

Rock & Roll Dope

John Sinclair

1969

For two weeks now I've been trying to write a letter to William Leach, the Black Panther who attacked what he calls the "white left" in the *Fifth Estate* last time as being jive and untogether. [See "The White Left—Serious or Not?" FE #70, January 9–22, 1969.] Brother Leach displayed his unfortunate ignorance when he attacked the White Panther Party as "silly" and "the movement's biggest headache." I don't know that much about the YSA or SDS, since I'm not a Young Socialist or a Student for a Democratic Society, but I do know about the Yippies and I do know about the White' Panthers, and I do know about the Black Panthers too.

Brother Leach not only revealed his ignorance of the White Panther Party, but he revealed an astounding lack of familiarity with the teachings and writings of the Black Panther Party leadership, e.g. Eldridge Cleaver, Minister of Information, National Headquarters; Bobby Seale; Chairman, Black Panther Party; and Brother Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense, Black Panther Party. All three of these men have not only called for a White Panther movement specifically, they have made concrete working public alliances with Yippies and other freeks (Jerry Rubin, Stu Albert, and Abbie Hoffman released a statement with Eldridge Cleaver last fall announcing a "YIP-PANTHER PACT," titled "Opening Salvos from a Black-White Gun"). The White Panthers have been in touch with the Black Panther Party through our west coast ministers, who were given encouragement and verbal support by Panther officers when they explained our program and our tactics to the brothers. So there's no question that Brother Leach is out-of-step with the Black Panther position on white radicals.

Eldridge Cleaver has spoken very eloquently about the need to seek out and encourage revolutionary white youth. Bobby Seale said just last week in Berkeley that the Black Panthers are coming out in full support of the Oakland Seven (7 white dudes charged with "conspiracy to evade the draft" or some shit like that) because "we recognize that we have a common enemy," and "the same grand jury that indicted Huey P. Newton indicted the Oakland Seven. The Oakland Seven came out for Huey to be free, and now we're doing the same for them."

Instead of attacking white radicals and maniacs for what he sees as their shortcomings, Brother Leach could be more useful offering specific programs for white revolutionaries—but they'd have to make more sense than his rant about going out and working in the factories to find out where white people are at. Man, our fucking parents work in the factories, and they've been working in those factories and offices for years and years so we won't have to do that shit anymore.

We know all about the white working class, and the white lower middle class, and white middle class, because that's where we come from. That's why we're the way we are now, because we won't have anything to do with that bullshit. The way to change a system like this is to stop supporting it with your life, not to join in the machine. The people who work in the factories—our parents—aren't about to be organized or convinced of anything at all by us, because they're too deep into the machine consciousness to hear anyone other than their machine leaders. But if we can't talk to our mothers and fathers (and some of us can and are), we can talk to our brothers and sisters, which is what the White Panthers are doing. Every day. Wherever they are—in the factories, in the jive army, in the offices and corporations, in the fucking streets. They all know what we're talking about, because they haven't been committed to a repressive, oppressive life-style for 30 years. They're still fighting the system, every day, in

their cells—they know it ain't supposed to be that way. They want to be free just as bad as we do, and that's why they'll talk to us, because we manifest freedom. And we talk to them in a way they can understand, because we are them. They don't worry about if we're crazy or if some honkies are going to think the so-called bullshit "movement" is fucked-up because of our crazed actions and statements. Fuck the honkies, is what Eldridge Cleaver says, and what we say right along with him. Fuck all the chomps, and their mamas. It's what they need.

Talking about crazy, I heard Eldridge Cleaver in New York City last fall, before he went off for a minute, and he called for a massive movement of madmen and crazy people to tear down the real insanity of the capitalist system. He said that if he was crazy and these other people were sane, then he was proud to be crazy. So are we.

Incidentally Brother Leach might check—out the current issue of the Black Panther newspaper (which you can get by sending \$7.50 for a year to P.O. Box 8641, Emeryville Branch, Oakland, Calif. 94608). The paper carries the complete text of Eldridge's Erektion Eve speech at the Berkeley Community Center, where he joined Jerry Rubin and other white maniac dope-fiends on the stage. In the same issue a speech of Bobby Seale's at the Anti-War Conference in Montreal at Thanksgiving time is printed in its entirety. Both brothers recognize the important work of white mother country revolutionaries and call for more cooperation and unity between blacks, whites, browns and yellows and reds, everyone who has an oppression scene happening to them. As the White Panthers say, "Black white & brown—all the people will get down."

I don't want to go on about this much more, because as I said in our original statement "this statement, like all statements is bullshit without an active program to back it up. We have a program which is on-going and total and which must not be confused with anything that is said or written about it."

Arguments with brothers are a drag. That's why the so-called "movement" is such a drag, and why it doesn't appeal to more hip young kids—because it's all about statements and positions and arguments and definitions and what do you think about this and that, and kids are tired of hearing that shit. They hear it at home and they hear it in school and when they get jobs, they hear it there, and they sure as hell ain't going to stand for some chomps talking all that funny shit on their FREE time.

I sure can't stand it. And it doesn't make any sense to me to hear some dude talking about working in the factory in order to really organize people, or to hear some other dude in a white shirt and tie, no hair, horn-rimmed glasses and a humorless graduate student face talking about "alternate life styles," as Rennie Davis does in the Mobilization flick on Chicago. That ain't what's happening, as the street brothers say. That ain't it.

What is happening is that millions of kids who wouldn't go in the factory to save their ass are looking for something to do, some real alternative to the plastic weirdo America their parents offer them as some kind of treat. They aren't about to be trained for jobs, since there isn't any need for them to work anyway; and there's no need to go to school if they aren't going to work, because really school is just a conditioning center for the assembly line and mostly teaches kids to follow orders, get up at 7 in the morning, pee when they let you, eat lunch when they tell you to, stay overtime if they tell you to, go home when they tell you to, read some bullshit books and write some shit that don't mean anything to anybody. And all of it presided over by a bunch of stomp-down honkie chomps—teachers and administrators. I don't know which are worse. There are some teachers who are deep into trying to get some information through to the kids, but the context is so fucked up and weird that the whole system works against these heroic teachers' efforts to enlighten their students.

Schools suck, that's for sure. In Ann Arbor the high school administration and student council (a bunch of teenage uncle toms) xxxed out a scheduled dance by the MC5 and the Rationals because they read about the 5 in TIME Magazine and didn't want that revolting shit to happen to their school. A lot of brothers and sisters out there at Ann Arbor High, on half-day sessions because their administrators' finely-laid expansion plans got fucked up as usual, are really pissed off and trying to bring some pressure to bear on the administration—a Dr. Somebody in particular. But it doesn't matter—every time the old chomps move against any of us they just expose themselves even further and their kids get even hipper to what they're doing.

In Birmingham last weekend the chomps tried to stomp us out before we even got there, but the management of the Village Pub took a strong stand against the nazi tactics of the authorities of the village and told them the 5 were coming in no matter what. We went and had a good time. The lesson is that if you stand up for the real thing every time, there's not much they can do to you, except maybe put you in jail (if they can catch you) or shoot you (if

you don't plug them first). It's not what you call security but it keeps everything out in the open where you can see it.

Anyway, what I wanted to say to Brother Leach when I was reading his story last issue, was that he should check us out before he starts shooting. He should also, as I said, check out the position of the Black Panther Party before he makes statements like "you give the oppressor a chance to show how dopey you are and to get people to think we're all crazy." If you ain't crazy, then fuck you. Because if you were hip to us you wouldn't be able to say shit like that. We know what we're doing, and more importantly, WE ARE DOING IT. We are organizing in our own community, among our own people, and what we're working for is an end to this whole rotten, fucking system. We know that we can do it, and the more of us who join together and work together, giving full respect to all revolutionaries no matter what their specific thing is, the faster we can bring this jive motherfucker down. But mis- and uninformed opinions written up in the community newspaper only hold all of us up. We have to get together and get down together, so that finally everyone can get down with us and have a good time all the time. Fuck all this other shit. We have to have a world where every man can be free, and we will not rest until this is accomplished.

So people, please let's not get hung up in all this bullshit written down, let's get out in the streets and everywhere else together. A hand in the pants is worth two on the typewriter I would say. I only write this shit because I can't talk to everybody like this all the time face to face and some people at least can make use of this information. I sure ain't sitting here at five o'clock in the morning writing because I think it's a joke. Like I said before, we are not playing. The only thing we play is music. The rest of this shit we are dead serious about—but that don't mean you can't have a good time while you're doing it. Like Eldridge said in the Berkeley speech, "I've enjoyed every minute of it, fucking with these pigs." That's the way I feel, brother, and I'll feel even better when they're dismantled and capitalism is dead.

Ok, enough of that shit. I'm sure you all know about the trial that's going on right now in Oakland County, with Brother Fred Smith and myself charged with "assaulting a police officer" last July at the Loft, a teen club in Oakland County. If you don't know about it, check it out.

You too, Brother Leach. You might check out some of the work we're doing, instead of making up indictments in your head. Let's do some work together. We'll be happy to play benefits to raise money for the Black Panthers if that would fit in with your plans. We're playing to raise money for our own community on February 4th at the Grande. That's a Tuesday night, with the MC5 and the UP, a poetry reading by me and some flicks. We hope to get copies of the Black Panther flick done by Newsreel and the film of Huey P. Newton's birthday rally in Oakland to show. All proceeds will go to "LSD for the community," a bail-bond and legal defense fund known formally as "Legal Self-Defense." The program is organized and sponsored by the Fifth Estate, the Detroit White Panther Party, Trans-Love Energies, the Grande Ballroom, Zenta International, and WABX Radio. Come on out and testify. Drop your money in the fund now and get out of jail fast if you get popped.

All Power to the People!

fifth Estate

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