

Letters

Various Authors

1969

Dear Comrades,

Just a short note of congratulations on your editors' notes column in the last (Jan. 23) issue of the *Fifth Estate*.

It is not often that a good cultural newspaper is willing to admit that the working class contains more than a bunch of fat contented racists. While I am one of those lucky individuals who can be both worker and hippy, I am the first to realize that this is impossible for most of the population.

The only addition to your fine editorial comments would be to add that the IWW considers students to be members of the working class even though they do not sell their labor, but are forced to give it away without control over their educational environment. They are as much members of the working class as the underpaid and overworked teachers who work for the same bureaucracy.

Yours in Struggle,
Bill Siebert
Industrial Workers of the World
Ithaca, N.Y.

Sirs:

I find it most distasteful to deal with people of your ilk, but at least 2 pandering bills were supposed to have been served to your Quote Unquote Paper.

We are asking for the discontinuance of this perverted trash from coming into our home. It was sent to our 16 yr. old son as a Christmas subscription.

We want it stopped immediately or we shall go higher than the U.S. Post Office.

I pray to God you are not the hope of this country and the toilets you are so wont to show could flush you all away.

Mrs. T.R. Henderson

To the Editors:

SDS is an organization of young revolutionaries. It's 500,000 strong. It's tough. And it's marching across this country leaving a path of administrators, pigs, and uptight critics in its wake.

SDS people didn't become revolutionaries because they were "alienated" or because they were "beat on the head" in a demonstration. That's what the New York *Times* wants us to believe.

We're either duped or we're sick. The one thing they won't even consider is that we may be right; they can't allow themselves to ask, even in their most private moments, if this country might not be an unjust, racist, imperialist horror.

But it is just that. America is a society that runs on the slaughter and domination of the people of the world, including ourselves. Ours is a government that maintains 3,500 military bases overseas to protect the fact that the American people, who make up 5% of the world's population, consume over 50% of the world's goods.

Ours is a government that talks of freedom while 1/3 of its people and 2/3 of its non-white citizens, live in poverty; a government that praises "success", and puts us through school factories as so much raw material to be shaped and formed into the desired final products.

Think of the reality of what this society is. To most, this society is a manipulative, militaristic racist system that has been killing us slowly for years.

SDS didn't build this society, it inherited it. SDS didn't decide arbitrarily how change could come about, the terms of the struggle were set by the reality of how this country runs. It's important to always remember that. We didn't create this fucking mess, we're only responding to it.

And in responding, we've learned some hard lessons. We've learned first, that we want to win. We've discovered that only in the creation of a free, just society and the total destruction of exploitation and oppression will any of us be able to breathe; only when no one is allowed to accumulate profit off of someone else's labor will any of us be able to work; and only when no one is hungry, will any of us be able to eat. This is what winning means.

We've also learned that in order to win we'll have to fight. We'll have to fight, not because we like to, but because the rulers don't give up easily. They want to maintain what they have by any means necessary, and we have to be prepared to take what's ours in the same manner.

SDS is now at an important point. It's growing and expanding in amazing ways as more and more young people break out of this society and commit themselves to the struggle. It's building coalitions with other revolutionaries, not on the guilty notion that some people are more legitimate revolutionaries than others, but on the notion that we're fighting the same enemy on different grounds, and that a revolutionary response to this society from any of us is totally justified, acceptable and increasingly predictable.

At the same time, repression is becoming a reality. The powers in this society are getting hip to the fact that we're for real, and they're responding in the only way they know how: red-baiting and witch-hunting.

They remember that it seemed to work against a weak Communist Party in the '50s; they assume it will work again. So Lansing and Washington start to get their repressive apparatus (committees, hearings) together, and the witch-hunt against SDS moves into high gear.

The attempt to kill the movement will fail. They may succeed in damaging one or two organizations; they may even send some of us to jail. But they will fail because the movement is not an organization or an individual.

The movement is the collective cry of the people for freedom and that cry will be heard and carried forward.

The smashing of SDS, although lamentable, will no more stop our revolution than the jailing of Huey stopped the blacks, or the death of Che stopped the Latin American people.

Right-wing politicians don't understand that individuals may be inspired to greatness by the movement, but they don't create the movement. The movement is a response to the world we're all part of. It's strength is in the people and their willingness to understand and move as a group.

Bill Ayres
SDS Regional Office
P.O. Box 625
Ann Arbor, Mich.

Gentlemen:

You get higher when you feel good. You get higher when you haven't been high for a while.

John Taylor

Dear Sir,

I am writing this letter in hopes that you will publish it as “food for thought” to your readers that are considering dodging the draft.

Being in the Army, I speak with firsthand knowledge. Basically, the Army is an organization that takes a man and strips away his freedom, liberties, rights, manhood, and respect for himself to the point where mentally and emotionally he is nothing but a beast of burden owned and operated by the government.

The same government regards him as a number, one of the mass, and could care less about him.

In short, I'm saying resist the draft and stay free in mind and body. You'll be glad you did.

Peace and happiness,

J. Nettle

Fort Walters, Texas

Dear Editor:

I have been sold into slavery by “our” government. The threat of imprisonment binds my hands. Unless I get some balls I'm doomed.

There's very little chance of me going to Vietnam as a combatant because I'm almost assured of getting a CO rating, but I still feel like a cop-out.

Maybe I'll get some guts someday, but until then I'd like to disrupt the Army as much as possible. If you have any suggestions on some good literature I could pass around I would appreciate it.

Judge me if you wish, but please help no matter what your decision.

Name withheld

Ed. Note: Our thing is helping not judging. Elsewhere in the paper is a list of GI newspapers that drive the army brass wild and the men are anxious to get. Write any one of them and ask for a bulk shipment or contact Detroit Resistance, 31 King St., 874-4334.

To the Editors:

Your paper has put many people uptight here in the U.S. Navy. But it has allowed me to come in contact with some very good heads who would otherwise not speak for fear of being condemned.

R. Cobb is the turning point.

Peace,

R.E.P.S.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Most of you so-called revolutionists don't even have kids. Wow, how do you expect to have a revolution without a generation to carry all our work out, to keep multiplying and get and gain power?

The government is really fucking up our sisters heads and bodies with these birth control pills. Think about it man, it's really scary to think of all the sisters who feed that shit into their systems everyday.

FUCK FOR KIDS...Start having children, TONS of em...teach em and love em.

And start loving each other more. Let's do it together. Until we do we ain't gonna get a damn thing done.

Love,

Your sister

Brothers and Sisters,

I just read Brother Sinclair's answer to William Leach's article [Rock & Roll Dope, FE #71, January 23-February 5, 1969]. I guess I should say that I thought both articles were relevant, but Brother Sinclair said one thing that totally pissed me off.

He put down Rennie Davis. If he'd stuck around in Chicago this summer he might've changed his mind.

If he judges the cat on what he looks like—"some dude in a white shirt and tie, no hair, hornrimmed glasses, and a humorless graduate student face"—then I've got no use for Brother Sinclair.

Rennie Davis got his skull split by the pigs in Chicago. I saw him a day later, and if another pig had hit him he probably would have died. Brother Rennie's shown me that he's got courage and he really cares.

Sinclair's shown that he hates pigs, that's about it.

I ain't gonna judge either of them. But I am gonna say that Brother Rennie is beautiful and Sinclair can get fucked if all he digs is if some cat looks freaky and knows all the right hip words. Jerry Rubin's bodyguard looked and acted pretty hip, and he was a pig.

If Brother Sinclair's really a brother, he should see beyond what a cat looks like. I don't want to put you down, John, I dig you. But you're wrong, Brother, really wrong, and you better realize it.

Unity,

A Freak Chick

Dear Sirs:

My son Greg in Vietnam asked me to subscribe for him to the *Fifth Estate*; so here goes.

I've sent him several copies of the *Fifth Estate*, *True*, *Avante Garde* and *Car Driver* in bundles for his enjoyment quite regularly. Only your paper has he requested for regular reading.

He is assigned as the Postal Clerk in his company and has time to read. Before going into service he was a commercial artist for 2 years.

Thank you for the favor.

Mr. Gregory Kucera

Clawson

To the Editor:

This letter is directed to John Sinclair.

I would like to ask Mr. Sinclair just what exactly is the function and purpose of the White Panthers. Are they supposed to be on our side (the blacks) or a separate organization with other aims?

On February 4th, I went to the Grande Ballroom as an observer and was surprised at what I saw and heard. I sort of dug it though.

The poetry readings were very good but I do have a question concerning the music. How do you describe or classify the type of music played by the MC5 and the others?

I hope he will answer this in his "Rock & Roll Dope" column.

Soulfully yours,

Vance Stevens

Dear Fifth Estate,

I am sure Detroit's gay community will join with me in thanking Dennis Raymond for his understanding review of a beautiful motion picture, *The Queen*.

Peace, in the year of the cock.

Missy

fifth Estate

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