

Black Groups Lead Boycott of News

Dena Clamage

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Pig-paper reporters don't wear blue uniforms.

But the pig media has to be considered one of the important repressive forces in this country. As long as "their" media are allowed to define "facts" for people, "their" power structure will be able to control these people. Power is partially the ability to define your world and yourself.

One of the worst examples of what a pig media is all about is our own homegrown *Detroit Noose*. This paper's racist mishandling of the New Bethel Incident and outright lies about Judge George Crockett are only the most recent examples of a long-standing Noose policy of serving as a tool of the oppressive city power structure.

The only way to change this policy is to make it unprofitable—in a big way.

Recognizing the function which the *Detroit Noose* serves and has served for many years in this city, the black community has come to the conclusion that pig media must go. The Black United Front (BUF), which was formed to protest the New Bethel Incident and support Judge Crockett, and which represents almost all city black organizations, has called for a boycott of the *Detroit Noose*.

Announced at the Republic of New Africa Unity Rally April 18, the boycott will include more than a request that people not buy the *Noose*, although this is certainly a part of it. *Detroit Noose* distribution sub-stations in various communities will be picketed.

Also, demonstrations and rallies will be held by the BUF and other organizations, white and black, at the Noose headquarters and other targets throughout the downtown area.

Wayne State University, Highland Park College, public libraries, and public school libraries will be asked to stop stocking and/or distributing the paper. If they do not cooperate, demonstrations will be held against them by the communities they pretend to serve.

Finally, *Noose* advertisers will be contacted and asked to withhold their advertising until the paper's racist policies are changed. It is interesting that the largest Noose advertiser is none other than the J.L. Hudson Company, whose president, J.L. Hudson, Jr., has been an active member of the New Detroit Committee.

BUF activity will continue and escalate until its demands are met. This includes the demand that 1/3 of all Noose personnel in every department would be black. Also, a black person should be appointed to the paper's editorial staff, and all sub-stations in black communities should be under black supervision.

In terms of content, the BUF is demanding that the Noose discontinue its racist reporting, including the "crime" page which creates the illusion that every "crime" committed in this city is committed by black men and women. The "crime" page thoroughly lists and describes every petty hold-up or fight which takes place in the city, especially if the suspect is described as a "Negro," while the real city criminals appear only on the "Society" page.

Finally, the BUF demands that if the *Detroit Noose* wishes to continue publishing in a city which is more than 40% black, it must begin to represent the "hopes and aspirations" of black people in its reporting, features, and editorials.

A number of white groups have responded to the BUF boycott call by planning and sponsoring supportive demonstrations and rallies. These include the Ad Hoc Committee (AHC), People Against Racism (PAR), and the Wayne State University Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

So far, white groups have sponsored several demonstrations as part of the growing campaign against the pig media. This campaign was kicked off by an Ad Hoc Committee demonstration at the *Detroit Noose* Lafayette offices downtown on April 14, which approximately 50 people attended.

On April 24, 80 people picketed the headquarters of the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA) in a demonstration co-sponsored by PAR and AHC.

The demonstration was held to protest the role which the DPOA played in inciting the hate campaign against Judge Crockett. This campaign has been waged in conjunction with the *Detroit Noose*, which printed the DPOA full-page ad against Crockett, an ad which the *Detroit Free Press* refused to print because of its inflammatory character.

At this date, a candle-light rally in Kennedy Square is being planned for April 28 by the Ad Hoc Committee. Also, the Students for a Democratic Society will be holding campus demonstrations some time in the near future.

As other evidence of support of the BUF action, the Executive Board of the Michigan American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has issued a statement which "expresses strong disapproval of the misrepresentation of the facts relative to the action of Judge Crockett by some of the news media and the campaign of vilification against him conducted primarily by the Detroit Police Officers Association and the *Detroit News*."

The BUF is hoping for much more support from the white community on this issue. As a spokesman stated, "This is an opportunity for the white liberals to show their sincerity in attacking one of the basic purveyors of racism in this city."

Related

See "Controversy Continues in New Bethel," in this issue, FE #78, May 1-14, 1969.

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