

Pig Conspiracy

C. McCall

The forces of political and cultural oppression have opened up a new front. Along with attempts to silence, arrest, and confine the leadership of the black community, the forces of repression inherent in capitalistic societies have begun to strip the young white community of their spokesmen.

The most current manifestation of these repressive forces is the harassment of John Sinclair, MC5 mentor-manager and Minister of Information of the White Panthers.

Two incidents involving Sinclair clearly point to this.

On April 17, a twelve-member honkie Oakland County jury found the MC5 manager guilty of assaulting a pig. The conviction stemmed from the arrest of both Sinclair and Fred Smith, MC5 guitarist, last July 23 when a scuffle ensued at the Club Loft between them and a sheriff's deputy and private guard.

Sentencing by Judge F.E. Roberts is slated for May 12. Sinclair faces a maximum penalty of two years in the state pen plus a fine. Smith was acquitted.

"It's going to be interesting," Sinclair commented, "to see if the judge has the guts to free me or if he's going to submit to the fascist pressure to sentence me to a prison term for something he knows I didn't do."

He added, "The jury knew I wasn't guilty but they couldn't go out into their communities, face their neighbors, and the honkies they work with if they had a chance to convict me and let it go." Sinclair's latest arrest makes the fears of a pig plot to get Sinclair less of a paranoid fantasy and more of a fact to be confronted.

Stopped at the Canadian border on April 18 en route to a job in Sarnia, Ontario, the band, Sinclair, and Bob Rudnick were stripped, searched, and harassed while their car was seized and searched by the Royal Canadian Mounted Pigs.

Sinclair was arrested for failure to register as a convicted narcotics offender and held for illegally attempting to flee the country, "That's bullshit," Sinclair said, "we were just going to play a job."

A Detroit News clipping and photograph of Sinclair posted in the U.S. Customs house tipped off customs agent, John Morton, as to the identity of the band's leader. Sinclair was held in St. Clair County Jail for two days without bond and was arraigned in Federal District Court on April 21.

District Judge Damon Keith set the hearing date for June 6 after a plea of innocent was entered for Sinclair by his attorney Howard Wittenberg.

The assistant prosecuting U.S. Attorney, Franklin Koory demanded a \$7500 bond to be placed on Sinclair.

Described by one observer as "a green-suited cockroach," Koory told Sinclair's brother Dave that he requested such a ridiculously high bond "Because I wanted to."

In the case of Timothy Leary two years ago, the same federal statute was used for indictment; Leary was released on a personal bond.

Sinclair stated, "The law is ridiculous and obviously unconstitutional. Koory is a punk and a prick; that bond was entirely uncalled for."

Sinclair has been the target of pig busts before.

On Dec. 30, 1964, he was convicted of possession of grass and was placed on two years probation.

On Feb. 24, 1966 he was again convicted of possession and sentenced to six months in prison and three years probation.

In a huge raid on Jan. 24, 1967, Sinclair was busted for the sale of grass; he awaits action on that charge in Detroit's Recorder's Court. His attorneys are challenging the Constitutionality of the marijuana statute he is charged under.

Forming a pattern, the numerous busts and continual harassment are part of a conspiracy to repress those who have developed an alternate lifestyle which means death to the pigs and a fascist society.

Sinclair feels, "It's important that the people of our community are aware that pig actions of this nature don't have anything to do with individual crimes like not registering as a convicted marijuana violator before leaving the U.S.

"The pigs arrest me for shit like this because I'm visible in the community and they want kids to think that this is what will happen to them if they try to free themselves from the pig culture.

"It's just like when they busted 56 of us in January of 1967 for dope "crimes"—the pigs thought it would wipe out the free community because everyone would see what happened to Sinclair and those hippies and be scared.

"It didn't work then and it won't work now."

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