

A Declaration of Non-cooperation with the *Detroit News*

Fifth Estate Collective

1969

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, hereby state that until the demands of the Black United Front are met, we will maintain a complete boycott of the *Detroit News*. Specifically, we will not assist the News in its so-called news gathering functions; we will not buy copies of the News, nor advertise in it, and will encourage others to join us.

The undersigned organizations and individuals will not knowingly give statements, interviews or press releases to the *Detroit News* (or its affiliated TV and radio stations). Persons identifying themselves as agents of the *Detroit News* will not be granted admission to meetings, press conferences, or events of which the undersigned are sponsors.

Let it be known that henceforth, "news" stories appearing in the News about any of the undersigned organizations and individuals or their activities will be based on information obtained in one or more of the following ways:

- Deceit: The News may obtain information by lying about who they are,
- Hearsay: They may pick up stories from other, second-hand sources,
- General Public Knowledge: The News can masquerade as part of the public and acquire information about events available to any citizen who witnessed events such as public meetings, demonstrations, etc,

it is important that the reasons behind this declaration be understood. They are simple.

First and foremost, the *Detroit News* is a racist reactionary newspaper. As self-appointed spokesmen for the power structure of which they are a part, the *Detroit News* in its so-called news coverage, its editorial stance and its relations to its own employees and the community is anti-black, anti-woman, anti-worker, anti-youth, anti-democratic, anti-progress and anti-self-determination. In short, the News is anti-people. Whatever its rhetoric about the national and community interest, it seeks merely to perpetuate the racial, sexual, economic, political, and military and social privilege of a small criminal clique.

Secondly and more specifically, it is a waste of time to talk to a *Detroit News* reporter. They do not have any control whatsoever over what finally appears in the newspaper. The more sympathetic they are, the more closely they are supervised and the less control they have over their material.

Experience after experience shows that no matter who one talks to, Peter Clark, Martin Hayden, and company will decide what appears in print. The News prints whatever will -not rile Martin and Peter's racist, Grosse Pointe, Detroit Athletic Club neighbors.

Stories appearing in the News have been butchered beyond recognition of the way in which they were submitted. Many important stories about right wing activity, political corruption and upper class bigotry have never appeared at all. It is a matter of fact that a good *Detroit News* reporter is an ex-*Detroit News* reporter.

In other words, it would be silly and stupid for us to continue to lend the illusion of legitimacy and credibility to the News "coverage" of our efforts to change the existing political economic and social order. The fact that a tiny group of white men, through inherited wealth and power acquire control over the means of communication does not give them the right to foist their opinions on all the people in the guise of "objective truth."

The *Detroit News* cannot by definition speak for the masses of the people. They hate and fear the people as they make clear in five editions every day. Their contempt is shown not only when they print but also when they don't. For thirteen months the News decided that it was better to sacrifice the daily attempt at brain dirtying rather than pay most of its employees a decent wage.

The *Detroit News* is immensely powerful. As yet, we are not. We cannot stop the *Detroit News* from spreading its self-serving drivel to hundreds of citizens each day. We do, however, have the power to withhold our complicity in its racist, reactionary policies. We intend to do so.

Let the public be informed. Any information appearing in the *Detroit News* henceforth should be considered one-sided and unreliable. If you read the News you don't know—because they don't know.

I hereby pledge myself and/or my organization and its representatives and spokesmen to the policy and practice of non-cooperation with the *Detroit News* and its affiliated radio stations WWJ and WWJ-FM and to its affiliated television station, WWJ-TV.

Name, Title, Organization

(Clip and mail to: People Against Racism, 109 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale, Mi. 48220. Tel: 399-9191)

Detroit Area People Against Racism

National Organizing Committee

Ad Hoc Action Group, Citizens of Detroit

Youth for Peace, Freedom and Justice

The Fifth Estate

Women's Liberation

Michigan Regional SDS



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