

Letters

Various Authors

1969

Brothers and Sisters,

I've really been digging the stuff that's been going down in your (no THE it's for everyone) paper, and I'd just like to mention a few radical things around.

First, I'm surprised that, except for once on ABX, no one in the left media has mentioned the only radical program on nationwide TV at the present. This being "The Prisoner" on CBS/Thurs., 8 pm.

Also, in the recent issue is a picture from *First Men in the Moon* by H. G. Wells on page 4. Some people may not be aware that H. G. Wells was a communist and that "First Men in the Moon" was a condemnation of this social system.

For Wells' communist ideas check out some of his less-known books because his main 7 books (*First Men...*, *Time Machine*, *Food of Gods*, etc.) have been corrupted too much by the system.

Personally, I'm a great follower of Wells; in fact, he converted me to communism with "Men Like Gods."

Right on,

Will Hempler

Friends,

In reply to Marxist Rodhe's complaint in the last issue that "the Fifth Estate, John Sinclair, the White Panthers and the entire Yippie underground movement is anything but revolutionary" [see Letters, FE #86, August 21-September 3, 1969], it is the old Marx-Bakunin argument brought up to date.

A nice argument, except that Bakunin lost. And lost for the next near-century—in Russia, then China, then Cuba—was the dream of the new free, stateless society.

It was the Marx-Authoritarians who, in each revolutionary case, grabbed the ball and then proceeded to proscribe their Bakuninist-libertarian comrades, much as Rodhe, were he in power, would proscribe them today, to wit, "counter-revolutionary." (By "proscribe" I mean wipe out.)

"All power to the people," but not the vanguard, Marxist or otherwise. As Abbie Hoffman puts it, "fuck the vanguard."

All power to the vanguardless, stateless people! No more states, Rodhe, no more states! Not even socialist ones, not even humanist ones! (You learned nothing in 51 years?)

Sam Cohen

Dig it Brothers,

I've waited too fucking long to hear about or from the White Panthers here in Chicago, so I'm getting right to the source.

Just like the Dead say, "Things are happening here, but much too slow," and I don't know why the hell the high-energy urban left isn't getting it on the way it should.

All across Amerika the fascist front arms themselves and kisses each others decaying asses, while the white folks splinter themselves into clothing classifications. At least there's the Young Patriots.

But I'm not a hillbilly and I dig the Stones, MC5 and the Illusion more than C & W.

So alright, kick out the jams, motherfuckers and let's have some White Panther buttons and organizational info rocking on down to Chicago. The anxious street fighters of the Motor City should get it together with those in the pig capital of the world.

Peace & freedom to those that Earn It,
Phil Griswold

Editors:

In regards to Hank Malone's article regarding the voyage of Apollo II [see "The ultimate phallic journey," FE #85, August 7-20, 1969], you'd better be damned happy that it was a success rather than a disaster.

For if it had been a fiasco, King Richard I (not to be confused with King George III) would probably be severing every financial connection with NASA presently in existence and reconnecting them to a certain military-industrial complex and a certain undeclared war in a certain Southeast Asian country.

Think about it.

Make Peace the Name of the Game

To the Editors:

The Fifth Estate's letter to SDS criticizing its projected Chicago action [FE #85, August 7-20, 1969] seems to fix the staff in the awkward position of people who draw back from the consequences of a perspective which they say they share with SDS.

I think SDS's tactics, which you characterize as adventurist and potentially disastrous, jibe pretty well with the SDS view of the world and of the role it thinks the white left can play. If SDS tactics flow logically from SDS perspectives, the Fifth Estate should either drop its objections to the SDS tactical line or else it should reconsider the assumption of its own current politics.

The SDS outlook on the world—as I extract it from a reading of the Weatherman paper—goes like this. The main contradiction in the world is between the national liberationist Third World and the imperial mother country. It gives rise to the encircling revolt of the world village against the world metropolis. All initiative in the international revolution is in the hands of the non-white insurgent peoples, including the black and brown internal colonies of the U.S.

The role of the white left can only be subordinate and auxiliary in the revolutionary process. It is in no way indispensable. Even in the U.S. the black and brown revolution can be victorious without one white finger being raised in behalf of the revolution. Of course the victory will be less costly to the extent that white support for the black and brown vanguard can be mobilized. And this is where SDS enters the picture—as organizer of the auxiliary support troops for somebody else's revolution. SDS apparently no longer believes that the radical, as opposed to the liberal, is one who feels the necessity to liberate himself.

The perspective behind the call to Chicago may be real or it may be hallucinatory. What is certain is that people in SDS whose intelligence and devotion command respect believe it is real. One such person predicted to me that

fifty to a hundred thousand young workers and students will answer the SDS call. We shall see. I question the prediction because I question the assumptions on which it rests.

First, I question the idea that the role of whites in the revolution must be subordinate and auxiliary. The decisive battles of the long class phase of human history will, I am convinced, be fought in this country. Any notion that the American revolution can be achieved without the organization of tens of millions of workers and of women to liberate themselves from class and sex oppression should be rejected. Those organizing efforts are as necessary for the success of the revolution as is the independent organization of blacks to win their national freedom.

The American revolution has three essential ingredients—the self-liberation of workers, of women, and of black and brown peoples. When it comes it will be the most fundamental, the most radical revolution ever to have occurred. It will surpass for a time all efforts of the Russians, the Chinese, the Cubans, to transform the quality of life. We shall have no models to copy.

Second, I challenge the idea that the social war is on in this country (“it is happening here,” says SDS) as well as the corollary that the time is right for fighting in the streets. To speak seriously about revolution is to speak of the transfer of power to new institutions. There can’t be a revolution unless there is somebody to transfer the power to. “Power to the People” is a meaningless slogan where the people are not organized to exercise power. It’s no more useful than Lincoln’s phrase about “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

What has to be understood is that right now power is not up for grabs in this country. It will not be until millions of victims of the system have organized to win their emancipation. Until then revolutionaries must patiently explain, organize, engage in exemplary actions. But before the emergence of a revolutionary situation he who counsels street battles is an organizer of defeats and he who merely threatens them is a fraud.

This has been the year of the Escalating Slogan. There have been many contestants. Among the slogans which appear to have lost out in the judgment of certain leftists is “Bring the Troops Home.” Some think that radicals should abandon that slogan to the liberals. Why? Has the demand for immediate withdrawal lost its urgency? Not to the NLF. It is point No.

One on their peace program. And not to hundreds of thousands of war-weary GI’s

It is point No. One to them too. On the other hand, SDS is weary of the slogans. They prefer “Bring the War Home”.

What this escalated slogan reveals is forgetfulness of the fact that a mass movement against the war is composed of war-weary people. SDS’s slogan is a rough translation of Lenin’s call to “turn the imperialist war into a civil war.” But Lenin never used that phrase to rally a mass movement; it was meant to reassemble a shattered vanguard. When the time for mass action against the war arrived, Lenin’s cry was “Peace.”

Real revolutionaries are often distinguished by moderation of language in a revolutionary situation. They respect the mass audience and they take pains to make sense to it. Bluster, on the other hand, is often the language of powerless people to whom no one is listening.

“I will do such things—what they are, yet I know not; but they shall be the terrors of the earth.” That’s King Lear raving at his ungrateful successors. They have the state power. He has just had his last hundred troops taken away from him. Therefore he blusters—and goes mad.

“Off the pigs!”

“Tear up the fascist courts!”

That’s the current tough-guy style. It begins to sound as though the SDS was down to its last hundred troops. Of course if fifty thousand revolutionaries show for the SDS Chicago action I shall have to eat these words. That I shall gladly do.

Meantime whatever revolution-minded people decide to do about Chicago, I hope they will feel duty-bound to give much more than lip support to the actions around the demand for immediate withdrawal which will come after Chicago, in Detroit and in Washington. Duty-bound to whom? To the Vietnamese who need the Americans out of their homeland. To the blacks and working-class whites who are imperialism’s cannon-fodder. Duty-bound to all the victims of oppression who will gain new courage to struggle for their liberation if mass actions are one of the causes for bringing this war to an end.

This is not a time for people who want to act like anti-imperialist internationalists to be doing their own thing. This is the time for broadest offensive for immediate withdrawal of all troops. To dare to make common cause to get the U.S. out of Vietnam is to dare to win.

David Herreshoff

To the Editor:

Really this letter is not to just the Editor of the Fifth, but to anyone who can save the town of Saginaw, Michigan, at least what's left of it.

Saginaw's two greatest moments in her entire history has been the Delta College Pop Festival and the Saginaw Pop Festival.- These two festivals are now past history, but not forgotten past history.

The Saginaw Pop Festival was last April. There has been nothing since! And the people of Saginaw are PISSED! The people of Saginaw are ready to do anything for some good music. The people of Saginaw aren't dead, it's Saginaw itself that's DEAD.

I myself am pleading with anyone who can save or at least try to save Saginaw. Saginaw wants to see the MC5, SRC, the Frost, the Dukes, Joplin, Big Mama Mae Thornton, the Stooges, Up, and any others.

Saginaw will soon die and fade away without help for its salvation.

Also Dying,

D.G.

(for Salvation of Saginaw)

Hillman

Dear Sir:

This statement concerns an incident that happened on August 13, in Oak Park near the tennis courts.

In brief, there was supposed to be an anti-Vietnam War rally. However, only approx. 15 youths arrived. I am from Southfield, and came upon the invitation of an Oak Park resident, along with two other friends, to see what one of these rallies were like.

We sat and talked for approx. 15 minutes, then Police Officer Desmone approached the group and confiscated some tobacco from a youth that was smoking.

He then wandered around, trying to provoke the youths present into obscenity or attacking him by verbal abuse. (Such as, "I wish you'd keep smoking. That way you'd die sooner and be out of my hair"). He then left.

At about 50 feet distant, someone allegedly shouted an obscenity at him. This was the- only time when any person in the group of youths were impolite or discourteous in any respect.

Officer Desmone returned and proceeded to challenge us: "I dare you to call me that to my face." And, "If there was another Officer present, I'd take off my gun" and have a go at us one by one. During this time he walked up to one youth and deliberately dropped a button which proclaimed "By Whatever Means Necessary" onto the ground and walked away.

My friends and I decided to leave by this time. As we left, we saw the youth with the button leaving. Desmone stopped him and purposely flicked the button off the youth's shirt again, all the while acting like a spoiled child 'who couldn't get his way.

The youth started to protest, whereupon a civilian clothed man angrily demanded to know where the youth was from, why didn't he stay where he belonged, and then (according to the youth) threatened to run him out of town.

Desmone then snatched a pamphlet out of my friend's hand and proceeded to arrest the other youth for loitering. The two left for the squad car.

My friend tried to protest the taking of his leaflet, but was told to leave Oak Park and never come back again by the civilian clothed man, otherwise he would be taken to the station. We decided to leave.

We went to the station to complain about this treatment, and were told that the civilian was Deputy Director McGee, and that no action could be taken as McGee was the desk sergeant's superior. After listening to some "advice," we left the station.

We demand a public apology from both Deputy Director McGee and Patrol Officer N. Desmone. Otherwise we shall file a complaint and take any other action deemed necessary.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Davis, Steven Rosenbaum and 3 other people who don't want their names in the paper.

To the Editors

Subject: Suggestion for Improvement

To: The Masters of War

From: Sp.4 Don Campbell 370-52-8072 79th Trans. Co. (DS)

APO San Francisco 96238

I. What is the present practice, system or item used?

The present practice in use is called, "Vietnam" and is one of the Militaristic Games the Army plays, It involves the employment of 500,000 young American men and a notable amount of resources invested in Southeast Asia.

The rules of the game: protect United States interests and handle the Saigon government like a puppet on a string.

The game involves the use of drafted Americans to play opposite drafted North Vietnamese to decide who will live, or die, while the Masters of War in Washington and Hanoi sit behind their desks getting rich from the results.

So far this game has cost billions of dollars, and 40,000 young men who have died for nothing, not to mention the thousands of men who will carry wounds with them for life.

The United States has been here for 6 years under the pretext of helping the people. If we've assisted the people, it's not noticeable. We haven't helped the people who should be helped—that's one of our problems in the States.

II. What change or improvement do you suggest?

I suggest that the United States withdraw from Vietnam, effective immediately and let the Vietnamese handle their own problems, in this, their own Civil War.

III. Where and how can it be used?

This practice can be used by redeploying the men in Vietnam and sending them back to their respective homes.

IV. What benefits or savings would result from its use?

At this time the savings in wounded and dead are unknown. The savings of American dollars would be astronomical! Intangible savings, such as, sparing relatives and friends of men in Vietnam of anguish, pain and worry cannot be counted. The money saved could be used to help THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

Al, Pete, Cathy,

Did you ever hear of lifers? These are people? who are put on earth to get their rocks by fucking with people!! They call their job a profession, but, did anyone ever think of what their "profession" is? Well, here's something for the beautiful 'people back in the world to digest.

These cock-suckers say that we have to have an army to suppress the so-called communism and keep America free—free from what?—the right for an individual to speak his mind or retain his own freedom—that's what we want, but the army and the money-hungry politicians don't want this—these idiots don't realize that they are working hand and glove with the enemy that we are supposed to be suppressing.

In the army (as you well know) a person isn't allowed any personal freedoms of such that the lifers are saying we are trying to maintain. Are we allowed to speak for ourselves—no—be able to do things that we want—no. If it wasn't for the war, these bloodthirsty lifers wouldn't have a job.

Those of us who speak out against their ideals and this bullshit of a war are either thrown into jail (Ft. Jackson) or are harassed on a level lower than the jail sentence, by the fucking lifers. Who wants to look forward to this type of freedom, but we will continue our work knowing that the beautiful people back in the world are fighting for the cause!

Sp.4 Barry Winn
Sp.4 Joe Calley
25th Inf. Pht. Scout Dogs
1st Cay. Div.
APO San Francisco 96490

To Judge Colombo

Editors' Note: The letter below was sent to Judge Colombo by a Fifth Estate subscriber.

Judge Robert J. Colombo
Recorders Court 1321 St. Antoine St. Detroit, Mich. 48226

Despite the three-score and two years I have witnessed the increasing inanities, injustices, and even barbarities, of public officials in this ostensibly civilized country, I am nevertheless appalled at the ruthlessness—to put it lightly—of your court, particularly in the recent case of John Sinclair.

Those of us who demand the maximum freedom obtainable within a community, and who have devoted a good deal of our lifetime in efforts to reverse the tyrannical trend of the American political system, have been rewarded merely with frustration.

On second thought, perhaps we can claim one sorry achievement: we have proved beyond a doubt that the course of the system can not be constructively altered.

The mounting diabolical misuse of the unwholesome agglomeration of power accrued to governmental units affirms the validity of the present objective of those of us who are working to exterminate every vestige of the prevailing political system.

Hugh H. Hobart

Dearest People,

Capitalism in the heavens has commenced with man's first step on the moon. Where will it all end I can only guess.

Will people commute to their jobs on earth from spaceburbia? Will the little cats on the other planets be straights or freaks? Will they be brothers or pigs? Will they have dope circulating freely on their planet and be fucking in the streets?

Buddha help them when their beautiful and innocent society is confronted with our fucked up systems.

All Power to the People

Marie

Brothers and Sisters All,

To top off a visit with some freak heads, friends of mine from the world, I dug in a pile of Fifth Estates. I really dig the way you "tell it like it is." In the "community of Uncle Sam" Vietnam is Fucked, and so are all the people who egg this war on. Big Brother sucks!

Us heads don't let the Nam get us "down." We stay "nice" 25 hours a day.

Maybe you can dig this, I thumbed up here to Bien Hoa -from Dong Tam to see my "brothers."

In closing, I'd like to say to all the friends of David Kenneth Williams W.O. of Detroit, USA, to whom I was very close, "Remember him as he was! A truly great guy! May he have everlasting peace."

Shalom
A Delta Doper

Dear Sirs:

I've been getting your paper for some time now and it's a pretty nice paper. The only thing is it's like the right-wing brainwash papers—it's all one-sided and fucked up. You don't allow for any other way than yours which is a little bit pig headed.

For example, what about the other dudes—the older straight people—how are they gonna feel when there's no government or security? We should consider their feelings.

Keep your head,
Puck

fifth Estate

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