

White Panthers Under Attack

Fifth Estate Collective

1969

The White Panthers arrested in New Jersey after the Woodstock Music Festival have all been released on bond and are back in Ann Arbor.

Although defense attorneys feel there are good chances of the charges being dismissed, the Panthers see this as an enlarging pattern of attempts by the authorities to eliminate their organization.

Arrested and released from the Hackensack jail on charges of possession of marijuana were Leni Sinclair, John's wife; Pun Plamondon, White Panther Minister of Defense; Geni Plamondon, Panther corresponding secretary; and two members of the Kraak Blues Band.

Pun said that within a half hour after being stopped by the New Jersey Pigs the FBI was on the scene. Why the Feds were needed is a mystery. but they did their share of law work and confiscated a large quantity of White Panther literature, red books, buttons and "Free John Sinclair" bumper stickers. None of these items were returned.

Pun also feels that there has been more harassment in the Ann Arbor area as well.

While the Trans-Love commune has always been hassled, it appears that the local pigs are really cracking down.

The editor of the Sun, a Trans-Love publication, was arrested for wearing an army jacket with a 48-star flag on the back. Others have been busted for curfew violation and blocking the sidewalk.

Such minor violations usually go unnoticed, but the Ann Arbor pigs are using every excuse they can find. They must feel confident knowing that Sinclair is behind bars and think this is an ideal time to rid the town of the rest of the troublemakers.

The Panthers, on the other hand, are continuing to do all they can to resist as well as work for John's right to be free.

The International Committee to Defend John Sinclair, headed by Ed Sanders and Richie Stoneman, has begun a campaign to bring attention to the case.

Allen Ginsberg and Michael Aldrich, editor of *Marijuana Review*, are contacting people in the arts as well as doctors, lawyers, professors, and congressmen, asking them to support John. Efforts are also being made in England, France and Germany to publicize the injustice of the sentence.

Abbey Hoffman, Yippie leader, is now writing a book about the Woodstock Festival entitled "Woodstock Nation." It will be dedicated to Lenny Bruce and John Sinclair. A percentage of the profits will be donated to the Committee to Defend John.

Locally, the Panthers have been circulating a petition to help show the kind of support and backing John has. 10,000 signatures have already been acquired. They plan to present the petition to State Representative Dale Warner. Rep. Warner is heading a committee to sponsor a Bill which would eliminate minimum sentences. This means a judge would not be obligated to give a convicted person the minimum sentence required by law.

For example, the minimum sentence for possession of marijuana is one year. Under the proposed bill, a judge could pass sentence of one day if he thought it appropriate.

Meanwhile, Trans-Love and the Panthers are being drained of funds in their effort to free John. Donations are urgently needed and should be sent to the defense fund at: 1510 Hill Street in Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.



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