

# Letters

## Various Authors

1969

### **Dear Fifth Estate,**

I'm still alive and well in the U.S. Navy. Much has happened since the MP hassled with Ray Greer last Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> at Metro airport. If you'll remember I was on a TV news spot last Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> when I left for Norfolk. Va.

Haven't been home since Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> when I left for Norfolk, Va. to join the U.S.S. Yorktown CVS-10, a "Hunter-Killer Force" anti-submarine carrier.

Haven't been sent to the Mediterranean as stated in a previous Estate article.

But, being an American Serviceman's Union member and active in off-duty movement activities blew the mind of the Yorktown's executive officer. He was intent on getting me off the ship, I heard through the grapevine.

I was transferred Aug. 7<sup>th</sup> to our second youngest attack aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. America.

It's slated for Vietnam next spring. Hopefully, peace will break out before then and it won't go. However, we are involved in major overhaul and modernization of the ship for the Vietnam trip.

Would appreciate any cards or letters from Detroit movement folks. Plan to come home in November.

Norm Gelnaw

SN, B51-19-92

1<sup>st</sup> Division, U.S.S. America,

CVA-66

FPO New York, N.Y. 09501

### **Editorial Staff,**

I registered for school today, and was stopped by 3 teachers and the vice-principal for wearing a White Panther button (which I bought at the Grande in support of John Sinclair) the end result was its being confiscated.

Our dress code doesn't seem to cover buttons, and while not a Panther yet, I am a supporter so I don't believe it could be classified as jewelry. How much legal weight does the dress code carry? Who would I contact if I am suspended, since such a thing would be in violation of my civil rights?

And most importantly, how do I become a Panther?

Tom Harbison

Wayne

*Editors' Note:* All of your questions can be answered by contacting White Panther national headquarters at 1510 Hill St., Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104.

## To the Editors:

When reading the article “SDS Girls Visit Macomb” [FE #85, August 7–20, 1969] and looking at Crumb’s comic next to it, it is obvious that the article and comic together have many implications. The comic is a criticism of the Women’s Liberation Movement and, since it was right next to the article also a criticism of the action taken by the SDS women.

Intelligent criticism of this action is needed. I am still puzzled as to why the SDS women took this action. Why did they decide to disrupt a social sciences class? What were the women’s liberation issues they wanted to communicate and how did they expect to communicate them?

Perhaps the *Fifth Estate* feels that women should be criticized for pushing men around or for an action that seems as if it was poorly planned, poorly executed, and of dubious effect. If criticism is needed it should appear in an article and not be laughed off in a comic.

There are several things wrong with criticizing actions in this way and this comic in particular. Whenever women have struggled for their rights they have been laughed at. This has been a serious obstacle to overcome.

It is very difficult to get anywhere if people don’t take you seriously. John Wayne’s line ‘Yuh sure are pretty when yuh get mad,’ illustrates what I mean.

A woman is angry, she wants things changed and the response is that all getting mad will do for you is to make you pretty. If we are to look at Crumb’s comic we see that when women from Women’s Liberation get mad their breasts pop out from their shirts.

It is like Crumb is saying: “It’s okay to be in Women’s Liberation as long as it makes you super sexy. It’s o.k. to really want to change your life and be politically active around women’s issues as long as your breasts pop out.

Is the establishment (with the *Fifth Estate* as one of its members as far as it concerns women or deals with issues vital to women’s liberation) so afraid of women’s anger that the only way they can handle it is to pretend to not take it seriously?

The comic is also misleading when it is next to the article about the SDS women. The comic is about a leader of “the militant wing of the Female Liberation Front.”

People who have little knowledge of Women’s Liberation Groups in Detroit might interpret this to mean that the action taken by the SDS women is typical of all Detroit groups when in fact it involved only one faction of one group of women in SDS. There are at least five Women’s Liberation groups in Detroit, none of which took part in the action.

Terry Littmann

Women’s Liberation Movement Detroit

## Dear Sir,

I have been in Vietnam since November, 1967 and the *Fifth Estate* is the best thing I have seen in this whole war. Your paper is really boss. When I got your last issue from a buddy I got the subscription form out of it.

A copy of your paper is read by at least 50 people here at Marble Mountain. Have 9 months left in this green mother-fucker then I’m out and can smoke and do and say what I want without some lifer or CID being down on my ass.

Am really looking forward to receiving my own copy of your paper. I have seen only 2 in the last four months.

Yours,

Scott Brank

## **To the Editors:**

It's about time to get down, get organized. In reference to a recent letter in the Estate (Vol. 4, No. 8) we agree that people have to get organized if we are ever to have legalized weed. People, for much too long, have been under oppressive laws concerning marijuana.

*The Saturday Review* of June 28, as stated from this previous letter, reports that the present laws for marijuana have made felons out of 60 per cent of the population under thirty. If through this paper and through other underground news media people can organize, find out that the people here have a majority, then maybe an effort to legalize marijuana can work.

Through organizations such as the White Panthers and concerns like Trans-Love Energies the people will find out that they are not alone.

An organized effort by the organizations and the national underground news media could bring an end to the tyrannical laws that oppress those who are enjoying grass illegally. Legalization would mean a higher standard of weed, a significant decrease in price, and freedom for those now in prisons and jails and to the many thousands now awaiting trial.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE !

Bryan R. Turnbull

Robert C. Smith

Romeo

## **Brothers and Sisters of Detroit,**

Just a short note to let you know that I will still be here until the first week of January and would appreciate it if you would continue sending the *Fifth* for the remainder of the year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to submit a few tidbits of information for anyone who wants to hear it. I am the personnel clerk for a small engineer outfit stationed approximately 15 miles off the DMZ. Grass, opium and barbiturates are plentiful here and as "Chief of Operations" for the "Family" here, I can safely say that a good 75% of the personnel assigned to this unit indulge in dope.

Up until June, we were more or less unorganized and busts were frequent. Then we decided to form a "Family" and initiated those we trusted. Now if the lifers attempt a bust (which has yet to happen) they run into 70 to 100 people sitting around a bunker with a fully loaded M-60 machine gun, several varieties of grenade and rocket-launchers and a variety of small arms.

This has completely eliminated any arrests since June. After all what commanding officer wants to go through the embarrassment of court-martialing 75% of his men, providing they succeeded in arresting us? (which would be a major operation in itself).

Name Withheld

## **Dear Fifth Estate,**

Sorry, I couldn't be at the Grande on benefit night. I like some of the music, but these ears are too old and tender for all that full-blast volume. Was touched by the invitation to aged straights like me—hence the contribution.

Note to Chris Singer: Librarians are not so stuffy as you imply. Books are placed on the restricted list not because the librarians are straight-laced, but to cut down the static from the old ladies in tennis shoes who zealously guard public morality.

*Amboy Dukes* was published in 1947 when *Lady Chatterly* and Henry Miller could not even be sold in this country. We've come a long way in twenty years. By "we" I mean the country.

M. Oesman,

## Dear Newspaperman,

I've been reading the *Fifth Estate* for nearly five months now and have taken notice of your repeated mentioning that the serviceman is on the verge of overthrowing the fascist military superstructure and spewing forth quotations from Chairman Mao while doing so. (*Ed. note: We said that?*)

Unfortunately, such is not the case, because the individual soldier knows that the army has him by the balls and jail is a scary thing (or so Johnny Cash tells us).

I am in an administrative company in Bien Hoa and we will be properly dealt with if we so much as go without a T-shirt or wear any other than O.D. green. That's pretty chicken shit man, and if they can give you an article 15 for that they can hang you for not polishing your boots.

Everybody comes down on the lifers and rightly so, but those same lifers are scaring the shit out of people.

Furthermore, in most cases the soldier doesn't want anything to change. He knows it's dirty and people are getting killed over here but he really digs on getting the ribbons and medals when he's going home.

To really disrupt the military structure you would have to have soldiers "strike" in a sense. By doing as little as possible you could greatly reduce effectiveness and do it legally. This doesn't work either though because nobody wants to be a "dud" or one who's shit ain't together.

The head thing is a farce. All they do is buy cheap grass, tell everybody how long their hair is going to be when they get out, and say "wow!" a lot.

The essence of all dissent in the army has its foundation in the fact that everybody wants to go home, get laid by a round-eyed girl and make some money. More bodies in the labor stream. Capitalists to contend with.

The cases you talk about in your paper are just isolated ones and don't represent the majority of servicemen. I wish there was a mood for revolution but there just isn't. It may sound trite but FUCK ALL LIFERS !!

Joe-Pete Savatta

## Dear Sirs:

Since I arrived in Vietnam I have read two of your papers and I find them most informative. I will admit that I don't go along with all your ideals but each man must pick his own path in truth.

For all the guys over here there is a saying "Freedom has a flavor sweeter than the protected shall ever know."

Peace,

Cpl. Steven R. Roberts

## Dear Chris Singer,

I dug your brief article on "The Amboy Dukes" and agree with you on its historical value to the present societal situation. If you mention it again, you might add that the movie version is titled "City Across the River." It makes the late show every now and then.

Another book/movie that tells it pretty well about the Pleistocene period of the revolution is "Knock on Any Door," by Willard Motley (movie of the same title stars Bogart and John Derek).

I'm better qualified to talk about "Blackboard Jungle," which you've probably read and seen. It was current when I was in H.S. That marked the beginning of the rev's Iron Age. Also the first high-amp rock concert.

Bill Haley & the Comets came on during the screen credits with "Rock Around the Clock" so fucking loud—and no parents around to tell you to "turn that noise down!" Bullshit society has never been the same since.

I'd really like seeing more articles like the one on Amboy Dukes. The People can benefit from learning where some of their roots are.

Right on

Evan Crawley

Chicago

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/88-september-18-october-1-1969/letters>

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