

# Plymouth pigs bust Dietrich

Victor Mansfield

1969

On Halloween eve the Chief of the Plymouth pigs, in what was the culmination of an “extended investigation of the circulation and distribution of the Fifth Estate and the Ann Arbor Argus newspapers,” finally arrested Rolf Dietrich as he “did then and there” show, offer for sale, and sell an indecent or obscene paper(s) to wit: The Fifth Estate and The Ann Arbor Argus; contrary to the provisions of the ordinances of the City of Plymouth...” according to the warrant of the arrest.

Dietrich was arrested right across from the Plymouth City Hall where he had been selling the last issue of the Fifth Estate in full view of chief pig Straley’s office. The arrest comes amid a myriad of charges and counter charges that “smut” is being peddled to the youths of Plymouth.

Ten days before the arrest of October 30, on Oct. 20, a boisterous group of VFWers had appeared at a City of Plymouth Commission meeting and had demanded that Dietrich be arrested. True to form, Straley had one of the complainers, Robert L. Johnstone, the father of one of our misguided brothers of Plymouth High School who apparently bought a paper from Dietrich and then ratted to his old man, filed a complaint that Dietrich sold obscene literature in the City of Plymouth.

Dietrich was held in the Plymouth jail for about two hours and was released on \$100 personal bond after his arraignment where he pleaded “innocent” before District Court Judge Dunbar Davis.

Before bond was set Dietrich requested that the judge direct the Plymouth pigs to release the property that the pigs had taken during the arrest. Dietrich argued that the papers the pigs had taken from him at the time of the arrest had nothing to do with the complaint inasmuch as the warrant alleged that the offense took place on October 9<sup>th</sup>, some three weeks before the issue of the Fifth Estate that Dietrich had in possession when he was arrested was printed.

Also, Dietrich argued that the pigs should return the bicycle that he was riding on the day of the arrest. Judge Davis refused to issue the order to the pigs and they are now in possession of about 50 more copies of the Fifth Estate as well as Dietrich’s bike.

All this raises the possibility of additional law suits by Dietrich against the Plymouth pigs, as he has already rented another bike and expects to bill the City of Plymouth for it. His monthly rental is about 20 dollars and could run into a considerable sum.

## Related

See in this issue, “Default,” FE #92, November 13–26, 1969.

# fifth Estate

Victor Mansfield  
Plymouth pigs bust Dietrich  
1969

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/92-november-13-26-1969/plymouth-pigs-bust-dietrich>  
Fifth Estate #92, November 13-26, 1969

**[fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net)**