

# Media Repression

**Insert: American Revolutionary Media / Detroit**

Fifth Estate Collective

1969

Movies, radio and television, newspapers and magazines consistently distort news, information and images of the Black and white liberation movements, here and around the world.

With Black Nationalist groups like the Panther Party, the effort is to present them as aggressively, violently militant organizations of anti-white Black racists. In the case of the Panthers, this slander has been accomplished entirely by slant and innuendo. The Panther Party has never been reported in an incident of violence that was not a case of self-defense. Spokesmen have continually emphasized that the Panther Party is not anti-white, but anti-racist, not concerned with the destruction of white people, but concerned properly and necessarily with serving, defending and liberating its own Black people.

The basic political reality that has enabled the power-structure media to accomplish this slander is, of course, that there are white racists whose immediate emotional response to the image of a proud Black man or woman with a gun is one of guilty fear. But the media do not so much play into this racism as play on it, foster and maintain it, as the primary means of isolating militant Blacks from the rest of working people, to maintain a system which is oppressing everybody.

This racist policy, applied most clearly, heavily and extensively at home, is also the basic and underlying psychological principle of propaganda in support of U.S. intervention and war against liberation of the Third World nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The rationalization for tolerating U.S. intervention in Cuba and Santo Domingo, in addition to anti-Communism, is that Brown peoples in Latin America cannot be "trusted" to determine their own political destiny. The rationale for continuing to support oppressive, politically bankrupt European and white colonial governments in Africa has been that those Black peoples are "not ready" for self-government; not that European and American businesses continue to make a lot of money there. Eisenhower admitted the reason for not allowing the elections promised for in Vietnam at the end of the French-Indo-Chinese war was that the Communists would be elected. The willingness of white Americans to tolerate continued escalation of the war there to include genocidal defoliation and bombings, which not only continue but have increased since the promise of troop withdrawals, is based on racism against the people Johnson described as "little yellow men with pocket knives."

But this kind of racist and anti-Communist propaganda in support of the corporate-political status-quo is used against white people as well, whenever they act for themselves in solidarity with colored liberation struggles. "Hippies," like "niggers" are "dirty" and "smell." White people who oppose the war in Vietnam are not only "traitors" to their country for supporting the Vietnamese people, but also (unstated) traitors to their race. As were the white Freedom Riders and civil rights militants. And so on.

The racism and anti-Communism of the power-structure media is not an accident. It is not an accident that really hip white youth into cultural liberation and really militant white people into political liberation are excluded as completely as really militant Black people from the media. It is not an accident that the way news is reported always has the effect of turning middle class people against labor struggles, white people against Black struggles,

men against women's liberation struggles, old against young, and the entire country against the rest of the world, especially colored peoples fighting for their liberation. It is not an accident that whenever average working people are presented in the media it is in a way that makes them seem a little dull-witted and silly. The reason for all of this is that the power-structure media are part of the power-structure and determined to preserve the privileges of rich, old, white men against the needs, the demands and the struggles of young, Black and white working men and women.

This is why almost all news is based on government, police and corporation "handouts"—the only thing they're willing to give away is lying garbage that protects their interests. This is why the moment writers, songwriters, musicians or singers show any serious promise of being able to produce entertainment for the people, they are bought up by the corporations, isolated from the people they came from and sealed away to grind out stuff that gets worse the longer they are away from the life of the people.

What we have to do, if we are ever going to be free, is to think critically about the stuff the power-structure media is constantly trying to cram down our throats. "Read between the lines" of news. Think about the way people's confidence is undermined the way most of us are always ridiculed in what passes for entertainment. And, whenever we can, start doing it ourselves and following and supporting people who are trying to do it for themselves and for us.

The people—that's us—are not just the sole producers and distributors of everything of material value, the merchandise we need to live well. We are also the only source of any culture worth consuming. Our lives and thoughts and feelings are what make movies, radio and television, music, books and magazines real and important. We make whatever history is being made.

And news or entertainment that has the effect of dividing us and setting us against each other is intended to repress and hold us down.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!



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Fifth Estate #94, December 11-24, 1969

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