

The Snakes will be Dealt With

John Sinclair

1970

Editors' Note: The following is the introduction to a speech written by John Sinclair at Marquette prison and read by Jesse Crawford at the Free John Sinclair Day benefit at the Grande Ballroom, Jan 24. Contrary to reports on WABX's Rock and Roll news the audience received the fifty minute reading with great interest and solemnity.

Brothers & Sisters:

First I want to say how happy I am that all of you are here on this day, that brother J.C. is able to read this message to you—and how sad I am that I'm not there with you, that instead of being where I belong—with you—I'm locked up here in Siberia USA, locked up just so I can't be with you, because there are people who are committed to keeping us apart—people who definitely don't want us to be together, whose very survival depends on us not being together, who are dedicated to keeping us separated, apart from each other instead of a part of each other. Can you dig that?

These people—and I think we all know who they are and why they are doing this—and I should say that their agents are here in the Grande Ballroom with you tonight, just as they have been sneaking around in here since October 28, 1966, three weeks after the ballroom opened—they started disguising themselves and sneaking into the Grande, these perverts, these undercover spies and snakes who disguise themselves as people in order to worm some of our sacraments out of us and then lock us up in their weird penitentiaries—they used the weed to lock people up, they don't even smoke it and get high off of it like we do—these snakes have to be dealt with, and will be dealt with, by the people. These snakes are the reason that you are here in the ballroom tonight, and the reason that I'm not here with you.

What is more important right now is that we realize why these snakes are crawling around in our midst, why they are fucking with us, why they are afraid of us and our sacraments—because they are afraid of us, brothers and sisters, they are so afraid of us and what we are doing and what we are trying to do that they will go to any lengths to snuff us out and put us away. They will go so far as to expose their whole evil system by sending people to prison for 9-1/2 to 10 years for possessing two joints of weed.

Our sacraments, our benevolent weed is not “dangerous” in any medical sense, it is not “harmful” to people, only to oppressive governments, and there is no reason why people who smoke weed and get high should be locked up and treated like dogs. These snakes are so desperate that they will bare their fangs publicly, they will break their own so-called laws and lock people up for this shit because they don't have enough courage to come out and say that they are carrying on a systematic cultural and political repression campaign against the revolutionary people, against the people who are committed to changing their system for the good of all the people, who are committed to abolishing their disastrously outmoded power structure which is based on the wealth and well-being of a tiny segment of the population, who are committed to replacing their tiny power elite with a system based on the needs and desires of all the people, a system that is absolutely responsive to the needs of all the people...

Love All Ways,

John Sinclair, Prisoner of War

Chairman, Youth International Party

Marquette Prison, January 1970

Text box

Free communities across the nation held benefits, rallies, and poetry readings the weekend of January 24 to demand that John Sinclair and all political prisoners be set free and that marijuana be legalized. Events were reported in New York City, Chicago, Cleveland, Berkeley, Calif., Madison, Wis., and Vancouver, B.C. Thousands of persons demanded an end to political repression by their presence.

In Detroit a two day rock concert featuring the top of the Michigan rock scene played to capacity audiences at the Grande and Eastown Ballrooms. In Port Huron the brothers and sisters there were cancelled out by up-tight Masonic Temple officials. The message from across the country was clear: FREE JOHN NOW!

fifth Estate

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