

WE ARE A PEOPLE!



by **JOHN SINCLAIR** Chairman, Rainbow People's Party

Long ago the ancient ones told us
that this would be.
The white man would kill the spirit of our people,
and take it to a far place,
but after a while it would come back again,
it would be born again.
In time a new spirit would come into the world
and we should look for it.
Like the raindrops gathering in the clouds of springtime
so would the spirit come to a thirsty land
and a dying people.
Let it grow! Let it grow!
This light you must find.
When you seek for your vision on the mountaintop
you will be told how to find it.
For it will be something so big and so wonderful
that in it all peoples of the world can find shelter,
and in that day all the little circles
will come under the big circle
of understanding and unity.
The rainbow is a sign of that which is in all things.
It is a sign of the union of all peoples
like one big family.
Seek the vision. Become a warrior of the rainbow!
Let it grow! Let it grow!

Printed in Sun/Dance #1 & #2, July and October 1970, as "Message to the People of Woodstock Nation," this piece was composed in Marquette Prison in May-June 1970 and extensively revised in the Wayne County Jail, March-April 1971.

Brothers and Sisters—

It is time for us to realize a number of very important things. We are a people, we recognize each other as brothers and sisters united in a common struggle for our freedom, for our survival, and we recognize each other because we share a common culture. We do the same things, we live the same way, we listen to the same music, smoke the same sacraments, we are united by our age, our common values, our common vision of the future. We want the same things—freedom, self-determination, peace, justice, harmony and equality for all people. There are millions of us, we are a people, but until now we haven't started to realize our strength because most of us have been primarily concerned with our **individual** freedom, our freedom as separate individuals, and we haven't really been aware of the need for our freedom as a **people**.

We've been giving too much attention to our individual selves, or to our separate little families and tribes, and what we have to realize now is that none of us can really be free until **all** of us are free. That's what we have to start with. We have to go beyond our spaced-out individualism, which has brought us up to this point in our history, and we have to start thinking about our freedom as a people, as a vast nation of free brothers and sisters who must unite with each other in a struggle for our **collective** self-determination and freedom. We have to get ourselves together, we have to unite

on the basis of our commonality, we have to come together and emerge together, as a powerful new political and social force which is capable of bringing about the changes we all know have to be made if we're going to survive and grow into our full human potential as a new people on this earth.

We want to be free, and we want all the people on earth to be free—that's what we've always wanted, right? There's never been any doubt about that. But we've been going about it all wrong. We've been asking and begging the established order for our freedom, like they're going to give it to us as a favor, and we've got to realize that we're not going to get what we want without a struggle. We have to struggle for it. We have to understand that the creeps who now control our lives, the "ownership" class here in Babylon, are not going to give up any of their power or any of their control unless we **make** them give it up, and the only way we can do that is start from where we are right now and move together in an organized fashion to get what we need. That's the only way we can do it. And the first step in that direction is to start re-defining reality in its own terms, in our own terms, in terms which will make it possible for us to realize our collective strength and to use it in our own interests.

We have to force our own definitions on these creeps, and the very first thing we have to do is seize control over our own images. We have to make it clear that we are **not** simply a "protest movement" but a **liberation** movement, a movement for total change and total revolution which will not be satisfied with anything less than the total freedom of all the people on the planet. And once we do that, once we define

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"WE ARE A PEOPLE!" is from GUITAR ARMY by John Sinclair, to be published in March by Douglas Books.



PHOTO BY: DAVID FENTON

ROCKIN' IN THE PARK, SUMMER, 1970

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and advance our own image of ourselves and our people, then we can start moving in the right direction. We can get out from under the definitions the pigs have put on us, and we can force them to start dealing with us on our own terms.

How do we do this? We start out by saying that **WE ARE A PEOPLE**. We are a people. We are not a bunch of isolated protesters, or one side of the "generation gap," or a collection of weirdos and misfits, or anything like that. We are a people, and we have been a colonized people with no control over our national destiny, we have never enjoyed the ownership or control of the means of production of the goods and services necessary to our survival, we have been subjected to the classical type of colonialism in which the mother-country "owners" have come down into our communities and ripped us off not only for our labor but for our national resources as well, and they take our resources back into their economy and refine them and adulterate them and then sell them back to us at exorbitant rates, with all the profits from our energies and materials going not to us but to the mother-country exploiters. Check it out. You can start by thinking about the example of Woodstock, which is something we're all familiar with. Woodstock was something we produced out of our own national genius and energy, it was a beautiful experience for hundreds of thousands of our people which we produced ourselves, but the mother-country record companies and movie companies and vampires of all kinds swooped down on it and grabbed it and took it into their factories and cooked the reality of Woodstock down into records and movies and shit which they now sell back to us at \$3.50 and \$12.00 a shot. We control no part of it, yet it's entirely produced by us. And if we do get any share of the wealth our energy and labor and genius has generated, then we are trained and pushed by the mother-country "owners" to squander that wealth on their products, their plastic junk, their degrading entertainment and products which they use to keep us under their control. They pump us for all we're worth, and they make sure that

we don't get any control over our own economy.

That defines us as a colonized people, that objective situation defines us as a colonized people above and beyond our national culture which is only the visible manifestation of our peoplehood. We are exploited as a people, we are oppressed as a people, and we are denied our freedom as a people. But there's more to it than that—our whole relationship with the mother-country system is a colonial relationship. We are impressed into the mother-country armed forces and sent to fight its wars under threat of imprisonment or death. Right? We are not permitted to vote or otherwise take part in the mother-country political process, those of us who aren't "old enough," and those of us who do "get to vote" don't have any say in the selection of the candidates for public office since the mother-country political process is controlled by small cliques of professionals who are responsive only to the big business interests who bankroll them. We don't have an effective voice in the mother-country government so we can't say anything legally about what wars are fought or where our taxes go—we do pay taxes, and those of us under 18 are literally subjected to what our ancestors called "taxation without representation."

We are conscripted into the training and brainwash centers of the mother-country—the schools—and all of us are forced under pain of imprisonment to stay enrolled in those centers until we're at least 16 years old—until they can be sure we've been pumped full of their poison. We are forced to accept the ugly death culture of the mother-country under pain of imprisonment. If we try to say anything about it, about how rotten it is, we are beaten or arrested and jailed by the mother-country's troops. Or else we get away with it, but we still have to worry about getting beat up or arrested and locked up, because we know that's what's happening to our brothers and sisters and we're bound to be next. We're bound to be next. Or we might get shot down for trying to demonstrate against the death machine, we've seen that already, we've seen our sisters and brothers gunned down by the mother-country troops just for walking across

the campus at the wrong time, or for carrying a sign saying End the War in Cambodia, or for calling the troops names fitting their functions. Dig it. And if we try to build an alternative to the death culture, if we try to create an alternative order which suits our needs, it's even worse.

But the point is that we are a colonized people, subjected to the classical methods of colonialism by the American ruling class just like colonized peoples all over the world. That's where we have to start. And we may have the highest so-called "standard of living" of any oppressed people in history, but this "standard of living" is ours only so long as we toe the line, only so long as we accept the terms of the death merchants and reject our peoplehood with our brothers and sisters in the colony. We can't do that, and we can't accept the bribes of the mother country either, because we know that its "high standard of living" is only possible through the colonization and exploitation of millions of other people around the globe who get ripped off so the Euro-American people can have all those color TVs and electric toothbrushes and new cars and shit, so we have to reject it on that basis also. Besides, having had access to the so-called fruits of this exploitation, we know how worthless they really are. This is one advantage we have over other oppressed peoples, many of whom are still struggling to attain the privileges and material well-being which were given to us at birth and which we have now rejected as worthless.

We've had it, we've had the whole thing, and now we've rejected it and we will keep on rejecting it until all the people in the world can have the same advantages that we've had, and until the death culture is finally junked on the scrapheap of history. We don't want any of it until everybody can have it, and we won't be satisfied with anything less than total freedom for everybody on earth. We can't be bought off, no matter how hard they try, because nothing they can give us or sell us is worth as much as the freedom of the people.

We are a colonized people, but there is one quality of our situation which is not shared by any other colonized peoples, and it is the condition which gives

our struggle for liberation a very special role in the international revolutionary drama. Our colonial status is supposed to be merely a temporary stage of our development, since we are expected to "graduate" from colonialism into the mainstream of the mother country social order. We are the expected heirs and successors of the mother country's ruling class and we are the heirs and successors of the mother country's working and management classes as well. If the mother country's socio-economic order is to survive we must be persuaded or forced to step into the shoes of our mothers and fathers. There are no replacements for us. If we refuse to toe the line, if we refuse to step into the roles we are expected to play in the mother country system, then that system must collapse.

Check it out. It will collapse without us. That's why our secession is so important, above and beyond the fact that we must have our freedom, because we are indispensable to the economy of the mother country. We are indispensable to its survival. They have to have us as workers and as consumers, and if we won't go for it then their system falls apart. No other colony has ever enjoyed this distinction, although with the contemporary form of economic imperialism which is necessary for the survival of international capitalism, all colonial peoples are necessary as markets for the consumer economy. Imperialism has to have markets for its degrading products, and it can't afford to let people reject its imperialist culture or else its own domestic economy will fall apart. They have to keep expanding their markets, they have to keep smearing their ugly death culture over the face of the earth, and when any people stands up to them and says they don't want it, that creates a tremendous crisis for imperialism—especially when that people is determined to fight back for the right to control its own destiny.

So we have to see how important our struggle is within the context of world revolution—we are not only an oppressed people, but our liberation is the key to the liberation of all oppressed peoples. If we can free ourselves from the grasp of the imperialist octopus which keeps us oppressed—which we can only do by cutting the head off the octopus and dragging its corpse off the stage of history once and for all—then we remove at one blow the force that is keeping all other peoples on the planet in a state of exploitation and oppression. It's as simple as that. We have been expected to step into the shoes of the oppressor and run the death machine, but if we refuse to do that, if we instead strike out for our freedom as a people, the death machine itself will fall apart, because it can't run on by itself—there have to be people to operate it. If we break free from the deathgrip of the octopus, if we refuse to go along with its program of exploitation and greed, if we do the one thing that can liberate us from this beast—that is, if we cut off its head—we not only free ourselves but we create the conditions of freedom for everybody. That's why our struggle is so important.

But in order to do that we have to get ourselves together and we have to move as a united people to win our freedom. We can't get any freedom as individuals—all we can win for ourselves as individuals is a place in the driver's seat of imperialism. And that isn't anything at all. That's what we're trying to get away from, because that just keeps the system going when what we want is to put an end to it forever. **There are no individual solutions—none of us can be free until all the people are free.** And we can't free ourselves without a struggle, because the people who have the power now are not going to give it up just because we want them to—they never have and they never will. More than that, they are not even going to let

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us survive without a struggle, because they can see even better than we can that our existence poses the most serious threat of all to their continued rule. They are going to keep trying to stomp us out, and if we want to survive—let alone realize the fulfillment of our vision—we're gonna have to fight.

Now this goes against the grain of our whole thing, because what we want is peace—we don't want war, we **hate** war, we want to eliminate all wars, but what we have to realize that we are not going to have peace until everybody on earth has their freedom, and there can be no freedom without a struggle. We have to fight for it. That may be hard for a lot of us to accept, but unless we understand that we are going to have a very hard time of it indeed, and we will not be able to survive. **We have to fight.** That doesn't mean that we have to run out into the streets right now with rifles and shit and start shooting down all the pigs we see, but it means that we have to start thinking about the future of our struggle, the survival of our people, the development of our struggle for the liberation of the youth colony over a protracted period of time. We have to start thinking about how to move when to move, where to move, who we can move with, who we are moving against, what they will do to stop us, and how we can overcome all the obstacles they will be sure to place in our way, to stop us from gaining our freedom.

We have to start thinking very seriously about **revolution**, brothers and sisters, because that's what this is all about. And we have to understand very clearly that the revolution is more than just an apocalyptic armed struggle which comes in a big flash, which happens all at once, is fought out and decided on the spot. That's just the way it is in the movies—in real life, the revolution is the entire scope of the people's efforts to achieve self-determination, and armed struggle is merely one tool of the revolutionary people which can be used in our cause. It is a tool and it should be picked up and used when it fits the specific task to be undertaken, and then it should be put down and replaced in the people's hands by other tools of liberation: revolutionary education, revolutionary economics, revolutionary technology, revolutionary culture. The revolution is a process which develops according to the given conditions in a given time and place, and

it encompasses all of the efforts the people make in their struggle to achieve self-determination.

Right now our revolutionary culture is our most powerful tool, because it brings us together and inspires us to keep pushing for what we know has to come to pass. It unites us around a high-energy core and gives us the strength to go on even when it looks like things are getting worse and worse for us all the time. Our culture helps us see that we really are a people, that we are a new people, that we really do have a vision which can light up the earth and take everybody into the future. What we have

to do is to start developing our culture to higher and higher levels, consciously and precisely, purging it (and ourselves) of the poison and filth that the death culture has implanted in it (and in ourselves) so it can lead us more directly and more perfectly into the New World. We have to put our vision out in front where everybody can see it for what it is, and we have to temper everything we do in the heat of that vision, letting it lead us and inspire us to new heights of creativity and struggle until we finally emerge victorious over the forces of death and destruction which want so desperately to wipe us out. We have to

build our culture into a powerful force for a revolutionary change, and we have to defend it (and ourselves) against the constantly increasing attacks on our way of life.

We have to realize, as brother Che said, that it is time to moderate our disputes and to place everything at the service of the struggle. We have to do that. We have to see that all of us are engaged in a single struggle against a single enemy, which is the imperialist octopus with its tentacles spread all across the globe, strangling and choking whole peoples in its terrible greed. We have to come together as a **people**—freeks and students, musicians and scholars, radicals and radio technicians, factory workers and filmmakers, lawyers, and laborers, dope fiends and deviates of all kinds—and we have to move together to free our whole people from the death machine. We have to start looking beyond our own immediate interests and see that none of us can grow and develop unless all of us do, that none of us can have our freedom unless we can have our freedom as a **people**. That's where we have to start.

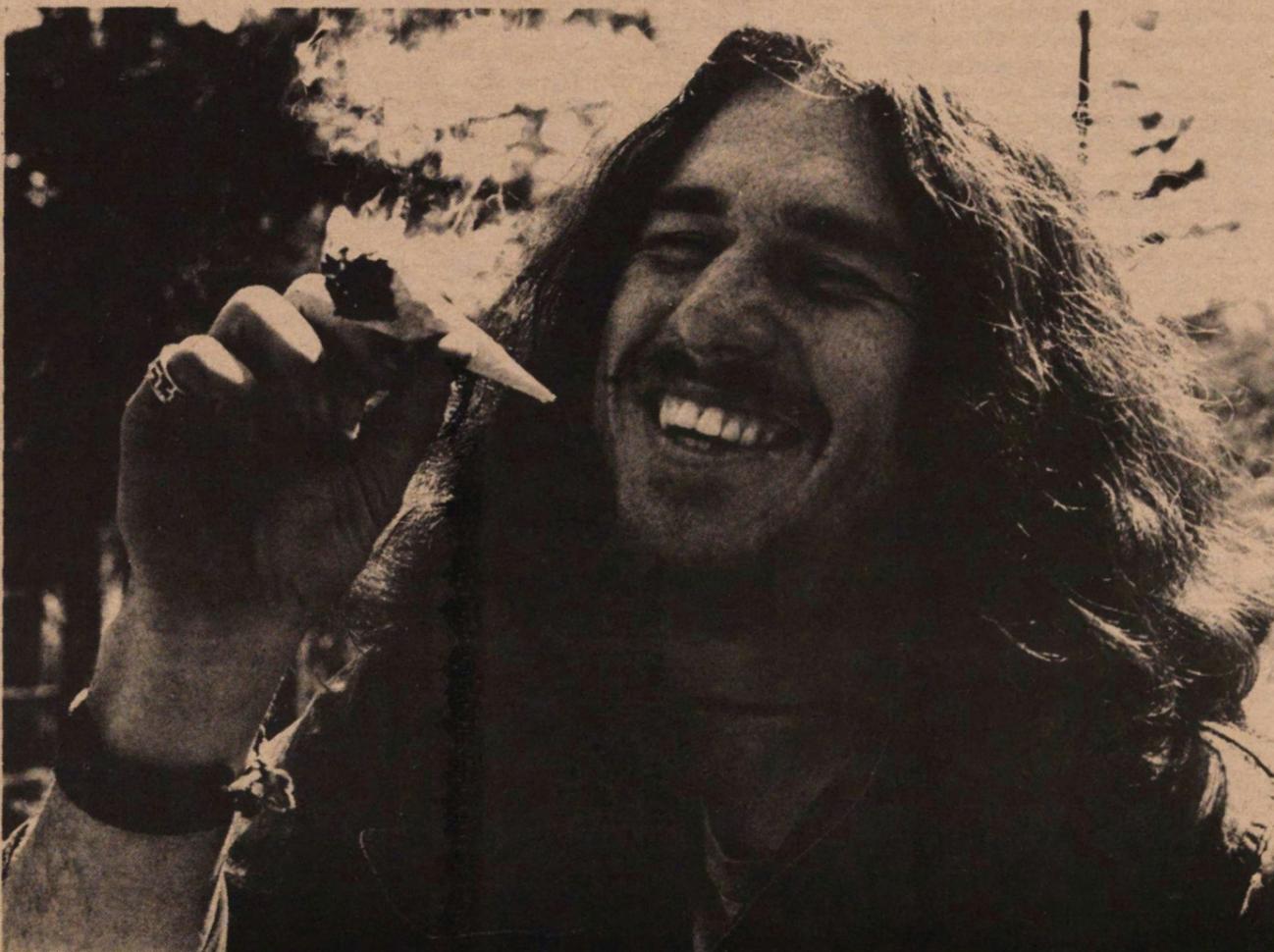
We have to be concerned above all with our survival (self-defense), because if we don't survive we don't do anything else either. And we have to be concerned with our political and economic development (self-determination), so we can grow and maintain ourselves during our struggle for the liberation of our people. We have to survive, and either we move to insure our survival as a people or else we face genocide as a people, because the death culture is **not** going to let us carry on like this. It can't afford to. We all represent a serious threat to its continued rule, whether we realize it or not, and the point is to start moving **consciously** to get ourselves so together that we can turn that threat into an actual act of liberation, a prolonged blow against the very roots of imperialist control which will free all of us from its grasp.

Now a lot of our people have already been rising against the oppressor—or at



RAINBOW STUDENTS TAKING "5" BETWEEN CLASS

Photo: David Fenton



SMOKING A JAMAICAN JOINT

Photo: David Fenton

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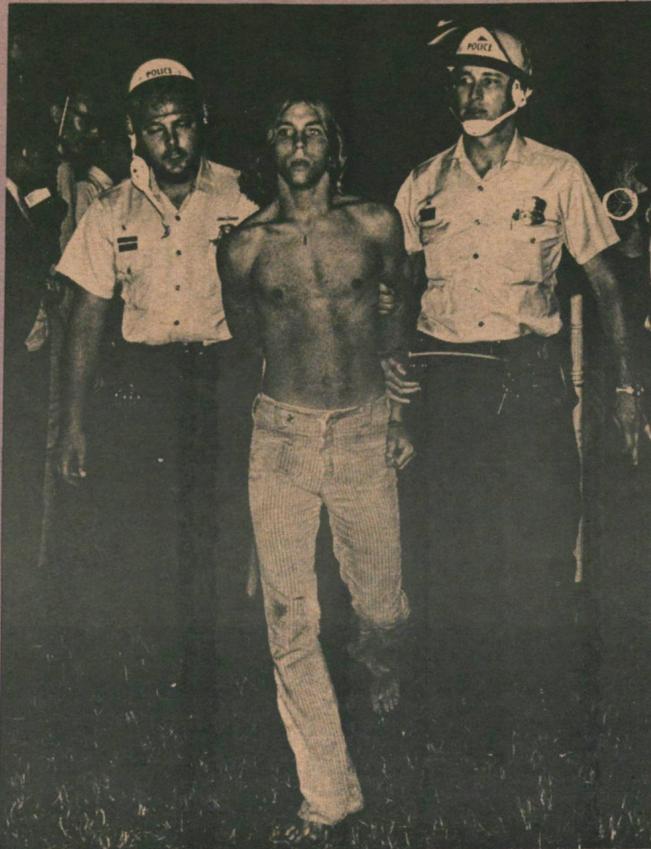
WE ARE A PEOPLE!

least against the symbols of oppression and the storm troops of the oppressor, on the campuses and in the youth ghettos—people have been rising spontaneously and striking out in their own individual ways, striking out against individual policemen and buildings and shit, but we have to realize, we really have to realize that spontaneous risings are not enough, that they are far less than enough, that in fact they usually play right into the hands of the oppressor, because their actual physical effect is minimal at best and the pigs use them to organize the broad masses of the people against us.

Spontaneous unarmed risings against an armed, disciplined, highly organized, brutal and technologically far superior force are not in the best interests of the people. They are beautiful in that they express the people's righteous anger, and the people's energy, and the people's intense need for change, but they are no more than that. In fact, when you break it down you will see that spontaneous risings are really just a form of ego-tripping in a lot of cases, where a brother or a sister makes himself or herself feel better by smashing a few windows, or throwing a rock at a pig, or shouting slogans which have no basis in reality at the time. They are expressions of the people's frustration and our feelings of powerlessness, and as such they are wrong—because in reality we are really very powerful, we can do a lot more than that, we can really make some changes, but we can't do it unless we get ourselves together, organize ourselves, and make the fullest possible use of our tremendous energy and our collective genius.

WE HAVE TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE ARE NOT SIMPLY A "PROTEST MOVEMENT" BUT A LIBERATION MOVEMENT, A MOVEMENT FOR TOTAL CHANGE AND TOTAL REVOLUTION WHICH WILL NOT BE SATISFIED WITH ANYTHING LESS THAN THE TOTAL FREEDOM OF ALL THE PEOPLE ON THE PLANET.

I don't mean to put down the brothers and sisters who have been moving spontaneously like that, because they've been a great inspiration to a whole lot of us and they've certainly made us see that we can't just sit around waiting for something to happen—they've taken the initiative and they've moved to do something about their condition, which is certainly right on. But what I am trying to say is that now we all have to start carrying on our struggle consciously—we have to start thinking about the effects of our actions, we have to start thinking about doing specific things to achieve specific results, and we have to start bringing all of our activity within the framework of a conscious revolutionary program which will bring about the liberation of our people. We have to relate to the fact that these risings have to be part of an overall strategy, a strategy which calls for and which can promise the collapse of the death machine. Too many of us don't see the difference between strategy and tactics, and we tend to make our tactics our strategy too much of the time without relating to the need for an overall strategy which incorporates all kinds of different tactics. If demonstrations and risings will advance the people's cause and bring us closer to victory, then right on, but we have to start figuring this shit out in front and picking our shots, choosing our tactics in accordance with the objective conditions in any given place and time, making sure that any given tactic



OUR FEELINGS OF POWERLESSNESS

is in line with the overall strategy for victory, and then moving with all our collective energy and rage to make each tactical battle a success.

We have to start organizing for our struggle in earnest. Smashing windows and throwing rocks at armed troops, without thought for the consequences, is not in the interests of the people. Even shutting down the universities is not in the interests of people finally, although organized strikes against the universities are certainly more effective than a few rocks and bottles thrown spontaneously through some windows or at some pigs in the streets. Shutting down the schools might show people that we are determined to do something about our situation, but that isn't enough any more. What we have to do is start taking over the schools so we can use their facilities in the best interests of our people—use them to teach the people what they need to know to survive and grow. We have to take control of the schools, and use them to further the growth of our culture, to further the growth of our people and to provide for our collective needs. We can use the facilities and the incredible technology which is at hand on the campuses, we can use the radio stations and printing facilities, the television equipment, the scientific equipment and laboratories, the dormitories and cafeterias and auditoriums and stadiums, all those buildings and all that technology, housing and dining and meeting facilities, we can use all of this for our people, and when we control our schools we can also throw them open to all the people in the communities in which these tremendous physical plants are located. The people need that stuff a lot more than General Motors does, or North American Rockwell, or Standard Oil, or Dow Chemical, or any of the other greedhead institutions which now control the schools and use them to

keep the people enslaved. And we can get it. We can get it!

WE WILL KEEP REJECTING IT UNTIL ALL THE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD CAN HAVE THE SAME ADVANTAGES THAT WE'VE HAD, AND UNTIL THE DEATHCULTURE IS FINALLY JUNKED ON THE SCRAPHEAP OF HISTORY. WE CAN'T BE BOUGHT OFF NO MATTER HOW HARD THEY TRY, BECAUSE NOTHING THEY CAN GIVE US OR SELL US IS WORTH AS MUCH AS THE FREEDOM OF THE PEOPLE.



photo by: Andy Fulton

RAINBOW SISTER ROCKIN' ON

We can get it through organizing our people, and education our people, and banding all of our people together so we can operate at our full strength. That's the only way we can get it, and all there is to it is to start doing it. The people are ready for it, and all they need is a program for action which makes sense to them and which has room for them to take part in it. Millions of us are tired of this shit and want to change it, millions of us are ready to start moving to determine our own destinies, millions of us are ready and waiting to take the steps which will spell death for the death culture and life for the life culture, but we've been more or less paralyzed so far because we haven't had a clear picture of what it is we want to happen. And it isn't just young people who are fed up, although we're the ones who are most ready to move—there are millions and millions of straight people, Euro-American people, who are sick to death of the kind of life that's been forced on them but don't know what to do about it. We have to reach across the

our friends, our real friends, that objectively speaking the masses of Euro-American people are as beaten down and oppressed and colonized as we are—as Huey says, all Americans are colonized by the "owners," or the ruling class—but subjectively, in their heads, they have been made to believe that we are their enemies and that we are trying to destroy them, to destroy their way of life just as they have been trying to destroy ours. The oppressor has been able to brainwash them so successfully that they identify with their own oppressor against the people who are fighting to try to free them from their own oppression. It's weird, but that's the way it is, and we have to recognize it and come up with ways of dealing with it so we can bring them together with us to make the revolution against our common enemy.

Another problem we have, which is just the other side of that one, is that so many of our own people, people in the youth colony, still have the feeling, the subjective, incorrect, totally wrong

WE SHARE A COMMON CULTURE. WE DO THE SAME THINGS, WE LIVE THE SAME WAY, WE LISTEN TO THE SAME MUSIC, SMOKE THE SAME SACRAMENTS, WE ARE UNITED BY OUR AGE, OUR COMMON VALUES, OUR COMMON VISION OF THE FUTURE. WE WANT THE SAME THINGS — FREEDOM, SELF-DETERMINATION, PEACE, JUSTICE, HARMONY, AND EQUALITY FOR ALL PEOPLE. THERE ARE MILLIONS OF US, WE ARE A PEOPLE.

line between our two cultures to draw all those people into our movement too, we have to make our vision available to them, we have to give them a clear idea of what it is we're fighting for and what we plan to do when we do win our victory.

We have to realize that the masses of the people in the mother country are never our enemy, that the masses are

feeling that the Euro-American people are our enemy, that we are carrying on our struggle correctly if we attack the masses of Euro-American workers, policemen, army troops, bureaucrats, store-owners and other elements of the masses. That is not true. The masses of the people are our real friends, even if they don't know it, and although we may be forced to struggle against them to protect ourselves at certain stages of the revolution, we have to keep firmly in mind the fact that the people are our real friends, and that only the "owners," the big capitalists who control all the means of production and information in this country, are our real enemies. Our job is to educate and teach the masses of the people that we are their real friends, and that the "owners" are their real enemies. We have to do that. It's not going to be easy anyway—it's never easy to win your freedom, and we're fighting against the biggest monster humanity has ever known. But just because it is so difficult that only means that it's even more necessary for us to get ourselves together and move in a conscious fashion to do what has to be done. We can win over the masses, and if we are going to have a revolution in this country we have to win them over and unite with them and with all oppressed peoples to defeat our common enemy—the Euro-American ruling class. Otherwise we're not even talking about revolution.



photo by: Detroit Annie

WE ARE ELECTRONIC ABORIGINES

Now, these things I've been talking about are what we might call our strategic objectives—these are the things we have to accomplish in order to realize our goal of liberating the youth colony and winning freedom for our people. We have to develop a strong sense of peoplehood; we have to develop our collective consciousness and direct it toward liberation for our people; we have to educate and organize ourselves for self-defense and self-determination; we have to purify our culture and hold it up in front of us to light our way to the future age; we have to win over the people of the mother country and unity with them to make the struggle against our common oppressor; we have to come together on all levels and move together to develop power for our people. Which means that we have to create political machinery for ourselves which will enable us to become powerful, we have to organize our economic development as a people, and we have to create new social and organizational forms through which we can move to survive during the struggle and to build up the new order which will sustain the people after victory is won.

We have to build a whole new nation on this continent, a whole new social order which will be capable of dealing with the needs of all the people, not just the ones the pig power structure sees fit to take care of. We have to build a new nation which will be the last nation in this place, which will be the bridge from the old society to the new, from the old order of the capitalist dinosaurs to the New World of our spaced-out visions. We have to destroy the old order, there can be no doubt about that, because there's no way we can have our freedom with the dinosaurs still around—they want everything for themselves, and that's just not happening any more. But as we destroy the old order we have to build our new nation in its place, so we can survive during the struggle and so all the people can see what it is we're trying to make available to them. That's the way we can win their support, by demonstrating that we do have an alternative to the death culture, an alternative which is every bit as open to them as it is to our own people, the people of the post-western youth colony.

We've got to do two things at once—we've got to build the new order starting

right now, building it up within the shell of the old, but we've also got to crack that shell and smash it completely open so our new world can come into life on its own, free from the strictures that bound it to the past. This isn't going to happen overnight, but it has to happen or else we'll just be suffocated within the shell before we can truly be born as an independent thing.

The gestation period—the time we're insulated and contained within the egg of the old society—will be fairly long,

longer than we used to think, and as we grow we will find our situation more and more oppressive, until we no longer have any choice but to break out the egg, crack the shell, step out of it altogether and leave it behind us to crumble into dust, empty and useless without us. It will keep us contained as long as it can, but our liberation is inevitable, and it will come when the time is right, when we have reached our earliest maturity, when all the conditions are right for our freedom, and it won't come before that.

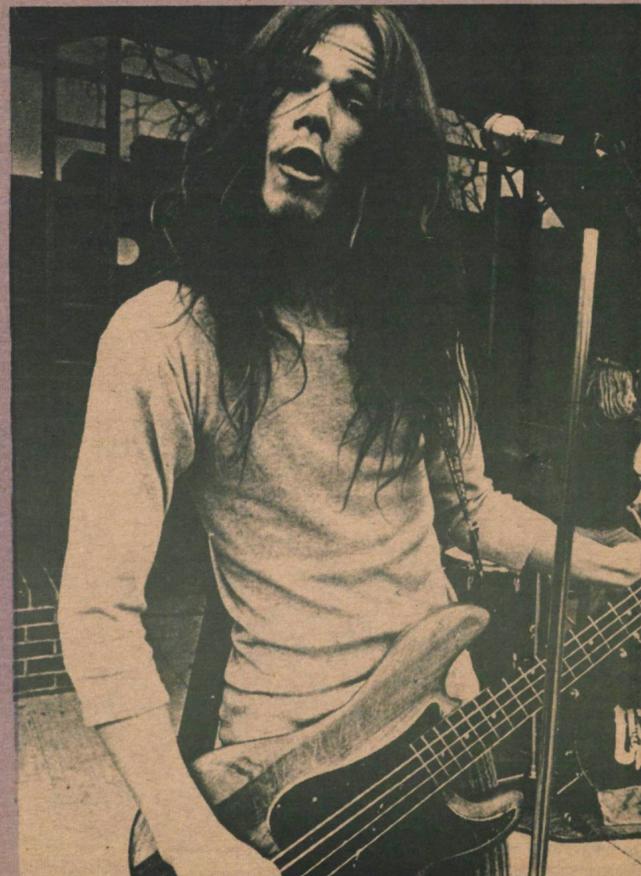


Photo: David Fenton

KICKIN' OUT THE PEOPLE'S MUSIC

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This means that we have to look upon our struggle for liberation as a **protracted** struggle, a long and arduous fight, and we have to do the things at each stage of this protracted struggle which are right for the particular time and conditions. Our development must proceed carefully, from one stage to the next, and we can't leave out any stages or try to skip them because we'll fail if we do. It's like breaking an egg open before the life inside has matured past the first stage of its development—all you'll get instead of a baby animal strong enough to climb out and walk around on its own is egg yolk sprayed all over the table, and the pigs will just fry it up and eat it. You dig? So we'll have to be very careful in that respect—we can't go on the offensive until we're strong enough to handle it, to complete our victory, or else we'll just get crushed like an egg in the hands of a giant.

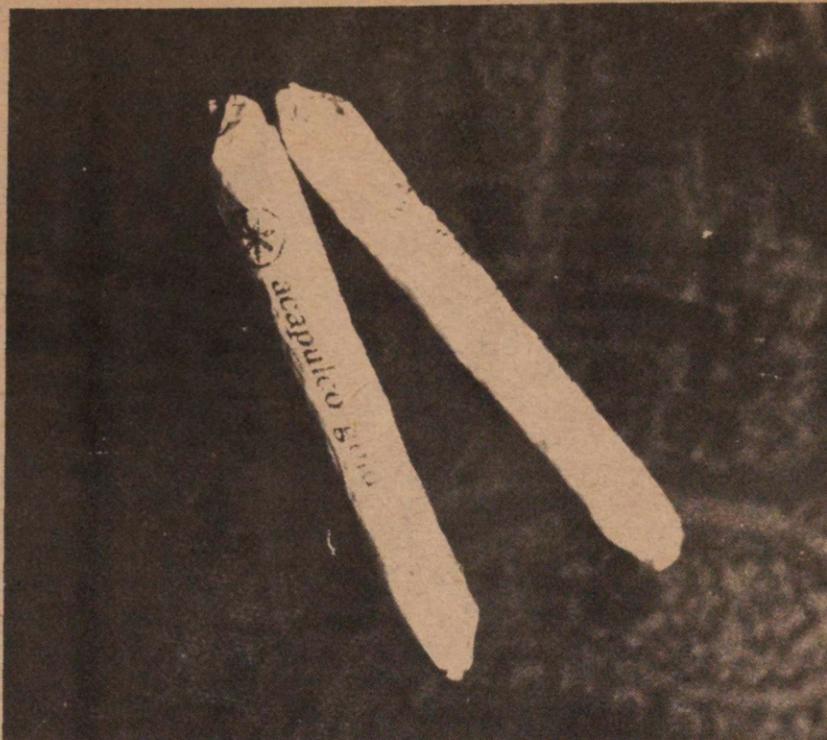
A protracted liberation struggle historically goes through three main stages: the strategic defensive, when the revolutionary forces are relatively small and scattered and survival is a problem; the strategic stalemate, when the revolutionary forces and the reactionary forces are fairly evenly balanced (although the new revolutionary forces are in the ascendancy, and the old reactionary forces are going downhill); and the strategic counter-offensive, which leads to the final victory of the revolutionary forces over the reactionaries. Right now we are in the first stage, the strategic defensive, and our tactics—the things we do to advance our struggle—must fit that condition. We can't go on the offensive until we're strong enough to survive, until we have consolidated all the scattered energies and resources available to us, united all our people, and won the tentative support of the masses of the people, in the mother country.

That's why our primary goal right

now must be to unite our people, spread revolutionary consciousness, and start moving together to defend ourselves against attack and to ensure our survival on the economic front. If we can't do these things we simply won't survive, because we're up against the most powerful, the most well-organized machine in the history of humankind, and it wants to crush us before we can get ourselves together. That doesn't mean it's invincible—in fact, the case is just the opposite, because the machine is falling apart at its center and it's got a whole lot of internal problems of its own above and beyond the trouble we're causing it—but it's still plenty strong, it can still do a lot of damage, it still carries itself along on its own momentum, and in order to stop it from crushing us we have to be just as well organized, just as tightly put together, as the death machine is. We can't stop it any other way.

And in order to unite our people we have to have programs that the people can relate to—programs which deal with the people's needs while at the same time holding up the vision of the new order we're working to bring into being. We have to have programs, and we have to develop the machinery through which these programs can be carried out. And again that means that we have to **organize** ourselves, on all levels, so we can deal with our common problems. We can't keep trying to attack these problems as individuals, because no individuals are powerful enough to overcome the problems by themselves. It's only through **unity** that individuals can gain political power, and economic power, and whatever other kinds of power are necessary for the people to be free. Without unity we can only get farther behind all the time, and eventually we'll be crushed for good. That's real, and that's exactly where we have to start.

We have to build unity within the colony, among all the segments of our people, and we have to give that unity



a political meaning, because our struggle is first and foremost a political struggle—we're fighting for the power to determine our own destiny as a people, and that fight is a political fight. We have to start from that understanding, to make ourselves consciously political—we're all political beings anyway, whether we want to be or not, and the only question is whether we'll be consciously political or remain unconscious and thus ineffective. We need to unify our people, and at the same time we have to formalize our unity so everyone will be able to see what we're about. Since our struggle is a national liberation struggle, we need a symbol which embodies and consolidates into a clear image the particular nature of our movement for the liberation of the youth colony. The symbol I want to suggest is this one.

In this drawing the two cross-sticks represent a rifle (on the left) and a guitar (on the right), with a peace pipe full of the righteous sacrament crossing them and bringing those two elements together. We can't have the guitar without the gun or we won't survive, we can't have the gun without the guitar or else we'd just be more of the same old shit we are trying to do away with; and without the sacrament that gives us our vision neither the guitar nor the gun would amount to anything worthwhile.

Further, the conjunction of the three sticks draws a tepee, symbolic of the shelter our new nation provides for its people; The whole thing is contained within a circle, which is the circle of understanding and unity. And the circle has flames bursting out of it, flames which symbolize the sun, the most powerful source of energy and light known to humanity—the sun which is our source, which shines through the storm to lead us through it to the Rainbow on the other side. And underneath it all is the word **NATION**, to remind us and everyone else what we're fighting for—a new nation of free people which will serve as a bridge into the New Age, where all the people of the world will live under the sign of the rainbow as brothers and sisters of the New World.

We can use this Nation symbol as a formal image for our struggle, as a sign of our life and of our determination to make that new life available to everybody on the planet. At first the New Nation will be primarily the people of the youth colony, our closest brothers and sisters, the People of the Future who are the natives of the New World even now—but it can't be limited to that because we want **everyone** to join us in our struggle to create a whole new world, and as our struggle develops more and more people will join with us to fight against the monstrous octopus of imperialism which is our common enemy. We want a nation to end all nations, a nation of free people which is dedicated to doing away with all unnatural boundaries and realizing the global unity which is necessary to the survival of all humanity. That's the nation I'm talking about.

This Nation symbol can be embraced by all of us to show that we all relate to the same thing—it should be a sign of our unity, a formal image of our common aspiration for freedom and self-determination. My hope is that all the people of the rainbow colony can relate to this symbol and use it to give definition to our dreams of unity and solidarity. The Nation symbol should be everywhere—on all the products created by our people, on record albums, newspapers, books, in people's windows at home or in their cars, on their guitars and drums, on flags (yellow on red) waving in the air over homes and demonstra-

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tions and festivals, on their shirts and jackets and t-shirts, around their necks, painted on the sides of buildings, in the middle of the streets— everywhere our people are the image of our new nation should be seen. And when people see it and ask about it, the sisters and brothers can explain to them what we're about, so they can understand what we're doing and join us in our struggle and make themselves one with us. Because that's what it's all about.

But it's also about being together in reality too, not just on paper or in drawings and symbols—the symbol has to stand for the reality which we want that image to reflect. We have to organize ourselves on all levels so we can gain our freedom and bring our new nation into being—it isn't enough to have the image in our minds, we have to construct the machinery which will make it possible for that vision to become reality. It's like if you hear a song in your head, that isn't really music—you have to get a guitar and an amplifier maybe, in order to flesh it out, and then you have to get together with some other musicians and organize yourselves into a **band** to give the music its fullest definition. The music we all love doesn't just spring into life the music its fullest definition. The music we all love doesn't just spring into life spontaneously—it is highly organized and comes into being the way we hear it only as a result of hard work and killer dedication by the people's musicians. I think you all can relate to that.

My point is that we have to organize our whole people as tightly and as effectively as our bands are organized, so our whole lives can become the kind of brilliant music we all need for our daily inspiration. We have to organize ourselves to deal with our daily problems, to protect ourselves from the pigs, and to ensure our survival during this stage of our struggle. We have to start in the towns and cities and communities where we live and organize ourselves at the most basic level—we have to organize ourselves into communes, into collectives, into councils and coalitions which will give us the power to deal with our most immediate problems, and we will grow from there. We start with our bands and move to regain control over our music, which has been ripped off by the octopus of greed and competition and profit—we develop our own ballrooms and concert places, our own recording studios and record companies, our own distribution networks and radio stations, our own presses and television stations, our own means of pro-

duction which will enable us to support ourselves and spread the word of the revolution we are making. We start on the most basic level to seize control of our lives and make them **ours** for once. That's the first step toward self-determination.

We start in the towns and cities and communities where we live and organize ourselves into **Tribal Councils**, community councils which are set up to deal with the needs of the people on the most basic level. The Tribal Councils should be the basic political unit of our new nation at this point—they will be the models for our new state machinery, and we can see for ourselves how the new order will work by putting it into practice in our communities right now. The Tribal Council is based on the government forms of the native red people who once flourished on this land, who lived then like we want to live now and in the future—we are the electric aborigines of the New World, and it is only natural that we should organize ourselves into the same forms as our aborigine brothers and sisters did before our

European ancestors came over here to wipe them out.

The Tribal Councils are the political organizations of the rainbow community—everyone in the many youth communities should take part in the Tribal Council programs, because everyone in the communities shares the same problems, and those problems can only be solved collectively, by all the people working together to solve them. Within the Tribal Councils many various committees can be set up, people's committees made up of the most dedicated individuals in the community, who will commit themselves to serving the people by helping them solve their problems in an organized fashion. We need **People's Food Committees** to grow food and to organize food cooperatives which supply food to the community at the lowest possible prices; **People's Defense Committees** to set up bail funds for people who get busted, to obtain lawyers and bondsmen, to train the people self-defense techniques, to provide security at our gatherings, and to organize teams of Psychedelic Rangers who will serve as the people's peace force; **People's Health Committees** to set up and coordinate the work of Free Health Clinics, anti-smack campaigns, and drug treatment centers in the community; **People's Music Committees**, to create and operate People's Ballrooms and community centers, to organize and produce free concerts in the parks, to set up booking and recording cooperatives for the bands in the community, to build equipment and recording studios, and to get as much music as possible to the people who need it; **People's Information Committees** to produce local newspapers and get the news out to the sisters and brothers in the community; **People's Education Committees** to set up liberation schools, communal childcare/education centers, and to teach the people what they need to know to survive and grow; **People's Communications Committees** to organize communications, set up switchboards, bulletin boards on the streets, and full-scale information networks in the community, to hook everybody up with everybody else so we can have real communities where we can all grow and develop together, not separately, not alone but totally **together** at last like all people are supposed to be. We need People's Housing Cooperatives, People's Radio and Television Stations, every kind of institution which is necessary

for our survival must be created and controlled by the people themselves—that's how we start to build a self-determination for our nation!

This is what we can do to start with, and it's something we **have** to do or we won't survive much longer. That's for real. Our struggle has really only just started, and if you think the pigs have been bogue so far you've got a lot of weird surprises coming—because, believe me, they haven't **begun** to be repressive like they will be before it's over. The snakes and rats and vampires of the octopus power structure use the pigs—the police in uniform—as their shock troops, and as our new way of life becomes a greater and greater threat to the established order in this country, as our nation grows and begins to consolidate itself into a powerful political force, these vampires and other animals will step up their repression more and more in their insane attempts to stomp us completely off the set.

But if we **organize** ourselves and get ourselves together on all levels, if we move for self-determination and self-defense on an organized basis, if we all unite under the banner of the Rainbow Nation we're fighting to bring into being here on this planet, and if we keep our vision of the future out in front where everybody can see it and pick up on it for themselves, we can survive anything the pigs throw at us, and we can come out of this period much stronger than we are now. We are a people, we are just beginning to define and develop ourselves as a people, but if we get straight on what we're doing and what we want to do from the very beginning our struggle will be a lot less difficult and a lot less confusing for all of us. We've been stumbling around in the dark, feeling our way around, trying to figure out what's happening to us, and we've made a lot of mistakes that we couldn't help but make. This is all new to us—we're a whole new people anyway—but we're starting to put it all together, and armed with a revolutionary analysis and our powerful revolutionary culture we can move to give flesh to our holy visions of the Rainbow World of the future. All Power to the People! Rainbow Power to the People of the Future! Revolution is the Way to Life!!!

John Sinclair
Chairman, Rainbow People's Party



Photo: David Fenton

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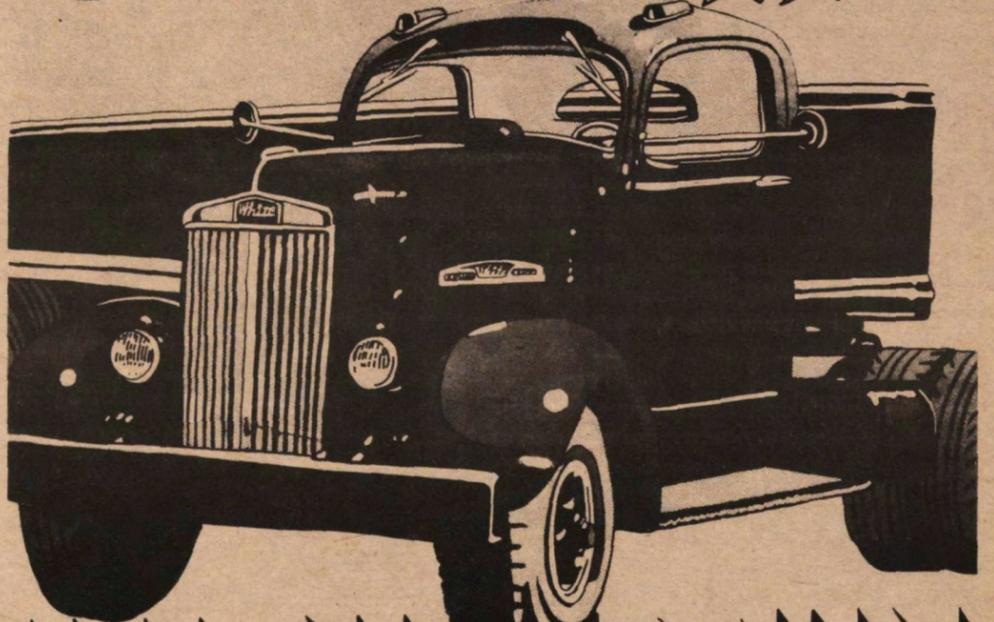
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