

*Blackburn Paul*

November 7/63, 19 E. 7th, NYC 3

Cher Rafael, amigo,

Thank you for your beautiful, yes, letter. While you were writing it, I was very likely up at Cornell in Ithaca subverting the Establishment from within, and being nicely paid for it, thank you. One takes such opportunities gladly.

Don't know which copy of FUCK YOU, / A Magazine of the Arts you saw, or which poem you think so well of, whether the HERE THEY GO in the recent issue, or THE ONE-NIGHT STAND in an earlier issue. The latter I read, the former I did not get to, probably just as well. Hits the students where they are, might scare the hell out of them. But in either case, where, exactly, in the establishment might one expect to publish such poems? THE NEW YORKER? THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE?

Which brings me to the very useful and particular function of F/U etc. The slogan A TOTAL ASSAULT ON THE ARTS is perhaps the key. As long as it maintains that tone and that force, perhaps total assault on the culture, wd be better, more accurate, it provides a useful tool, subject to your reservations of course, but also a useful place to publish just such assaults and steps toward some honest recognition of the real standards, as practised. Good poem or no, one is at a loss to find any outlet for such recognitions. Better a small audience, even of practitioners, which can be infected with courage or reinforced by honesty, than none at all.

To be able to produce such a force by manual labor and anonymity, seems to me, almost because of the limits of distribution - that seminal - as important as the bearing from within. And my place? God knows there are few enuf of us who can and will work both ways. To put it so.

So let us say, Rafael, that if we differ at all, it is not in intent or goals: you say one means, I say both are needed, tho they seem to qualify one another. God knows you have done an incredible thing with AMERICAS to judge from the copy I have right now. And it has taken just that persistence and patience to get that far. NO ONE ELSE CD HV DONE IT! That simply, by whatever means, and I've had some of the details from Connally. You are beautiful, baby! You are the 1st bureau-cat of the world! No argument there.

No danger of F/U becoming another sort of Establishment or an entrenched Anti-Establishment. Should a publication become that, if it does not EXIST AT ITS FULL POSSIBLE STRENGTH - then it becomes useless, or worse. For godssakes don't blame its excesses, blame rather where it fails to shock, where IT compromises...for then it it comes too easy for anyone. One set cd giggle and belong and another set cd giggle and pretend to belong, a third set cd giggle cd giggle and WISH it belonged, a fourth set cd giggle and put it down....ad infinitum, from left to right, if you'll excuse a political phrase.

I grant - perfectly - that yours is the more dangerous position, even the more heroic, stoic, and foic-us, if you like. But you spoke of 'new men'. Well, where in hell you think you're going to get them? Right. And you are right that it is working all over. And in many ways. You are enuf executive to know that different men's psyche's are valuable

in different ways/ F/U ought to be as anti-establishment as possible with no holds barred. Exactly. And no one really expects AMERICAS to print poems, even translated which might contain the words coño or gran puta madre, or even cajones. God knows it might become some sort of latin-american hero if it did. Likely it won't. And the taboo words at least will hv to be kept out. But IDEAS? I think not. Where you come in, and ARE. Muy bien.

No damn position is impregnable, and your choice of the careful and insistent middle, least of all. Yes, you take the more chances. But let us all take all chances. Ed Sanders is not the editor's real name, he has a wife and at least 1 kid I know of. And makes that his protection for them. It is carefully assumed responsibility, not irresponsibility. Or at least he makes it possible for himself both ways and protects his own. Taking his doctorate in Greek and Latin, by the way. If I could have your home address, I would see how many copies of back issues I cd get for you, should that interest you, and send them 1st class, or by Connally's hand, or so.

My chief diversion from the world of letters these days is jobhunting - editorial something, since I have been careful to become a competent editor with assorted skills. And if you see a press release on the picketing of the AFL-CIO national convention next friday here in NY to try to get the big unions to back the miners of Eastern Kentucky and have funds diverted to depressed areas, well, that's my work too. Shall also be on the picket-line, tu sais? Doing some work for the Committee of Public Conscience, a sort of roving picket-line, seeking out injustices as well as things to be for, everywhere. Last month we picketed the Italia ~~MMMM~~ Consulate in sympathy with Danilo Dolci's hunger strike in Italy, to try to force the Italian government to start work on a dam that has been promised for years. Before that, we picketed Mme. Nhu at her hotel. Before that the South African Consulate, etc.

Back to the F/U again: if enuf good writers print THERE enuf good poems, let us say that the literary level of acceptance will rise, without, hopefully, lowering the level of concentration, i.e., attack. But given that force is the primary consideration, and contra in this case a major White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP) official morality, dammit, Rafael, it's all to the good. Fight it on their terms, too, of course. But the possibility of fighting it openly for a limited audience...very damned seductive. The sheer demands that will be met, someday, somewhere...

Fifty years ago, the word jazz, which meant to have sexual relations with someone, when applied to a then new kind of music, was unacceptable in polite conversation. The word poppycock, now meaning sheer nonsense or some statement without backing, is now considered an old lady's phrase: 70 years ago it was unmentionable. A poppy, as you know, has a slender stem and tends to droop...it was a strong word to my grandfather, and my grandmother knew what it meant and never consciously used it. My mother used it, and in the 54 years of her life, likely never thought of what it might mean except "nonsense". - and thought of it as an old people's phrase meaning "nonsense"...

Never fear, I shall someday do your article for you, my article for you. And try to do it in such a way that you shall have your margin of choice. I still hope to do an heroic job myself, either way. Okay?

best love always, y. un abrazo,

P. Cruz