



## William F. Buckley Jr. John Lennon's almanac

A letter from a spirited and incisive correspondent on the west coast has cost me the better part of a day... "I send you, untouched by human hands, Issues 74 & 75 of *Rolling Stone* that carry the complete interview with John Lennon, running to some 30,000 words.

"These sheep-witted Beatles, fawned on and reverently looked up to by most of the young across the earth, although their dispositions are as mean as their intelligence and their morals are as base as their lineage, I make so bold as to suggest to you, started it all, and have dealt Western Society such heavy blows that it will be a century in recovering, if, in fact, it ever does.

"These men are not innocents--they are sophisticated scoundrels capable of the most swinish behavior and their influence poisoned the head waters of the Sixties and we now see that trickling stream of history as it gathers and deepens and broadens and rolls its mighty tides of drugs and anti-nomian attitudes, now already engulfing what remains of civilization in a few walled towns... What I am sending you is an historic document."

**BECAUSE MY FRIEND BELIEVES**, after all is said and done, in the virtue of moderation, he adds the P.S., "There are northwest winds today, and the horses are restless--also my 51st birthday--tomorrow will be better."

What was Lennon's point in granting the interview? He had a minor and major point to make, respectively to promote an upcoming album, and to talk about himself. Several times, with his complete approval, he refers to himself as an egomaniac, a frailty a great many people have; but not all of those who have it, have the complementary failing of supposing that that part of the world (always a majority) that fails to interrupt all other activity in order to give itself over to the veneration of you is a) phillistine, b) ungrateful, c) is wasting its time.

Lennon manages to convey these conclusions, which could have been done much more economically if he had eliminated as redundant say

every other use of his favorite obscenity, which makes him sound like a musician who cannot graduate beyond the use of the two-four beat.

**IT IS REMARKABLE** to achieve in combination what Mr. Lennon manages to do here, namely a) to demonstrate how he laid waste his life during the 1960's, and b) to proclaim so apodictically on how others should govern their lives: recipe: adore Lennon, and [favorite verb] your neighbor).

By his own admission Lennon was never happy with the Beatles. 1) He greatly distrusted Paul, whom he always suspected of attempting to satelize the other Beatles; 2) to have joined the Beatles was in any case an artistic cop-out; 3) he was victimized by a succession of commercial predators who have managed to get everything snarled up; 4) the music the Beatles ended by playing was arid and formalistic and an imposture on good creative music; 5) he was stoned for the better part of two years on acid, which he took "literally" thousands of times; 6) the sex orgies in which he engaged, particularly when on tour, cloyed, and gave him no satisfaction; 7) on flying out to India in search of spiritual solace, he discovered that the fakir in whom he reposed confidence was a commercial old lecher; 8) oh yes, he discarded a wife; 9) everybody is jealous of him; and 10), it is only by chance that he met his Yoko, whose least song is better than "Sergeant Pepper," widely hailed as the Beatles' best; wherein Mr. Lennon achieves credibility at last. The balance of the magazine is devoted to endless copy about other rock groups, classified advertising for abortion seekers, and home-growing advice for marihuana users, plus a great deal that is inscrutable except to high-honor students in the sub-culture which strains through 30,000 words of John Lennon in search--

Of what? Lennon is greatly talented as a musician. As a philosopher he is as interesting as Jelly-Roll Morton; less so, as a matter of fact. He is interesting only to an anthropologist of pieces on How I Wrecked My Own Life, and Can Help Wreck Yours.



Mankiewicz and Braden

## New inducements for Israel

WASHINGTON—There is more to U.S. pressure on Israel to reach an agreement with Egypt than has yet been made public. As reported, there is on the table a State Department promise to urge Congress to pass a resolution—sure of approval—promising "immediate consultation" whenever Israel feels insecure. But there is much more.

United States' negotiators—led by Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco have talked to the Israelis in expansive terms, if only they will be more forthcoming on an agreement, generally based on the proposal of U.N. mediator Gunnar Jarring.

They have promised Israel (1) the sale of up to 200 military planes; (2) \$1 billion in credits for military and economic development; (3) hundreds of millions of dollars to aid in refugee resettlement (Israel must agree to take no more than 100,000 of the Palestinian refugees); (4) financial assistance in large-scale desalinization programs.

**A TREATY OF ALLIANCE** such as that proposed by Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) is considered out of the question at the moment, but Sisco thinks Congress would go along with a resolution containing words just short of military-pact language.

Finally, State is offering a four-power occupation of Sharm El-Sheik, in which troops from the United States, France, England and the Soviet Union would participate, thus presumably insuring Israel that Nasser's forced withdrawal of U.N. troops from the area—guarding access to the Gulf of Aqaba—the incident which provoked the Six-Day War, could not occur again.

It is a big packet which Sisco has wrapped, but so far Israel has declined to take it. In response to Egypt's surprisingly firm offer of recognition and a treaty of truce, Israel has stuck to language which—in Sisco's view—is hardly a response at all.

**ISRAEL HAS PROPOSED** "withdrawal of Israel's armed forces from the Israel-United Arab Republic cease-fire line to the secure, recognized and agreed boundaries

to be established in the truce agreement. Israel will not withdraw to the pre-June 5, 1967 line."

But when the United States asks Israel what "secure, recognized and agreed boundaries" Israel wants, we get no response at all.

What the State Department thinks Israel may have in mind is a slice of the Sinai Peninsula running all the way from El Arish on the Mediterranean to Sharm El-Sheik. This would leave them in control of nearly half the territory won in the '67 war. No Egyptian government could live for a moment after surrendering so much territory, barren and unpopulated desert though it is.

**SO IT COMES DOWN** to upping the ante, making the pot sweet enough so that Israel will accept something less than what it now has in mind. Secretary of State William Rogers has been insisting on withdrawal to the borders of June 5, 1967. Some compromise to which the Russians can urge the Egyptians is the next logical move.

But logic does not necessarily hold. "Fifty-fifty" is what Sisco thinks are the chances for success, and he is not impatient, reasoning that the "up the ante" strategy requires time for Israel's leaders to reflect upon the prizes that may come their way.

They did not anticipate that the Egyptians would be forthcoming with an offer to recognize the state of Israel, and so they did not think they would have to negotiate. Before they accustom themselves to their new position, they will doubtless go on a diplomatic counteroffensive, charging the United States with trying to recreate the 1957 situation, when John Foster Dulles persuaded Israel to withdraw from the Sinai under an armistice.

**SISCO POINTS OUT** that the 1957 armistice was informal, guaranteed neither by treaty nor by the guardianship of major powers. This time, he argues, Israel will have as much security as an insecure world can insure. That—and the new blue chips on the table—may make the difference.

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