

3-C
March 3, 1974

For the Symbionese Liberation Army

They call it terror
if you are few
and have no B-52's
if you are not a head of state
with an army and police
if you have neither napalm
nor tanks
nor electronic battlefields
terror is if you are dispossessed
and have only your own two hands
and each other
and your rage
It is not terror
if you are New York's Finest
and you shoot a 10-year old black child in the back
because you think black people
all look like they've just committed a robbery
It is not terror if you are ITT
and you buy the men
who line Chilean doctors up in their hospital corridors
and shoot them for supporting the late
democratic government of their country
It is not terror but heroism
if you were captured by the Vietnamese
for dropping fragmentation bombs on their schools and hospitals
Only those who have nothing
can be terrorists

Brothers and sisters, let us choose
our weapons carefully and humanely
let us use no torture
or napalm
or genocide
but do not be fooled
there is no weapon they will allow
nothing that works will be called legitimate
unless we fight for it
unless we educate ourselves and others
unless we separate resistance from oppression
The same editorials that scream terrorism
screamed mob rule
at the civil rights marches of the early sixties
at the anti-war demonstrations
thousands of busted heads later
they say, of course
we always upheld the right to peaceful protest

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The attitudes they offer up in print—
with little tabs, cut them out and wear them.
written by men who have not
seen a jail cell from the inside,
or hunger,
or the face of a duly constituted officer
of the law as he says,
make one move and you'll be dead.
they say, we cannot condone violence,
but watch out!
for whether they say it about murdering prisoners at Attica
or about kidnapping Patricia Hearst
about the disinherited
or about the inheritors.

As we find our way slowly—
to use the means available to us—
as wisely as we can
there will be mistakes.
but do not let
the enemy define the mistakes,
because he is experienced
and has ten thousand printing presses at his back
behind which he hides the tanks and guns.
and he will say, the people don't support you
and saying it can make it so.
if we agree.
he will say, you only turn off
those you say you are fighting for.
he is helpful!
no anti-war march
no sit-in
no teach-in.
but had its helpful editor to say
how much more we could accomplish by doing less
or preferably nothing
while the people of Vietnam
patiently explained their cause to the world
but did not stop shooting down the bombers
for fear of alienating someone!

Watch out
for what they turn into news
and what they quietly forget.
What if all the headlines
and stories about Solzhenytsyn
had said instead,
Millions of humans
held in semi-slavery,

or to next pg.

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deprived of every human and legal right.

families forcibly torn apart

strikes broken by mass murder

hundreds of thousands imprisoned without trial

in Southern Africa?

> (Is it because of their impartial humanity that they hear
the cry of the Russian camps of '47
but are deaf to the roar of the African prisons
of '74?)

Or, 25,000 U.S. troops remain in Thailand . . .

the war in Southeast Asia

isn't over but continues

directed as before by U.S. officials

and U.S. money.

U.S. advisors who changed their uniforms

into civilian clothes and call it by another name

or worse, do not call it anything at all

but hope the world will forget

and let them carry on their dirty business undisturbed

while solemn conferences are held on what to do

about the "international terrorism" of the Palestinians

who disrupt the peaceful prosperity of tourism

with annoying reminders that their land has been stolen from them

and they have been left with nothing

but their courage and the justness of their cause

with which to win it back

poor enough weapons

we can help supply some others

by shouting and whispering on every corner

the story of their struggle

a people utterly deprived of its homeland

which the world has tried so hard to forget

Sisters and brothers, think hard before you jump
onto the bandwagon

of condemning terrorism

remember who is making the definitions

remember not to strengthen the hand

that will turn in an instant

against every means of resistance to oppression

That bandwagon rolls straight toward fascism

do not forget the real terrorists

that lurk behind the masks of heads of state

do not be afraid to hold strong

together

with all who dare to struggle

A sister in the Weather Underground