

LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to *INQUIRY Magazine*, 747 Front St., San Francisco, California 94111. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for length when necessary.

We could have won

YOUR "THE NOBILITY OF Napalm" editorial [Oct. 6] is an extremely slanted and simplified article of yellow journalism. No credit line is given, which gives the impression *INQUIRY* takes full responsibility.

Whether you agree with Ronald Reagan's "noble cause" statement or not, it is simple to note had our involvement been handled differently, with a "win" attitude, perhaps there would have been fewer American and Vietnamese casualties. Further, My Lai may never have occurred, Agent Orange may not have been used, our defense budget would have been less, napalm manufacture would not have been profitable and the CIA would not have practiced extermination.

Your readers deserve more depth of intelligence than such an ambiguous article infers.

ROBIN W. PIZANTI
Daly City, Calif.

Unsigned editorials in the front of the magazine do indeed represent *INQUIRY's* position.

—EDITORS

The Front

NICK THIMMESCH'S ARTICLE on Lebanon's Major Saad Haddad and his "Christian militiamen" [Oct. 6] was not as biased as your editorial interpretation of it. It is conceded by you, however, that the "Lebanese Christians" are, in fact, Lebanese. Of course, the Palestinians, United Nations, and Syrians cannot make the same claim.

As I understand it, libertarian principles state that those who are aggressed upon may properly use force in return. Your editorial interpretation violates these principles. If Lebanon "bleeds," it is the PLO and the Syrians who have done it—not the Israelis.

The name of your street appears more appropriate at second glance. Having

contributors from the *Chicago Lawyer* and ads from the "Committee for Public Justice" are good clues as to who may be in "back" of your operation.

SHELLY WAXMAN
Chicago, Ill.

Romanticizing Tibet

TORY STEMPEF'S RELIANCE on refugees and the chief of the dalai lama's Office of Tibet in New York in his case [Sept. 22] on the awfulness of life in Tibet under Peking is akin to checking out the state of things in the new Republic with Tories who fled to Canada after the American Revolution.

If Stempf's dark picture is as accurate as his statement regarding the "Cultural Revolution that lasted into the late 1960s," it must be taken with several grains of salt. Longtime dalai watching may have clouded his view. The Cultural Revolution began in 1966, had a number of stages, and ended in 1976.

Concern for human rights in Tibet is praiseworthy, though nothing was heard about its well-being before the "reds" took over in Peking. Apart from a romantic flurry brought on when Ronald Colman made it beyond the *Lost Horizon*, the West was not interested until the People's Republic made its appearance and Tibet was no longer under our good friend Chiang Kai-shek.

Stempf labels as snow jobs Western correspondents' writing that Tibet had been a lamaist theocracy, that there were no roads or industry and no schools or medical care outside the monasteries, and that the bulk of the population were impoverished serfs. Before 1950, he assures us, the Tibetans were poor and comparatively free. The fact is Tibet's population was declining because of disease and impoverishment—more Tibetans lived in Chinese provinces outside Tibet than in Tibet itself.

The Tibetan theocracy was an anomaly which inaccessibility alone preserved into the 1950s. Absolute feudalism prevailed and most people were held in serfdom. The lamas and nobility owned nearly all the land, livestock, and other wealth. Fear of devils and hellfire for the impious combined with barbaric torture and death for fugitives from the system kept the population in subjugation, as in

other feudalism.

The above paragraph is what Edgar Snow wrote in 1960. Stempf obviously will dismiss him as another of those misled foreign journalists, while continuing to carry the ball for the former serf-owners and rulers of Tibet.

JULIAN SCHUMAN
San Francisco, Calif.

Banking on Chrysler

GOVERNMENT RESCUE OF Chrysler has occurred to save neither jobs nor votes, as you imply in your article "Chrysler's bail-out blues" [Sept. 22]. Chrysler is in debt to certain banks. After taxpayers pay off that debt, Chrysler will expire. United States Treasury Department rescue of Chrysler is an operation of the bankers, by the bankers, for the bankers.

We made two mistakes in 1916. We allowed our Constitution to be "amended." Until that tinkering changed our agreement with our rulers, income tax was illegal. And we allowed a private organization called "the Federal Reserve System" to hook itself directly into the United States Treasury Department. The hook is skillfully designed to be elaborate and purposefully complex so as to confuse and intimidate anyone who would question the arrangement.

Simultaneous appearance of income tax and Federal Reserve banks was no accident. They were engineered by the same people, to the same purpose. We are under their control. They control our money. They intimidate us with their re-creation of a debtors' prison such as our grandparents escaped when they left the old country. Income tax unpaid they defined to be a violation of criminal law. Any other debt unpaid is a violation of civil law.

Milton Friedman says we should be "Free to Choose," and Robert Ringer has called for "Restoring the American Dream." We will be free to choose and we can start restoration of America when we accomplish two things. The Federal Reserve System must be burned to the ground, and the Sixteenth Amendment must be thrown into the fire.

JACK D. DENNON
Warrenton, Ore.

CHARLES LEWIS

J. Edgar's man in the Klan

ON SEPTEMBER 4, 1980, Howell Raines, Atlanta bureau chief of the *New York Times*, opened a letter from Southern Bell in Atlanta. Only then did he learn that three months earlier, his personal home telephone records and the entire bureau's toll records had been subpoenaed by the Criminal Division of the Justice Department. At the request of the department, Southern Bell had delayed for ninety days before even notifying the *Times* or Raines that the records—covering the period from October 1978 to March 1979—had been seized.

The ostensible rationale for the subpoena was a federal grand jury in Washington investigating whether a department employee had leaked a secret report. But the real issue was the report itself, not the logistics of how its contents were made public.

The controversy began in July 1978, when the *New York Times* and ABC News revealed that Gary Thomas Rowe, one of the FBI's chief informers in the Ku Klux Klan, had committed several acts of racial violence in the South in the 1960s. Reporters cited his role in beating Freedom Riders in 1961, bombing a Birmingham church in which four girls were killed in 1963, and the fatal shooting of Viola Gregg Liuzzo, a civil rights worker from Detroit, in 1965.

For the Justice Department and the FBI, the revelations could not have come at a worse time. The Senate Judiciary Committee was conducting hearings on the relatively weak guidelines proposed by the bureau for its use of informers. The Justice Department official testifying on behalf of those guidelines was none other than Philip B. Heymann, head of the Criminal Division, who later authorized the subpoenas. Much of the

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questioning of Heymann on July 12, 1978, was about what he least wanted to discuss—the nefarious activities of informer Rowe. Public pressure was mounting on Justice and the FBI to explain Rowe's actions and to assure the inquiring senators that at the very most this informer was a lone aberration among the many thousands employed in the past.

On the day of Heymann's testimony, Senators Edward Kennedy and James Abourezk sent a joint letter to the attorney general, stating that the Senate Judiciary Committee was "intensely interested" in receiving a full report about Rowe's activities.

On October 24, 1978, Attorney General Griffin Bell created a special task force in the department's Office of Professional Responsibility to investigate (1) whether FBI personnel acted properly in handling Rowe, (2) whether Civil Rights Division attorneys, in their federal case arising out of the Liuzzo murder, were aware of Rowe's unreliability, and (3) whether Rowe in fact was responsible for the death of Mrs. Liuzzo.

The Attorney General got the group's 302-page report in July 1979, but the department refused to release it. The official reason was that it might prejudice the impending trial of Rowe for the Liuzzo murder. (Two months after ABC

marizing the Rowe report, which had been leaked to him. Parts of the report were nothing short of astounding, and government resistance to its release suddenly became more understandable. The report was to have been an examination of Rowe's activities, but some of the most dramatic disclosures concerned the activities of others, including then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

On September 15, 1963, a bomb ripped through the basement of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Four black children were killed and others were maimed for life. The church bombing caused the largest number of deaths in a single incident in the civil rights struggle in the South. It was also one of the FBI's most intense, high-pressure cases. Eventually, at the urging of President Kennedy and then Johnson, more than 240 special agents were detailed to Birmingham.

On two occasions Hoover actually blocked prosecution of four Klansmen suspected by agents as the bombers. The FBI director ordered that the U.S. attorney and local prosecutor not be told of breakthroughs in the investigation. Hoover never passed along the full account of the bombing to his Justice Department superiors.

By late 1964, the FBI had eyewitness testimony from three people who said

His agents thought they had found the Birmingham bombers, but Hoover blocked prosecution.

News charged that Rowe himself had fired the bullet that killed Viola Liuzzo, a grand jury in Lowndes County, Alabama, indicted him for her murder.) The unofficial reason for the report being withheld was that its release could result in a tightening-up of the rules in the proposed FBI charter that will govern the use of informers.

AFTER SEVEN MONTHS OF suppression, someone in the government balked at what was coming to have all the earmarks of a cover-up. In the five years since the creation of the Office of Professional Responsibility, never has a report been publicly assigned and then totally suppressed—not even released in a censored version.

In February 1980 *New York Times* reporter Raines wrote two stories sum-

that they saw four men near the church roughly eight hours before the explosion. The Birmingham field office had four identified suspects and recommended prosecution, but Hoover disagreed on the grounds that successful prosecution would be unlikely. According to Raines's accounts of the Rowe report, five months later the Birmingham office again sought prosecution. The FBI's special agent in charge argued to Hoover that the case should be tried in an Alabama state court "due to the climate of public opinion favoring prosecution." That statement, given the racial antagonisms in Birmingham in 1963-64, is a vivid commentary on the level of white outrage over the bombing. But again Hoover blocked federal prosecution and prevented any distribution of the findings to other jurisdictions.