

*MR & Dalla Costa*

**WILHELM REICH: On Revolutionary Organization**

# **LIBERATION**

April 1972

75 Cents

**Bruce Brown on the Critique of Everyday Life**



**fred branfman THE THIRD INDOCHINA WAR**

**art by john dobbs**



# Letters

Dear *Liberation*:

The article by Muriel Schein and Carol Lopate was overdue, whatever disagreement there may be on their view of this or that. That Engels' collected works should so widely be read now as carrying a sort of Biblical authority is only one further indication that we live in a very superstitious age. After all, that the *Bible* carries Biblical authority has been nothing but a misfortune. Why begin over with the moderns?

Preoccupied with women, Schein and Lopate did not mention that Engels' *Origin of the Family* also provides a rationale of male homosexuality, and that in half a sentence. I will cite it along with the half-sentence that precedes it and the sentence that precedes that, the whole passage being an explanation of how monogamy functioned in its presumed earliest phase, namely in ancient Greece:

...in spite of locks and guards, Greek women found plenty of opportunity for deceiving their husbands. The men, who would have been ashamed to show any love for their wives, amused themselves by all sorts of love affairs with *hetairai*; but this degradation of the women was avenged on the men and degraded them also till they fell into the abominable practice of sodomy and degraded alike their gods and themselves with the myth of Ganymede.

What could be more primitive and superstitious than this reading of history? Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and He or Somebody (not, surely, the dialectic?) avenged those degraded women—degraded either by being “deceived” wives or by being courtesan deceivers—by degrading the men, it being taken for granted by the founder of scientific socialism that “sodomy” (quite a term for a scientist) is degrading. People who've tried it don't usually think so. But people who haven't tried it know all about it the way Billy Graham knows that His Redeemer liveth, and the State of New York, along with 47 other states, agrees with Engels.

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He would be happy here! And he would be less happy when these laws are repealed as they are going to be under pressure from radical—shall we even say revolutionary?—agitation. . .

In the 18th century, already Mary Wollstonecraft was able to show that the most revolutionary thinkers (chiefly Rousseau) were reactionary in this fundamental matter of sexual relations. Apparently her point still needs making in 1972. True, Engels is not a 20th century thinker, but some of his most vulnerable propositions, being also conventional and unrevolutionary in the extreme, have proved all too useful to Stalinism in particular and bureaucratic, “ecclesiastical” Marxism generally.

Has any of the socialist countries moved forward to a more enlightened view of homosexuality? Cuba, for one, has made rather a point of moving the other way, and, of course, the “idea” invoked by Castro's spokesmen is exactly the stereotype: homosexuality as a symptom of social decay.

When I was about thirteen, the news reached me that, as the Roman Empire fell apart, the Romans proceeded to screw a lot more (the school-boy vocabulary belongs here) and weren't content to screw just their wives but took out after their mothers and sisters and just about everybody including (which was worst of all, wasn't it?) members of their own sex. Here's a theory of the origin and nature of homosexuality! And, come to think of it, it's *the* theory, the only one around—the only one available either to my schoolteachers or Fidel Castro, the only one available either to conservatives or radicals yesterday or today. But forever?

Fraternally yours,  
Eric Bentley  
New York City

*Liberation*:

Just a couple of reactions to Schein and Lopate's “On Engels and the Liberation of Women” in your February issue.

The authors say that, according to Engels, society has gone through “three

primary stages: promiscuity, matriarchy, and patriarchy.”

But did Engels actually say any such thing? As far as I can tell, nowhere in the *Origin of the Family* does Engels use the word “matriarchy.” Much of his book, on the contrary, deals with *matri-lineal* societies. But this, as your authors will surely agree, is a very different thing! Engels is *not* arguing for a primeval state in which women exercised power; he does argue for early societies in which “the position of women is not only free, but honorable.” (*Origin of the Family*, New York: International Publishers, 4th ed., pp. 42-3.)

It is true that Bachofen believed in the original existence of what he called “gynaecocracy.” Engels was much influenced by Bachofen's pioneering work; but this was a position that he did *not* borrow from his predecessor.

So, if your authors attribute to Engels a belief in matriarchy as a stage of societal development, it is fair to ask: how carefully have they actually read their source?

Schein and Lopate lump Lewis Morgan and J.J. Bachofen together as the authors of “evolutionary stages” which they reject as “useless.” And they refer to Bachofen as an “early anthropologist.”

Of course, Bachofen was neither an anthropologist nor the inventor of “evolutionary stages.” Even if he had believed in Morgan's “evolutionary stages” this would have been immaterial to his own massive contribution, which lay essentially in the field of the study of comparative mythology. The extraordinary nature of his achievement was to show precisely that mythological material sheds light upon the question of the status of women, their freedom, equality, and “honor,” in early societies.

So I would ask Schein and Lopate: have they gone back to the sources, and have they examined *Mutrecht und Urreligion* for themselves? Would they care to give us another article in which they subject this work to a critical examination? That, now, would be something!

Now, for Morgan. Certainly he developed a highly rigid and schematic series of evolutionary stages through which, he asserted, all (or most) societies have passed. Again, are these stages

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*Liberation*



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**In this issue**

The war in Indochina is not yet over, but the nature of the conflict has changed—so much so that Fred Branfman, in an interview conducted by Dick Goldensohn, describes it as “The Third Indochina War.” Fred spent four years in Laos, the first two with International Voluntary Services and the last two as a free-lance journalist. Before he was expelled in 1971, he interviewed thousands of refugees, asking them to write and make drawings based on their experiences. Currently, Fred is the director of Project Air War, an organization which, in cooperation with the Indochina Resource Center, has just published a handbook containing factual information and graphics related to the air war. It can be obtained by writing Project Air War at 1322 18th Street, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Bruce Brown’s article, “Towards a Method for the Revolutionary Reconstruction of Everyday Life,” is, we feel, a significant contribution to the development of a revolutionary theory for the modern industrial capitalist state. His article combines the experiences of the New Left with a clear view of the relevant tendencies in the development of revolutionary theory throughout the last century. We would very much like to encourage debate on the basic themes of this piece because we think it deals with the most crucial obstacles to changing our society.

We are again publishing the first English translation of a piece by Wilhelm Reich. We believe Reich’s relevance to our contemporary situation has been amply demonstrated in “What is Class-Consciousness?” published by *Liberation* in October 1971. This short article, “On Revolutionary Organization,” was written in 1934, the same year as “What is Class-Consciousness?” and is a kind of distillation of the essential points of that work. You will find, hopefully, that you can remove it from the centerfold and paste it on your wall. The engraving was made from Robert Koehler’s 1886 painting entitled “The Strike.” It first appeared in *Harper’s*

*Weekly*. According to Lee Baxandall, who is writing a study on Koehler, it appears to be “the first painting by anyone, anywhere, to represent the self-organizing of the industrial working class.”

The poem “Lordstown” by Jon Hillson is a sort of poetic editorial in response to the situation at G.M.’s Vega plant in Lordstown, Ohio, the scene of recent rank-and-file actions against the conditions of work.

The editorial on the Harrisburg trial, “The Kissnapping,” was written for us by Paul Mayer, one of the “unindicted co-conspirators” and, as the article makes clear, an articulate member of the Catholic Left. We also call your attention to the editorial on the ITT affair.

The major artist for this issue is John Dobbs, who presented us with a wide variety of very fine work. Also, Dan Brown, whose art was published in our January and March issues, contributed two drawings which he made after visiting the Harrisburg trial himself. The drawing on page 7 was made by a Laotian refugee.

*Liberation* would like to encourage its readers to send letters and comments on all editorials. We would also like to receive communications on projects and actions in which you are involved, even if these reports are brief, as we would like to begin devoting a few pages each month to keeping people in better touch with others around the country who are engaged in various kinds of organizing.

We would like to thank those who have already responded to our recent appeal for funds.

This is the final issue of *Liberation* which is going to *motivate* subscribers. We are asking all *motivate* subscribers who wish to continue to receive *Liberation* to fill out the attached card and to return it to us immediately, so that you don’t miss any issues. We hope that you have enjoyed reading *Liberation* and will decide to continue receiving it throughout the next year.



# Editorials

## INTERNATIONAL TRICKS of the TRADE

*"I'm no penny-ante, two-bit little crook."*

*—Richard Kleindienst, March 20, 1972*

One is tempted to say that the revelation of Dita Beard's memorandum on the connection between the settlement of the ITT anti-trust case and ITT's \$400,000 commitment to the Republican Convention presents us with very little that is new. Insofar as it illustrates the close cooperation of big business and government, conniving together against laws which are supposed to prevent that connivance, it certainly is nothing new. We are reminded again that there are very few laws designed to prevent this practice; far more are designed to facilitate it.

What is new, or at least what has reached new heights, is the level of open and blatant lying in which government and corporate officers have engaged in and during the investigation by the Senate Judiciary Committee into the scandal.

The statements which were made, the testimony which was given, the accounts of what happened, are all an affront to every individual in this country who is forced to refer to these men as our "leaders." Each new revelation which has come out of the investigation has been followed by more self-righteous statements and fantastic lies.

That Richard Kleindienst, himself, called for the re-opening of the Senate hearings so that he could deny any wrongdoing has been described in the press as "ironic." But what it really reveals is the studied arrogance of leaders who demand to be trusted if only they will lie publicly and under oath.

It is only because this particular scandal discredits the Republicans that it has received so much attention thus far. But inasmuch as the revelations serve ultimately to demystify the power of the entire establishment, we can look forward to the whole question's being dropped before much comes of it. As for the dozens of "minor" scandals which have arisen in connection with the memorandum, we can expect to hear even less.

The American people have not really expressed themselves on the issue. Unfortunately, there is no ready mechanism by which they can do so. Faced with the possibility of a Nixon-Humphrey rerun in 1972, they can at best degrade themselves by voting for Humphrey.

However frightening the present concentration of arbitrary power in the hands of this country's ruling elite may be, we can take some comfort in the fact that they will continually overstep the ground which is allowed them and thus gradually reveal their own lack of legitimacy. Nevertheless, we must study episodes such as this one so that we can develop means for a genuine popular response to them. In this way we can begin to limit the freedom with which the government and the corporations now operate.



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—R.G.



# THE KISSNAPPING

The price of militarism abroad is political repression at home. This simple lesson of history is once again being documented by the Harrisburg Conspiracy Trial. The case of the Harrisburg Eight is no more a bizarre accident than the United States' military involvement in Indochina is an unfortunate mistake. The Pentagon Papers clearly show the war to be a logical part of that continuum born out of the Truman Doctrine and expanding into ever broader experiments in counter-insurgency operations. Similarly, Harrisburg represents another stage of the government's plan to wind down the anti-war movement instead of the war.

This is hardly news for the Third-World people of this country. It has been their basic assumption for some time that any serious political activity in the non-white community would be met with the force of the police and the judiciary. The FBI documents liberated in Media, Pennsylvania, show that the government automatically assumes that *any* black organization is a threat and therefore must be spied upon and infiltrated.

Through political showcase trials such as the one at Harrisburg, the Nixon administration hopes to divert the American people's attention away from the issue of a war which it has failed to defuse or obliterate from the public mind, as evidenced by recent Harris polls. Along with troop withdrawals and "peace plans," the discrediting of anti-war activists as subversives, bombers and kidnapers is a high priority in the government's strategy.

What is unique about the Harrisburg case is that most of the defendants are religious people coming out of the Catholic Resistance, a movement which has experimented with new and creative forms of non-violent actions involving the destruction of Selective Service and war corporation records. As such, the case also represents a unique kind of threat to a government which has always been able to count on the unquestioning loyalty of most of the churches, and of the Roman Catholic Church in particular. The political importance of this factor in the Harrisburg trial should not be underestimated.

This consistent determination of the Catholic Church to be fully American can only be understood in the light of its immigrant origins. Accused of having a double loyalty to the Pope and to the President, the Italian, Polish, and especially Irish immigrants of the nineteenth century struggled to prove themselves real Americans. Under the leadership of their priests and bishops, they created a church which became—if anything—200 per cent American. As the sons of these immigrants graduated from Jesuit universities such as Fordham and Holy Cross, they fought their way into the bastions of Wall Street, Madison Avenue, the legal and medical professions, and gradually even into middle-level positions of government. Many became special agents for the FBI, since J. Edgar Hoover valued the virtues of discipline, obedience, and patriotism with which these clean-cut young graduates of Catholic schools were imbued.

This spirit of patriotism and unconditional loyalty to the state was facilitated by an almost paranoid fear of Communism accompanied by a certain Crusade mentality which one would be hard put to justify from the life and sayings of Jesus. In this sense, Francis Cardinal Spellman, as the Military Vicar of Catholic chaplains, was hardly eccentric or unrepresentative in his views on war and politics. His declaration of "my country right or wrong" as a comment on the war and his interest in establishing Diem (a Catholic) as head of the Saigon military dictatorship probably reflected the views of the majority of American Catholics.

It is only against this background that one can begin to appreciate the threat of even a minority resistance movement among Catholics. The Catholic Left had been deeply influenced by the Church's failure to speak out clearly against Hitler's holocaust of innocent millions in Germany, and also by the resistance activity of the small but courageous Confessing Church against the Nazis. But the Catholic Left's most profound inspiration was derived from a radical understanding of Jesus and the Hebrew prophets as men whose lives and struggles were identified with the oppressed and poor, rather than with the rich and powerful.

Only this can explain the massive FBI manhunt of Father Daniel Berrigan, who, as an imaginative Jesuit priest, was apparently considered more dangerous than if he had been an armed desperado. The confrontation between the "old" church and the "new" was symbolized by Berrigan's arrest. Instead of the traditional "up against the wall," the arresting FBI agent placed the handcuffs on him with an "Ad majorem Dei gloriam" ("to the greater glory of God")—the motto of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits. The agent obviously saw himself not only as the emissary of the state, but also as an apostle of the church, apprehending a dangerous heretic.

The Justice Department's choice of five Roman Catholic prosecutors in the Harrisburg trial is clear proof that the government is hardly indifferent to these issues. William Lynch, the chief prosecutor, who reportedly frowns on church renewal and Pope John XXIII, has accepted the case as an opportunity for discrediting the new church. The growing support for the Catholic Resistance among religious people, including even a handful of bishops, represents a real threat to the Nixon Administration. The possibility of the religious community breaking away from its blind chauvinism and Sunday Morning White House liturgies is symbolized by the Harrisburg trial. To the government it signals the fearful prospect that the American people may discover that "God is not on our side."

The Harrisburg case also represents a grave danger to that collective search for truth which has always been characteristic of serious and committed people in a free society. This is especially true today, as the American movement's awareness of the meaning of collective struggle and the need to create a collective consciousness grows. This communal



effort to find appropriate responses to official policies of violence and injustice has always been the responsibility of groups of women and men who are not merely dilettantes playing at social change.

It is to be expected that in such a collective search for truth, only some alternatives will be accepted and explored further. Many more such options will be rejected as useless, inappropriate, unethical, unrealistic, or politically counterproductive. It is when a repressive government illegally intervenes in such a process through conspiracy laws, informers and electronic surveillance that "plots" such as the Harrisburg case develop.

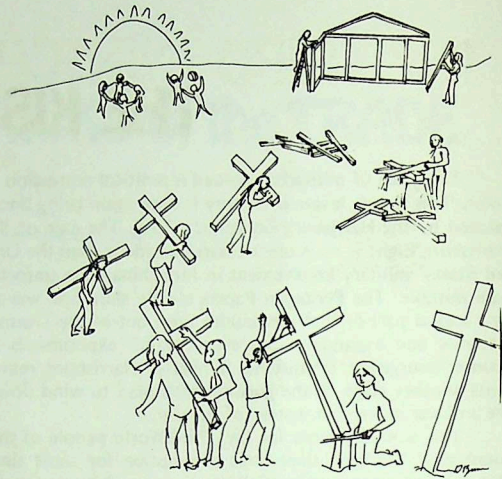
Conspiracy laws of questionable constitutionality have rightfully been called "the darlings of the prosecutors' kindergarten," since their vagueness makes them the all-purpose tools of political prosecutions. Basic constitutional rights of free speech and assembly are seriously threatened, since the crime consists not in actions but rather in conversations or even thoughts, joined to whatever the government may choose to interpret as an "overt act." In today's official demonic vocabulary, along with "pacification" for kidnapping and "Vietnamization" for racism, we now have "conspiracy" to describe what we call community.

Paid government informers who also serve as provocateurs further violate this process. The general style and purpose of informers such as Boyd Douglas of the Harrisburg Eight case has recently been illuminated by the unexpected change in heart of Robert Hardy, an informer in the case of the Camden 28. Hardy fully admitted his role to have been one of provoking, organizing, financing and reviving a dying plan to destroy government records in Camden, N.J. The Justice Department's lack of scruples and viciousness against the Catholic Resistance have never been better illustrated. The final approval for this government conspiracy came from a high official at the West Coast White House.

The use of conspiracy laws, informers and the violation of privacy through electronic devices are all characteristic of political trials, both notorious and unknown. Some or all of these repressive techniques are typical in the cases of the Panther 21, the Chicago Eight, Angela Davis and many others. Ultimately, all of these cases represent a policy decision on the part of the executive branch to use the judiciary as its instrument for silencing political dissent. The government obviously hopes that they will also "increase that paranoia which is endemic to these circles" (Media FBI Papers) and consequently cause a cooling of protest and resistance.

It is in this sense that the Harrisburg trial affords the movement an important opportunity for taking a fresh look at its own state and future. After all is said and done, there seems to be good reason to suppose that certain kinds of correspondence and/or conversations concerning bombing and kidnapping may have gone on among at least some of the Harrisburg defendants. Although these never reached the proportions of a conspiracy plot and were later discarded, the very fact that they happened can be a point of reflection for the movement, regardless of whether one considers these discussions to have been naive, pretentious or ambitious.

The very fact that members of an essentially non-violent movement felt it necessary to explore such ideas as the citizen's arrest of a Henry Kissinger conveys a sense of crisis



and emergency that few of us are willing to confront. What kinds of questions will we have to be asking ourselves in the year(s) which lie ahead in order to maintain our authenticity as a force for radical change? Should the movement simply roll over and play dead because of trials such as Harrisburg or because the "energy level is low"?

What will it mean for the future of the people of Indochina as well as for the American peace and justice movement to have Richard Nixon reelected for four more years of the same? With the recent bombing escalation and new Pentagon policies of secrecy about the number of air sorties, the stage is set for new levels of U.S. savagery in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia without even the knowledge of the American people. Moreover, increased talk about the forcible removal of large numbers of civilians from the northern provinces of South Vietnam again raises the fearful spectre not only of "free fire zones" but of the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons. The conceivable tactic of bombing the dikes of North Vietnam would also cause untold suffering through floods and deaths. It is difficult to overestimate the Nixon regime's determination to win a military victory in Southeast Asia and the consequent state of emergency arising out of these possible means of achieving it. When all of this is added to the almost total erosion of faith in the system on the part of the Black, Latin, and Native American communities of this country, is it too much to expect a new sense of urgency in the period which lies ahead?

The point here is not to offer a neat blueprint for the future. Hopefully, the movement will continue to build toward that kind of non-violent revolution which is symbolized both by the tactic of the general strike and by the creation of alternate institutions and new life styles. But the Harrisburg case will have performed some kind of service to the American movement by asking us how serious we are, in fact, willing to be. In our collective search for adequate responses to institutionalized forms of violence we may have to summon much deeper resources of imagination, moral passion and risk in order even to be asking the right questions.

—Fr. Paul Mayer



# THE THIRD INDOCHINA WAR



*Drawing by a Laotian Refugee*

## an interview with fred branfman

President Nixon has given many American people the impression that the war is almost over or "winding down." From what you have learned, do the Indochinese people have the same impression?

I think *they* feel that the war has intensified against them, mainly because of the very nature of the automated war as well as the increased political and cultural repression in the cities. Far from being over for them, the war is worse than ever. Basically, South Vietnamese casualties remain high, while the carnage outside of South Vietnam has skyrocketed, adding up to greater Indochina-wide devastation than perhaps ever before.

The first concrete example is Cambodia. When Nixon took office, although the U.S. military had carried out a good many incursions into Cambodia and done a lot of bombing in the eastern portion, it was relatively unscathed. A Government Accounting Office survey issued in December 1971 said that there were two million refugees created in the previous year and a half. Now that's roughly one third of Cambodia's population displaced in a year and a half. There has never been a population displacement like this in history,

as far as I know. Nixon has also resumed the bombing of North Vietnam. He has hit it over 250 times since taking office; so far this year, he has hit it more than once a day.

In addition to the full-scale air war being waged throughout Cambodia right now, the bombing tonnages in Laos are double what they were when Nixon took office. The U.S. has also brought at least ten thousand new Thai troops into Laos in the last six months. In the past couple of years, the U.S. has put over two million dollars into new buildings in Laos designed solely to house American personnel, and they've upped the number of American advisors in Laos.

Now it's true that within South Vietnam there's been something of a de-escalation from the very peak reached in 1968. This is apparently primarily because the NLF has switched to a political strategy over the last three years and simply has not done very much fighting in South Vietnam. Nonetheless, South Vietnamese casualties are still extremely high—in 1971, civilian hospital admission rates and ARVN deaths were roughly equal to 1967 levels—a year when over 450,000 U.S. ground troops were there. And under Nixon, there have also been sporadic and vicious escalations within



South Vietnam, as in January 1971, when the administration suddenly increased the bombing five-fold out of fear of another Tet offensive.

Could you put things into a little better focus as to the situation right now?

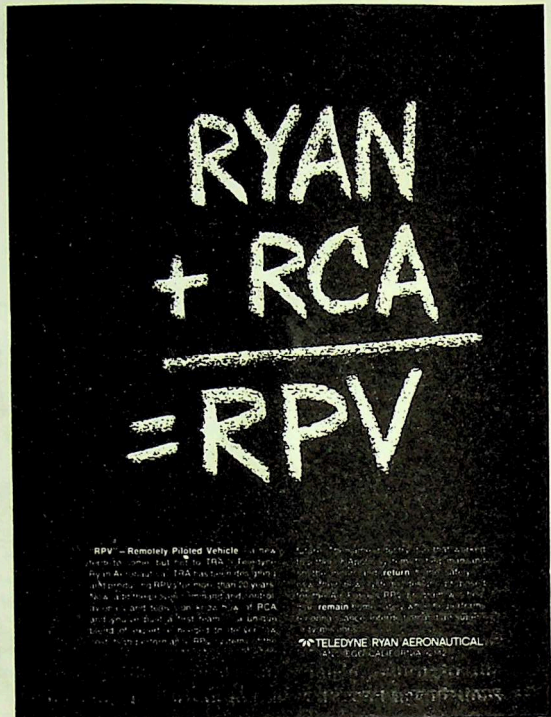
If you remember General Gavin's enclave theory—that the Americans should withdraw to the major coastal bases and let the ARVNs fight it out, giving them only logistical support—we see that this theory has been basically applied, but on an Indochina-wide basis. The Americans have moved something like 60 per cent of the population of Indochina in and around the major provincial capitals and major bases. This is where they are waging their political end of the war. Now outside the main capitals and bases—the enclaves—we have the military side, which is the air war, the automated war from the skies, the total war, the secret war.

The basic ground situation is that most of the political war now is in South Vietnam and most of the military war is outside South Vietnam. The figures show that ARVN casualties are now running about ten to one vis-a-vis the Americans, where as in the past there were, of course, more American than ARVN casualties. Moreover, many of these ARVN casualties are *outside* Vietnam, in Cambodia and in southern Laos. But what is even more important is the absolutely fantastic rate of Laotian soldier, Cambodian soldier, and Thai soldier casualties which are not released. I think that if they were we would find that the number of Asian soldiers dying on the ground is higher than at any time in the war. Now if we add to that the number of Asians who are living in what is basically a free-fire zone—which is all of Indochina except for the major provincial capitals and bases in Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam—we would find that there are probably more Asians dying now than at any time in the last 25 years. This is very difficult to prove. Our conclusions are based on our research on the air war in Laos up until 1969. If we then look at the tonnage figures, which have doubled now in Laos, and gone from zero to heavy in Cambodia, we would conclude that it's worse now.

What keeps the guerrilla forces from actually moving on the major cities?

I'm no expert on guerrilla strategy, but I would guess that in Laos and Cambodia the guerrillas realize that there is no point in taking the major cities. There is no doubt that they could if they wanted to. But if they were to take over the towns, which everyone, even the American Embassy, admits they could do at any time, it would simply make the major towns part of the free-fire zone, as are those the guerrillas have already captured. The key is South Vietnam. The NLF has to win in South Vietnam, forcing the kind of political repercussions back in the United States which will force American leaders also to stop interfering in Laos and Cambodia.

Now, of course, it's not quite that simple. While it's true that the Pathet Lao could take the towns in Laos anytime they wanted, it is also true that the American leaders are using the Thais as a threat to invade the Mekong Valley.



They haven't mentioned numbers, but they're talking about divisions and divisions, tens of thousands of men. Thus there is also a potential military question. Could the Pathet Lao capture Vientiane if the U.S. leaders were to make good on their threat to invade the Mekong Valley with Thais? What would happen if the Americans sent in one hundred thousand Thais? So in Laos and Cambodia, the reasons the guerrillas don't take the major cities may be a) the realization they'll be bombed to smithereens and/or b) the possibility of the U.S. introducing tens of thousands of Thais (and/or South Vietnamese).

Why, then, have the guerrillas in South Vietnam not moved on the cities? There are two basic theories: the first one is that they can't. They can't because first, the Americans have a million ARVNs surrounding the cities—there are two million men under arms—and second, as was shown by the Tet offensive of 1968, U.S. leaders are prepared to level every city in South Vietnam to dust. The third part of this first theory that the guerrillas can't is that the political and cultural repression is working, so the NLF has less active support now in the cities. Also there is the idea that the NLF simply doesn't have the capability to take the cities because of the enormous losses suffered during Tet 1968.

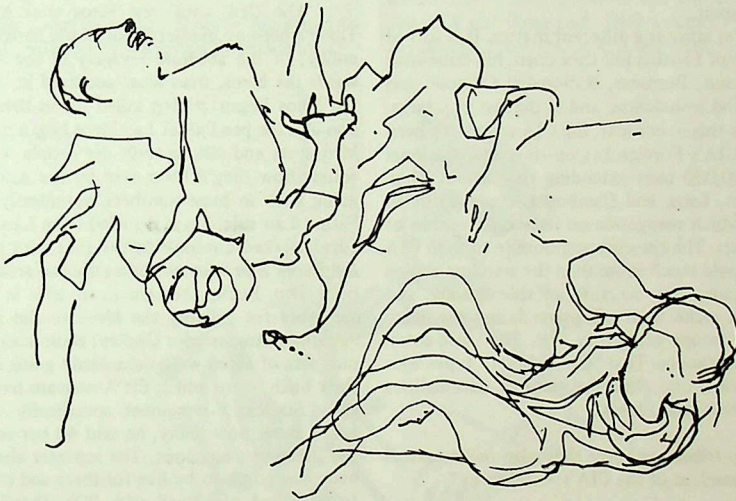
The second basic theory, to which I come closer, is that the NLF during the last two years has switched to a political strategy. It's fairly obvious that they would. They didn't want to give Nixon any excuses to slow down troop withdrawals. He might have retaliated and he might have



used even heavier bombing on North Vietnam. There was no point to it—Americans would obviously bring out the ground troops, so why attack them as long as they're going to bring them out? The guerrillas can accomplish the same thing without taking any losses on their part. We've had many indications that they have switched to an active political strategy—for example, the skyrocketing official U.S. *Chieu Hoi* rate for 1969 and 1970 which was absolutely fantastic. When I added up the figures I was given in Saigon in November 1970, it turned out that 50 per cent of the whole NLF had defected in those two years. You know something must be happening when suddenly, after the resounding victory of the Tet offensive and when the Americans are getting out, half the NLF gives up.

I conclude from this that most of these *Chieu Hoi*'s may be simply integrating into the ARVN, and working politically in the cities. We see things like the growth of the student struggle within South Vietnam. We see the many

thus the year when the PRG feels it has the greatest political leverage against Nixon. Nixon has clearly thrown down the gauntlet. By revealing the secret negotiations, by trying to divert attention from Vietnam, by going to China, he's said, I'm not interested in negotiations. Obviously he's not. Otherwise he wouldn't have revealed the secret talks, which were, of course, nothing new anyway. The Americans have been asking the same thing for the last 25 years: to decide who's going to run South Vietnam. But by making the secret talks public, he's given them no choice. As far as we know, unless Nixon has worked out some deal with the Chinese, which seems highly unlikely, this is the year when the NLF has to respond. If it doesn't, I personally would conclude that it's weak, and I think Nixon would conclude that it's weak. So we'll see. What I'm saying is that it doesn't necessarily mean anything that the guerrillas have not taken the major cities until now. They may have just been waiting for maximum political leverage in South Vietnam this year. But if they



losses, due largely to "desertions" according to the reports, which the U.S. has been taking in the Delta in the last year. And the regional forces, or the "Rough Puffs" as the Americans call them, just run away. The Americans call it treason. So I lean to the theory that the NLF has simply switched to a political strategy and is working slowly to take over the cities *politically*—not *militarily*—at a future date.

But what I want to emphasize most is that there's no way of knowing. It could conceivably be a combination of both—on the one hand, they're working politically, and on the other, they're too weak to take over the cities. We may know in the next three to ten months. In my opinion, the coming six months are the most crucial period in the last 25 years. Neither side has ever been able to defeat the other conclusively on the battlefield. The only way American leaders will get out is when the American people put enough pressure on them to do so. This can only arise from a strong showing by the PRG. This is a presidential election year, and

haven't done anything by this time next year, I would conclude that they are as yet too weak to do so.

**Would you explain to what extent the Thai, Lao, Cambodian, and South Vietnamese forces are mercenary forces?**

The Thai forces are totally mercenary as far as we know. From my talks with these people, and also from the *Bangkok Post*, it's clear that their reason for going to Laos or Cambodia or South Vietnam is almost totally the amount of money that they're offered by the Americans. They receive very high salaries, almost on the level of American troops as I remember—something like \$200 or \$300 a month. The average salary in a place like Thailand for, say, a government worker, is maybe \$50. And for these soldiers, who are mostly peasants, it's much less than that. So the Thais are almost completely mercenaries.

Now in Laos and Cambodia, we have to divide the



armies up into the *standing armies*, which are supported by MACV (the American army), and the *secret army*, supported by the CIA. The standing armies are mainly conscripts. These are the kids who are literally stolen from their home villages by force. I have friends, like John Van Tine, who was an IVS volunteer up in Hong Sa, who have actually seen this. Army men go into the villages and they take kids fifteen and sixteen years old off in handcuffs. They take them away from their villages and fly them to another place and stick them on isolated mountain tops and tell them they're soldiers and that they have to fight for 20 years. As the kids put it, they will have to be soldiers "until I die." So they're not mercenaries, but rather under a kind of penal servitude—it's a form of slavery really. They just take these kids away from their villages, put them in isolated places where they have no money, where they can't get back to their homes, where their officers steal money meant to buy meat for them so they have to survive on leaves and fish—and there they sit. Needless to say, there's a very high desertion rate, total lack of morale, complete despair.

The CIA's secret army is a different matter. It is sort of a polyglot collection of Laotian hill tribesmen, hill tribesmen brought from Thailand, Burmese, Nationalist Chinese, and Filipino mechanics and technicians, and in the last year largely Thais. Just to put this in context, the CIA army—it's been called by some the CIA's Foreign Legion—is a super-national army of roughly 100,000 men extending throughout Thailand, South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, made up of all these nationalities, which recognizes no national frontiers or sovereign governments. They're only responsible to their CIA employers; They're paid much more than the standing armies of Cambodia and Laos, they do most of the fighting, and when the Americans make their offensive during the rainy season, it's the CIA troops who go in first. The basic structure is American Commandos, Thai "Green Beret" types who serve as intermediaries, and then the various nationalities controlled through their local chiefs.

**What about the Meo tribesmen? Are they also mercenaries? And aren't they the nucleus of the CIA's secret army?**

They *used* to be the nucleus. The CIA began building up its secret army in Laos in the late Fifties, based on a then unknown Meo named Vang Pao who had been a sergeant in the French army. Vang Pao was given enormous sums of money and later bombing support to threaten and bribe tens of thousands of Meo villagers spread throughout northeastern Laos to leave their native villages and come down around his CIA-built base at Long Tsieng. The Americans also played upon the fact that the Pathet Lao Laotians and the Meos had been enemies for many years. It gets complicated, because of course Fay Dang, a vice-chairman of the central committee of the Pathet Lao, is a Meo and there's a sizeable number of Meos fighting with the Pathet Lao. But the Americans, by uprooting hundreds of thousands of people before they had a chance to really know what the Pathet Lao were all about, involved the Meo tribe on the American side to a larger extent than, for example, the Burmese or the Nationalist Chinese, the Filipinos, and the Thais.

So in the beginning, let's say '64 and '65, those Meos

were not completely mercenaries. They were paid more money than the Laotian standing army, but there was a degree of anger against the Pathet Lao. What happened of course is that the Meos were decimated, and the Americans are now taking eight- and nine-year-olds into the Meo army. This was recently shown in a British TV documentary by Granada Films. T.D. Allman has also written about it. It's hard for me to call a nine-year-old Meo boy a mercenary in the classic sense. So even within the CIA standing army there's a high level of forced conscription. But, in any event, today the Meos are a negligible force. The real backbone of the CIA standing army in both Laos and Cambodia is the Thais, as well as many talented Laotians. They take the best Laotians from the standing army, offer them more money, and put them in the CIA's army, the CIA's Foreign Legion.

**Are the highest casualties suffered in the CIA army or the standing army?**

The CIA army—the Meos were killed off this way. There's been no greater proof of the bankruptcy of American policy, of the absolute savagery of the American policy towards the Meos, than what occurred in '69, '70, and '71. As the Meos began getting killed off in these years, the Pathet Lao and the pro-Pathet Lao Meos began infiltrating American Meo areas and talking with the people. When they began to realize how they'd been used by the Americans, they began going back in huge numbers, voluntarily going back to the Pathet Lao side. I was expelled from Laos in February 1971. I had worked a month before that with a reporter from the *Baltimore Sun* who wrote a series of articles. He interviewed both Pop Buell, the American who is the man most responsible for rallying the Meos to the American side, and American Ambassador Godley. Both men admitted that large numbers of Meos were voluntarily going back to the areas of their birth, from which the Americans had taken them in the early Sixties. I remember specifically when the reporter asked Buell how many, he said 40 per cent had defected in the previous year alone. The reporter also asked what going back was going to be like for them and if they were all going to be killed off. Buell said, "Oh, they'll have to do some portage, but hell, they're better off under the Pathet Lao than they are under us." What went on was that they took all these Meos and they neither had any land area for them to farm, nor did they spend enough money to feed them, but rather, as usual, they spent most of the money on arming them. The Meos survived at first on these rice drops, the famous rice drops, which although characterized as a humanitarian way of helping them were actually a means of coercion to get them to fight. I don't know how many Meos have died from just disease, from malnutrition, basically, after living in American-patrolled areas.

**How much outside knowledge is there of the Meo situation?**

Let me stress here that there's only been one American outsider who's ever gotten into the American-controlled Meo zones. When we talk about the secret war, we always have to remember that throughout the Sixties the Americans wouldn't allow any outsiders to talk with the Meos, to have



free access to them, to find out what was really going on. However, one American did go there, last summer—Al McCoy, a Yale graduate student who's writing a book on heroin now. He was taken up there by a fellow named John Everingham, an Australian who's just a very courageous guy and walks all over Laos, through Pathet Lao zones, anywhere. He took McCoy up to one Meo village and they reported that the village chief and the people said that in the early Sixties the Americans would come to their village and tell them that if they didn't come around they'd be bombed. The villagers were forced to come on the American side and they were forced to fight for ten years. The chief said, "We've given Vang Pao our sixteen-year-olds, we've given Vang Pao our fifteen-year-olds, and we're not going to give him our fourteen-year-olds." As a result, the Americans had cut off the village's rice and these people were starving. Now we can't prove to the satisfaction of everyone that this is typical, because we don't know. All we can say is that it's that way in 100 per cent of the cases we know about.

So most information about what has actually happened to the Meos is what U.S. officials have allowed to trickle out?

Yes, but the fact that the Meos are going back now to join the many Meos who have been fighting with the other side from the very beginning implies to me that the majority would have at least been neutral, if not actually on the side of the Pathet Lao, had they not been bought off and bombed out by the Americans. While we're talking about the Meos, let me just add a final note to say that if the Americans had any, just the slightest, concern for the Meos in the last two years, they would have taken them out of the war. There's a whole area of northwestern Laos, Sayaboury Province, that's unpopulated. Now the Meos—the ones who are left—want to go there; they want to move to the west and get out of the war. The Americans have refused. It's documented, and they admit, that first they brought them from Long Tsieng to a place called Ban Son which was south of Long Tsieng but still up in northern Laos. At that point the Americans could have placed the Meos in camps to the west, which would have taken them more out of the war, or to the east, which would leave them between the Pathet Lao and Vientiane. The CIA put them east. They wouldn't permit them to go to Sayaboury Province. You'd ask them why, and they'd say,





well, the Lao government doesn't want it. That may be true, but the Americans have never given a damn for what the Lao "government" wants. The Americans for seven years now have done all sorts of things that the Lao "government" doesn't want, from using Laos to spy on China to bombing the Ho Chi Minh trail. If the American officials had wanted to help the Meos, they could have done it—but they didn't. And they're just using them as cannon fodder at this very moment.

#### What about Cambodian and South Vietnamese mercenaries in Cambodia?

I have less first-hand knowledge about what's going on in Cambodia. I will say that everything I've heard and read about Cambodia indicates that it's the same kind of situation, where much of the front-line fighting is done by the Komphong Khrom people who are ethnic Cambodians who grew up in South Vietnam and whom the CIA trained. If you'll remember, Sihanouk claimed that just before the coup the CIA placed a couple of battalions within the army of Lon Nol. Sihanouk gives this as one indication of CIA involvement in the coup, since of course the Komphong Khrom were under the CIA. Every indication I've had is that they, plus the Thais, etc., are doing the real hard-line fighting in Cambodia.

As far as the ARVN goes, I assume that the Rangers (specially paid troops) do much of the fighting for the ARVN on the front lines in Cambodia, but I'm not really sure. All I can do is throw out to the reader for further investigation the proposition that most of the fighting in Cambodia is done by CIA mercenaries.

**We haven't talked much about the air war yet. How does what you've said fit into the bombing?**

Of course, I think the air war is the most important topic. It's important to discuss these other things because the Asian foot soldier plays a very significant part in today's war and he's being maimed and dying as never before. But he plays a secondary role. The key role is played by the air war. All our research has indicated that when talking about the role of the bombing and the air war, it is not enough simply to point out that the bombing is important and is still killing a lot of people. It plays the *key* role. It plays such a key role that what we're talking about today is a new form of warfare in Indochina, which we call the third Indochina war.

This third Indochina war, which began at the end of 1968, can be described best by three concepts: 1) it's *automated* war; 2) it's *total* war; and 3) it's *secret* war. First, it is automated war because most of the killing and destruction going on in Indochina today is done by American machines. One way of demonstrating the automated nature of this war is to point out that as of May 1, when 69,000 men are left within South Vietnam, we'll have 53,000 American ground troops and 16,000 American airmen. If we add the 29,000 American airmen who'll be in Thailand, and the 10 to 20,000 American airmen who'll be in the Gulf of Tonkin and the several thousand airmen who'll be in Guam, based with B-52's, we'll see for the first time in history a nation deploying more airmen abroad than ground troops.

Most of the money after May 1 will be going into this automated air war. Of course all these figures are classified so we can't give the exact figures, but it seems the air war is costing something like three to four billion dollars a year. I think they give about a billion dollars to the ARVN and about another billion or two to the rest of them. Since the American ground troops have been taken out of the combat role in any event, most of the funds for combat will be spent on the air war from now on. Now the three billion dollars is only an approximate figure. Nobody knows what the upkeep on the bases in Thailand and the aircraft carriers is, nobody knows what it costs whenever a pilot is shot down, or even how you want to compute that. It takes a million dollars alone just to train each of them, and nobody knows what the costs of the planes are or how many planes are shot down, the amortization on the planes and above all the cost of the research, development and deployment of the electronic battlefield. The costs are actually perhaps as much as ten or twenty billion dollars, but nobody knows—in fact, for all we know, no one in the Air Force knows.

This money provides for at least fifteen hundred tons of bombs falling every day. The air war has levelled off now to a steady fifty thousand tons a month (although it rose to sixty thousand in December), about two thousand tons a day, over a ton every sixty seconds. It's these bombs that are killing most of the people today and that are destroying most of their homes and rice fields. We are talking about bombs, chemical sprays, poisons, incendiary bombs, anti-personnel bombs, high explosives, all sorts of things.

#### What's the role of the ground troops in today's air war?

The Asian foot soldier today is used to *supplement* the bombers and I think this is the *essential point*. In both the first Indochina war, from 1946-54, and the second Indochina war, from January 1, 1961 (when the first American died in South Vietnam) to November 1968, most of the killing and destruction was done by large Western ground forces, French and then American. Bombing was meant to supplement the ground troops; it was conceived of as "strategic," "interdiction" bombing against military targets in North Vietnam—for example, "interdiction" bombing of the Ho Chi Minh trail. Over 90 per cent of the bombing in South Vietnam was "interdiction" according to the Cornell Air War Study, released in 1971. There was also "tactical air support." Despite the heavy destruction done by the bombing, it was all *meant* to support that massive American ground machine, the green machine. What's different today, in the third Indochina war, is that in this automated war the machines bomb, kill, destroy, burn, and *then* the ground troops, now almost all Asians, come in. This has happened again and again, at Snoul, Kratie and Mimot in Cambodia, the Plain of Jars in Laos—wherever you look, a major role of the ground troops is to come in afterwards.

Their second role is described by General Petit in the Symington "Thai hearings," held in the fall of 1969. Petit said that the troops of Vang Pao, the Meo general, would go in, draw enemy fire, pull back and let the airplanes come in. This second role of Asian ground troops is to serve as *live bait*. This was most dramatically illustrated in the invasion of



southern Laos in February 1971. If you look at Document 119 of the Pentagon Papers, MacNamara argues very strenuously (this is when we had half a million American ground troops in South Vietnam) that *Americans could not invade the Ho Chi Minh trail*. The guerrillas control the heights and have a superior knowledge of the terrain, and the North Vietnamese have large strategic reserves estimated at 320,000 men in September 1969 by Ambassador Sullivan. So no matter what the Americans did, they could not invade the Ho Chi Minh trail. The conventional wisdom when I was in Laos was that it would take 50,000 American ground troops on the trail, as well as 150,000 in I Corps backing them up, even to try to invade the Ho Chi Minh trail. Okay, so why do they send in 22,000 ARVN, of all people, in February 1971? Well, in *Life* magazine in April 1971, a post-mortem of the Laos invasion by John Sarr makes it all very clear. He says that the ARVN were used as "live bait." That's his quote. The point for me, although not for Sarr, is that the Americans had been bombing the Ho Chi Minh trail for seven years and never located the guerrillas, they finally sent the ARVN in to draw enemy fire, so they would know where to bomb.


The third way the Asian foot soldier is used today in this war by machine is to provide static defense for the major bases and towns, to provide a screen behind which the United States can practice political and cultural warfare.


Now the second part of my description of the third Indochina war is that it's *total war*. That point is rather simple, I'm sure, to readers of *Liberation*. This air war destroys everything below. No distinction is made between civilian and military, between animals and humans, between schools, crops, pagodas, whole villages or towns. The most important reason for this is that the pilots have never been able to find the guerrillas. If they could, the war would have been over a decade ago. The guerrillas are out in the forest, sleeping by day and moving at night in small groups, and leave very few clues as to their location. The Air Force is hardly in the business of carefully dropping bombs only out in the forest, without any visible targets, just hoping to hit something. Instead, they wind up bombing whenever and wherever they do see any signs of human life.

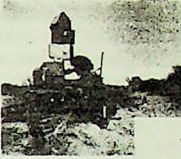
**Could you give an example, from pilots you've talked to, of what goes on in a pilot's head, and what goes on in the machine, when he decides to bomb?**


The pilot goes up and he's told to hit an enemy bivouac storage area. He's told that he'll be bombing troop concentrations, a truck park, a key road segment, a bridge. There are three major sources which generate the targets for him: photo-interpretation, the guy in the light spotter plane (the forward air controller or FAC), and sensor intelligence. But whatever the source of intelligence, it's usually vague and uncertain and based simply on any sign of human life. The photo-interpreters will pick up on cut grass, smoke, plowed fields, footprints, or, of course, any human being they happen to catch out in the open. The sensors will register footsteps, sounds, even animals—whatever it is, any sign which could indicate human life gets bombed. These targets are usually provided by the civilians, of course.


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So the pilot goes out looking for these things that he was told to find. Now, of course, there are very few structures left in the guerrilla zones that the pilot sees from the air. When he gets the coordinates, he may be told just to go and look around. There may be an FAC who fires the smoke marker; maybe it's sensor intelligence, in which case the pilot doesn't even make any decisions himself, he just vectors in. Basically he just goes to the coordinates—if he's a jet pilot he rarely sees anything below him anyway—and pushes a button. Next time you're in a plane, look out the window—our civilian aircraft usually fly at 30,000 feet just like the B-52's—and notice what you can see. White clouds, blue sky, and maybe a little sun—that's all the pilot sees too. He has no concept of what's below. A lot of the bombing now is at night, where it's just coordinates, where he can't see anything. If it comes from an FAC, the most he'll be told is that it was an enemy bivouac storage area or an ammo dump.

The result is total war, primarily against the civilian population. The civilians are usually the ones that are in and around the villages; they can't keep on the move all the time because they have families and belongings and homes. They're the ones who provide the signs of human life, and they're the main casualties.



Do you have any outside confirmation to back up your interviews?

One of the best examples is the famous USIS report that Congressman McCloskey brought back from Laos. This official report accepts the refugees' statement that 80 per cent of the casualties are civilians and 20 per cent are military. I've interviewed more people than the USIS has and I would say that the figure of 20 per cent for the military is high. When we interviewed Pathet Lao defectors, they said that almost no soldiers were killed from the bombings. Once in a while they may catch a group out in the open, or they may have some kind of intelligence about a guerrilla location, but this is infrequent. There are three or four sorties going up every day, and the vast majority of the casualties are definitely civilian.

What about the secret war?

The third major aspect of today's third Indochina war is that it's secret war. The Cornell Air War Study shows that when Nixon took office, 70 per cent of the bombs fell within South Vietnam and another 10 to 20 per cent fell within North Vietnam. Reporters could always go out on choppers and bombing raids over South Vietnam when that 70 per cent of the tonnage was falling there. In fact, as you can read in *The Military Half* by Jonathan Schell, that's exactly what he did. A good percentage of the news that folks back in the

States saw was based on first-hand observation. Even the bombing of North Vietnam was relatively highly publicized then, for although reporters could not usually go into North Vietnam, raids were announced and there was interest, especially after the sensation created by Harrison Salisbury's reports.

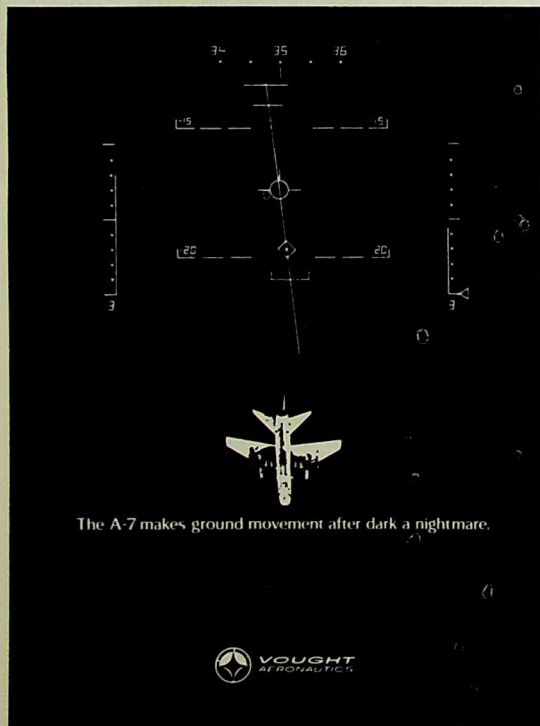
So the air war was not a secret war under Johnson. It was in Laos, of course, that the model for the third Indochina war was developed. But the bombing was still relatively light there in 1968, and the basic facts of this earlier phase of the air war, Frank Harvey's book, *Air War, Vietnam*, etc., were relatively well known. Even in speaking of a hidden war now, I am not trying to say that there is some kind of blanket censorship about the air war. The administration goal is not to keep every little fact out of the newspaper, but rather to muffle domestic dissent by taking the war off the front pages every morning and off the TV screens every night.

How have they done this? Do you think they've succeeded?

They've been extremely successful. They've employed a number of different measures to achieve this success: first of all, two-thirds of the bombs under Nixon have fallen outside of South Vietnam, according to the Cornell Air War Study, and reporters are not allowed on the bombing raids outside of South Vietnam. Secondly, they refuse to fly reporters to the front lines in American-controlled aircraft. Reporters were always flown this way to the front lines in South Vietnam in the second Indochina war. Khesanh is a great example. The scenes of Khesanh on television and the photographs did as much to create domestic dissent as any other single factor in the war. Reporters are not flown to the Khesanhs in Laos and Cambodia. When our Asian troops retake the Plain of Jars after the bombing has caused the Pathet Lao to retreat and the CIA mercenaries are sent in, reporters are not along to film the bombed-out villages and the people just victimized by the last bombing raids. When reporters do try to go out to the front lines now, they have to go out in taxis, which is why about 20 newsmen were captured and killed in Cambodia alone during the first six months after Nixon's invasion, and which is why reporters don't go out anymore.

So one way they manage the news is to not let reporters see the fighting. Then we have the other side of the hidden war, in which the government creates its own version of reality about the air war. As reporters can't observe the war first hand, the percentage of news based on official statements goes up. After all, our reporters have never been a very intrepid lot—99 per cent of the news about the war has always been either what they can see or what the American officials tell them. If they can't see it, the chances of what the American officials tell them getting into the news go up. And American officials falsify the air war by consistently denying that they bomb civilian targets, by claiming that they only bomb military targets, by greatly inflated claims of success like nine out of ten trucks destroyed going down the Ho Chi Minh trail, and by the use of terms which are much more than lies.

Terms like "protective reaction raids" are very similar to the Newspeak that George Orwell talks about. The differ-



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ence between a lie and Newspeak, if you'll remember, is that what the government does with Newspeak is to create new terms with very limited meanings, terms which mean exactly what the government wants them to mean. By drumming these new terms into the public's mind enough, concepts capable of describing wider meanings, or referring to things the government doesn't want the people to think about, cease to exist. When U.S. and allied spokesmen always claim that they are only carrying out "protective reaction" raids against North Vietnam, it becomes doubly difficult for people to talk about the terrible bombing of Thanh Hoa hospital and throughout North Vietnam because of the unconscious mind-set created by the term "protective reaction raids." When they bombed North Vietnam for five days, from December 21st through December 26th, levelling towns, villages, hospitals, killing hundreds of people, it counted as *one* limited-duration protective reaction strike on the charts. So already you sound like a kook when you talk about heavy bombing raids of North Vietnam. It makes it that much more difficult, whereas if they said, "We have resumed massive raids against North Vietnam," we'd at least have a vocabulary to talk about it.

The final aspect of the hidden war is the way they classify all information about the air war other than overall tonnages, men at bases, and a few other basic facts. They don't tell you how many tons are falling in Laos and Cambodia, or which men go down where (unless Hanoi Radio reveals it first), or the weapons they're using and their pur-

poses, or how many sorties are flown. There's a big discrepancy between the number of planes Hanoi claims shot down and what America claims shot down and the American public has no way of knowing what is correct because that information is classified—on and on and on. Put all these tactics together—don't let reporters see what's happening, lie, and classify—and you get a hidden war. Today we're faced with a war straight out of George Orwell, an automated war waged halfway across the globe by a tiny elite through a very conscious and deliberate news management which prevents the people at home from knowing what's going on.

#### Where does this put the peace movement?

We have to be very frank and admit that this is an absolutely disastrous problem. In this kind of automated third Indochina war, the limitations on the executive branch are much less than in the second Indochina war. During the earlier war, tremendous domestic dissent was created by the use of American boys and their deaths, by the high cost, and, I would say, by just the horror of the war, which was brought home by the electronic media. In today's war, very few American boys die, relatively speaking, the costs are much lower, and above all, the electronic media's not covering it. This is a problem not only for the people of Indochina but for people throughout the Third World.

**You said that most of the troops on the other side are not directly affected by the bombing. So what is the American rationale for carrying on such a war against the civilian population?**

I don't like to repeat their stated rationales—neither what they say publicly nor what I've heard privately—for I don't think even they really believe the ridiculous rationales they verbalize. I think it's more useful simply to look at what they *do*. I think what we have today is the reverse of the Kissinger thesis stated back in 1968, that as long as the guerrillas don't lose, they win, and eventually the invading superpower will be exhausted politically. Now what the air war has done is to turn this around. By using machines, American leaders win as long as they don't lose.

These discussions of why American leaders are still involved in Indochina 25 years later get very complicated. Let's just note that they *are*, that they seem to feel it's very important for them not to lose. Let's simply pass over what all the economic, political, and psychological motivations for this might be. Since they are so concerned not to lose, apparently their main goal is just to hang in there, for which the air war is their key. The most dramatic demonstration is that whereas when Johnson and Kennedy wanted to escalate they would send in ground troops, when Nixon wants to escalate, despite the political costs, he sends back more B-52's, aircraft carriers, and F-4 squadrons. In February of this year, 42 new B-52's, two new aircraft carriers, and apparently one or two new F-4 squadrons were dispatched. Nixon bombed North Vietnam for five days over Christmas. High visibility, terrible political cost, Muskie and everyone else picked up on it. Nixon knew in advance that that would happen, but he did it anyway because the administration feels the air war is the



key.

The biggest question is not, let me add, whether they are right. Personally, I think they are fools. I think that not only is the air war ineffective, but it's counter-productive from the American point of view because it heightens guerrilla morale, and in a war like this, where there are no longer American troops, where it's American leaders, Asian mercenaries and conscripts versus highly motivated guerrillas, then the Americans in the long run are digging their own grave by this air war. But it's unimportant what I think—what's important is what *they* think.

### So why are they following this course of action?

First of all, they *don't* look at it in terms of military effectiveness, civilian casualties, or anything else. I think the main factor is a kind of unconscious *technological imperative*; American leaders, unquestionably intent on remaining on in Indochina but unable to rely on ground troops, are desperately turning to more and more vicious forms of technology to enforce their will. They've gone from the pineapple bombs which explode horizontally—one sortie has a thousand bombs, which means one sortie sends 250,000 steel pellets spewing over an area of one-quarter mile by one-half mile—to the guavas which explode in the air and go into the holes where people are hiding. They've gone on from the pineapples and guavas, which have steel ball-bearing pellets, to the flechette pellets, which are tiny steel arrows with larger fins at one end. When they enter the body they enlarge the wound and lodge in the blood vessels and they're designed to shred the internal organs. They've gone on from flechettes to fragmentation bombs, which explode in jagged fragments and zig-zag their way into the body.

They've also gone on from napalm, which we all know about, to white phosphorus. Although napalm explodes over a wide area, it can be rubbed out or put out by water, but phosphorus can't. White phosphorus burns on an oxidation principle, which means that it usually has to burn its way down to the bone before going out. They're using high-temperature thermite and magnesium bombs, which are also difficult to put out. They've gone from napalm to super-napalm, which has the advantage of having high adhesive qualities and a high temperature. They've combined them all now in a napalm-phosphorus-thermite bomb or NPT which has all the "advantages" of each.

These bombs are dropped when they think they have a target—which may or may not be a military target. They also have developed an entirely different kind of bomb, the *anti-personnel mines*. These are part of what they call the areadial program, where they flood whole areas with hundreds and thousands of tiny mines designed to look like leaves or animal droppings and to make the area uninhabitable for humans. Thousands of square miles of territory in Indochina are now flooded with little mines which are designed for the sole purpose of blowing off a foot. They can't blow up a truck or anything else; they are only designed to make life impossible.

They've also gotten into these vicious gunships. We used to hear about the AC-47's—the Spookies, Puff the Magic Dragons—but they aren't telling you about the AC-119's, the

Shadow Gun Ships, or the AC-130 Spectres; they don't tell you about the B-52's which are now dropping the anti-personnel bombs. The biggest emphasis in the air war during the last two years has been on gunships. They are sent over an area to hover at night when they can't be shot down and people can't see them or hide from them, when they know the people have to come out because they can't come out during the day. The gunships have six guns, each one shooting 6000 rounds a minute. When heat emission shows a white dot of light on the pilot's infrared scope or when any movement or sound activates a sensor, he pulls his trigger and thousands of bullets shoot down into every square foot of an area the size of a football field. If you're caught above ground, you're finished.

We could go on with examples, but what it comes down to is that American leaders at this point, in my opinion, are desperately trying to hang on. They feel that the air war is their major means of doing so, and they don't care what its effect is. They know that cost-effectiveness-wise it's absolutely absurd—it probably costs them one to two hundred thousand dollars a truck. They know that the people they kill are mostly civilians, but on the other hand, they probably do kill some soldiers every once in a while. The basis of every decision is finally their 25-year-old absolute determination to remain on in Indochina, to dominate Indochina and decide which governments will rule there.

**What evidence is there that there are plans to continue the air war? Is its development being carried further or has this levelled off?**

There is a lot of obvious, documented evidence to indicate that it is not only here to stay, but is going to spread over the whole Third World. When American leaders choose to intervene in the decades to come, it will be through this kind of automated, total, secret air war. I think there is no more dramatic proof of this than the millions of corpses and maimed survivors and the gutted ruins of whole nations that Nixon has left in his wake. Let's go back to January 1969, when Nixon took office. At that point, there was heavy fighting in South Vietnam, but bombing of North Vietnam had ceased. The bombing of Laos had jumped up as of November 1968, but it was still relatively moderate, and of course there was no war to speak of in Cambodia. If Nixon had wanted to, he could have made a political deal, as told to us by a high-ranking official in the State Department, and the fighting could have ended. Obviously if Nixon had wanted to get out, the NLF would have been happy to accommodate him by letting him play his little charade of Vietnamization while withdrawing over perhaps a two-year period. But since then—and let's just stick to the air war—the bombing of North Vietnam has been resumed and that of Laos doubled, the air war has spread into Cambodia, Northern Thailand is now being bombed, and if you want a shock, try reading the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on Ethiopia. The U.S. Air Force is supplying planes to Haile Selassie's government and loading the bombs to be dropped on Eritrea—same business as in Laos in 1964, etc.

Major evidence of the continuation and gradual extension of the air war is also found in the tremendous budget requests and the appropriations being granted. The Air Force



is competing for more bases and more planes and the Navy is asking for more aircraft carriers and all the rest. Now this doesn't necessarily mean anything specifically for Indochina but it certainly is an indication of the general direction things are taking.

The third sort of proof of the importance of the air war is the American reaction in February to fear of another Tet offensive. As I've already mentioned, they brought back 42 B-52's, two more aircraft carriers and a few squadrons of F-4's, which amounts to almost doubling the total bombing tonnage. It would be very interesting to see what the bombing tonnage was for January and February. They don't release the figures now for a few extra months.

**What other evidence of the continuation of the air war have you found?**

In our research and in our interviews with pilots, with American targeting officials, and with the kind of people who work for Honeywell and for Hanscom Air Force Base in Boston, we learned of tremendous job openings in electronic warfare, contracts let out, new weapons, feverish development of ordnance, airplanes, gunships, sensor devices, and computerized warfare. In Westmoreland's famous speech, he laid this all out. Since this stuff is all classified, unfortunately we don't have enough facts and figures to back this up com-





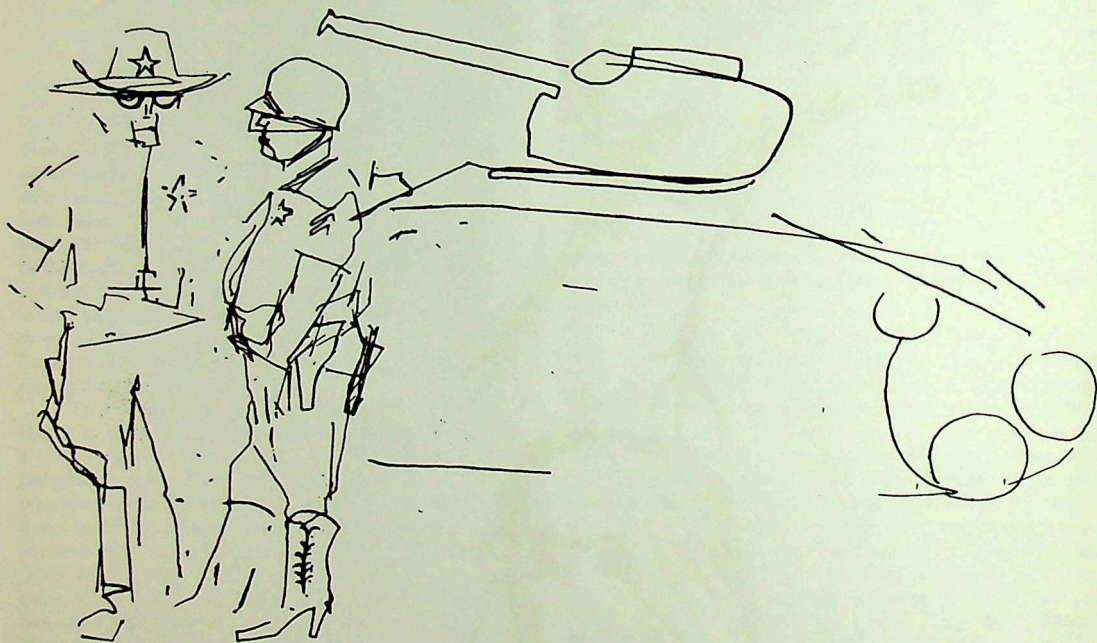
pletely. But we certainly invite any of the readers to check this out and reach their own conclusions. I can only report that on the basis of a year of hard-working research, I am certain that internally the government is feverishly expanding the development of the air war technology.

#### What about the argument that bombing tonnages are lower under Nixon than under Johnson?

It's true, but the comparative figures can't be taken simply at face value. The average monthly tonnage dropping on Indochina in 1968 was 120,000 tons; in 1971, it was 70,000 tons. There's no reason to accept these figures, since there's no way of knowing whether they are correct, and they're also internally inconsistent. But even if we accept

include what's being dropped by the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF), the Royal Cambodian Air Force (RCAF), the Royal Lao Air Force (RLAF), and the Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF). There is no reason to believe that's true. What I think they've done is simply take out the Asian figure to make it seem like the tonnage is much lower.

In any event, under Nixon, and with these new types of ordnance, they're dropping whatever restraints there were previously against bombing the villages, as far as we can tell, and now it's just a free game in which you hit any human being anywhere you want to, without any restrictions. As far as we can tell, probably more people have suffered from the air war of Nixon than under Johnson. The best example again is Cambodia, where you have a third of the population refugeeed by the air war in a year and a half. Every newspaper



these figures, they don't mean anything. First of all, the 120,000 tons a month in 1968 was ridiculously high and most of it was almost totally wasted. Secondly, the human suffering caused by the air war is not reduced much by their dropping less tonnages. For one thing, there are fewer people living in the rural areas. There are ten million refugees—about six or seven million in South Vietnam, two million in Cambodia, and about a million in Laos—and the rural areas basically don't exist anymore. Since they've destroyed everything, there is less need for this kind of tonnage. Moreover, with the area-denial programs, etc., the ordnance is becoming more sophisticated.

The major question about what the tonnage figures mean is that it's not clear what's happened to the Asian air forces. The administration claims that these tonnage figures

report interviewing refugees has indicated that they left because of the bombing. There may be less tonnage, but there are much more vicious and indiscriminate sorties and much more anti-personnel tonnage falling in an area inhabited by several million people.

**In terms of damage to human beings, then, there is much more damage being done per ton now than if the bombs were dropped on, say, a bridge.**

Right, that's what I meant when I said that despite the decline in tonnages, the ordnance is more sophisticated. Also, we've interviewed U.S. airmen from places like Udorn Air Force Base. They say that during the second Indochina war under Johnson, maybe only between 20 and 30 per cent of



the bombs stored at Udorn were anti-personnel. Since 1968, they say 60 to 70 per cent have been anti-personnel bombs. Now that, in the latest development, B-52's are also dropping anti-personnel bombs, I'd imagine that up to 75 or 80 per cent of the bombs may well be anti-personnel. So not only are the bombs more sophisticated, but also a higher percentage of them are anti-personnel.

#### What sort of anti-personnel bombs are dropped?

Pineapples, guavas, the flechette rockets, smooth and striated "orange" fragmentation bombs, the various anti-personnel mines. Pilots, by the way, in talking to me, have even described the dozens of different incendiary bombs they drop—napalm, white phosphorus, etc.—as "anti-personnel." All of these are basically meant to murder and maim human beings. They could use some of them against trucks or buildings if they wanted to, but basically they can't locate vehicles and there aren't that many structures left to bomb.

The impression I get is that they would like to collect all of the remaining population in urban concentration camps, and so they want to make it less and less possible for people to live in the countryside. Is this tactic working?

That's an impossible question to answer, but if the NLF does launch an offensive this year, the guerrillas themselves will answer it. As I have said, it may be counter-productive in many ways for U.S. leaders because it raises guerrilla morale. But it is also likely that if the U.S. had never done any bombing, the guerrillas would have been in an even stronger position than they are today. So there may be a certain limited effectiveness to the bombing. But let's be very clear what this limited effectiveness means. This limited effectiveness is what happens when you practice genocide, biocide and ecocide on a rural people. The war is effective only in the sense that *total war* against a society, war which makes no distinction between civilians and military, is always more effective than a war in which you try to make such distinctions. This is precisely why such a war is outlawed by international law, precisely why people with any kind of decency and goodwill have been trying for centuries to establish some kind of limits on total war. This is why they have supported the 1907 Hague conventions, the Nuremberg principles, the 1949 Geneva conventions, all of which basically attempt to establish distinctions between military and civilian as well as to outlaw excesses of cruelty within the military itself.

The third Indochina war is a total war, which winds up mainly striking civilians and is by its very nature a war crime. I think this is the most effective answer for the Calley dilemma—who's responsible for Calley doing what he did, how high up does the chain of command go, can you really pin it on Nixon or Johnson, etc. The air war by its very nature is a war crime—it's not the pilots who are responsible, it's nobody except the people who initiated it. Nuremberg Principle VI reads almost like a literal description of what U.S. officials have done in Laos and Indochina. It forbids the "wanton destruction of cities, towns, and villages." It forbids "cruel and inhuman acts" carried out against the civilian population "on political grounds." And the Nuremberg Principle

is in the United Nations Charter, ratified by the Senate—it's the law of the land. So any effectiveness achieved by the air war has been at the price of violating our Constitution, the U.N. Charter, the Hague and Geneva conventions, and every moral and legal principle which humanity has laboriously established over the centuries. And this kind of "effectiveness" must be weighed against the extent to which it's been *ineffective*, i.e., it's raised consciousness and strengthened guerrilla morale, it's been ineffective in hitting "military" targets, etc.

Personally, it seems to me more of a morale boost to defeat an army on the ground than to be hit from 30,000 feet or from a hilltop or gunship. I'm really questioning your saying that the American bombing positively raises people's morale.

Of course, the main considerations are moral. Whether or not the air war is effective or ineffective, it *must* be stopped immediately. To argue on "ineffectiveness" grounds always opens up the old trap that if the air war *does* become effective, it will be harder to argue against. But I think that as people interested in stopping the air war, we have to realize that in the short term and on the political level, the question of effectiveness is an important one. If it is effective, I don't think we should use the argument that it's ineffective just for the hell of it. But if it *is* ineffective, we should say so, because it's one of the best ways of stopping the air war. Most Congressmen, Senators, or public figures couldn't give a shit whether or not Asians get slaughtered, but they are willing to pick up on the argument that air power isn't helping us anyway.

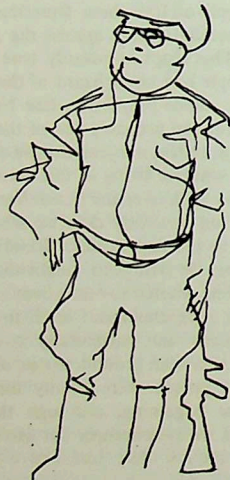
This question leads us to another important issue: our understanding of how revolutions come about. I think that one of the basic problems we've had in learning from the Indochinese—and I think they have a lot to teach us—is that all of us, myself included, have tended to over-romanticize the process of revolutionizing a society. During my interviews with thousands of these refugees in Laos, I was very interested in exactly how the Pathet Lao works. I would say that the first level of our over-romanticization is the assumption that the people of Indochina, from the beginning of the war, have been totally unified against the American imperialist aggressors. That's not necessarily true—in Laos, for example, many people had never heard of the Americans. Others changed their minds only later, like Ngo Vinh Long, a Vietnamese student and probably one of the brightest people residing in the U.S. today, a representative of the South Vietnamese students who are living in this country and a leader of the people who took over the South Vietnamese embassy earlier this year, and now very clear on where he stands. He was sympathetic to the Americans a decade ago. He worked for the Americans. He had been taught that America was a great country and he wanted to come here.

So even on a psychological level, in terms of people hating the Americans—and particularly in Laos, where they didn't have any American ground troops as a focus—it may not be true that people were totally unified against the Americans in the beginning, although they undoubtedly would have voted overwhelmingly for Ho Chi Minh, Prince Souphanouvong, etc., if they had had a free vote at any



point. But on the level of action, ten years ago, before the bombing started, the people of Indochina were certainly not prepared to act in total unity against the aggressors. They had their families to worry about, they had their fields to worry about, and their consciousness, as in this country, was focussed in the beginning on local problems. I think we just have to face the fact. Moreover, on the Plain of Jars, for example, which the Pathet Lao first began to administer in 1964, the people had been subjected to anti-Pathet Lao propaganda for ten years. A lot of them had been told the communists ate children and raped women. Of course few believed that, but many were apprehensive when the Pathet Lao took over. So then the guerrillas came in and talked about what imperialism means. They explained how the French were there and there were big landholders whom the people didn't like, but that didn't necessarily motivate the typical peasant to leave his family and friends, to risk death fighting for his people and nation.

But when the planes started coming over, they found out just what imperialism really means. Now ask yourself a question: how would you or I feel if we lost our mothers? If your mother were killed when planes came from 10,000 miles away by people you'd never seen, you would have a much higher level of consciousness and commitment, and be willing to take a lot more risks, than if that hadn't happened. What I've seen in Laos time and time again from interviewing the refugees is that the air war really raised consciousness in the guerrillas pretty quickly. The Pathet Lao are admirable fighters now. They take risks, they're disciplined, they go without food, etc. The leaders and many other people didn't need the air war to do that, and in time, probably the rest of the people wouldn't have either. But for it to happen so quickly, for so many of the people in the Plain of Jars who hadn't really been exposed to the Pathet Lao until 1964 to become so united within a year or two, the air war was a key factor. So I would argue that on the whole the air war has raised morale and given the vast majority of the people a clear reason for which to fight. In an arena where American officials have to rely on poorly motivated Asian conscripts



and mercenaries, this means the air war has helped the Pathet Lao to develop troops who fight better, gain more territory, and win over more people. That's the record of the last seven years.

**How much has morale risen in guerrilla zones over the last few years?**

Tremendously. I think the political and cultural repression in the cities is only one measure of American officials' fear of rising guerrilla morale. The main reason that the American air war hasn't been totally successful is not some fantastic, secret guerrilla technology, some super machine-guns which shoot down six jets with a single bullet. What the guerrillas do have is will and spirit and courage, a whole culture of resistance. In Indochina today, the air war is the military screen behind which the Americans practice a wide variety of economic, political and cultural measures designed to break that spirit of resistance. When I was in Paris in February, North Vietnamese representatives said there's no word to describe what the Americans are doing. It is not only genocide, biocide, and ecocide, but also "culturecide," or the destruction of a culture.

It's no accident that in the four years that I lived in Laos in American-controlled zones, I never once heard a Laotian tell me that he was proud to be a Laotian. But when you meet men and women coming from Pathet Lao zones, they tell you, "We have a great history, we've fought against aggressors, and we can defeat them now." This is totally erased in the American-controlled zones. When they learn about their history, it is presented in such terms as, first you were colonized by the French, then Laos was divided a long time, and so on; what Laotians tell you in the American-controlled zone is, "We're so happy that you Americans have come here to help us," etc. After massive uprooting of the people from the countryside, the family structure has been so weakened that over 400,000 Vietnamese women have become prostitutes. The kids who grow up in American-controlled zones stay in school until they're fourteen or fifteen and learn their smattering of English. Those who do well in English go on, but the vast majority goes into the army. Ripped away from what remains of their family, sent out to some isolated post and told to stay there, used as cannon fodder and bait, they become hard and mercenary, without beliefs, goals, or hopes. When you get into it and look at it from the Pathet Lao and NLF points of view, many of these millions of kids who are taken into the ARVN, these prostitutes, etc., have been killed. Their bodies remain, but the Vietnamese or Laotian parts of them are gone. (Though of course many, and perhaps most, of the ARVNs, the prostitutes, etc., *do resist*.) The strong ones who refuse to die, who remain Vietnamese—put them in prison, get them out of the way, for a key part of the air war, of the American struggle to remain on, is to break the will of the people.

**How conscious do you think this plan to break the spirit of the Indochinese is?**

I don't know if there is any one person or group of people making policy who think specifically in those terms.



It's probably a lot more garbled and vulgar in their minds, like: "We have to give them a piece of the action so they won't like the communists." But the point is that this kind of cultural genocide is going on right now, with no end in sight, hidden from outside view by the military screen.

You worked for the Americans in Laos from 1967 to 1969, and then from '69 to '71 you were on your own. What do you see as your personal responsibilities? How do you see yourself as an American, growing up in a right-on wealthy suburb—why did you go to Laos?

To escape the draft, basically, although I had fairly pure and politically naive motives. As a framework for answering this question, let me repeat a phrase that was in that *Liberation* article [February-March-April, 1971]. The basic lesson that came to me in Indochina was that the real war is not so much a test of whether the communist system is better than the capitalist system, whether national liberation is better than imperialism, but rather a very elemental struggle between the human spirit and an ahuman technology, as seen, for example, in the electronic battlefield.

The analogy to Hitler's campaign against the Jews falls down because at least Jews were people to Hitler—they were people with funny beards, they were vermin—and he hated them. One of the most interesting things was the group Hitler set up to found a museum to preserve Jewish culture, presumably as a monument to its iniquity. In the process, these Aryans learned all about Jewish culture; the Jews were people to them. By contrast, nobody today is out to get the Indochinese like Hitler went after the Jews. The Indochinese were "gooks" for the ground troops, but they aren't even gooks for the airmen. I was in Laos for four years and never heard a Laotian called a gook. They're just not people, they're not even considered. The refugees come into the camps and cities and then they're dealt with, and at some level there's talk of how by generating refugees we do this and that, but basically it's a completely ahuman kind of mentality which the Americans and their minions employ.

Moreover, it doesn't take you very long after coming back to this country to find out that these same men with this ahuman mentality are doing the same things to Americans, to black people and others. I don't believe that Nixon's the same sort of racist as George Wallace or somebody else who hates black people because he is attracted to their women or threatened by their masculinity. But blacks to Nixon are simply a bloc of votes; they're just ignored as human beings.

The best example of this process just came up today [February 23] on the front page of the *Washington Post*. Kleindienst says that he sees no distinction between the threat from foreign enemies and that from domestic radicals. Or a few months ago in *Reader's Digest*, there was a depersonalizing article about "radicals"—who are something like "communists" or "reds." This article was an "I was an FBI spy" type in which the radicals don't have names or faces. To the extent that they're described, they have long hair or something else equally specific, and they're planning to blow up everything and kill and rape. The article ends by saying something like: my life is now in danger but I'd do it again

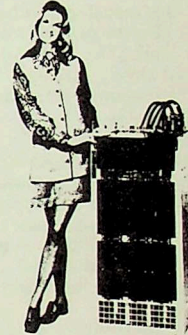
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for my country . . . This ahumanization, the increasing use of helicopters and wiretap devices in this country, the total disregard for human need . . . it's the same phenomenon as in Indochina. And let's not forget what these people with this ahuman morality did to the American "Indians" on the assumption that they posed some kind of alien threat to their interests. I find no reason to believe that they won't react in the same way to what they perceive as an equally great threat from the domestic front.

So the question is: what is my response to all this, coming from a middle-class suburb and going to college and having all of these privileges? Well, I find no greater model for what my response should be than the Pathet Lao, who are at the forefront of the battle against this ahuman technology. I think what is called for is a further development of one's human qualities and a realization that you are not going to prevail by becoming a super gadgeteer and learning all about technology so as to take over the machinery yourself. That the only way it's ever going to come about is by each of us developing her/his own qualities of patience and courage and perseverance and faith. ●



# ON REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION: Points For Discussion

## Preliminary

What follows is a summary of some changes in our method of proceeding. If we can judge by past errors, they seem to be needed.

It is not possible to go into particular cases. What is needed is to become clear about our basic outlook and analysis. This in turn is applied in particular cases. If correct in fundamentals you will not have errors in specific applications. But suppose your basic outlook and method is wrong. In this case even a correct decision in specific cases will be an accident. The chance for error will be immense.

## Making Judgments about Political Events

1. Two questions need to be asked in thinking about every development: (a) Does this case display a trend that is reactionary, or revolutionary? (b) Do the people involved believe it has a socialist or a capitalist aim? (The objective and the subjective are for the most part not closely matched. For instance, objectively the SA troops are counter-revolutionary. Subjectively they are revolutionary.)

2. If the tasks that need doing are to be done rightly, in deciding each judgment and policy you must ask:

- What's happening in the various strata of the masses?
- What favors us there? What opposes us?
- What is the broad, unpolitical or miseducated masses' perception of the political events?
- How do these masses perceive and feel about the revolutionary movement?

3. Every development is contradictory. It has elements which favor the revolution and elements which retard it. *Fore-sight* is possible only when:

- The contradictions are understood;
- The different possible courses for further development are explored. (For example, the reactionary and the revolutionary elements within fascism.)

4. The social process contains progressive forces, but it also contains retrograde or retrogressive ones. Revolutionary work consists of understanding both, and of promoting the revolutionary tendencies. (For example, in the Hitler Youth, sexual freedom is progressive, and trust in authority is retrogressive.)

5. Human needs do not exist for the sake of the economy. Rather, the economy exists for the sake of those needs.

6. The police, and others whom one flinches from as foes, should be pictured in their undershorts. And so with every feared authority.

## Methods of Proceeding

7. To win over the masses by manipulating and mesmerizing them—let us leave all that to the political reactionaries. The revolutionary movement does not want to mesmerize. It should rather disclose processes to the masses. It should locate and articulate their unexpressed and their unformulated needs. (The theory of "the inevitable revolutionary upswing"—that's an example of mesmerizing.)

8. Secret negotiation is the politics of reaction. The politics of revolution is to turn always to the masses, and to root out secret negotiations.

9. If you read your own desires back into the masses, and you do not judge the *real* situation *independently* of your own desires, then the most directly felt needs will remain unfulfilled. (Projection of the situation in a small circle onto the masses.)

10. The attitude called "economism" only leads to mistakes. Not the machine, but man, makes history. He uses machines for that end. The economy as such never enters directly into consciousness. There are many intermediary stages and also contradictions (for example, the worker who is Christian, the Nazi woman who is poor).

11. Possibly when the masses revolt against their material and sexual misery, it seems a "natural" development. Is this why it is always an incomprehensible problem when the masses *act against* their own interests ("irrational conduct")? Examples of the latter: The woman who welcomes marriage even though it may be her cage. The worker who ignores the facts of exploitation when his job horizon appears clear. The adolescent who comes out on behalf of sexual repression.

12. Class consciousness is not something to be taught to the masses like lessons in school—as a set of doctrines. Rather, it is to be elicited, drawn out of the masses' own experience. The discovery of the politics of all human needs.

13. Demonstrate clearly that when the proletariat acts in its own interests, it represents at the same time the interests of all people who work. Head off any conflict between the proletariat and the middle classes. For the industrial proletariat under advanced capitalism is numerically in the minority and it is bourgeoisified, too.

14. Better to employ no leaflets (or other actions) than to employ poor ones. Be sure to avoid anything that will disappoint and discourage the masses! Your will and your intention are not decisive. How the masses react is decisive! Instead—build confidence by all that you undertake. For instance: admit to not knowing something.

15. Do not exhort the masses to undertake more than they can carry out. Proceed step by step! In general, work by adopting the long view. Yet seize the advantage in every sudden turn of events!

16. The destiny of the revolution will always depend on the broad, unpolitical masses. Accordingly, discover the politics that underlie private life. Politicize its most trivial details, wherever people gather—in the dancehall, the movie house, the grocery store, the bedroom, the tavern, the betting office! The energy of the revolution is concentrated in the little events of everyday life!

17. Always think internationally. Never just nationally. ("We Germans aren't interested in the popular front in France, or the Saar question, or the Chinese revolution.")

## The Party—We Are It

18. Class consciousness comes in two types. That of the masses is different from that of the leadership. (Examples of the former kind: The needs of adolescents, as for their own living accommodations. The factory worker's refusal to accept a cut in his pay. The fury of the SA people when they were disarmed. Examples of the other kind: A knowledge of the mechanisms by which crisis takes its course. Technical understanding of the socialist economic plans. Understanding of imperialist contradictions and armaments races throughout the world, combined with the most attentive empathy with the needs of the masses.)

19. The political force of an organization or movement is ultimately determined not by its will or its program, but by its mass base, i.e., by what elements of the mass make up its following. Hence the same fate should not lie in store for the revolutionary leadership as came to Goebbels, who could brush off the massacre of June 30, 1934, since he was the representative of no mass base by which he was held accountable and which might have made him come down on the "right" side.

20. A crucial question: In what ways am I, who am a revolutionist, hampered by bourgeois, religious or moral habits? In what ways therefore am I crippled in my revolutionary work? At what points do I too tend to trust in authority?

21. The least we should expect is that the revolutionary leadership will act, not only subjectively, but also objectively in the revolutionary interest.

22. Where mistakes are made, it is imperative that corrections be carried through not only at the lower level but also at the higher level.

23. The political line must be submitted constantly to the control of the base. (Inner-party discussion.)

24. It is wrong to launch political steps silently or in secrecy. This only sows confusion and breeds incompetence. A full accounting ought to be given to the members of the party for every political step that is taken. The failures that occur should be the occasion of a true self-criticism, which doesn't merely distribute mechanical blame to the lower levels of the party ("The decisions of the Xth Party Congress have not been carried out properly").

25. In this connection, the problem of the leadership has to be raised. There must be renewal of the personnel at the middle and upper levels . . . Whoever acts and does so ignorantly . . . whoever proves reluctant to act . . . is not prepared to lead—and the pressure of the masses should induce him or her to admit it!

26. It is essential to find and prepare *in advance* the means which will prevent the bureaucratization of a living revolutionary organization. Why does the ordinary worker so readily turn into a mandarin when he is appointed a functionary? What are the warning signs?

27. How are we to detect the future turncoat, the police spy, renegade, unreliable type in a decisive moment, even before he realizes or is aware of it? (Vanity, ingratiating manner; soft-pedaling his position in debate; excessive friendliness; forced and abstract display of the revolutionary viewpoint, etc.)

28. What are the recognizable signs of the firm revolutionist? (Outwardly simple bearing; capacity for direct contact with people; simple, straightforward conduct in sexual matters; absence of phrasemaking; of course an emotional but above all a reasoned conviction favoring socialism; no mandarin tendencies when entrusted with tasks; absence of patriarchal attitude towards women and children.)

29. Composition of the party in the process of its building: Quality, not quantity, at the core! A core (the party), plus the matrix of sympathizing masses (formerly the simple party card-holders). A testing procedure before the admission of others.

30. No overburdening of the functionaries! Absolutely provide them with free time! Don't be indifferent to their private life, instead aid in maintaining its health! Always have substitutes prepared and ready to step in. Work allocated in tolerable proportions. Meetings brief and to the point! Criticism sought if pointed; critical carping *stringently rejected!* Always understand the other point of view first! Avoid the "scattershot" approach and intermittent "campaigning"; rather, pursue what is most fundamental and urgent, until the discussion has run its course.

31. No needless heroism! Do not be proud of martyrdom, but conserve your resources! There's no skill or fame in serving a sentence. But it can take the greatest skill to avoid serving a sentence! Don't brag about "proletarian solidarity." Rather, really do practice solidarity.

32. Personal conflicts and relationships often disturb the political work! Learn how not to reject the personal, but to politicize it. (For example, a wife who is self-centered and hampers the husband; or vice-versa.)

33. We must learn to go through changes in our thinking. This doesn't mean we shouldn't have convictions. We must learn to recognize that our adherence to organization and to transmitted ideas can get in the way of seeing the living reality. (The revolutionary organization, and our conscious solidarity in it, is the basis for the individual's revolutionary work. Yet where the organization becomes an unconscious substitute for a homeland and family, the sharp focus on reality can be obscured.)

34. Also with regard to inner-party issues, always turn to the open forum which is the party (this, of course, in times of legality). Inner-party secret proceedings are harmful. Anyone who must hide her/his opinion is not one of us. The same applies to anyone who subordinates the revolutionary cause to the service of tactics, rather than the reverse.

35. To develop one's own initiative, means quite unequivocally to observe life steadily and to proceed from one's conclusions.

—1934



# LORDSTOWN

A symphony of steel!

& 7000 new Jonahs in the coiled  
iron belly of this whale  
called

Lordstown

The sparks fly like fat hornets &  
bounce off welders helmets like

ack-ack

Huge cords are  
rubber intestines that  
dangle from gratings at the peak of  
the furnace

You can hear the explosions:  
ice cracking  
& avalanches  
shells shot from cannons  
& pistons bursting  
thru floorboards

The mice underfoot are chewing  
brittle ballbearings with teeth  
made of tungsten  
with skulls constantly  
crunched under blind metal  
presses

There is smoke & fire as  
volcanoes with lids sealed by the climate  
spit thru the mountain & at the snap of your fingers  
turn oak into carbon

Speed!

the command curls from the lips of invisible kings  
draped in gold armor & backed by armies with  
parchment & truncheon

The line rushes at you like a  
whipped hyena all rabid & laughing  
& gorging down doors & hoods & windows  
like water

*This is the glutton*

with teeth that peel flesh from their palms  
if a beat is missed & glares back with bulging  
chrome eyeballs & howls like a klaxon screeching  
more of it

faster!

On the galley the drumbeats get quicker  
but the drummer is lulled by the rhythm of  
his pounding & does not see them sweeping the  
mice & the bearings into the chassis & misses  
them snipping the wires to the taillights &  
spilling axle grease skimmed from the linings:

a product of the good ship  
Lordstown

There are plots being hatched in the bathrooms  
& crosshairs etched on the necks of foremen in  
a thousand Lordstowns

At five dollars an hour  
there is no law  
& no bit  
that fits  
their jaws  
& even the windowpanes  
have trouble keeping their place  
when the orchestra starts  
(the Africans can see the  
whites  
of their eyes in the  
silver bumpers of  
better ideas)

The lords of Lordstown need armies  
for neighbors & chauffeurs to taste  
the products  
for poison

(inside the belly theres a jungle  
of wires & rods & elevators  
& belts that never stop running &  
the steam like hot smog makes it  
hard for the seeing & machetes &  
road maps are tough for the getting  
but the path leads right to the houses  
on hilltops & like the ocean for Moses  
the army will part for the coming)

In Lordstown  
theres no albatross like age  
but even the elders empty the filings  
of finely drilled rivets into the coffin  
between wheeldrum & hubcap

& testing the radio there comes the kind  
music & the tunes so familiar its become  
nearly martial  
it assumes a choral which echoes off beams  
as thick as your thigh & the jingle becomes  
part of the tempo  
it meshes with the bursting of air drills &  
crests on the sparks that dance off the  
torches

& the bosses start bouncing & kicking their heels  
& grinning like drunkards

They salute old glory & kneel to  
hyenas & snap back their whips made of  
hot plastic

The song has a sting in the  
bowels of Lordstown  
tensing the muscles & veins till it shoots  
thru the ceiling

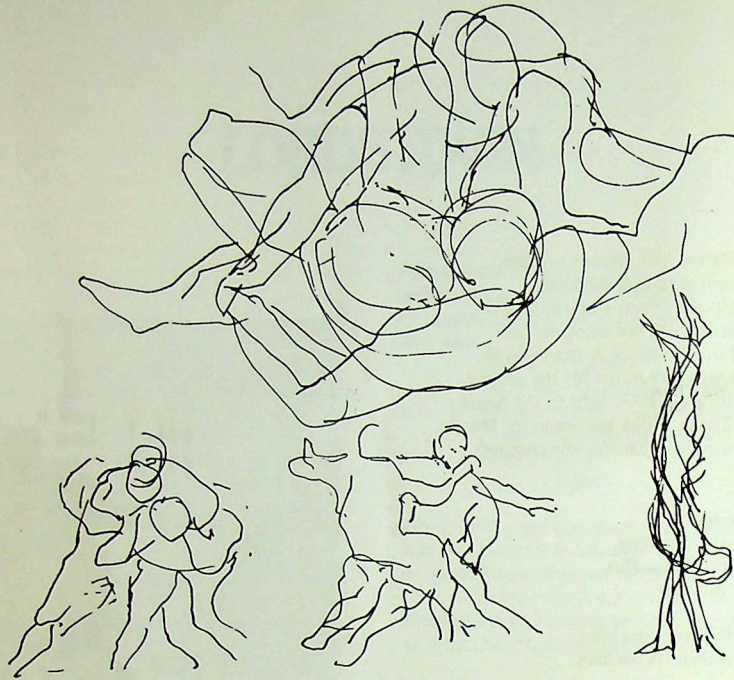
the armies of Lordstown  
in the mirrors of Vegas made of their  
bodies  
see

the USA  
& have a  
better way



—jon hillson





# TOWARDS A METHOD FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY RECONSTRUCTION OF EVERYDAY LIFE

bruce brown

**D**uring the events of May-June 1968 in Paris, the following expression was prominently displayed on the walls of the Sorbonne: "the first revolution was political (of nationalities), the second was economic (of proletariats), ours will be cultural." Although it was the French student movement which coined this particular slogan, it would seem to have expressed a sentiment commonly held by the various currents of contestation making up what we call the New Left—the anti-authoritarian student movements, the dissident groupings within the so-called youth culture, the movements for female and sexual liberation, the revolts of colonized minorities—throughout the advanced capitalist countries. Although its nomenclature may be borrowed in part from the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, the current call by New Leftists for a cultural revolution in the West nevertheless has a very different meaning and content which can be fully understood only in terms of the specific experiences of oppression and alienation which gave birth to these struggles in the advanced industrial world, on the one hand,

and the concrete problems of revolutionary theory and practice which have been posed by the subsequent development of this disparate New Left, on the other.

## The New Left in Search of a Cultural Revolutionary Project

**T**hese "new left" movements originated in the revolt of individuals against their experience of impotence and alienation within an increasingly reified and atomized "consumer" society—fragmented at the base and unified only from above by an ever more omnipotent bureaucratic apparatus. This society everywhere negates human experience and denies individuals any control over the processes that structure their existence; it deforms and denies the satisfaction of the very needs it creates within these individuals; it expropriates not only their work and creative activity but their leisure and private lives as well. Under these conditions, as R.D. Laing put it, "no one can begin to think, feel or act . . . except



from the starting point of his or her alienation."<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, these new radical currents started out as pure affirmations of spontaneity and democracy, as living refusals of the petrification of society and the impoverishment of everyday life.

Quite understandably rejecting the reductive\* formulas of the traditional Left, these New Leftists sought, through a politics of continual experimentation, not so much a new revolutionary theory as the sort of new experience which is the source of all truly revolutionary theory. In this way, they discovered—not out of books, but from their own concrete experience—certain crucial truths which more traditional leftists, due to their doctrinaire and economic perspectives, had been unable to perceive. Above all, as they came into contact with the system's bureaucratic apparatus, they found that the opportunities for "doing one's own thing" were narrowly circumscribed by this apparatus and that, as a result, it was impossible to evade the political consequences of one's actions. As Marshall Berman puts it, "whoever you are, or want to be, you may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you."<sup>2</sup> In other words, they discovered "that nothing in modern society is unpolitical, that every detail of everyday life is saturated with and reproduces the hegemony of the ruling system."<sup>3</sup>

With this recognition, there followed the necessity of transforming this amorphous movement of disaffection into a new subversive force, and of inventing a new politics capable of overcoming the depoliticization of public life and the atrophy of earlier political oppositions—a project which found its most immediate expression in the widespread talk among New Leftists of the need for a "cultural revolution." For all the new oppositional currents making up this New Left, the slogan of "cultural revolution" carries the implication that the old revolutionary project developed by socialists over the last century—a project which emphasized the necessity of overcoming the proletariat's exploitation in the work place through the socialization of the means of production and of replacing the destructive anarchy of the unregulated capitalist market with rational social and economic planning—is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for revolution today. Under the present conditions of advanced capitalism, it is necessary to conceive of a much more pro-

found process of revolutionary transformation. What is called for is a total attack on existing alienations—not just the alienation of the worker from his economic product, but all the other forms of alienation (political, psychological, sexual, aesthetic, cultural, etc.), which afflict us today. "Cultural revolution" thus does not mean a struggle which substitutes narrowly "cultural" goals for traditional political and economic ones. Rather, it is a cumulative process, in the sense that it incorporates all these earlier conflicts within a larger revolutionary project, multiplying them and endowing them with a new actuality.

**A**lthough this search for a cultural revolutionary project and politics has been the principal impetus for the New Left's politicization, unfortunately it is still only a tendency—more a fervently desired goal than an accomplished fact. This is particularly true on the ideological and theoretical level, where the movement's initial distrust of and indifference to intellectual work—which to a certain extent was an asset ten or even five years ago—has become an impediment to its further political development. Unable to bring together the different threads and currents of contestation within an adequate totalizing perspective and an overall revolutionary strategy, the movement finds itself increasingly vulnerable to the manipulative techniques of divide and conquer, of containment and/or cooptation, by which the system seeks to suffocate potential opposition and repress consciousness of its contradictions. The success of this repressive strategy is particularly apparent today in the increasing difficulty of effecting a fusion of cultural and political struggles, and the consequent growing disjunction between the two. At the height of the movement's initial burst of enthusiasm, during the late 1960s, it had seemed for a brief moment that anything was possible, that cultural and political radicalism were one and the same. But in the wake of repression and disappointed hopes, disillusionment set in and this unity was shattered, leaving political radicals and their ideological banners on one side and cultural radicals, convinced that all politics were a sham, on the other. In short, in Murray Bookchin's words, "... the two sides became polarized into 'either . . . or' propositions as though oppression can be defined in only one of two ways: spiritual or material, psychic or economic, alienative or exploitative."<sup>4</sup>

As a result, the movement is presently in crisis. As the contradictions of advanced capitalism grow ever more intense, the profound inhumanity and moral bankruptcy of the system is revealed to ever greater numbers of people. But the New Left has no theory and strategy of cultural revolution capable of giving direction to this constantly enlarging fund of disaffection and revulsion. The movement's current fragmentation has brought disorientation and confusion, even despair. But to many, it has also brought an increased awareness of the inadequacies of the forms of organization and activity developed in the Sixties. A search for new directions,

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\*The concept of "reduction" as used here is that of Henri Lefebvre, who defines it as the tendency to take specialization to the limit, to divide labor and fragment activity, to treat problems in a narrowly analytic (as opposed to synthetic) manner, to separate labor, politics, and private life, etc. "To reduce," he writes, "is not only to simplify, schematize, dogmatize, order. It is also to arrest and fix, to change the totality into a part and yet to claim that it is the totality . . . ."

1. *The Politics of Experience* (Pantheon: New York, 1967), p. xiv.

2. *The Politics of Authenticity: Radical Individualism and the Emergence of Modern Society* (Atheneum: New York, 1971).

3. Paul Breines, "From Guru to Spectre: Marcuse and the Implosion of the Movement," *Liberation*, Vol. 15, No. 5 (July, 1970), p. 26.

4. "Youth Culture: an Anarcho-Communist View" in *Hip Culture: Six Essays on its Revolutionary Potential* (Times Change Press: New York, 1970), p. 53.



new projects, new collective revolutionary identities, appears to be beginning. Above all, there seems to be emerging a belated recognition of the crucial need to go beyond the recent "wars of quotations" between competing sects, which substitute textual exegesis from authorities ranging from Mao to Metesky for theoretical work, by reinstating distinctions between sloganeering and radical analysis, to inform spontaneity with conscious criticism and critical consciousness, by rehabilitating the theoretical enterprise, and, in this way, to bridge the crippling disjunction between political and cultural revolutionary currents within the movement by making explicit the liberatory project which has already been implicitly posed by the New Left's practical development.

### The Rediscovery of Critical Marxism

It is in this light, then, that we can appreciate the current revival of interest in theoretical work on the part of an increasing number of New Leftists—a change in emphasis and a reorientation of activity which has clearly been reflected in recent issues of *Liberation* as well as in other movement publications. There has been an increasing recognition that the elaboration of new revolutionary theory must be based on a rediscovery of the currents of critical revolutionary thought which embody the accumulated experience of revolutionary struggles of many generations past. On the other hand, there is also an acute awareness that the actual resumption of revolutionary struggles implies the reassertion and deepening "of all the old liberating endeavors" in the face of their incompleteness or their partial incorporation within the system's logic. It has already been discussed in an earlier issue of *Liberation*<sup>5</sup> how this reorientation has been reflected in the enormous current interest within the movement in the work of revolutionary thinkers like Wilhelm Reich and Herbert Marcuse, for together with the Surrealists and Marcuse's colleagues in the Frankfurt School, it is these thinkers more than any others in the history of Marxism who have antici-

5. Bruce and Kathy Brown, "[Wilhelm] Reich, Cultural Revolution, and the New Left," *Liberation*, Vol. 16, No. 5 (October, 1971).

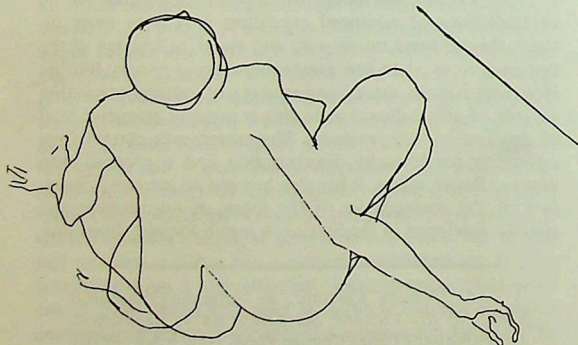
pated the contemporary problematic\* posed by the New Left's development.

More specifically, these theorists represent perhaps the most significant attempt to date to restate the classical revolutionary project of the socialist movement in terms of the problems posed for it by the fundamental crisis of civilization in the 20th century—a crisis which manifested itself above all in the failure of the *subjective* pre-conditions for the transformation to a new system of social relations to develop among the masses in the face of events such as the two world wars and the Great Depression, which so clearly demonstrated the *objective* obsolescence and moral bankruptcy of the existing system of bourgeois social relations. That the masses reacted to these catastrophes not by a rational assertion of their own self-interest but by surrendering themselves to an irrational politics of disaster which was the very antithesis of this interest, could not be accounted for by a classical Marxism which reduced all conflicts to the economic level. Rather, it demanded an analysis of repressive society which combined an understanding of the dialectics of psychic life, on the one hand, with an understanding of their reciprocal relations with the dialectics of historical life (i.e., the class struggle), on the other. Only psychoanalysis integrated within the framework of a critical Marxism appeared to offer such a perspective. It alone could comprehend the manner in which the maintenance of class power, and of the modes of economic exploitation necessary to reproduce that power, depended not only upon the actual forces of physical coercion available to the ruling class or on the ideological mystification and propaganda with which it seeks to insulate itself, but also, and more fundamentally, on the reproduction within the masses themselves of submissive personality structures appropriate to the needs of the dominant system.

### Wilhelm Reich and the Sexual Revolution

Such a "Freudo-Marxist" analysis, first developed by Wilhelm Reich in the late 1920s and early 1930s, demonstrated, first of all, how society created authoritarian character structures through a process of the formation, alteration and suppression of human needs, and how the patriarchal family served the system as the psychic agency through which this process took place. More specifically, according to Reich the patriarchal family structure produced submissive, authoritarian personalities by stifling the infant's creative impulses in general and by repressing the expression of its sexual urges in particular. In this sense, a direct relationship is established between the forms of class domination over people in the society as a whole and the modes of patriarchal domination over women and children within the family. Finally, in demonstrating how capitalism perpetuates itself through imposing psychological (and above all, sexual) re-

\*The term "problematic" is used here in the philosophical sense of a critical point of impasse in the development of theory or practice which forms the context in which the particular problems peculiar to an era present themselves.



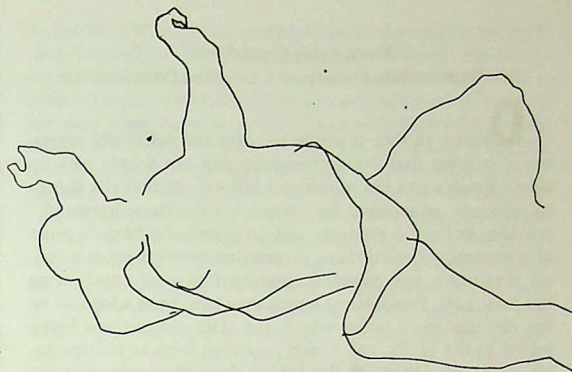


pression on the masses, as well as through their economic exploitation and political oppression, Reich revealed new, explosive sources of conflict overlooked by Marxism—forces and antagonisms which might be utilized to help individuals overcome their authoritarian fixations and become capable of the social act of revolution.

In particular, Reich argued that under the conditions of material scarcity which had characterized all previous history, the libidinal energy of the vast majority of people had been necessarily sublimated in the struggle for survival. Now, however, this labor, this self-denial, has produced a level of technological development that makes future repression unnecessary. The result is an explosive collision between the claims of human instinct and a civilization that continues to deny them. Under these circumstances, the gratification of previously suppressed libidinal urges—pursued to the limits defined by the individual's own need for creative personal development, rather than restricted by the need to reproduce class domination within the masses—would inevitably lead to an extension of the claim for gratification and happiness to other spheres of human existence as well. Thus, just as sexual inhibition is a crucial component of inhibition in general, so also is sexual emancipation an essential stage in a general emancipation of humanity that would transcend capitalist society.

On the basis of these insights—on the one hand, into the manner in which social modes of domination depend on psycho-sexual modes of domination built up in childhood and adolescence; on the other, into the liberating potential represented by the struggle against psycho-sexual repression—Reich attempted to reformulate the inherited principles of radical politics on the basis of a new, broadened conception of the revolutionary project. Although accepting the macro-sociological argument of Marxism regarding the absolute necessity of overthrowing the capitalist state and the system of bourgeois property relations, it was nonetheless possible, he argued, to wage a struggle to subvert the reactionary influence of institutions like the family, school and church, without waiting for the great social and political revolution which would destroy the very foundations of exploitation and hence the need for these ideology-producing institutions.

Indeed, not only was such a struggle possible, but, for Reich and his comrades in the Sex-Pol (Sexual-Political) Movement of the Thirties, it was also absolutely necessary; for a socialist revolution whose “human dimension” is continually put off until later can easily accommodate itself to the patriarchal family, to sexual repression, to the repressive organization of the school. However notably such a revolution might succeed on the higher level by eliminating the bourgeois system of property relations, if it did not similarly overthrow the repressive morality of everyday life, it was doomed to failure. At best, it might simply democratize economic life, while leaving intact all the processes through which reactionary ideologies are internalized in the character structure of the masses—leading, as in Russia, to their depoliticization, to the replacement of proletarian democracy by bureaucratic efficiency, of Lenin by Stalin. More probably, the attempt to realize a purely political and economic revolution without first waging a struggle to transform the estab-



lished character structure of the masses, would only succeed in provoking disastrous “defensive reactions” in the form of fascist counter-revolution on the part of the very masses the revolutionary movement claimed to represent.

If, indeed, these broad, “unpolitical” masses upon whom the fate of the revolution ultimately depends, are to be won over to the proletarian “cause,” then it is essential that a second front be opened up in the class struggle, through a cultural revolutionary project aimed at the politicization of everyday life. Reich’s “What is Class-Consciousness?” published for the first time in English translation in the October 1971 issue of *Liberation*, presents what is probably the ultimate programmatic statement of such a new politics. Within the strategy it outlines, the struggles of the proletariat in the work-place against the power of the ruling class are united with a cultural revolutionary project aimed at weakening the inhibiting influence of the authoritarian character structure of adults and at forestalling its development in the young, thus facilitating the development “of people with character structures which would make them capable of self-regulation.”

Although the Sex-Pol Movement and the perspectives of the Freudo-Marxists were ultimately unsuccessful in their bid to introduce a new revolutionary dimension to the struggles of the Left in the 1930s, their importance should be obvious today, when a revolutionary “new left” is once again opening up the questions of personal liberation and its relation to the broader social revolution. For in raising the whole problem of the political significance of sexual repression, on the one hand, and the enormous revolutionary potential represented by the struggle against sexual repression—and especially the sexual revolt of youth and women—on the other, Reich and his followers first enunciated the premises of a new revolutionary practice which would find its concrete embodiment 30 years later in the politics of the New Left in the West. If the communist movements in the Thirties had been as willing as the contemporary New Left movements to deal with the authoritarianism built into the psychic structure of the masses and its origins in sexual repression and the psychic conditioning of the patriarchal family, if they had launched a comprehensive and consistent struggle for the revolutionary transformation of human relations, the outcome of the struggle against fascism in the West might have been completely different.



## From Crisis Capitalism to a Bureaucratic Society of Controlled Consumption

Despite all this, it would be naive and politically regressive to assume that the movement today can simply pick up where Reich's Sex-Pol movement left off, or that the Reichian strategy enunciated in "What is Class-Consciousness?" provides in itself a strategic and programmatic basis capable of overcoming the crippling disjunction between socio-political revolution and personal emancipation now confronting the New Left. Perspectives which may have been adequate to the circumstances under which the class struggle was being waged in the 1930s, and which may even form an indispensable point of departure for future theoretical advances, do not, however, constitute a sufficient intellectual basis for the resumption for revolutionary struggle. Neither do they permit us to dispense with the obligation of all revolutionaries to keep abreast with reality by the continual up-dating and modification of old categories and/or the introduction of new ones in the light of actual historical development.

Underlying this need for a continual updating of revolutionary theory and practice is the fact that we are currently undergoing one of the most extraordinary and massive processes of transformation in the whole history of humanity—more profound and disruptive even than those of such periods as the Renaissance or the first industrial revolution. Driven forward by the scientific and technical revolution of this century and by the simultaneous unification of the world, this transformation is giving birth to a totally new civilization, new in regard to its ecological environment as much as to its technical-economic base, its social structure, its mental superstructure, its means of communication, and its modes of perception. At the time Reich wrote, however, the all-pervasive effects of this vast transformation had only just begun to reveal themselves, in the breakdown of competitive, laissez-faire capitalism, on the one hand, and in the dissolution of patriarchal authority and of traditional sexual morality, the partial emancipation of women and youth, and the increasing extension of opportunities for leisure, consumption, and education to the proletarian masses, on the other. In attempting to reformulate the revolutionary project in the light of these phenomena, he was therefore unable to anticipate certain contradictory consequences of this transformation, which became fully visible only after World War II.

These changes, which reflect both the increasingly effective mobilization of society's resources in order to suppress the liberating potentialities latent in the development of its productive forces, and the reorganization and stabilization of economic life within the framework of organized "consumer" capitalism in the West or bureaucratic state capitalism in the East, have resulted in the progressive integration of political, economic and administrative processes within a single, overarching apparatus of total administration. As a consequence of this tendency toward the gradual obliteration of the functional difference between the base and the superstructures, the social system of industrial societies increasingly takes the form of a network of totalitarian institutions, aiming at the integration of all aspects of everyday life—

work, leisure, consumption, education, sexuality, etc.—with the repressive logic of the whole.

This transformation of both the socio-economic structure and the institutions of social control has been accompanied by an equally profound modification of the psychic environment of contemporary capitalism as a result of the parallel development of increasingly sophisticated techniques for the manipulation and management of both individual and collective behavior. Mass education, market research, "human relations," information processing, the repressive use of mass communications, and the proliferation of "spectacles," all serve "to demand and evoke a false consciousness immunized against its own falseness." As Marcuse and, more recently, Reimut Reiche, have shown, these tendencies have profound consequences both for the psychic development of individuals and for the nature of the society made up of such individuals. For instance, whereas "it was possible for Wilhelm Reich in his day to link every demand for the liberation of sexuality from the complex of forces oppressing it under the capitalist system," today even sexuality has become integrated within the general system of domination. Disinfected of any true erotic content, it appears only as an object of consumption, as a thing to be labelled, hoarded, bartered, or bought. As a consequence, "it has become very much more difficult to make the qualitative distinction between apparent and real sexual freedom."<sup>6</sup> Although all the new forms of sexual manipulation—the commercialization of sex, the de-eroticization of the human body, the institutionalized release of instinctual energies in the form of controlled aggression, etc.—are directly related to the contemporary forms of social and economic exploitation and class domination, they are, nevertheless, only *one* aspect of this general oppression, which encompasses the destruction of *all* forms of real human communication and individuality. This process of "massification," as described by Marcuse, is seen as directly related to the decreasing importance of the familial framework and the transfer of the socializing or character-forming functions to other agencies (peer groups, the mass media, the schools, etc.). Whereas Reich saw only the liberating aspects of such a disintegration of familial authority, for Marcuse—given the conditions of total administration and manipulation by the repressive apparatus—it simply means the subjection of the individual to a continuing process of repressive socialization, resulting in a tendency toward the disintegration of the ego itself. This production of "masses," in turn, is simply the reflection on the psychological level of the more general tendency toward "the introjection of totalitarianism into the daily business and leisure of man, into his toil and into his happiness," which "manifests itself in all the manifold ways of fun, relaxation and togetherness which practice the destruction of privacy, the contempt of form, the inability to tolerate silence, the proud exhibition of violence and brutality."<sup>7</sup>

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6. Reimut Reiche, *Sexuality and Class Struggle* (New Left Review Editions: London, 1970), p. 17.

7. Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization: a Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Vintage Books: New York, 1962), p. x.



## The Limits of Integration and the Re-emergence of Opposition

Within this bureaucratic society of controlled consumption, the fun and games of repressive affluence in which the individual participates at the point of consumption have as their admission price the continuing surrender of control over increasing areas of his/her life to the quasi-totalitarian apparatus. As a consequence of this progressive disappearance of all remaining areas of choice or autonomy, there is a dual loss: in the private sphere, the loss of a sense of personal identity; in the public sphere, the loss of any meaningful political life. Even the autonomy of organizations originating in an earlier era of class struggles and formally dedicated to the defense of the interests of the oppressed against the ruling class and the state (labor unions, for example) becomes illusory in the face of the current extension of the system's administrative apparatus. As a result of all these processes, then, the new repressive system seemed, to radical critics like Herbert Marcuse, to have virtually foreclosed on the remaining possibilities of social revolution. Although the system's objective contradictions might in no way be overcome—indeed, they were more profound than ever before—the system's success in manipulating consciousness seemed to preclude the very process of subjective transcendence which could bring these contradictions to consciousness and hence, revive the class struggle.

Given the success of this counter-revolutionary mobilization of society's repressive forces—extending even to an “administered” relaxation of sexual mores on a scale Reich

would have thought incompatible with the maintenance of class domination—it is no longer possible to accept the overly optimistic Reichian vision of the prospects for a cultural revolution uniting social liberation with sexual emancipation. At the same time, however, the extreme pessimism of Marcuse's vision of a totally closed, one-dimensional system is equally in error. Indeed, “the very intensity of the process of management and manipulation, the necessity for the constant supervision in the realm of consciousness” within this society “is the best evidence of the essential fragility of the social structure which requires it.”<sup>8</sup> Aiming at stability, consolidation, at preserving its own survival, at integrating the working class and smothering its traditional class antagonisms, this society only partially succeeds and achieves this partial success only at the cost of maximizing repression. Since the products and illusory satisfactions it provides cannot under any circumstances really satisfy the expectations they create, frustrations and unfulfilled desires accumulate into a fund of repressed resentment. As a result, just as it appears to realize its goals, just as integration tends to become complete, incorporating all the old oppositional forms into the apparatus, it also tends to explode: “By fragmenting and multiplying the vexations, it thus arrives sooner or later at an atom of unlivable reality, and suddenly frees a nuclear energy that had become lost from sight beneath so much passivity and

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8. William Leiss, “The Critical Theory of Society,” in P. Breines (ed.), *Critical Interruptions: New Left Perspectives on Herbert Marcuse* (Herder and Herder: New York, 1970), p. 99.



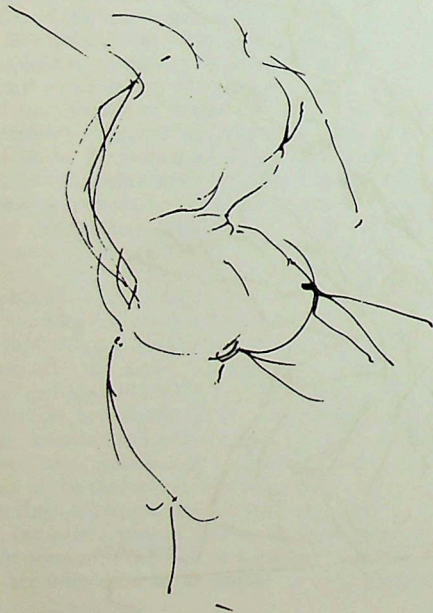


dreary resignation."<sup>9</sup> Thus, the image of total social integration collapses. Opposition once more becomes possible and thus necessary. A New Left arises and new forms of struggle and contestation are invented which attempt to direct the accumulated resentment diffused among the oppressed population back against its real source—the "system."

To be sure, this re-emergence of opposition within the advanced capitalist societies does not signify a return to the sort of class politics which characterized the pre-fascist era. It rather demands the elaboration of new forms of action and fresh strategic perspectives appropriate to the new forms of domination and new internal potentialities which characterize the latest stage in the development of capitalism. If the development of new techniques for the manipulation of behavior and the total administration of society has not, as we have suggested, been successful either in smothering the system's contradictions or in preventing the emergence of new and explosive forces of opposition, these new techniques have nevertheless altered decisively the basis for the development and organization of these potentially revolutionary forces, in ways anticipated neither by the traditional Marxian theory nor even by its Reichian and Marcusean reformulations. These modifications thus pose a number of practical and theoretical problematics for these new oppositional forces which must be surmounted if they are to come to fruition in a new emancipatory praxis and which, if not resolved, will ultimately pose a threat to the very existence of these forces. The discussion to follow, without attempting to be systematic, will explore the nature of these problematics

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9. Raoul Vaneigem, *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes generations* (Gallimard: Paris, 1968), p. 30.



and suggest some of the possible ways in which they may be resolved or overcome.

### The Problem of Creating Non-Repressive Needs

**T**he first problematic facing the New Left is that of the necessity to create "non-repressive" needs and to liberate new desires both within its own ranks and within the population as a whole. As the Frankfurt Marxists have shown, bureaucratic, "consumer" capitalism, through its control over the formation and satisfaction of individual needs and through its elimination of all opportunities for autonomous individual development within its all-pervasive institutional apparatus, has achieved a degree of instinctive or primary integration among the dominated majority sufficient to repress its very capacity for subjective transcendence or spontaneous negation. Capitalist development thus reduces not only the environment of freedom and the "free space" necessary for the existence of individuality but also the very desire and need for such an environment. Under these circumstances, "the individual and with him the rights and liberties of the individual is something that has still to be created, and that can be created only through the development of qualitatively different societal relations and institutions." Although "all the material and intellectual forces needed for the realization of a free society are present"<sup>10</sup> and hence the advanced industrial societies are ripe for a revolution extending beyond the mere reorganization of production, a development and refinement is needed within the human psyche in order to bring it into correspondence with the level already reached by technological development and the potentialities contained within that development. There is, then, a vicious circle: "the rupture with the self-propelling conservative continuum of needs must precede the revolution which is to usher in a free society, but such [a] rupture itself can be envisaged only in a revolution—a revolution which would be driven forward by the vital need to be freed from the administered comforts and the destructive productivity of the exploitative society . . ." <sup>11</sup> Thus, a qualitative change must occur in the character of human needs, extending to the very depths of the biological infrastructure of the personality and, as a consequence, demanding the transformation of the existing forms and contents of human life into qualitatively new ways of living. In this sense, the demands of the current struggle may correspond more than anything else to the sort of total revolutionary practice dreamed of by the Surrealists, which would bring together the perspective of Marx—"to transform the world"—with the perspective of Rimbaud—"to change life"—within a common struggle resting on a new conception of human possibilities. This praxis, aiming not at an abstract utopia but at the permanent unleashing of human creativity, begins with a series of very concrete liberations: all the faculties, tendencies, or elements that have been repressed, concealed, or perverted, will now find release. Ac-

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10. Herbert Marcuse, "The End of Utopia," in *Five Lectures: Psychoanalysis, Politics, and Utopia* (Beacon Press: Boston, 1970), p. 64.

11. Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Beacon Press: Boston, 1969), pp. 18-19.



ording to this conception, desire, hope and imagination are latent in man and his history—to become actualized, however, they must “have power.” The permanent aim of revolutionary activity thus becomes to give them that power—to liberate the unconscious, to place creation at the disposal of everyone, to bring imagination to power.

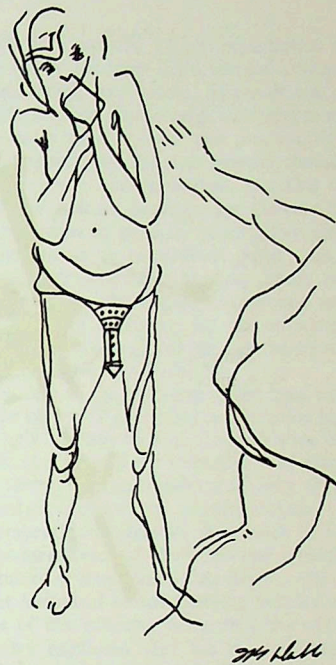
The pursuit of these ends—the liberation of previously suppressed human needs, desires and possibilities and their coming to consciousness through a new sort of permanent cultural revolution—suggests the full extent and depth of the problematic confronting us. For the necessary “break in the historical continuum” which it implies must take place in the face of the following three difficulties:

Firstly, that this break can only be theorized in advance in categories, modes of thought and dreams bearing the hallmarks of the existing society, and the oppression, exploitation and deprivation of liberties practiced in it; secondly, that it will have to be carried out by people who, though they suffer under this oppression, exploitation and deprivation of liberty, want to do away with them, [but] are also molded and maimed by them in their most minute feelings and habits; and, thirdly, that the free society can only be built up on the basis of the maimed and fettered capacities of unfree societies.”<sup>12</sup>

In the face of these obstacles, the project of “transforming life” is not going to be accomplished magically through a sort of poetic act, as the Surrealists believed. Such a cultural revolutionary project today will not and cannot simply unfold in the abstract, nor will it be achieved by the pure spontaneity of a practice of total negation and refusal. A practice which seeks the liberation of what has hitherto remained unconscious cannot itself be unconscious; on the contrary, it needs not less, but more reflection and analysis than earlier revolutionary movements. Just as the capitalism of today has made the manipulation of individual behavior and need into a practical science, the cultural revolution which combats the system’s repressive apparatus can only proceed on the basis of a critical revolutionary science which can master, both theoretically and practically, the dialectic of repression and integration through which the system infiltrates the terrain of everyday life. This means working out a multi-dimensional revolutionary project, building upon but going beyond the syntheses of Reich and Marcuse, to incorporate the new complexities represented by current reality and by the oppositions to this reality.

#### The Loss of Self and the Constraints on Experience

Such a cultural revolutionary project, while having much in common with that of the Sex-Pol movement, nevertheless must begin by taking account of the new dimensions which have come to characterize the individual experience of oppression since Reich’s day. Increasingly, the neuroses and Oedipal fixations he examined have been replaced by the



contemporary syndromes of alienation: absurdity, nausea, superfluity, meaninglessness, schizophrenia, etc. These new forms of psychological repression, like the older ones, serve to block the development of the individual’s consciousness and hence of his/her capacity to act in a revolutionary manner. But their crippling effects are far more extensive and incalculably more severe; accordingly, the cultural revolutionary project today must go beyond Reich’s narrow emphasis on overcoming sexual repression. It must find methods of struggle which incorporate a total challenge to the way individual experience and authenticity are reduced by the repressive organization of everyday life. Given this “totalization” of alienation—this internalization of the repressive society outside—“a purely sexual counter-strategy or even a counter-strategy whose main bias is in this direction, is not by itself sufficient to wipe out exploitation.”<sup>13</sup>

More specifically, such a project and such a strategy must begin at a much deeper and more fundamental level than Reich’s did. For, while the old Freudian ego produced by the patriarchal family was innately authoritarian and neurotic, at least it provided a subject for the Reichian project of overcoming the repressions which had deformed it. In the current stage of the development of repressive society, even the Self itself has become problematic—within this society each individual is non-identical with her/himself. In place of the former unity of the self, there is only a succession or even a simultaneity of fragmentary perceptions in a fragmented environment. Under these circumstances, the unifica-

12. Reiche, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 25.





tion of individual experiences within a framework capable of giving them meaning is rendered ever more difficult, if not impossible. The individual—unable to find a means of identifying him/herself within the framework of a segmented experience in which family, home, work, leisure, consumption, politics, etc., are all divided up—becomes ever farther removed from a dialectical comprehension of reality, ever farther removed from participation in creative praxis. Freedom, under these conditions, remains a purely abstract possibility unless some sort of synthesis takes place. Through a “systematization of confusion,” as Breton might have called it, the individual must discover the hidden principles of order underlying a chaotic existence.

To be sure, an enormous amount of energy is available for this task. For the terms of survival defined by this society—the unconditional surrender of the self to the logic of bureaucratic power, the individual’s acquiescence in her/his own dismemberment, the endless pursuit of pseudo-gratifications by which the consumer is him/herself consumed—make everyday existence impossible to tolerate and lead a growing number of people into a total refusal of this reductive fragmentation. However, this refusal, and the aspirations toward subjective autonomy and toward a restoration of the essential wholeness of the self which it implies, come up against the total mobilization of the repressive society’s formidable powers of containment and manipulation. Under these circumstances, they are foredoomed to failure unless they succeed from the very start in breaking free of the “blockage” imposed upon them by the system’s success in maintaining the maximum isolation of the individual. Other-

wise, the creative energies released by this refusal, confined to the monadic solitude of the individual’s imagination, can only find an outlet in fantasy as the individual attempts to discover his/her lost “self” through an inward journey—a journey which leads to passivity or even madness. As Murray Bookchin has put it, to drop out in this sense, is “to drop in.”

#### The Small Group in the Struggle for Free Space

**A** practice capable of facilitating the individual’s self-transformation while avoiding these pitfalls of solitude and self-destruction must thus be simultaneously subversive and therapeutic: on the one hand, it must be capable of undermining the triple pillars of hierarchy, specialization and non-communication by which the system maintains the individual in a state of passive subordination; on the other hand, of facilitating the crystallization of new, self-confident and integrated personalities capable of subjective autonomy. Where is such a two-sided method of contestation and therapy to be found? It is in the search for an answer to this problematic that the developing practice of the New Left has led to the rediscovery, in the spontaneous capability of small groups, of a potential instrument of struggle which has not been given its full due since Proudhon’s day. More specifically, in its various contemporary manifestations (affinity groups, collectives, communes, micro-societies, consciousness-raising groups, etc.) the small-group form has provided the New Left with an indispensable context *outside* the framework of the



system's repressive apparatus within which to recreate the sort of "interhuman" milieu which alone can facilitate the difficult process of reconciling individual need and social purpose. In this way, as individuals escape the quiet desperation of their monadic existences and learn to identify with larger areas of social purpose, the practice of the group may nurture the emergence of the embryonic social self lying buried underneath the defenses (or to use Reich's term, the "character armor") which the individual has had to develop to survive in an atomized society. In addition to its therapeutic efficacy in the process of self-formation and development, the face-to-face group, inasmuch as it makes possible the tentative traversal of the gap separating the Self and its private world of needs, desires and dreams, from the Other, also provides a medium for the accumulation of new types of intersubjective experience (new modalities of human relationships, of emotionality, and of aesthetic perceptions). While these new relations cannot achieve full social expression within the existing society, they are an essential source for the transcendence of a false social consciousness and the formation of new utopian desires and demands. Finally, the practice of the group, by thus recreating the "free space" necessary for psychic growth, may enable the individual to become "conscious that social constructs experienced by the child as absolutes, since he has no hand in shaping them, may in fact be altered by the impact of his will"<sup>14</sup> and thus to rediscover the innate creative initiative which has been suppressed since infancy.

#### From Consciousness-Raising to the Critique of Everyday Life

Out of the formation and multiplication of such spontaneous groupings of people, whose aim is to overcome the atomization and reduction of everyday existence through new experiences of collective solidarity, we can, therefore, discern the creation of a micro-political base for the formation of a new revolutionary culture and consciousness. For the search for unalienated interpersonal relations and new ways of living which gives the life of these groups its experimental character not only generates a new sensitivity to the atrophied modes of experiencing interaction and the administered modes of life and labor which define the existing macro-political order, but also gives rise to new conflicts and contradictions within that order. Perhaps the most typical of these new antagonisms is the contradiction between the aspiration to subjective autonomy in the decisions that affect one's life, on the one hand, and the necessity of adapting oneself to the demands of bureaucratic super-organizations, of accepting the limitations placed on personal initiative and responsibility by the restrictive role-definitions of these large-scale institutions, on the other. The rejection of this hierarchical control, of course, found its programmatic expression in the American New Left's principle of "participatory democ-

racy," both as a method of self-organization within the movement and as the basis for a utopian project aimed at transforming society as a whole. Alongside and underneath this conflict, however, there emerge others, even more fundamental, between psychic needs and practical demands, between the imaginary and the real, between thought and feeling, between desire and realization, etc. Out of the perception of the contrast between the extreme humiliation, boredom and enforced passivity of everyday life, the result of its subordination to hierarchical power, and a development of society's productive capacity which renders that power anachronistic, there arises a profound need for the social expression of creativity, for the recovery of all the creative richness and energy lost through the impoverishment and over-organization of everyday life.

In the face of the quasi-imperialist logic by which the bureaucratic system of controlled consumption has extended itself, not only spatially through the unification of the world market, but also through the colonization of every sphere of daily life, the attempt to transform the new affinity groups into "liberated enclaves" or counter-societies (rural communes, therapeutic communities, etc.) which seek a partial or localized transcendence of alienation and reification, are as easily contained or consumed by the larger social order as are attempts at individual escape. Nothing testifies to the quixotic nature of this endeavor better than the self-destructive and regressive implosion that has characterized the disillusioning history of the so-called "Woodstock Nation." In contrast, if the quite real and fundamental utopian spirit which underlay the early years of the youth culture is to escape the "recuperations"\* prepared for it by the system's repressive apparatus and its pervasive "spectacle," it must actualize itself through a new praxis aimed, not at the *evision* of everyday life, but at its *transformation*.

Such a praxis must be total in the sense that it seeks the reappropriation of everything that the system takes away. It is men and women who have, through their activity, produced the system. But as a result of the appropriation of this activity by hierarchical power, they now experience its product (that is, the product of their own creativity) as an alien force (as a "given" system of constraints embodied in ideas, in language, in institutions, whose origins have been forgotten) in which they cannot recognize themselves. This praxis seeks to destroy all the constraints imposed on the creative self-activity of men and women by this world of alien objects and reified forms, while simultaneously creating a new world in which these men and women can recognize themselves—a world in which the realm of the "given" is encountered only as the "free gift" of past human creativity and as the pre-condition for their own future creativity. Such an assertion of the claims of human creativity against everything that degrades it, should not, of course, be used to

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\*The notion of *recuperation*, first introduced by the Situationists, refers to the manner in which the repressive system seeks to neutralize or contain the attacks launched against it by *absorbing* them into the "spectacle" or by *projecting* its own meanings and goals onto these revolutionary actions.

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14. George Benello, "Group Organization and Socio-Political Structure," in Benello and Roussopoulos (eds.), *The Case for Participatory Democracy* (Grossman: New York, 1971), p. 41.

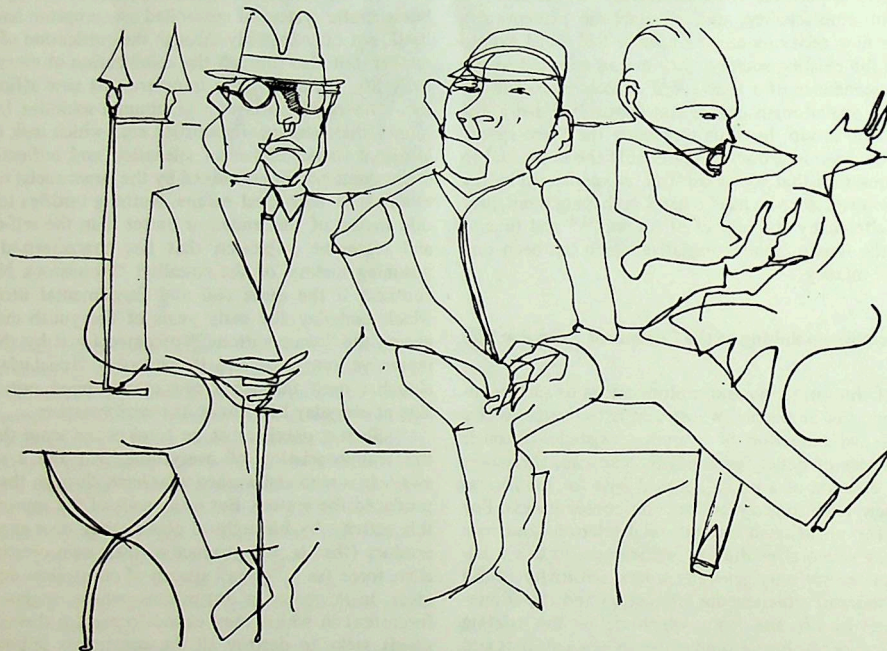


justify the sort of abstract maximalism or pure contestation which assumes a totally open-ended view of the possibilities available to revolutionary practice. If everything is possible, then nothing is possible. Such a false consciousness, born of a legitimate fear of co-optation or containment, tends in practice toward a nihilistic refusal which at best may temporarily disrupt the routine of everyday life without allowing any real expression of creativity. If allowed to run its course, it logically ends in self-destruction as it points toward a confrontation with power which it cannot win, since it takes place on power's own terms and terrain. If these twin pitfalls of integration and self-destruction are to be avoided through the elaboration of a method for the conscious transformation of everyday life, what is required is a new sort of practical and theoretical intervention which proceeds by uniting conceptu-

patriarchal family, and, on the other hand, to relate each of these various interpersonal milieux to the social totality within which they arise and which is, in turn, conditioned by their cumulative or "over-determined" effect.

### Toward a Politics of the Imagination

Accordingly, this "socio-analysis" of everyday life must, like psychoanalysis itself, proceed simultaneously on several discrete levels. First of all it begins with the recognition that in a society whose bureaucratic apparatus has so profoundly invaded even the deepest roots of the individual experience, the projects of self-transformation inaugurated within face-to-face groups can progress only to the extent



al analysis with what Henri Lefebvre calls "socio-analytical experience"—a sort of continuous action-critique aimed at even the most trivial details of daily life. Such a critique aims, first of all, at unveiling, through analysis and through practical exploration, the specific constraints and alternatives which define the dialectic of possibility-impossibility at any particular moment. Such a critique of everyday life, if it is to be carried on under the current conditions constituted by the "totalization" of alienation and "the fact of the integration of the conscious and the unconscious and the latter's externalization," suggests the need for what Jeremy Shapiro has described as "a psychoanalysis of the external world." In other words, it would attempt, on the one hand, to do for all the other institutional contexts within which everyday life is organized what Freud and later Reich began to do for the

that they succeed in simultaneously subverting the institutional contexts in which they have arisen. This means analyzing, discrediting, and disassembling these institutions in such a way as to undermine their apparent universality and rationality and, by thus stripping away the mask of reification and mystification, to reveal their real origins as the objectification of human purpose and activity.

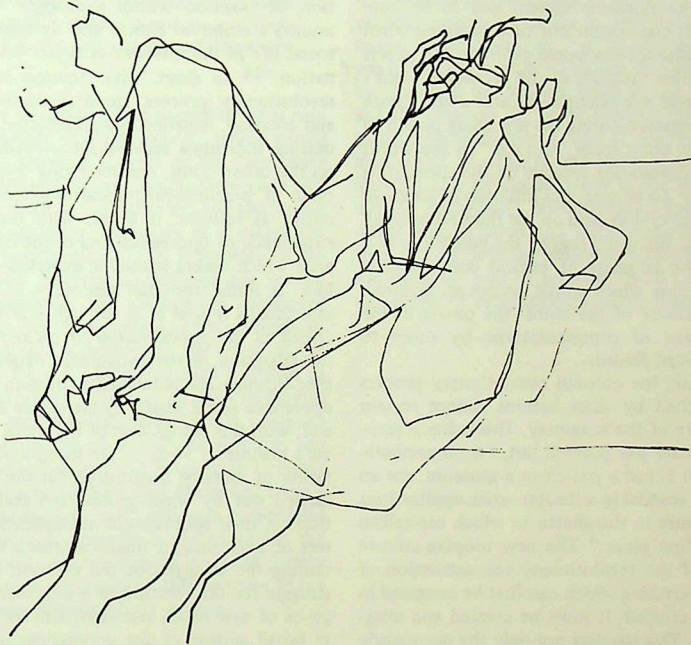
More specifically, this means that even before hierarchical power can be encountered and contested on the political or economic level, it must be attacked in the realm of the social imagination, of what the Situationists call "the spectacle"—the systematic organization of appearances through which the domination of hierarchical power is expressed by the closure of the fields of socially available perception, extending from the definition of the possible and the impos-



sible, of the useful and the useless, of the good and the bad, to that of the rational and the irrational, and of the future and the past. This perception is carried in the whole web of social relations in the form of the objective future which determines their persistence and resistance to change. It is, however, most fundamentally expressed on the specific level of language and of communications, and on this level, through the repressive society's incorporation of fantasy, of the imagination, and of the aesthetic into the spectacle. It follows that a revolutionary coming-to-consciousness aimed at the total transformation of everyday life must begin by opening up the field of possibility through a recovery of this realm of imagination and fantasy, and its translation into social practice. As Paul Cardan has observed, it is mistaken to believe that "the imaginary" comes into play only as the

seen primarily as a method for "unlocking" the impediments the spectacle places in the path of social expression, of imagination, and of communication. By introducing "free speech" and uninterrupted dialogue, by initiating tension and disorder, participation and festivity, these actions (originating in the initiative of active minorities within the universities but subsequently spreading to other institutional contexts as well) attack not so much hierarchical power itself as its pseudo-universal mythologies—its attempt to insulate itself by representing the degradations it imposes on society as "normal," eternal, natural verities, as immutable facts of life.

Similarly, the related conception of "exemplary actions" constitutes an original attempt to confront the problem of diffusing revolutionary themes and aspirations in a society where the manipulative use of the mass media tends



result of a failure to solve "real" problems. The distinction is utterly false, for when such "real" problems are solved, it is only because people have exercised their "imaginary" powers. Moreover, the very identification of things as "real problems" is contingent on the specific "imaginary" complex that defines a particular time or place. There is nothing "God-given" about reality; but the imagination that is at work in it is concealed from us by the false images of the spectacle.

It is in the light of this need to cross the boundary between the possible and impossible, between the real and the imaginary, that it becomes possible to grasp the significance of some of the new forms of struggle whose spontaneous emergence has characterized the development of the New Left. The notion of "contestation," for example, may be

to transform any action into a neutral spectacle. The exemplary action fights this new kind of censorship with a symbolic act of liberation which rejects "the rules of the game," which challenges the whole logic of the system. Such actions, while launched within a particular, localized institutional context, seek to transcend their parochial origins through their symbolic efficacy in conveying to other groups, who can identify their own circumstances with those of the original actors, the secret of how to take matters into their own hands in the cause of their own liberation.

Finally, and in this regard with only ambiguous success, the struggles launched by the new oppositional groupings provide a tentative idea of the methods by which the fragmentation and disinfection of language, in the interests of concealing and legitimating hierarchical power and dis-



arming its political opponents, might be overcome. One aspect of such a method for liberating language is the reappropriation of the meanings which have been taken over by the apparatus in the interests of power, reduced to mere signals for the transmission of orders from above, and finally, re-imposed on the masses—who thus become mere *receivers* of these orders. How such a reconquest of language might take place, through a redistribution of the power of expression to those from whom it has been taken away, or to whom it had never been granted at all, was suggested by the May-June events of 1968 in France. The institutional crisis initiated by the student contestation was accompanied by a parallel breakdown in the structures of repressive communication through which hierarchical power imposes its political pre-definitions and official symbols on the language of public life. Within the void created by the absence of these legitimating symbols, a battle broke out over the rules of interpretation by which the symbolic system was to be constructed, a battle which was fought out each morning when groups of people throughout Paris would gather in the streets and theaters to discuss the meaning of the preceding night's events. The Latin Quarter, for example, became a vast forum in which "speech," suppressed during the preceding period of repression and stability, burst forth "to take," in the words of Henri Lefebvre, "a devastating revenge on the constraints of written language."<sup>15</sup> To be sure, this inflation of language was often demagogic or childish, and on the theoretical level, poetically metaphysical, but it did suggest the possibility of a unification between the language of critical consciousness and the language of action which would permit an insurrectional seizure of the power of the word—the power of the intellect and the power of communication—by those to whom it had hitherto been denied.

At the same time, the cultural revolutionary process which has been launched by these actions cannot remain solely within the sphere of the imaginary. This cultural revolution, as Peter Schneider has pointed out, "is no aesthetic ersatz for revolution; it is not a putsch in a museum, nor an attack on a park, nor a scandal in a theater—such applications amount to leaving culture in the ghetto to which capitalism condemned it in the first place." The new utopian culture which is the object of the revolutionary reconstruction of everyday life is not something which can first be imagined in its entirety, and *then* created. It must be created and imagined at the same time. This requires not only the occupation of "mental space" but a "space" which is material as well as symbolic. The liberation of language from all that has degraded it is, of course, necessary and fundamental, but it is not sufficient. The new images of utopia cannot bear fruit unless they materialize themselves by actually entering into the social division of labor. Otherwise, the process of disalienation through refusal and contestation, street actions and festivities, will affect only the "spectacular" images of power, leaving the summits of bureaucratic power and their roots in the economic base undisturbed. As enthusiasm ebbs

and spontaneity reaches its limits, these pillars of order will become the axes around which the structures of everyday life will tend to resolidify. As a consequence, a cultural revolutionary project which aims at the actual transformation and not just the suspension of everyday existence must be capable of countering such attempts to impose the reorganization of everyday life from above, with a concrete project of its own aimed at reconstructing social life from below.

### T The Long March through the Institutions

The specifically utopian functions of cultural contestation, it follows, must be supplemented by a strategy of anti-institutional struggle, and "the long march through the institutions" recognized as the only road to the realization of the new utopian culture. In general terms, this means a fusion of the cultural and political revolutions within a new conception of politics, within a struggle "to extend the community's realm of choice and decision over the entirety of social life in the interests of needs that do not require domination."<sup>16</sup> In short, what emerges is a new model of the revolutionary process, simultaneously involving destruction and creation, negation and affirmation, on the one hand, and uniting individual self-realization with social consciousness, on the other. Thus, characterizing this new praxis is a panorama of practical-theoretical development that can be described as follows: it begins with the individual's personal experience of oppression and of the fragmentation of experience which makes authentic experience impossible for her or him; it leads from the discovery of this alienation to the individual's refusal of it through a process which is best described as the *politicization of oneself* and which aims at a retotalization of the individual's experience; it develops further through the individual's collision with the inertia of an oppressive social reality in his or her search for authenticity and, with this recognition of the social sources of the individual's malaise, it leads to the inauguration of a radical contestation of existing institutions on the level of everyday life carried out by small groups and collectives, and extended through their spontaneous multiplication as micro-social centers of resistance; it finally attains a truly social dimension, uniting the struggle for the creation of a new self with the struggle for the creation of a new society, through the emergence of new needs and capacities for self-organization within broad sectors of the population and the attempt on the part of these groups to engender the creation of new forms of self-management (or, as the French call it, *autogestion*) throughout every sphere of social activity. Thus, from all sides, the eruption of localized centers of contestation, and the further politicization of these contesting currents, lead to the demand for a new collective self-regulation of life, for a generalization of self-management throughout society. In this sense, self-management becomes both the principal means and method for the reconstruction of everyday life and, simultaneously, the principal goal of this reconstruction:

15. *The Explosion: Marxism and the French Upheaval* (Monthly Review: New York, 1969), p. 119.

16. Jeremy Shapiro, "One-Dimensionality: The Universal Semiotic of Technological Experience," in Breines, *op. cit.*, p. 181.



Self-management portends the surge through the breach of a process extending over the whole of society. It would be wrong to confine this process to the management of economic affairs. . . . Self-management implies a social *pedagogy*. It presupposes a new social practice at all stages and levels. This process involves the shattering of bureaucracy and centralized state management. . . [and] implies the establishment at the base [of society] of a complex network of active bodies. [Its] practice and theory modify the classic concept of . . . [representative democracy]. Effective self-management and participation cannot be separated from a "system" of direct democracy akin more to a continuous and continuously renewed movement deriving its organizational capacities from within itself, than to a formal "system." Relations change at all levels. The old relations between those who are active and those who are passive, between the rulers and the ruled, between decisions and frustrations, between subjects and objects—all these are dissolved.<sup>17</sup>

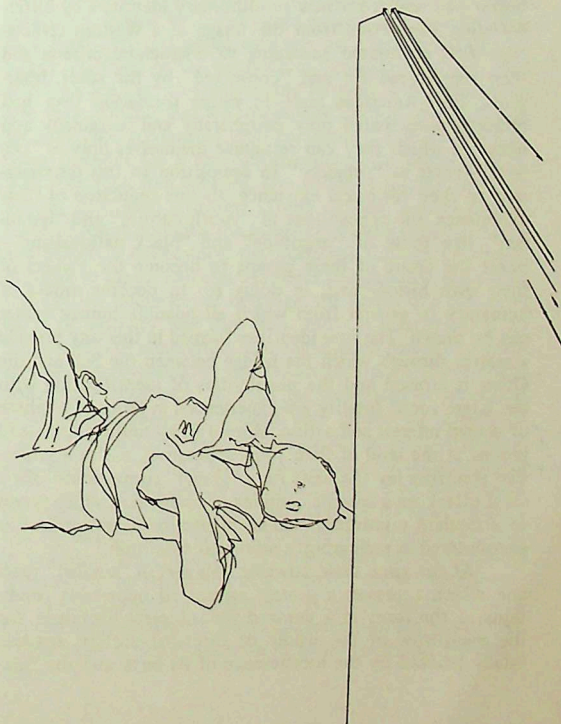
Such a notion of generalized self-management thus provides the basis for a strategy of "dual power" which would deprive the centralized power of its role as the "repressive unifier" of society by instituting new forms of everyday life, of working life, of "the festival," of collective self-expression and uninstitutionalized dialogue. Inasmuch as it places the existing society as a whole in question, it is possible to discern a new contradiction opening up between the general extension of such demands for and attempts to implement self-management, on the one hand, and the existing forms of state power and institutional authority, on the other. At the same time, the struggle for the creation of such a system of dual power as a method of revolutionary struggle leading to the total liberation of everyday life faces certain obstacles and raises certain new problems of theory and practice. For self-management is a hollow slogan if it is taken in isolation from the concrete problems it raises and abstracted from a concrete theoretical project. It only becomes meaningful when its social and political content is placed within the context of a revolutionary program for the whole of society and an all-inclusive strategy which adapts this program to the actual social forces which are presently in motion.

#### The Dialectic of the Universal and the Particular

**H**erein, then, lies the final and in many respects the most formidable problematic facing the movement. For whereas the project of restoring a repressive social order from above finds its social basis in a small but highly unified minority, the demand for a revolutionary reconstruction of everyday life, for generalized self-management, has a potential social basis which, while incomparably broader, is at the same time highly dispersed and atomized. The reasons for this are complicated, but in general appear to be a consequence of the forms of politicization through which the various currents of contestation have necessarily developed in

order to oppose a capitalism which has unified itself to the extent that its domination is becoming increasingly universal and which is, at the same time, tending toward totalitarian self-regulation. In the face of a worldwide organization of repression and its equally pervasive "spectacle" which tend toward the obliteration of all difference and all autonomy through the universal extension of commodity relations, the re-emergence of opposition has had, necessarily, to begin with a return to the basic and the specific, with the reassertion of differentiation—that is, with explosive contestations launched outside of or beneath the "apparatus" and conducted in the name of racial, cultural, linguistic, and sexual particularisms.

Thus, the development of revolutionary movements, both in the Third World and among the colonized minorities of the metropolitan countries, confronts Marxist theory with the paradox of revolutionary struggles against the whole imperialist system which are fought, not in the name of proletarian internationalism, but in the name of national independence and ethnic solidarity. In this way, the black man, by pursuing his independence in the name of "negritude" and the creation of "black power," turns what was a symbol of his inferiority into a fund of positive values and a potent instrument of struggle—the assertion of a new revolutionary identity and its actualization in the formation of new (and usually exclusivist) revolutionary organizations. The subsequent politicization and self-affirmation first of youth and then of women in the industrial West has taken place through the same process of refusing pseudo-universal ideologies in the name of revolutionary particularisms. All three groups



17. Lefebvre, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.



(continued from page 2)

central to Morgan's thought? Will his contribution collapse if we abandon his stages? Far more important than his schema, perhaps was Morgan's contribution in applying the theory of evolution to human society. . . .

What Engels took from Morgan was a "general theory" of societal evolution far transcending, in Engels' development of this theory, Morgan's own developmental stages. In throwing Engels out along with Morgan's outdated schema Schein and Lopate are throwing out the baby with the bathwater—a very small amount of water, but a very large baby.

Schein and Lopate, of course, are aware of the force of this criticism. Why not ignore Engels' "problematic scheme," they ask, and give an answer. These "evolutionary stages," they argue, have become "a central and restricting part of feminist ideology"; a rationale must therefore be provided for letting them go.

But, alas, their language is highly ambiguous. The concept of "evolutionary stage" may refer either to Morgan's stages—barbarism, savagery, civilization, etc.—or it may refer to what is at the heart of Engels' thesis: *that the development of the institutions of private property determines the total evolutionary pattern which a given society exhibits, including its sex patterns.* Is it the heart of Engels' thesis which Schein and Lopate are "innocently" tearing out under the plea of jettisoning Morgan's "evolutionary stages"?

Engels (and Morgan) described and analyzed early matrilineal societies in which the state as we know it did not exist, in which "descent as well as authority resided in the group as a whole." To this Schein and Lopate reply: "we know of no societies in which all individuals hold equal and identical authority." No, but we have some pretty close approximations; again, one wonders if Schein and Lopate have gone back to the sources and have examined the evidence? Lucy Mair's *Primitive Government*, for example (Pelican paperback, 1962), has interesting accounts of the absence of power, or the equality of power, in African cattle-herding societies. And Colin Turnbull's *Forest People* may also be read in this context.

The main thrust of Engels' argu-

ment is that the change from matrilineal to patrilineal social organization corresponds to a revolution in property relations which vests ownership of property, such as cattle or land, in the male, and which demands social and legal arrangements through which inheritance can pass in the male line. Private ownership and inheritance of property, primarily by males, spells the growing subordination of women, and the introduction of the concept of the indissoluble marriage.

One wonders if Schein and Lopate are concerned to refute this thesis? It can be so richly verified in the history of "civilized" societies!

Schein and Lopate seek to blur the distinction between societies organized on a kinship and a patriarchal basis by arguing that early societies were never wholly communal, that, for example, hunting tools or ritual equipment might be privately owned and inherited. True, but irrelevant. Private ownership of such things, as a determinative social force, pales into insignificance compared with private ownership of herds, or land, or slaves. And a shift in power, obviously enough, goes along with a shift in the dominant form of ownership and control. Come the revolution, when the means of production have been socialized, we shall still retain, I suppose, private ownership of toothbrushes. *De minimis non curat lex.*

The authors' final principal point deals with women as a class. They argue that the false concept of women throughout the world as a uniformly oppressed class is "supported by Engels." But if, as they assert, this notion "is a shorthand means of relating the women's movement to leftist politics," assuredly it receives no support from Engels. I challenge Schein and Lopate to cite a single sentence, in all of Engels' writing, that would buttress their contention. True, he refers to "the defeat of mother-right as the world-historical defeat of the female sex." (*Origin of the Family*, cited above, p. 50) But to assert a proposition on the defeat of the sex is logically distinct from the proposition that sex equals class in the Marxian sense.

your,  
John Anthony Scott  
New York City

~ ~ ~

The authors reply:

It is difficult to tell from your letter exactly what it is about our article that upsets you. It should have been clear that our arguments against Morgan, Bachofen and Engels were not meant to apply to everything they said, but to a specific line of reasoning and, more importantly, to the way this line has been used to legitimate certain sectors of the women's movement. We do not deny the significant contributions made by these authors. Perhaps we should have emphasized that. If you read the article carefully, however, it should become clear that at several points we differentiate between Engels' thesis and the way it has been used.

Our one regret about the article is that we did not say that our basic sympathies are indeed with Engels, and more, how much of our theoretical framework has been drawn directly or indirectly from Marx. But where Engels says that women's position deteriorates as private property dominates, our own thesis is that within each type of society, as the structure of economic relations becomes more rigid, one finds a concomitant deterioration of women's position relative to men. Can we really say that the position of women under a capitalist system is more restrictive than it is in pre-revolutionary agrarian China? What is essential to do, but was outside the confines of our article, is to articulate the specific constraints under capitalism or any other economic system which determine the position of women.

Finally, as to your substantive criticism, hunting and agricultural tools are not toothbrushes; these tools (and ritual equipment, which functions in primitive society much like scientific equipment in our own society) constitute the technology—the means of production—and their importance in the production process requires us to note how they are owned. The fact that they are owned individually has major implications for the social structure. The means of production *non minima sunt.*

Carol Lopate  
Muriel Schein



Dear *Liberation*:

Michael Seliger's editorial critique of the New American Movement contains many logical and analytical errors (January 1972 *Liberation*). His two main points, that NAM is in danger of becoming a superstructure without a base in autonomous local groups, and that instead, a "communications network" between local groups is what is needed, will be seen to carry less weight when the following points are considered.

To set a context for analysis of Seliger's editorial, I write as one active in local projects, and who has begun helping to form a NAM chapter after the Davenport conference. I share Seliger's belief in the necessity for autonomous local action groups dealing with matters of daily concern to members and their community, but I do not share his implied premise that whatever local groups happen to be doing is correct, useful or devoid of false consciousness.

1. Seliger affirms the substance of the original NAM document drafted by "heavies," but then condemns it because its subordinate, tentative list of possible programs were co-optable and vague. While rejecting hierarchies, he seems to expect a small nucleus of analysts to produce a blue-print for detailed local action in every community. The main point of the document, an accurate critique of past mistakes and a call for ongoing radical analysis, is dismissed.

2. The NAM organizers are criticized for narrowness in seeking old New Left contacts for input and ideas. Their months of travel, hundreds of conversations, endless meetings, are minimized. As a victim of endless meetings awaiting spontaneous direction, I can identify with the organizers who chose to act upon what feedback they could gather in a reasonable period.

3. In his concept of a difference between pre- and post-conference chapters, we see a major deficiency in Seliger's analysis, and one which leads to the very elitism he argues against. In presuming that chapters in existence before the entry of NAM on the national scene at the Davenport conference somehow "have it together," are somehow more in touch with truth and right action, whereas those formed after the conference are mindless dependents

upon a national structure, Seliger ignores peoples' differential development, variations in awareness, and the fact that many folk work and have families and other demands that preclude instant awareness of every new movement wrinkle. Carried to its conclusion, Seliger's network itself contains the danger of being a system of in-group initiation that certifies some of us as "together" and others as "not." We've had enough of such mirrors of bourgeois society.

4. Also, there is the logical error of supposing that pre-conference chapters, with their local authenticity and rootedness, will develop programs through NAM which will be unable to take root elsewhere. Granted local and regional specificity, Seliger is surely not suggesting that the disease of advanced capitalism is merely a series of local "mistakes" and corruptions of local ruling elites.

5. The whole promise of what NAM can become—an all-inclusive radical analysis and action-engendering movement toward a genuine alternative—is questioned when Seliger states that the NAM priority areas are "difficult for local organizations . . . working in communities to relate to." What does this mean? If it means developing local programs challenging the sources of peoples' oppression at its roots as they penetrate locally is difficult, yes, it's difficult work. But it must be done. If, however, Seliger means that such fundamental challenge is not what local groups are about, then the groups' relevancy and not the priorities through which such a challenge can be mounted, is the matter in question.

6. Presumably, the editorial was written shortly after the NAM conference, for aside from a tentative and provisional nature of developments from the conference being the rule, there are not three, but four general priority areas. As subsequent information shows, NAM does include many areas Seliger claims are excluded: health care, housing, co-operatives, etc. Highly co-optable programs cited by Seliger—prison reform, "ecology," democratizing media, etc.—have been included, but in a framework ensuring against their co-optation; properly treated as symptoms of an exploitative society, rather than as organizing objectives in them-

selves.

One could go on to list other difficulties, but the main weakness of the editorial, and of the "movement" to date, is failure to grasp the necessity for a total struggle against capitalism. The promise of NAM is its possibility of reaching the working class as that class reaches beyond unionism, and its potential for showing students, the educated, technicians, and intelligentsia that they, too, are a part of an exploited, alienated mass, atomized by an ideology of liberal egotism.

The possibility of a post-scarcity society transcending problems of production, can only be realized by struggle to overcome the mechanism which enforces scarcity, capitalism, and only precisely at its foundation in production. NAM is one of the first formations to recognize that this struggle must be waged both in the areas of traditional industrial production, and in contemporary areas of technical, ideological and scientific production.

It may well be that NAM is premature. This is no reason to withhold our energies from NAM. Insofar as we do so, Seliger's criticism will be fulfilled in reality: NAM will become an empty superstructure. Those of us committed to fundamental change will not hesitate to commit ourselves to working within a vehicle that can materially advance the revolutionary struggle even though it may contain within it some contradictions not now evident. Some may wish to continue working in atomized reforms, armchair strategies, or in pursuit of egoistic careers, waiting until there is no doubt about the victory. It's an egoistic decision.

Finally, NAM's four priority areas mark the advance of movement struggle into concrete historical materialism, and beyond the unreality of idealism. The priorities are a call to begin the struggle to win democratic control of the social, economic and cultural reality, rather than continuing to wage purely symbolic criticism of and protest against the established order. To paraphrase Marx, the point is not to have a communications network about the world, the point is to change the world.

Robt. A.P. Gibbons  
Sharing Way Press



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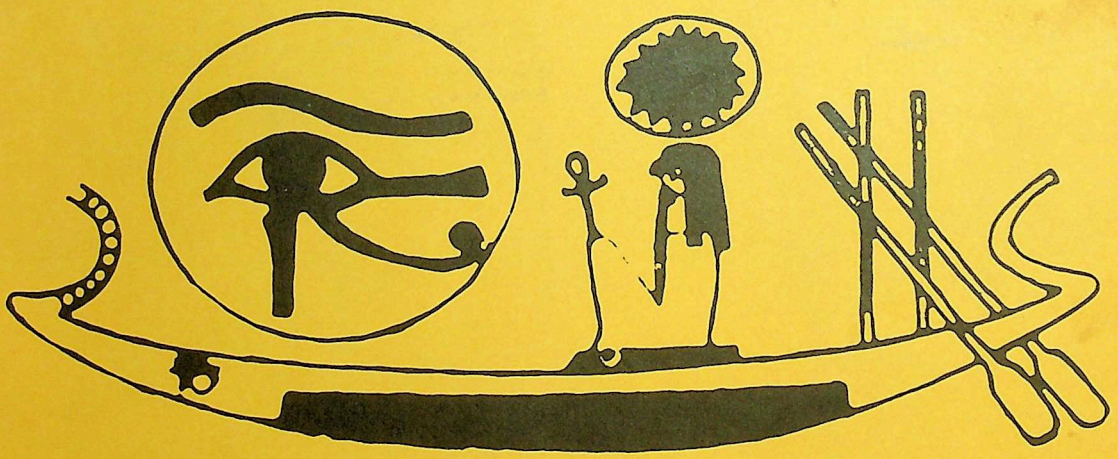
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david kubrin



## SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE

art by daniel brown



# Editorial

# WAR TAX RESISTANCE

We are trapped within an empire which, as we increasingly see, is waging war against life. The most agonizing and immediate example is the war against the peoples of Indochina. Our government, in addition to its daily business of murder and ruin, is carefully wiring the planet for nuclear annihilation. We know this. It generates frustration in each one of us not to be able to do more to break the death grip our military-industrial society has on the world and on us.

It is becoming clearer to more people that in order to maintain its lethal habit, the government must mainline our dollars and our bodies. Draft resistance together with insurgency within the military have severely restricted Nixon's ability to use troops to implement his policies. But it is becoming clear the Pentagon is replacing men with computer circuits, ground troop offensives with saturation bombing of unimaginable ferocity. It is our tax money fleeced from our paychecks which pays for this madness.

April 15, the income tax deadline, is approaching. We feel the time is long overdue for the emergence of a massive war tax resistance movement. Of the Fiscal 1972 budget, 61 per cent, or 107.5 billion dollars, is allocated for the costs of war. Only 17 per cent goes for Human Resources, another 11 per cent for Physical Resources, and the remaining 11 per cent for all other costs. The projections for the Fiscal 1973 budget promise more of the same. It is time we refuse to have our dollars conscripted by a government whose main business is militarism.

We believe that tax resistance, joined with constructive action, has the potential of being one of the most powerful

strategies for changing the nature of our society. It is a strategy open to anyone who pays taxes, whether withheld or not. And it should be stressed here that it is simply *not* true that people who have taxes withheld cannot engage in tax resistance. Tax resistance allows for a multiplicity of commitments and ways of resisting. The easiest tax to resist is the 10% federal excise tax that is added to your phone bill every month, but one can go as far as publicly disclosing one's refusal to pay any taxes at all.

There are various groups which have promoted the idea of tax resistance, such as the Peacemakers. The only national organization is War Tax Resistance, which was founded in 1969 with the aim of building a mass tax resistance movement; there are now more than 180 regional centers operating around the country. People interested in tax resistance may wish to contact their National Office at 339 Lafayette Street, New York, N.Y., for literature on the hows and whys of war tax resistance, and for research material.

Tax resistance has always been a means of resisting illegitimate authority. But it also has its positive, affirmative side, in that it offers a means of undermining and destroying state power and of restoring power to people, who by pooling the withheld funds, can use them for constructive, human ends in their own communities. Thus, tax resistance becomes a powerful force enabling us to build a new society within the shell of the old.

-K.P.  
C.B.

## VVAW DRIVE

Vietnam Veterans Against the War is aiding in a petition drive to raise 100,000 signatures to be sent to Donald Johnson, VA Administrator. The petition is designed to put pressure for complete federal funding of VA and civilian programs and also to get veterans on the staff of these programs. For petitions and information, contact Ed or Gerry at 25 West 26 Street, New York, N.Y. 10010, or call (212) 725-5680. Sign the petition and send it to your friends. We need your support to make this drive a success.

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## In this issue

In the past *Liberation* has occasionally described its role as "opening new frontiers of thought." In practice, this means that we try to avoid glib reinterpretations of the most conventional wisdom as occur in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Reader's Digest*, *Life* and the other magazines that Americans usually read when they do read. The articles in the current issue were chosen because they make an attempt to live up to this claim.

Murray Bookchin is particularly concerned with breaking down traditional ways of thinking about the world, which limit attempts to bring about revolution because they ignore the overwhelming changes that have taken place in the world since Marx's day. As he says in the conclusion to "On Spontaneity and Organization," which is printed here for the first time, "History . . . has turned yesterday's verities into today's falsehoods, not by generating new refutations but by creating a new level of social possibility."

Also in this issue are two articles dealing with science. "Science for the People" discusses the changing nature of modern science, and the changing responsibilities of scientists. The article was rejected for publication in *Science* magazine despite the fact that the decision of the three original "referees" chosen by *Science* to consider the article was 3 to 0 in favor of publishing it. Reprints of the paper are available from: Science for the People, 9 Walden Street, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts 02130.

David Kubrin's "How Sir Isaac Newton . . ." opens up old frontiers of thought as well as new ones. These old fron-

tiers, he contends, were stunted by the development of modern science under industrial capitalism. Kubrin's article is an introduction to a longer work on the subject in which he makes a more extensive documentation of his point of view. Although the entire work is not yet published, interested persons may write to the author *c/o Liberation* if they wish to see the rest of it.

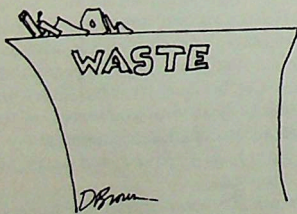
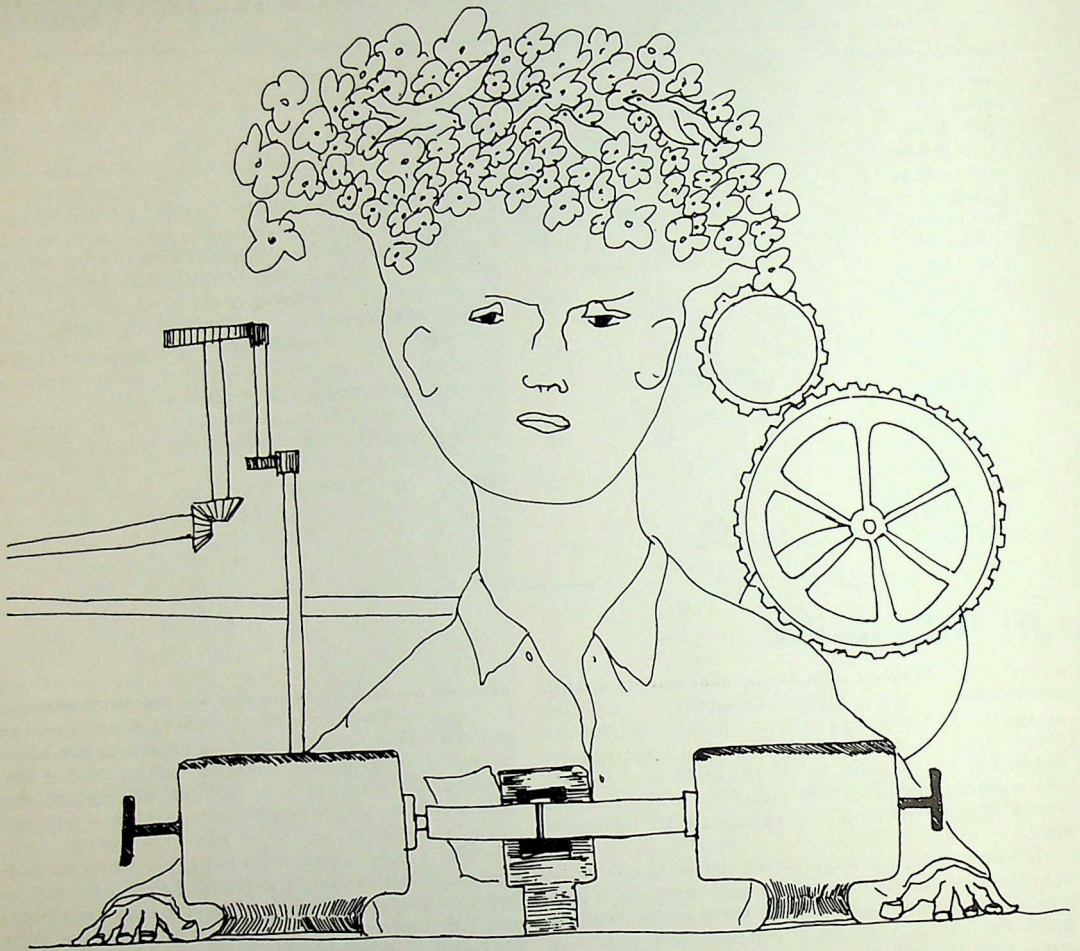
There is, of course, much left to be said on the development of science and its relationship to society. Still, we feel that these two articles, in different ways, contribute much to our understanding of the issues. *Liberation* invites your comments and responses to these two pieces as well as to Murray Bookchin's article.

Dan Brown, the artist whose work was printed in our January issue, has also contributed to this issue, doing work related to the texts themselves. While we usually do not coordinate the art with the articles, we wanted to try it this time, in particular because we liked Dan's art so much. We would also like to hear your comments on this experiment. We have used an ancient Egyptian design for our cover this month, and on pages 18, 26, 31, and 42 are Mexican motifs, chiefly pre-Columbian.

This month we are printing the work of three poets. Walter Schneir is a frequent contributor to *Liberation*, and we are happy to welcome Karen Swenson and Jean Tepperman.

We especially would like to call your attention to our editorial this month on tax resistance.







# ON SPONTANEITY AND ORGANIZATION

Murray Bookchin

This article elaborates a work I read at the Telos Conference on Organization at Buffalo, New York, on November 21, 1971. Space limitations do not make it possible for me to deal concretely with my view that we have already developed the technological bases for a post-scarcity society or describe in greater detail the type of organization that I think is appropriate to our time. For a more comprehensive discussion of these issues, I would refer the reader to my book *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* (Berkeley: Ramparts Books, 1971), especially the essay "Toward a Liberatory Technology" and the "Discussion on 'Listen, Marxist.'"

## I

It is supremely ironical that the socialist movement, far from being in the "vanguard" of current social and cultural developments, lingers behind them in almost every detail. This movement's shallow comprehension of the counter-culture, its anemic interpretation of women's liberation, its indifference to ecology, and its ignorance even of new currents that are drifting through the factories (particularly among young workers) seem all the more grotesque when juxtaposed with its simplistic "class analysis," its proclivity for hierarchical organization, and its ritualistic invocation of "strategies" and "tactics" that were already inadequate a generation ago.

Contemporary socialism has shown only the most limited awareness that people by the millions are slowly redefining the very meaning of freedom. They are constitutively enlarging their image of human liberation to dimensions that would have seemed hopelessly visionary in past eras. In ever-growing numbers they sense that society has developed a technology that could completely abolish material scarcity and reduce toil to a near vanishing point. Faced with the possibilities of a classless post-scarcity society and with the meaninglessness of hierarchical relations, they are intuitively trying to deal with the problems of communism, not socialism.<sup>1</sup> They are intuitively trying to eliminate domination in *all* its forms and nuances, not merely material exploitation. Hence the widespread erosion of authority as

1. "Communism" has come to mean a stateless society, based on the maxim, "From each according to his ability and to each according to his needs." Society's affairs are managed directly from "below" and the means of production are communally "owned." Both Marxists and anarchists (or, at least, anarcho-communists) view this form of society as a common goal. Where they disagree is primarily on the

such—in the family, in the schools, in vocational and professional arenas, in the church, in the army, indeed, in virtually every institution that supports hierarchical power and every nuclear relationship that is marked by domination. Hence, too, the intensely *personal* nature of the rebellion that is percolating through society, its highly subjective, existential, and cultural qualities. The rebellion affects *everyday life* even before it visibly affects the broader aspects of social life and it undermines the *concrete* loyalties of the individual to the system even before it vitiates the system's abstract political and moral verities.

To these deep-seated liberatory currents, so rich in existential content, the socialist movement continues to oppose the constrictive formulas of a particularistic "working class" interest, the archaic notion of a "proletarian dictatorship," and the sinister concept of a centralized hierarchical party. If the socialist movement is lifeless today, this is because it has lost all contact with life.

## II

We are travelling the full circle of history. We are taking up again the problems of a new organic society on a new level of history and technological development—an organic society in which the splits within society, between society and nature, and within the human psyche that were created by thousands of years of hierarchical development can be healed and transcended. Hierarchical society performed the baneful "miracle" of turning human beings into mere instruments of production, into objects on a par with tools and machines, thereby defining their very humanity by their usufruct in a universal system of scarcity, of domination, and, under capitalism, of commodity exchange. Even earlier, before the domination of man by man, hierarchical society brought woman into universal subjugation to man, opening a realm of domination that reached beyond exploitation—a realm of domination for its own sake, of domination in its most reified form. Domination, carried into the very depths of personality, has turned us into the bearers of an archaic, millenia-long legacy that fashions the language, the gestures, indeed, the very posture we employ in everyday

character and role of the organized revolutionary movement in the revolutionary process and the intermediate "stages" (most Marxists see the need for a centralized "proletarian dictatorship," followed by a "socialist" state—a view anarchists emphatically deny) required to achieve a communist society. In the matter of these differences, it will be obvious that I hold to an anarchist viewpoint.



life. All the past revolutions have been too "olympian" to affect these intimate and ostensibly mundane aspects of life, hence the ideological nature of their professed goals of freedom and the narrowness of their liberatory vision.

By contrast, the goal of the new development toward communism is the achievement of a society based on self-management in which each individual participates fully, directly, and in complete equality in the unmediated management of the collectivity. Viewed from the aspects of its concrete human side, such a collectivity can be nothing less than the fulfillment of the liberated self, of the free subject divested of all its "thingifications," of the self that can concretize the management of the collectivity as an authentic mode of *self-management*. The enormous advance scored by the counter-cultural movement over the socialist movement is attested precisely by a personalism that sees in impersonal goals, even in the proprieties of language, gesture, behavior and dress, the perpetuation of domination in its most insidious unconscious forms. However marred it may be by the general unfreedom that surrounds it, the counter-cultural movement has thus *concretely* redefined the now innocuous word "revolution" in a truly revolutionary manner, as a *practice* that subverts apocryphal abstractions and theories.

To identify the claims of the emerging self with "bourgeois individualism" is a grotesque distortion of the most fundamental existential goals of liberation. Capitalism does not produce individuals; it produces atomized egotists. To distort the claims of the emerging self for a society based on self-management and to reduce the claims of the revolutionary subject to an economic notion of "freedom" is to seek the "crude communism" that the young Marx so correctly scorned in the 1844 manuscripts. The claim of the libertarian communists to a society based on self-management asserts the right of each individual to acquire control over her or his everyday life, to make each day as joyous and marvelous as possible. The abrogation of this claim by the socialist movement in the abstract interests of "Society," of "History," of the "Proletariat," and more typically of the "Party," assimilates and fosters the *bourgeois* antithesis between the individual and the collectivity in the interests of bureaucratic manipulation, the renunciation of desire, and the subservience of the individual and the collectivity to the interests of the State.

### III

**T**here can be no society based on self-management without self-activity. Indeed, revolution *is* self-activity in its most advanced form: direct action carried to the point where the streets, the land, and the factories are appropriated by the autonomous people. Until this order of consciousness is attained, consciousness at least on the social level remains *mass* consciousness, the object of manipulation by elites. If for this reason alone, authentic revolutionaries must affirm that the most advanced form of class consciousness is self-consciousness: the individuation of the "masses" into conscious beings who can take direct, unmediated control of society and of their own lives. If only for this reason, too,

authentic revolutionaries must affirm that the only real "seizure of power" by the "masses" is the *dissolution* of power: the power of human over human, of town over country, of state over community, and of mind over sensuousness.

### IV

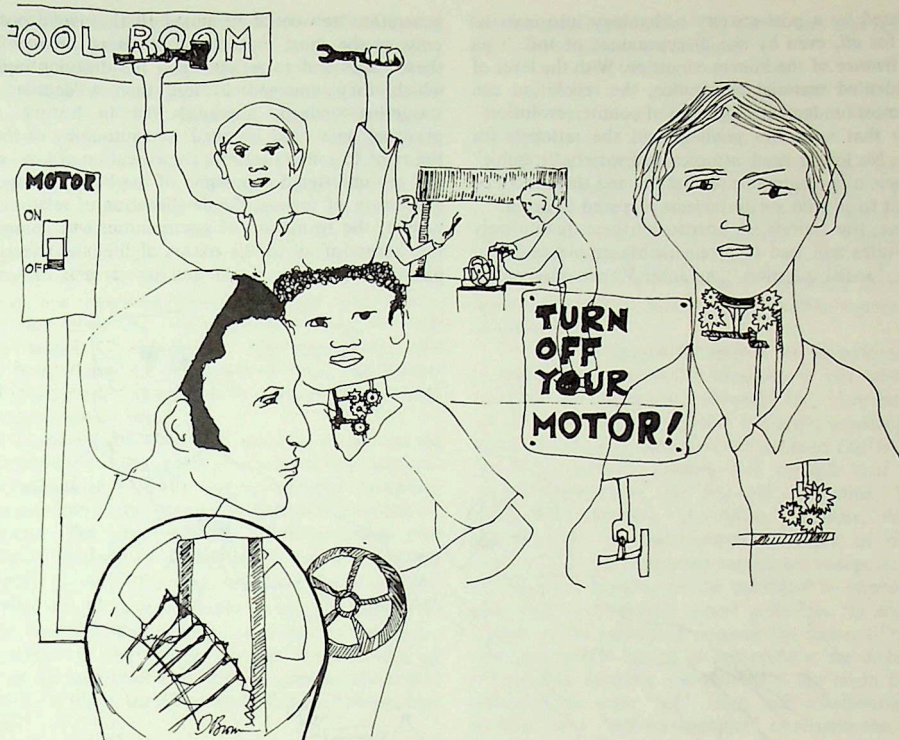
**I**t is in the light of these demands for a society based on self-management, achieved through self-activity and nourished by self-consciousness, that we must examine the relationship of spontaneity to organization. Implicit in every claim that the "masses" require the "leadership" of "vanguards" is the conviction that revolution is more a problem of "strategy" and "tactics" than a social process;<sup>2</sup> that the "masses" cannot create their own liberatory institutions but must rely on a state power—a "proletarian dictatorship"—to organize society and uproot counterrevolution. Every one of these notions is belied by history, even by the particularistic revolutions that replaced the rule of one class by another. Whether one turns to the Great French Revolution of two centuries ago, to the uprisings of 1848, to the Paris Commune, to the Russian revolutions of 1905 and March, 1917, to the German Revolution of 1918, to the Spanish Revolution of 1934 and 1936 or the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, one finds a social process, sometimes highly protracted, that culminated in the overthrow of established institutions without the guidance of "vanguard" parties (indeed, where these parties existed they usually lagged behind the events). One finds that the "masses" formed their own liberatory institutions, be these the Parisian sections of 1793-1794, the clubs and militias of 1848 and 1871, or the factory committees, workers' councils, popular assemblies, and action committees of later upheavals.

It would be a crude simplification of these events to claim that counterrevolution reared its head and triumphed where it did merely because the "masses" were incapable of self-coordination and lacked the "leadership" of a well-disciplined centralized party. We come here to one of the most vexing problems in the revolutionary process, a problem that has never been adequately understood by the socialist movement. That coordination was either absent or failed—indeed, that effective counterrevolution was even *possible*—raises a more fundamental issue than the mere problem of "technical administration." Where advanced, essentially premature revolutions failed, this was primarily because the revolutions had no material basis for consolidating the *general* interest of society to which the most radical elements staked out an historic claim. Be the cry of

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2. The use of military or quasi-military language—"vanguard," "strategy," "tactics"—betrays this conception fully. While denouncing students as "petty bourgeois" and "shit," the "professional revolutionary" has always had a grudging admiration and respect for that most inhuman of all hierarchical institutions, the military. Compare this with the counter-culture's inherent antipathy for "soldierly virtues" and demeanor.





this general interest "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" or "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness," the harsh fact remains that the technological premises did not exist for the consolidation of this general interest in the form of a harmonized society. That the general interest divided again during the revolutionary process into antagonistic particular interests—that it led from the euphoria of "reconciliation" (as witness the great national fetes that followed the fall of the Bastille) to the nightmare of class war, terror, and counterrevolution—must be explained primarily by the *material limits* of the social development, not by technical problems of political coordination.

The great bourgeois revolutions succeeded socially even where they seemed to fail "technically" (i.e., to lose power to the radical "day-dreaming terrorists") *because they were fully adequate to their time*. Neither the army nor the institutions of absolutist society could withstand their blows. In their beginnings, at least, these revolutions appeared as the expression of the "general will," uniting virtually all social classes against the aristocracies and monarchies of their day, and even dividing the aristocracy against itself. By contrast, all "proletarian revolutions" have failed because the technological premises were inadequate for the *material* consolidation of a "general will," *the only basis on which the dominated can finally eliminate domination*. Thus the October Revolution failed socially even though it seemed to succeed "technically"—all Leninist, Trotskyist, and Stalinist

myths to the contrary notwithstanding—and the same is true for the "socialist revolutions" of Asia and Latin America. When the "proletarian revolution" and its time are adequate to each other—and precisely *because* they are adequate to each other—the revolution will no longer be "proletarian," the work of the particularized creatures of bourgeois society, of its work ethic, its factory discipline, its industrial hierarchy, and its values. The revolution will be a *people's* revolution in the authentic sense of the word.<sup>3</sup>

## V

**I**t is not for want of organization that the past revolutions of radical elements ultimately failed but rather because all prior societies were organized systems of want. In our own time, in the era of the final, generalized revolution, the general interest of society can be tangibly and *immediate-*

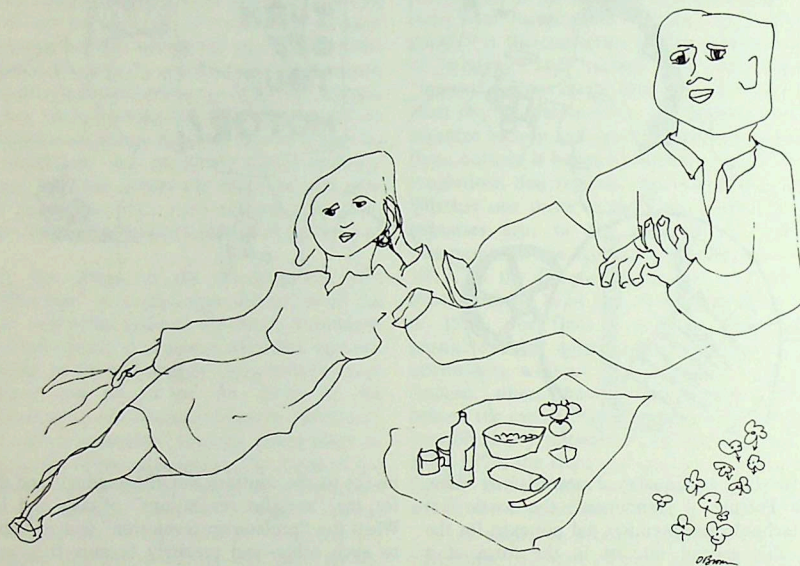
3. The word "people" (*le peuple* of the Great French Revolution) will no longer be the Jacobin (or, more recently, the Stalinist and Maoist) fiction that conceals antagonistic class interests within the popular movement. The word will reflect the general interests of a truly human movement, a general interest that expresses the material possibilities for achieving a classless society.



ly consolidated by a post-scarcity technology into material abundance for *all*, even by the disappearance of toil as an underlying feature of the human condition. With the lever of an unprecedented material abundance, the revolution can remove the most fundamental premises of counterrevolution—the scarcity that nourishes privilege and the rationale for domination. No longer need *any* sector of society “tremble” at the prospect of a communist revolution, and this should be made evident to *all* who are in the least prepared to listen.<sup>4</sup>

In time, the framework opened by these qualitatively new possibilities will lead to a remarkable simplification of the historic “social question.” As Josef Weber observed in

generation ago could be posed (if they were posed at all) only as the most esoteric problems of theory. To review these issues and to reflect upon the dizzying rapidity with which they emerged in less than a decade is simply staggering, indeed, unprecedented in history. Only the principal ones need be cited: the autonomy of the self and the right to self-realization; the evocation of love, sensuality, and the unfettered expression of the body; the spontaneous expression of feeling; the de-alienation of relations between people; the formation of communities and communes; the free access of all to the means of life; the rejection of the plastic commodity world and its careers; the practice of



*The Great Utopia*, this revolution—the most universal and totalistic to occur—will appear as the “next *practical* step,” as the immediate praxis involved in social reconstruction. And, in fact, step by step the counter-culture has been taking up, not only subjectively, but also in their most *concrete and practical forms*, an immense host of issues that bear directly on the utopian future of humanity, issues that just a

mutual aid; the acquisition of skills and counter-technologies; a new reverence for life and for the balance of nature; the replacement of the work ethic by meaningful work and the claims of pleasure; indeed, a *practical* redefinition of freedom that a Fourier, a Marx, or a Bakunin rarely approximated in the realm of thought.

The point to be stressed is that *we are witnessing a new*

4. The utter stupidity of the American “left” during the late Sixties in projecting a mindless “politics of polarization” and thereby wantonly humiliating so many middle-class—and, yes, let it be said: *bourgeois*—elements who were prepared to listen and to learn can hardly be criticized too strongly. Insensible to the *unique* constellation of possibilities that stared it in the face, the “left” simply fed its guilt and insecurities about itself and followed a politics of systematic alienation from all the authentic radicalizing forces in American society. This insane politics, coupled with a mindless mimicry of the “third world,” a dehumanizing verbiage (the police as “pigs,” opponents as “fascists”), and a totally dehumanizing body

of values, vitiated all its claims as a “liberation movement.” The student strike that followed the Kent murders revealed to the “left” and the students alike that they had succeeded only too well in polarizing American society, but that *they*, and not the country’s rulers, were in the minority. It is remarkable testimony to the inner resources of the counter-culture that the debacle of SDS led not to a sizeable Marxist-Leninist party but to the well-earned disintegration of the “Movement!” and a solemn retreat back to the more humanistic cultural premises that appeared in the early Sixties—humanistic premises that the “left” so cruelly ravaged in the closing years of that decade.



*Enlightenment* (more sweeping even than the half-century of enlightenment that preceded the Great French Revolution) that is slowly challenging not only the authority of established institutions and values but authority as such. Percolating downward from the intelligentsia, the middle classes, and youth generally to all strata of society, this Enlightenment is slowly undermining the patriarchal family, the school as an organized system of repressive socialization, the institutions of the state, and the factory hierarchy. It is eroding the work ethic, the sanctity of property, and the fabric of guilt and renunciation that internally denies to each individual the right to the full realization of her or his potentialities and pleasures. Indeed, no longer is it merely capitalism that stands in the dock of history, but the cumulative legacy of domination that has policed the individual from within for thousands of years, the "archetypes" of domination, as it were, that comprise the State within our *unconscious* lives.

The enormous difficulty that arises in understanding this Enlightenment is its invisibility to conventional analyses. The new Enlightenment is not simply changing consciousness, a change that is often quite superficial in the absence of other changes. The usual changes of consciousness that marked earlier periods of radicalization could be carried quite lightly, as mere theories, opinions, or a cerebral punditry that was often comfortably discharged outside the flow of everyday life. The significance of the new Enlightenment, however, is that it is altering the *unconscious apparatus of the individual* even before it can be articulated consciously as a social theory or a commitment to political convictions.

Viewed from the standpoint of a typically socialist analysis—an analysis that focuses almost exclusively on "consciousness" and is almost completely lacking in psychological insights—the new Enlightenment seems to yield only the most meagre "political" results. Evidently, the counterculture has produced no "mass" radical party and no visible "political" change. Viewed from the standpoint of a communist analysis, however—an analysis that deals with the unconscious legacy of domination—the new Enlightenment is slowly dissolving the individual's obedience to institutions, authorities, and values that have vitiated every struggle for freedom. These profound changes tend to occur almost unknowingly, as for example among workers who, in the *concrete* domain of *everyday life*, engage in sabotage, work indifferently, practice almost systematic absenteeism, resist authority in almost every form, use drugs, and acquire various freak traits—and yet, in the *abstract* domain of *politics* and *social philosophy*, acclaim the most conventional homilies of the system. The explosive character of revolution, its suddenness and utter unpredictability, can be explained only as the eruption of these unconscious changes into consciousness, as a release of the tension between unconscious desires and consciously held views in the form of an outright confrontation with the existing social order. The erosion of the unconscious restrictions on these desires and the full expression of the desires that lie in the individual unconscious is a precondition for the establishment of a liberatory society. There is a sense in which we can say that the attempt to change consciousness is a struggle for the

unconscious, both in terms of the fetters that restrain desire and the desires that are fettered.

## VI

**T**oday it is not a question of whether spontaneity is "good" or "bad," "desirable" or "undesirable." Spontaneity is integrally part of the very dialectic of self-consciousness and self-dealienation that removes the subjective fetters established by the present order. To deny the validity of spontaneity is to deny the most liberatory dialectic that is occurring today; as such, for us it must be a given that exists in its own right.

The term should be defined lest its content disappear in semantic quibbling. Spontaneity is not mere impulse, certainly not in its most advanced and truly human form, and this is the only form that is worth discussing. Nor does spontaneity imply undeliberated behavior and feeling. Spontaneity is behavior, feeling and *thought* that is free of *external* constraint, of *imposed* restriction. It is self-controlled, *internally* controlled, behavior, feeling, and thought, not an uncontrolled effluvium of passion and action. From the libertarian communist viewpoint, spontaneity implies a capacity in the individual to impose self-discipline and to formulate sound guidelines for social action. Insofar as the individual removes the fetters of domination that have stifled her or his self-activity, she or he is acting, feeling, and thinking spontaneously. We might just as well eliminate the word "self" from "self-consciousness," "self-activity," and "self-management" as remove the concept of spontaneity from our comprehension of the new Enlightenment, revolution, and communism. If there is an imperative need for a communist consciousness in the revolutionary movement today, we can never hope to attain it without spontaneity.

Spontaneity does not preclude organization and structure. To the contrary, spontaneity ordinarily yields non-hierarchical forms of organization, forms that are truly organic, self-created, and based on voluntarism. The only serious question that is raised in connection with spontaneity is whether it is *informed* or not. As I have argued elsewhere, the spontaneity of a child in a liberatory society will not be of the same order as the spontaneity of a youth, or that of a youth of the same order as that of an adult; each will simply be more informed, more knowledgeable, and more experienced than its junior.<sup>5</sup> Revolutionaries may seek today to promote this informative process, but if they try to contain or destroy it by forming hierarchical movements, they will vitiate the very process of self-realization that will yield

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5. Obviously I do not believe that adults today are "more informed, more knowledgeable, and more experienced" than young people in any sense that imparts to their greater experience any revolutionary significance. To the contrary, most adults in the existing society are mentally cluttered with preposterous falsehoods and if they are to achieve any real learning, they will have to undergo a considerable unlearning process.



self-activity and a society based on self-management.

No less serious for any revolutionary movement is the fact that only if a revolution is spontaneous can we be reasonably certain that the "necessary condition" for revolution has matured, as it were, into the "sufficient condition." An uprising planned by an elite and predicated on a confrontation of power with power is almost certain today to lead to disaster. The state power we face is too formidable, its armamentarium is too destructive, and, if its structure is still intact, its efficiency is too compelling to be removed by a contest in which weaponry is the determining factor. The system must fall, not fight; and it will fall only when its institutions have been so hollowed out by the new Enlightenment, and its power so undermined physically and morally, that an insurrectionary confrontation will be more symbolic than real. Exactly when or how this "magic moment," so characteristic of revolution, will occur is unpredictable. But, for example, when a local strike, ordinarily ignored under "normal" circumstances, can ignite a revolutionary general strike, then we will know that the conditions have ripened—and this can occur only when the revolutionary process has been permitted to find its own level of revolutionary confrontation.<sup>6</sup>

## VII

If it is true that revolution today is an act of consciousness in the *broadest* sense and entails a demystification of reality that removes all its ideological trappings, it is not enough to say that "consciousness follows being." To

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6. This is a vitally important point and should be followed through with an example. Had the famous Sud-Aviation strike in Nantes of May 13, 1968, a strike that ignited the massive general strike in France of May-June, occurred only a week earlier, it probably would have had only local significance and almost certainly would have been ignored by the country at large. Coming when it did, however, after the student uprising, the Sud-Aviation strike initiated a sweeping social movement. Obviously, the tinder for this movement had accumulated slowly and imperceptibly. The Sud-Aviation strike did not "create" this movement; it *revealed* it, which is precisely the point that cannot be emphasized too strongly. What I am saying is that a militant action, presumably by a minority—an action unknowingly radical even to itself—had revealed the fact that it was the action of a *majority* in the only way it could so reveal itself. The social material for the general strike lay at hand and *any* strike, however trivial in the normal course of events (and perhaps unavoidable), might have brought the general strike into being. Owing to the unconscious nature of the processes involved, there is no way of foretelling when a movement of this kind will emerge—and it will emerge only when it is left to do so on its own. Nor is this to say that will does not play an active role in social processes, but merely that the will of the individual revolutionary must become a *social* will, the will of the great majority in society, if it is to culminate in revolution.

deal with the development of consciousness merely as the reflection in subjectivity of the development of material production, to say as the older Marx does that morality, religion, and philosophy are the "ideological reflexes and echoes" of actuality and "have no history and no development" of their own, is to place the formation of a communist consciousness on a par with the formation of ideology and thereby to deny this consciousness any authentic basis for transcending the world as it is given.<sup>7</sup> Here, communist consciousness itself becomes an "echo" of actuality. The "why" in the explanation of this consciousness is reduced to the "how," in typical instrumentalist fashion; the subjective elements involved in the transformation of consciousness become completely objectified. Subjectivity ceases to be a domain for itself, hence the failure of Marxism to formulate a revolutionary psychology of its own and the inability of the Marxists to comprehend the new Enlightenment that is transforming subjectivity in all its dimensions.

Classical western philosophy in its broad, albeit often mystified, notion of "spirit," recognized that reason increasingly "subsumes" the material world—or stated in a more "materialistic" sense, that matter becomes rational and reason forms its own "cortex," as it were, over natural and social history. Reason is ultimately nature and society rendered conscious. In this sense, it is insufficient to say that "consciousness follows being," but rather that being develops toward consciousness; that consciousness has its own history within the material world and increasingly gains sway over the course of material reality. Humanity is capable of transcending the realm of blind necessity; it is capable of giving nature and society rational direction and purpose.

This larger interpretation of the relationship between consciousness and being is not a remote philosophical abstraction. On the contrary, it is eminently practical. Followed to its logical conclusion, this interpretation requires a fundamental revision of the traditional notion of revolutionary consciousness as class consciousness. If the proletariat, for example, is conceived of merely as the product of its concrete being—as the object of exploitation by the bourgeoisie and a creature of the factory system—it is reduced in *its very essence* to a category of political economy. Marx leaves us in no doubt about this conception. As the class that is most completely dehumanized, the proletariat transcends its dehumanized condition and comes to embody the human totality "through urgent, no longer disingenuous, absolutely imperative need . . ." Accordingly: "The question is not what this or that proletarian, or even the whole proletariat at the moment *considers* as its aim. The question is *what the proletariat is*, and what, consequent on that *being*, it will be compelled to do." (The emphasis throughout is Marx's and provides a telling commentary on

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7. The young Marx in *Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* held a quite different view: "It is not enough that thought should seek its actualization; actuality must itself strive toward thought."



the de-subjectification of the proletariat.) I will leave aside the rationale that this formula provides for an elitist organization. For the present, it is important to note that Marx, following in the tradition of classical bourgeois political economy, totally objectifies the proletariat and removes it as a true subject. The revolt of the proletariat, even its humanization, ceases to be a *human* phenomenon; rather, it becomes a function of inexorable economic laws and "imperative need." The essence of the proletariat as proletariat is its non-humanity, its creature nature as the product of "absolutely imperative need." Its subjectivity falls within the category of harsh necessity, explicable in terms of economic law. The psychology of the proletariat, in effect, is political economy.

The real proletariat resists this reduction of its subjectivity to the product of need and lives increasingly within the realm of desire, of possibility. As such, it becomes increasingly *rational* in the classical, not the instrumentalist, sense of the term. Concretely, the worker resists the work ethic because it has become *irrational* in view of the *possibilities* for a non-hierarchical society. The worker, in this sense, transcends her or his creature nature and increasingly becomes a subject, not an object; a non-proletarian, not a proletarian. *Desire*, not merely need, *possibility*, not merely necessity, enter into her or his self-formation and self-activity. The worker begins to shed her or his status of *workerness*, her or his existence as a mere class being, as an object of economic forces, as mere "being," and becomes increasingly available to the new Enlightenment.

As the *human* essence of the proletariat begins to replace its factory essence, the worker can now be reached as easily outside the factory as in it. Concretely, the worker's

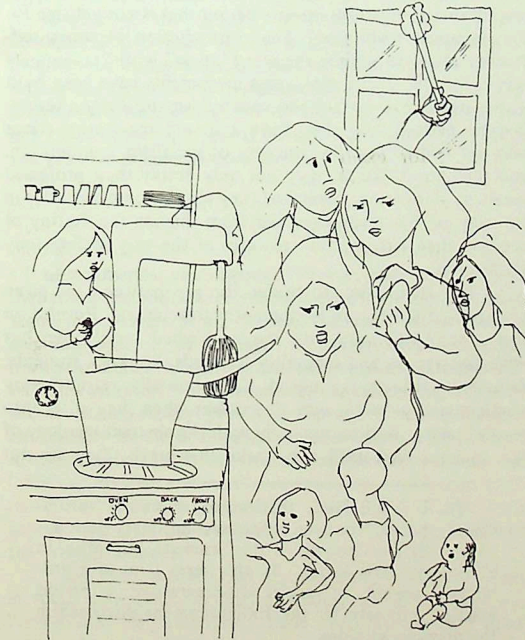
aspect as a woman or man, as a parent, as an urban dweller, as a youth, as a victim of environmental decay, as a dreamer (the list is nearly endless), comes increasingly to the foreground. The factory walls become permeable to the counter-culture to a degree where it begins to compete with the worker's "proletarian" concerns and values.

No "workers' group" can become truly revolutionary unless it deals with the individual worker's *human* aspirations, unless it helps to de-alienate the worker's personal milieu and begins to transcend the worker's factory milieu. The working class becomes revolutionary not *in spite* of itself but *because* of itself, literally as a result of its awakening selfhood.<sup>8</sup>

## VIII

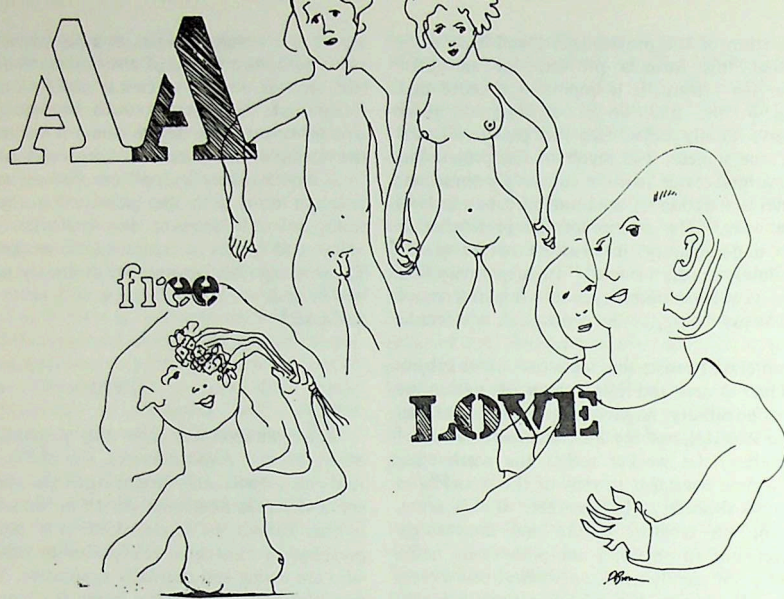
Revolutionaries have the responsibility of helping others become revolutionaries, not of "making" revolutions. And this activity only begins when the individual revolutionary undertakes to remake herself or himself. Obviously, such a task cannot be undertaken in a personal vacuum; it presupposes existential relations with others of a like kind who are loving and mutually supportive. This conception of revolutionary organization forms the basis of the anarchist affinity group. Members of an affinity group conceive of themselves as sisters and brothers whose activities and structures are, in Josef Weber's words, "transparent to all." Such groups function as catalysts in social situations, not as elites; they seek to advance the consciousness and struggles of the larger communities in which they function, not assume positions of command.

Traditionally, revolutionary activity has been permeated by the motifs of "suffering," "denial," and "sacrifice," motifs that largely reflected the guilt of the revolutionary movement's intellectual cadres. Ironically, to the extent that these motifs still exist, they reflect the very anti-human aspects of the established order that the "masses" seek to abolish. The revolutionary movement (if such it can be called, today) thus tends, even more than ideology, to "echo" the prevailing actuality—worse, to condition the "masses" to suffering, sacrifice, and denial at its own hands and in the aftermath of the revolution. As against this latter-day version of "republican virtue," the anarchist affinity groups affirm not only the rational but the joyous, the sensuous, and the aesthetic side of revolution. They affirm that revolution is not only an assault on the



8. A fact which was already clearly in evidence during the May-June events in France at the Champs de Mars gathering of students and workers on May 12. Here, worker after worker stood before the microphone and spoke of his life, his values, and his dreams as a human being, not merely of his class interests. Indeed, the extent to which broader human life issues emerged in the May-June events has yet to be adequately explored. It was precisely the Stalinists, on the other hand, who appealed to workers as "proletarians" and maliciously stressed their "social differences" with the "bourgeois students."





established order but also a festival in the streets. The revolution is desire carried into the social terrain and universalized. It is not without grave risks, tragedies, and pain, but these are the risks, tragedies, and pain of birth and new life, not of contrition and death. The affinity groups affirm that only a revolutionary movement that holds this outlook can create the so-called "revolutionary propaganda" to which the new popular sensibility can respond—a "propaganda" that is art in the sense of a Daumier, a John Milton, and a John Lennon. Indeed, truth today can exist only as art and art only as truth.<sup>9</sup>

The development of a revolutionary movement involves the seeding of America with such affinity groups, with communes and collectives—in cities, in the countryside, in schools, and in factories. These groups would be intimate, decentralized bodies that would deal with all facets of life and experience. Each group would be highly experimental, innovative, and oriented toward changes in life-style as well as consciousness; each would be so constituted that it could readily dissolve into the revolutionary institutions created by the people and disappear as a separate social interest. Finally, each would try to reflect as best it could the liberated forms of the future, not the given world that is reflected by the traditional "left." Each, in effect, would constitute itself as an energy center for transforming society and for colonizing the present by the future.

Such groups could interlink, federate, and establish communication on a regional and national level as the need arises without surrendering their autonomy or uniqueness.

9. As the decline of fictional literature attests. Life is far more interesting than fiction, not only as social life but as personal experience and autobiography.

They would be organic groups that emerged out of living problems and desires, not artificial groups that are foisted on social situations by elites. Nor would they tolerate an organization of cadres whose sole nexus is "programmatic agreement" and obedience to functionaries and higher bodies.

We may well ask if a "mass organization" can be a revolutionary organization in a period that is not yet ripe for a communist revolution? The contradiction becomes self-evident once we couple the word "mass" with "communist revolution."<sup>10</sup> To be sure, mass movements have been built in the name of socialism and communism during non-revolutionary periods, but they have achieved mass proportions only by denaturing the concepts of socialism, communism, and revolution. Worse, they not only betray their professed ideals by denaturing them, but they also become obstacles in the way of the revolution. Far from shaping the destiny of society, they become the creatures of the very society they profess to oppose.

The temptation to bridge the gap between the given society and the future is inherently treacherous. Revolution is a rupture not only with the established social order but with the psyche and mentality it breeds. Workers, students, farmers, intellectuals, indeed all potentially revolutionary strata, literally *break with themselves* when they enter into revolutionary motion, not only with the abstract ideology of the society. And until they make this break, they are not

10. I would argue that we are not in a "revolutionary period" or even a "pre-revolutionary period," to use the terminology of the Leninists, but rather in a revolutionary epoch. By this term I mean a *protracted* period of social disintegration, a period marked precisely by the Enlightenment discussed in the previous sections.



revolutionaries. A self-styled "revolutionary" movement that attempts to assimilate these strata with "transitional programs" and the like will acquire their support and participation for the wrong reasons. The movement, in turn, will be shaped by the people it has vainly tried to assimilate, not the people by the movement. Granted that the number of people who are revolutionary today is minuscule; granted, furthermore, that the great majority of the people today is occupied with the problems of survival, not of life. But it is precisely this *preoccupation* with the problems of survival, and the values as well as needs that promote it, that *prevents* them from turning to the problems of life—and then to revolutionary action. The rupture with the existing order will be made only when the problems of life infiltrate and assimilate the problems of survival—when life is understood as a precondition for survival today—not by rejecting the problems of life in order to take up the problems of survival, i.e., to achieve a "mass" organization made up only of "masses."

Revolution is a magic moment not only because it is unpredictable; it is a magic moment because it can also precipitate into consciousness within weeks, even days, a disloyalty that lies deeply hidden in the unconscious. But revolution must be seen as more than just a "moment"; it is a complex dialectic even within its own framework. A majoritarian revolution does not mean that the great majority of the population must necessarily go into revolutionary motion all at the same time. Initially, the people in motion may be a minority of the population—a substantial, popular, spontaneous minority, to be sure, not a small, "well-disciplined," centralized, and mobilized elite. The consent of the majority may reveal itself simply in the fact that it will no longer *defend* the established order. It may "act" by *refusing* to act in support of the ruling institutions—a "wait and see" attitude to determine if, by denying the ruling class its loyalty, the ruling class is rendered powerless. Only after testing the situation by its passivity may it pass into overt activity—and then with a rapidity and on a scale that removes in an incredibly brief period institutions, relations, attitudes, and values that have been centuries in the making.

## IX

**I**n America, any organized "revolutionary" movement that functions with distorted goals would be infinitely worse than no movement at all. Already the "left" has inflicted an appalling amount of damage on the counter-culture, the women's liberation movement, and the student movement. With its overblown pretensions, its dehumanizing behavior, and its manipulatory practices, the "left" has contributed enormously to the demoralization that exists today. Indeed, it may well be that in any future revolutionary situation, the "left" (particularly its authoritarian forms) will raise problems that are more formidable than those of the bourgeoisie, that is, if the revolutionary process fails to transform the "revolutionaries."

And there is much that requires transforming—not only in social views and personal attitudes, but in the very way "revolutionaries" (especially male "revolutionaries") interpret experience. The "revolutionary," no less than the

"masses," embodies attitudes that reflect an inherently domineering outlook toward the external world. The western mode of perception traditionally defines selfhood in antagonistic terms, in a matrix of opposition between the objects and subjects that lie outside the "I." The self is not merely an ego that is distinguishable from the external "others"; it is an ego that seeks to master these others and to bring them into subjugation. The subject/object relation defines subjectivity as a function of domination, the domination of objects and the reduction of other subjects to objects. Western selfhood, certainly in its male forms, is a selfhood of appropriation and manipulation in its very self-definition and definition of relationships. This self- and relational definition may be active in some individuals, passive in others, or reveal itself precisely in the mutual assignment of roles based on a domineering and dominated self, but domination permeates almost universally the prevailing mode of experiencing reality.

**V**irtually every strain in western culture reinforces this mode of experiencing—not only its bourgeois and Judeo-Christian strains, but also its Marxian one. Marx's definition of the labor process as *the* mode of self-definition, a notion he borrows from Hegel, is explicitly appropriative and latently exploitative. Man forms himself by changing the world; he appropriates it, refashions it according to his "needs," and thereby projects, materializes, and verifies himself in the objects of his own labor. This conception of man's self-definition forms the point of departure for Marx's entire theory of historical materialism. "Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion or anything else you like," observes Marx in a famous passage from *The German Ideology*. "They begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to *produce* their means of subsistence. . . . As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with *what* they produce and with *how* they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production."

In Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, the theme of labor is taken up within the context of the master/slave relationship. Here, the subject becomes an object in the dual sense that another self (the slave) is objectified and concomitantly reduced to an instrument of production. The slave's labor, however, becomes the basis for an autonomous consciousness and selfhood. Through work and labor the "consciousness of the slave comes to itself. . . ." Hegel observes. "Labor is desire restrained and checked, evanescence delayed and postponed; in other words, labor shapes and fashions the thing." The activity of "giving shape and form" is the "pure self-existence of [the slave's] consciousness, which now in the work it does is externalized and passes into the condition of permanence. The consciousness that toils and serves accordingly attains by this means the direct apprehension of that independent being as its self."

Hegel transcends the imprisonment of labor in the master/slave relationship—i.e., in the framework of domination—with the dialectic that follows this "moment." Eventually, the split between subject and object as an antagonism is healed, although as reason fulfilled in the wholeness of



truth, in the Absolute Idea. Marx does not advance beyond the moment of the master/slave relationship. The moment is transfixed and deepened into the Marxian theory of class struggle—in my view a grave shortcoming that denies consciousness the history of an *emergent* dialectic\*—and the split between subject and object is never wholly reconciled. All interpretations of the young Marx's "Feuerbachian naturalism" notwithstanding, humanity, in Marx's view, transcends domination ambivalently, by dominating nature. Nature is reduced to the "slave," as it were, of a harmonized society, and the self does not annul its Promethean content.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the theme of domination is still latent in Marx's interpretation of communism; nature is still the object of human domination. So conceived, the Marxian concept of nature—quite aside from the young Marx's more ambivalent notions—vitiates the reconciliation of subject and object that is to be achieved by a harmonized society.

That "objects" exist and must be "manipulated" is an obvious precondition for human survival that no society, however harmonized, can transcend. But whether "objects" exist *merely* as objects or whether their "manipulation" remains *merely* manipulation—or indeed, whether labor, as distinguished from art and play, constitutes the primary mode of self-definition—is quite another matter. The key issue around which these distinctions turn is domination—an appropriative relation that is defined by an egotistical conception of need.<sup>12</sup> Insofar as the self's need exists exclusively for itself, without regard to the integrity (or what Hegel might well call the "subjectivity") of the other, the other remains *mere* object for the self and the handling of this object becomes *mere* appropriation. But insofar as the other is seen as an end in itself and need is defined in terms of mutual support, the self and the other enter into a *complementary* relationship. This complementary relationship reaches its most harmonized form in true art, just as will reaches its most harmonized form in authentic play.<sup>13</sup> Complementarity as distinguished from domination—even from the more benign forms of contractual relationships and mutual aid designated as "reciprocity"—presupposes a new animism that respects the other for its own sake and

responds *actively* in the form of a creative, loving, and supportive symbiosis.

**D**ependence *always* exists. *How* it exists and *why* it exists, however, remain critical toward an understanding of any distinction between domination and complementarity. Infants will always be dependent upon adults for satisfying their most elemental physiological needs, and younger people will always require the assistance of older ones for knowledge and the assurances of experience. Similarly, older generations will be dependent upon the younger for the reproduction of society and for the stimulation that comes from inquiry and fresh views toward experience. In hierarchical society, dependence ordinarily yields subjugation and the denial of the other's selfhood. Differences in age, in sex, in modes of work, in levels of knowledge, in intellectual, artistic, and emotional proclivities, in physical appearance—a vast array of diversity that could result in a nourishing constellation of interrelationships and interdependencies—are all reassembled objectively in terms of command and obedience, superiority and inferiority, rights and duties, privileges and denials. This hierarchical organization of appearances occurs not only in the social world; it finds its counterpart in the way phenomena, whether social, natural, or personal, are internally experienced. The self in hierarchical society not only lives, acts, and communicates hierarchically; it thinks and feels hierarchically by organizing the vast diversity of sense data, memory, values, passions, and thoughts along hierarchical lines. Differences between things, people, and relations do not exist as ends in themselves; they are organized hierarchically in the mind itself and pitted against each other antagonistically in varying degrees of dominance and obedience even when they could be complementary to each other in the prevailing reality.

The outlook of the early organic human community, at least in its most harmonized form, remained essentially free of hierarchical modes of perception; indeed, it is questionable if humanity could have emerged from animality without a system of social reciprocities that compensated for the physical limitations of a puny, savannah-dwelling primate. To a large extent, this early non-hierarchical outlook was mystified; not only plants and animals, but wind and stones were seen as animate. Each was seen, however, as the spiritualized element of a whole in which humans participated as one among many, neither above nor below the others. Ideally, this outlook was fundamentally egalitarian and reflected the egalitarian nature of the community. If we are to accept Dorothy Lee's analysis of Wintu Indian syntax, domination in any form was absent even from the language;

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\* See my "Dialectical Philosophy," to be published by Times Change Press in the autumn of 1972.

11. One sees this in Marx's restless concept of practice and especially of material "need," which expands almost indefinitely. It is also clearly seen in the exegetical views of Marxian theorists, whose concepts of an unending, willful, power-asserting practice assumes almost Dionysian proportions.

12. And "need," here, in the sense of psychic as well as material manifestations of egotism. Indeed, domination need not be exploitative in the material sense alone, as merely the appropriation of surplus labor. Psychic exploitation, notably of children and women, may well have preceded material exploitation and even established its cultural and attitudinal framework. And unless exploitation of this kind is totally uprooted, humanity will have made no advance into humanness.

13. Music is the most striking example where art can exist for itself and even combine with play for itself. The competitive sports, on the other hand, are forms of play that are virtually degraded to marketplace relations, notably in the frenzy for scoring over rivals and the egocentric antagonisms that the games so often engender. The reader should note that a dialectic exists within art and play, hence my use of the words "true art" and authentic play," i.e., art and play as ends in themselves.

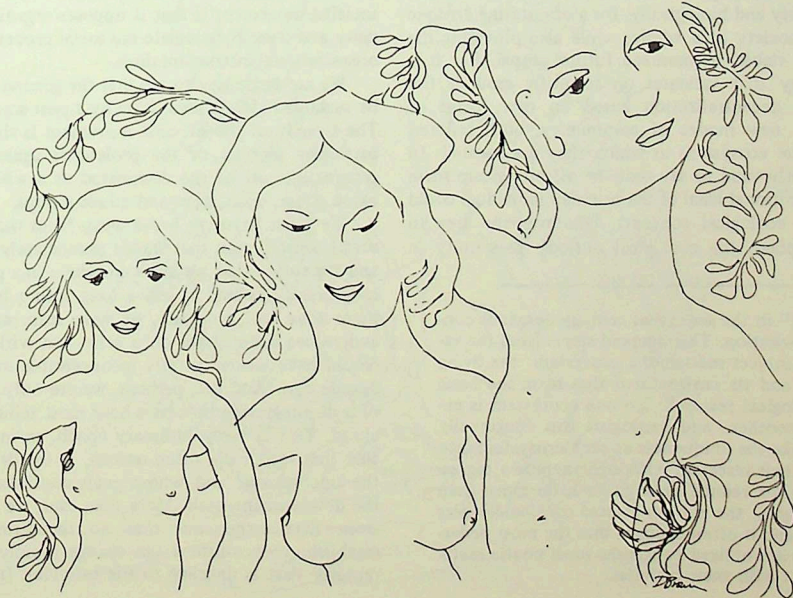


thus a Wintu mother did not “take” her infant into the shade, she “went” with her child into the shade. No hierarchies were imputed to the natural world, at least not until the human community began to become hierarchical. Thereafter, experience itself became increasingly hierarchical, reflecting the splits that undermined the unity of the early organic human community. The emergence of patriarchy, of social classes, of the towns and the ensuing antagonism between town and countryside, of the state, and finally of the distinctions between mental and physical labor that divided the individual internally undermined this outlook completely.

Bourgeois society, by degrading all social ties to a commodity nexus and by reducing all productive activity to “production for its own sake,” carried the hierarchical outlook into an absolute antagonism with the natural world. Although it is surely correct to say that this outlook and the various modes of labor that produced it also produced incredible advances in technology, the fact remains that these advances were achieved by bringing the conflict between humanity and nature to a point where the natural fundament for life hangs precariously in the balance. The institutions that emerged with hierarchical society, moreover, have now reached their historical limits. Although once the social agencies that promoted technological advance, they have now become the most compelling forces for ecological disequilibrium. The patriarchal family, the class system, the city, and the state are breaking down on their own terms; worse, they are becoming the sources of massive social disintegration and conflict. As I’ve indicated elsewhere, the means of production have become too formidable to be used as means of domination. It is domination itself that has to go, and with domination the historical legacy that perpetuates the hierarchical outlook toward experience.

The emergence of ecology as a social issue reminds us of the extent to which we are returning again to the problems of an organic society, a society in which the splits within society and between society and nature are healed. It is by no means accidental that the counter-culture turns for inspiration to Indian and Asian outlooks toward experience. The archaic myths, philosophies, and religions of a more unified, organic world become alive again only because the issues they faced are alive again. The two ends of the historic development are united by the word “communism”: the first, a technologically primitive society that still lived in awe and fear of nature; the second, a technologically sophisticated utopia that could live in reverence for nature and bring its consciousness to the service of life. Moreover, the first lived in a social network of rigidly defined reciprocities based on custom and compelling need; the second could live in a free constellation of complementary relations based on reason and desire. Both are separated by the enormous development of technology, a development that opens the possibility of a transcendence of the domain of necessity.

That the socialist movement has failed utterly to see the implications of the communist issues that are now emerging is attested by its attitude toward ecology: an attitude that, when it is not marked by patronizing irony, rarely rises above petty muckraking. I speak, here, of *ecology*, not environmentalism. Environmentalism deals with the serviceability of the human habitat, a passive habitat that people *use*, in short, an assemblage of things called “natural resources” and “urban resources.” Taken by themselves, environmental issues require the use of no greater wisdom than the instrumentalist modes of thought and methods that are used by city planners, engineers, physicians, lawyers—and





socialists. Ecology, by contrast, is an artful science or scientific art, and at its best, a form of poetry that combines science and art in a unique synthesis.<sup>14</sup> Above all, it is an outlook that interprets all interdependencies (social and phylogenetic as well as natural) non-hierarchically. Ecology denies that nature can be interpreted from a hierarchical viewpoint. Moreover, it affirms that diversity and spontaneous development are ends in themselves, to be respected in their own right. Formulated in terms of ecology's "ecosystem approach," this means that each form of life has a unique place in the balance of nature and its removal from the ecosystem could imperil the stability of the whole. The natural world, left largely to itself, evolves by colonizing the planet with ever more diversified life forms and increasingly complex interrelationships between species in the form of food chains and food webs. Ecology knows no "king of beasts"; all life forms have their place in a biosphere that becomes more and more diversified in the course of biological evolution. Each ecosystem must be seen as a unique totality of diversified life forms in its own right. Humans, too, belong to the whole, but only as one part of the whole. They can intervene in this totality, even try to manage it consciously, provided they do so in its own behalf as well as society's; but if they try to "dominate" it, i.e., plunder it, they risk the possibility of undermining it and the natural fundament for social life.

The dialectical nature of the ecological outlook, an outlook that stresses differentiation, inner development, and unity in diversity, should be obvious to anyone who is familiar with Hegel's writings. Even the language of ecology and dialectical philosophy overlap to a remarkable degree. Ironically, ecology more closely realizes Marx's vision of science as dialectics than any other science today, including his own cherished realm of political economy. Ecology could be said to enjoy this unique eminence because it provides the basis, both socially and biologically, for a devastating critique of hierarchical society as a whole, while also providing the guidelines for a viable, harmonized future utopia. For it is precisely ecology that validates our scientific grounds the need for social decentralization based on new forms of technology and new modes of community, both tailored artistically to the ecosystem in which they are located. In fact, it is perfectly valid to say that the affinity-group form and even the traditional ideal of the rounded individual could be regarded as ecological concepts. Whatever the area to which it is applied, the ecological outlook sees unity in

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14. "Art" in the sense that ecology demands continual improvisation. This demand stems from the variety of its subject matter, the ecosystem: the living community and its environment that form the basic unit of ecological research. No one ecosystem is entirely like another, and ecologists are continually obliged to take the uniqueness of each ecosystem into account in their research. Although there is a regressive attempt to reduce ecology to little more than systems analysis, the subject matter continually gets in the way, and it often happens that the most pedestrian writers are obliged to use the most poetic metaphors to deal with their material.

diversity as a holistic dynamic totality that tends to harmoniously integrate its diverse parts, not as an aggregate of neutrally co-existing elements.

It is not fatuity alone that blocks the socialist movement's comprehension of the ecological outlook. To speak bluntly, Marxism is no longer adequate to comprehend the communist vision that is now emerging. The socialist movement, in turn, has acquired and exaggerated the most limiting features of Marx's works without understanding the rich insights they contain. What constitutes the *modus operandi* of this movement is not Marx's vision of a humanity integrated internally and with nature, but the particularistic notions and the ambivalences that marred his vision and the latent instrumentalism that vitiated it.

## XI

History has played its own cunning game with us. It has turned yesterday's verities into today's falsehood, not by generating new refutations but by creating a new level of social possibility. We are beginning to see that there is a realm of domination that is broader than the realm of material exploitation. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that, steeped in the past, it uses the methods of domination to try to "liberate" us from material exploitation.

We are beginning to see that the most advanced form of class consciousness is self-consciousness. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it opposes class consciousness to self-consciousness and denies the emergence of the self as "individualism"—a self that could yield the most advanced form of collectivity, a collectivity based on self-management.

We are beginning to see that spontaneity yields its own liberated forms of social organization. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it opposes organization to spontaneity and tries to assimilate the social process to political and organizational instrumentalism.

We are beginning to see that the general interest can now be sustained after a revolution by a post-scarcity technology. The tragedy of the socialist movement is that it sustains the particular interest of the proletariat against the emerging general interest of the dominated as a whole—of all dominated strata, sexes, ages, and ethnic groups.

We must begin to break away from the given, from the social constellation that stands immediately before our eyes, and try to see that we are somewhere in a process that has a long history behind it and a long future before it. In little more than half a decade, we have seen established verities and values disintegrate on a scale and with a rapidity that would have seemed utterly inconceivable to the people of a decade ago. And yet, perhaps, we are only at the beginning of a disintegrating process whose most telling effects still lie ahead. This is a revolutionary epoch, an immense historical tide that builds up, often unseen, in the deepest recesses of the unconscious and whose goals continually expand with the development itself. More than ever, we now know a fact from lived experience that no theoretical tomes could establish: consciousness can change rapidly, indeed, with a rapidity that is dazzling to the beholder. In a revolutionary

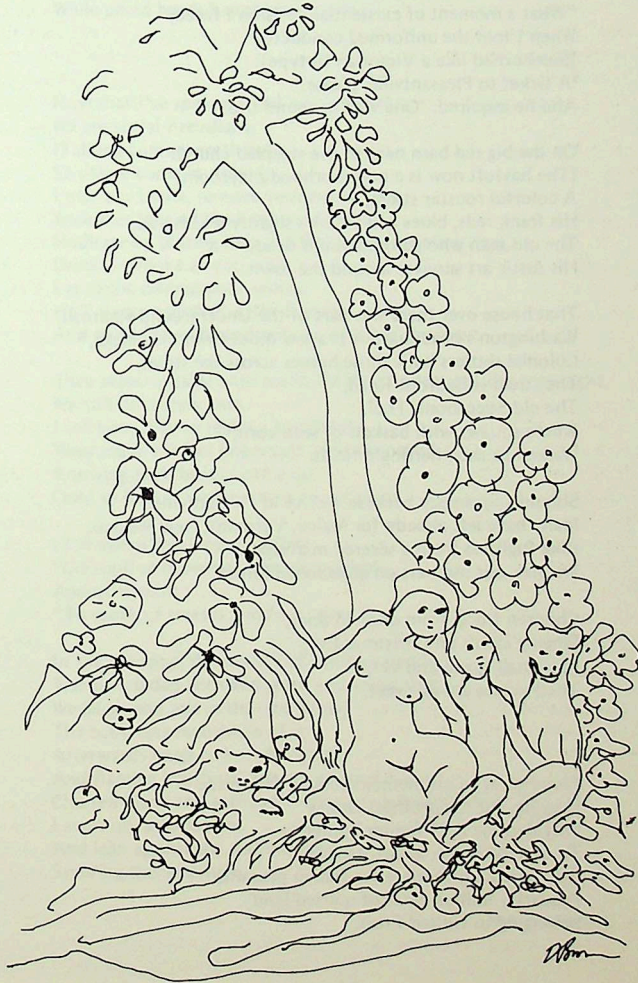


epoch, a year or even a few months can yield changes in popular consciousness and mood that would normally take decades to achieve.

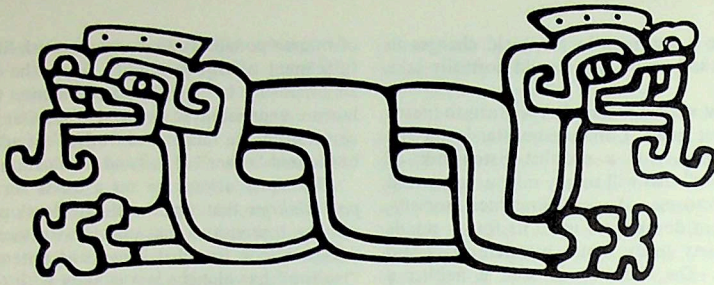
And we must know what we want, lest we turn to means that totally vitiate our goals. Communism stands on the agenda of society today, not a socialist patchwork of "stages" and "transitions" that will simply mire us in a world we are trying to overcome. A non-hierarchical society, self-managed and free of domination in all its forms, stands on the agenda of society today, not a hierarchical system draped in a red flag. The dialectic we seek is neither a Promethean will that posits the "other" antagonistically nor a passivity that receives phenomena in repose. Nor is it the happiness and pacification of an eternal status quo. Life begins when we are prepared to accept all the forbidden experiences that do not impede survival. Desire is the sense

of human possibility that emerges with life, and pleasure the fulfillment of this possibility. Thus, the dialectic we seek is an unceasing but gentle transcendence that finds its most human expression in art and play. Our self-definition will come from the humanized "other" of art and play, not the bestialized "other" of toil and domination.

We must always be on a quest for the new, for the *potentialities* that ripen with the development of the world and the new visions that unfold with them. An outlook that ceases to look for what is new and potential in the name of "realism" has already lost contact with the present, for the present is always conditioned by the future. True development is cumulative, not sequential; it is growth, not succession. The new always embodies the present and past, but it does so in new ways and more adequately as the parts of a greater whole. •







### AN INTERLUDE IN PLEASANTVILLE

Through a glass paperweight snowfall,  
We drive to the station to greet the visitor from the City.  
Our friend is amused by the name of this little town  
And recalls with mock awe,  
"What a moment of existential decision I faced,  
When I told the uniformed conductor  
(Sideburned like a Victorian tintype):  
'A ticket to Pleasantville, please,'  
And he inquired: 'One way or round trip?' "

On the big red barn next to the steepled church  
(The hayloft now is a neighborhood playroom)  
A colorful rooster struts,  
His frank reds, blues and yellows slightly weathered.  
The old man who painted him is dead;  
His rustic art survives around the town.

That house over there was part of the Underground Railroad,  
Washington's headquarters is a few miles from the village,  
Colonial settlers built those homes across the street,  
The street is Bedford Road,  
The old Succabonk Trail,  
Where squaws with baskets of seed corn,  
Walked to their herring'd fields.

Should I apologize because we live in Pleasantville?  
Many have left already for Maine, Vermont, New Mexico.  
Like fugitives from a severed marriage,  
We seek our mothers on abandoned farms.

Children troop from door to door,  
Singing carols on Christmas Eve,  
Pop small town, and yet,  
Their voices are so sweet.

Eisenhower in his memoirs relates with pride  
How he and the brothers Dulles  
Provided the P-51 fighter-bombers  
To overthrow the leftist Arbenz,  
Who dared appropriate for Indian peasants  
A quarter million acres of unused land  
Belonging to United Fruit.



Beside the ruins of a Mayan temple,  
A wizened baby cradled by a brown madonna,  
Is dying of whooping cough, diarrhea, kwashiorkor.

The City cowers at knife point.  
Victims are mugged by victims.  
Whistler's mother is crucified in an elevator  
By beardless junkies hurrying toward their overdose.

Small sad eyes accuse me from masks of burnt flesh.  
Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia.  
Who would have thought they had so much blood!

Once you've seen one deluge you've seen them all.  
Waiting for the apocalypse we tell jokes,  
While piked heads haunt our dreams.

Now that I've spoken I feel much better,  
We are social Freudians  
(Talking cures everything)  
So please come in, friend,  
Enter our home, remove your heavy coat,  
Walk barefoot on the hardwood floor,  
Meditate by blazing logs and feel the penetrating heat,  
Drink or smoke as you will,  
Let music cleanse your senses.  
We'll dance together at the fireside  
And paint the walls and ceilings with our shadows.

Then stand outside with me in the dear honesty of the cold night.  
We still have stars here.  
I tell you, they're really a knockout.  
They make me feel important and purposeful,  
Knowing their beauty can exist  
Only so long as we have eyes to see them.

I fall asleep thinking of Jeffers:  
"Corruption never has been compulsory,"  
And of Brecht:  
"To speak of trees is almost a crime."

In the morning, the sounds of children sledding,  
The air scented with evergreen and wood fires,  
We laugh and roll in the new snow,  
The baby eats mouthfuls of it,  
Afterwards mugs of hot chocolate,  
And flaming marshmallows on pointed sticks.  
Charred black and soft inside the taste is bitter sweet,  
I avert my associations  
And lean against the warm bricks,  
Savoring this interlude.

—Walter Schneir



# SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE

Mel Rothenberg   Len Radinsky  
Bart Meyers   Bill Zimmerman

**I**n the 15th century, Leonardo Da Vinci refused to publish plans for a submarine because he anticipated that it would be used as a weapon. In the 17th century, for similar reasons, Boyle kept secret a poison he had developed. In 1946, Leo Szilard, who had been one of the key developers of the atom bomb, quit physics in disillusionment over the ways in which the government had used his work. By and large, this kind of resistance on the part of scientists to the misuse of their research has been very sporadic, from isolated individuals, and generally in opposition only to particular, unusually repugnant projects. As such, it has been ineffective. If scientists want to help prevent socially destructive applications of science, they must forego acting in an *ad hoc* or purely moralistic fashion, and begin to respond collectively from the vantage point of a political and economic analysis of their work. This analysis must be firmly anchored in an understanding of the American corporate state.

We will argue below that science is inevitably political, and in the context of contemporary American corporate capitalism, that it contributes greatly to the exploitation and oppression of most of the people both in this country and abroad. We will call for a reorientation of scientific work and will suggest ways in which scientific workers can redirect their research to further meaningful social change.

## Science in Capitalist America

**C**oncurrent with the weakening of Cold War ideology over the past 15 years has been the growing realization on the part of increasing numbers of Americans that a tiny minority of the population, through its wealth and power, controls the major decision-making institutions of our society. Research such as that of Mills (*The Power Elite*), Domhoff (*Who Rules America*), and Lundgren (*The Rich and the Superrich*) has exposed the existence of this minority to public scrutiny. Although the term "ruling class" may have an anachronistic ring to some, we still find it useful to describe that dominant minority that owns and controls the productive economic resources of our society. The means by which the American ruling class exerts control in our society

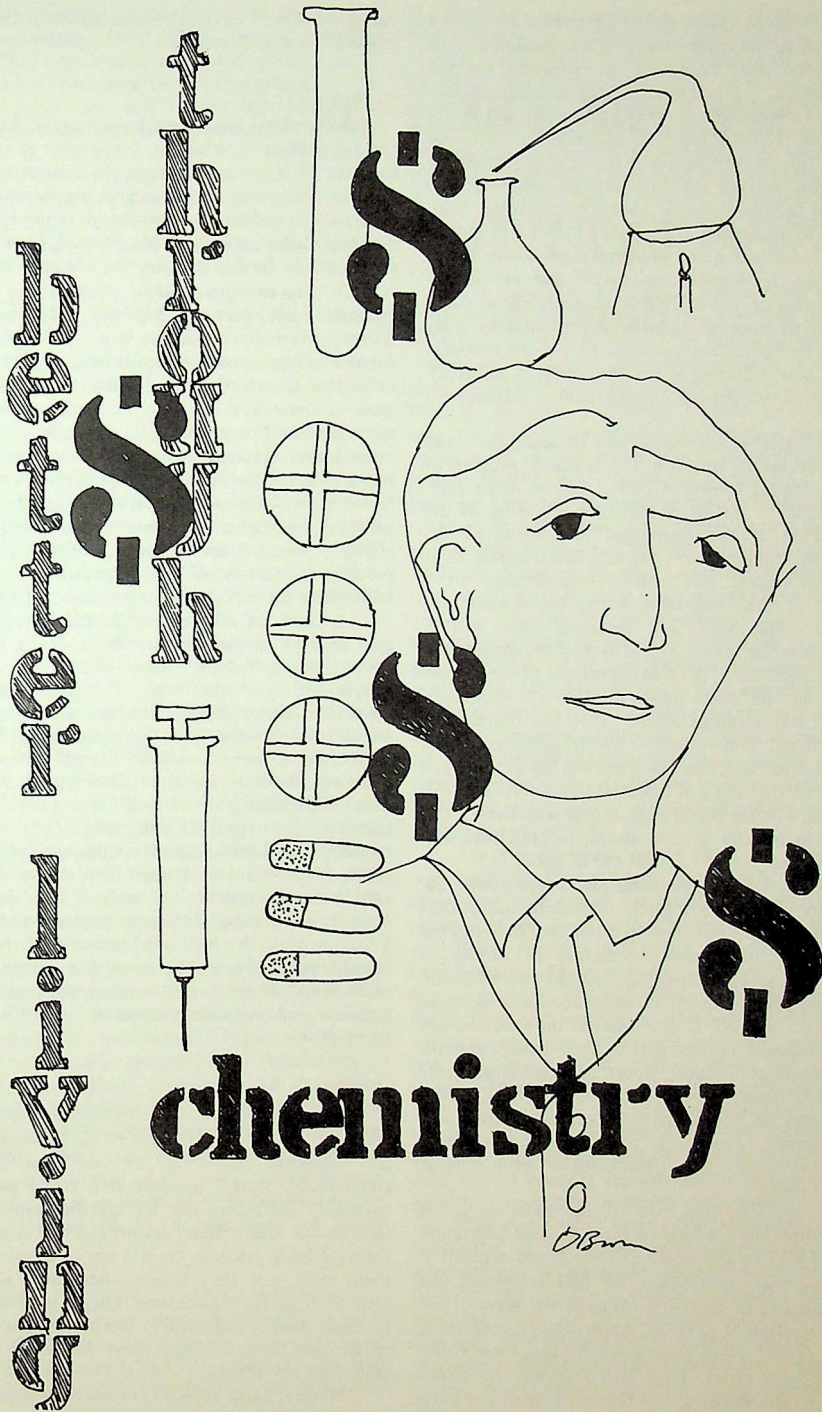
and over much of the Third World has been described in such works as Baran and Sweezy's *Monopoly Capital*, Horowitz's *The Free World Colossus*, and Magdoff's *The Age of Imperialism*. These works argue that it is not a conspiracy, but rather the logical outcome of corporate capitalism that a minority with wealth and power, functioning efficiently within the system to maintain its position, inevitably will oversee the oppression and exploitation of the majority of the people in this country, as well as the more extreme impoverishment and degradation of the people of the Third World. It is within the context of this political-economic system, a system that has produced the Military-Industrial complex as its highest expression, and that will use all the resources at its disposal to maintain its control, that is, within the context of the American corporate state, that we must consider the role played by scientific work.

We view the long-term strategy of the U.S. capitalist class as resting on two basic pillars. The first is the maintenance and strengthening of the international domination of U.S. capital. The principal economic aspect of this lies in continually increasing the profitable opportunities for the export of capital so as to absorb the surplus constantly being generated both internally and abroad. With the growing revolt of the oppressed peoples of the world, the traditional political and military mechanisms necessary to sustain this imperialist control are disintegrating. More and more the U.S. ruling class is coming to rely openly on technological and military means of mass terror and repression which approach genocide: anti-personnel bombs, napalm, pacification-assassination programs, herbicides and other attempts to induce famines, etc.

While this use of scientific resources is becoming more clearly evident (witness the crisis of conscience among increasing numbers of young scientists), the importance of scientific and technological resources for the second pillar of capitalist strategy is even more central, although less generally accorded the significance it deserves.

The second fundamental thrust of capitalist political economic strategy is to guarantee a steady and predictable increase in the productivity of domestic labor. The ability to extract an increasingly better return on the wage investment







by curtailment of the necessary labor time to produce a given product is crucial to the maintenance of the profitability of domestic industry and its ability to compete on the international market. Without this increase in labor productivity it would be impossible to maintain profits and at the same time sustain the living standard and employment of the working class. This in turn makes it possible to sustain the internal consumer market and to blunt the domestic class struggle in order to preserve social control by the ruling class.

The key to increasing the productivity of American labor is the transformation and reorganization of our major industries through accelerated automation and rationalization of the production process (through economy of scale, the introduction of labor-saving plant and machinery, doing away with the traditional craft prerogatives of the workers, etc., such as is now occurring in the construction industry). This reorganization will depend on *programmed* advances in technology.

There are basically two reasons why these advances and new developments cannot be left to the "natural" progress of scientific-technological knowledge, why they must be foreseen and included in the social-economic planning of the ruling class. First is the mammoth investment in the present-day plant, equipment and organizational apparatus of the major monopolies. The sudden obsolescence of a significant part of their apparatus would be an economic disaster which could very well endanger their market position. (One sees the results of this lack of planning in the airline industry.) Secondly, the transformation of the process of production entails major reorganization of education, transportation, and communication. This has far-reaching social and political consequences which cause profound strains in traditional class, race, and sex relationships, which have already generated and will continue to generate political and social crises. For the ruling class to deal with these crises it is necessary to be able to plan ahead, to anticipate new developments so that they do not get out of hand.

In our view, because planning and programmed advances in technology are absolutely central to ruling class strategy, an entirely new relationship is required between the ruling and the technical-scientific sectors of society, a relationship which has been emerging since the Second World War, and which, deeply rooted in social-economic developments, cannot be reversed. If one looks at the new sciences which have developed in this period—cybernetics, systems analysis, management science, linear programming, game theory, as well as the direction of development in the social sciences, one sees an enormous development in the techniques of gathering, processing, organizing, and utilizing information, exactly the type of technological advance most needed by the rulers.

It is no accident that two of the most advanced monopolistic formations, advanced both in their utilization and support of science and in the efficiency and sophistication of their internal organization, are Bell Telephone and IBM. They represent to capitalist planners the wave of the future, the integration of scientific knowledge, management technique and capital which guarantees the long-term viability of the capitalist order. They also represent industries which are key to the servicing and rationalizing of the basic

industries as well as to the maintenance of the international domination of U.S. capital.

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The ruling class, through government, big corporations, and tax-exempt foundations, funds most of our research. In the case of industrial research, the control and direction of research are obvious. With research supported by government or private foundations, controls are somewhat less obvious, but nonetheless effective. Major areas of research may be preferentially funded by direction of Congress or foundation trustees. For example, billions of dollars are spent on space research while pressing domestic needs are given lower priority. We believe that the implications of space research for the military and the profits of the influential aerospace industries are clearly the decisive factors. Within specific areas of research, ruling-class bias is also evident in selection of priorities. For example, in medicine, money has been poured into research on heart disease, cancer and stroke, major killers of the middle and upper classes, rather than into research on sickle cell anemia, the broad range of effects of malnutrition (higher incidences of most diseases), etc., which affect mainly the lower classes. Large sums of money are provided for study of ghetto populations but nothing is available to support studies of how the powerful operate.

Second, on a lower level, decisions on which individual gets research money are usually made by scientists themselves, chosen to sit on review panels. The fact that these people are near the tops of their respective scientific hierarchies demonstrates a congruence between their professional goals and the scientific priorities of the ruling class. This kind of internal control is most critical in the social sciences, where questions of ideology are more obviously relevant to what is considered "appropriate" in topic or in approach. This same scientific elite exerts control over the socialization of science students through funding of training grants to universities, through their influence over curricula and textbook content, and through their personal involvement in the training of the next generation of elite scientists. Thus, through the high level control of the funding now essential for most scientific research, and second, through the professional elites acting in a managerial capacity, ruling-class interests and priorities dominate scientific research and training.

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The same government-corporate axis that funds applied research that is narrowly beneficial to ruling-class interests also supports almost all of our basic or, to use the euphemism, "pure" research; it is called pure because it is ostensibly performed not for specific applications but only to seek the truth. Many scientific workers engaged in some form of basic research do not envision any applications of their work and thus believe themselves absolved of any responsibility for applications. Others perform basic research in hopes that it will lead to the betterment of mankind. In either case these workers have failed to understand the contemporary situation.

Today, basic research is closely followed by those in a



position to reap the benefits of its application—the government and the corporations. Only rich institutions have the resources and staff to keep abreast of current research and to mount the technology necessary for its application. As the attention paid by government and corporations to scientific research has increased, the amount of time required to apply it has decreased. In the last century, fifty years elapsed between Faraday's demonstration that an electric current could be generated by moving a magnet near a piece of wire and Edison's construction of the first central power station. Only seven years passed between the realization that the atomic bomb was theoretically possible and its detonation over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The transistor went from invention to sales in a mere three years. More recently, research on lasers was barely completed when engineers began using it to design new weapons for the government and new long-distance transmission systems for the telephone company.

The result is that in many ways discovery and application, scientific research and engineering, can no longer be distinguished from each other. Our technological society has brought them so close together that today they can only be considered part of the same process. Consequently, while most scientific workers are motivated by humane considerations, or a detached pursuit of truth for truth's sake, their discoveries cannot be separated from applications which all too frequently destroy or debase human life.

Theoretical and experimental physicists, working on problems of esoteric intellectual interest, provided the knowledge that eventually was pulled together to make the H-bomb, while mathematicians, geophysicists, and metallurgists, wittingly or unwittingly, made the discoveries necessary to construct intercontinental ballistic missiles. Physicists doing basic work in optics and infrared spectroscopy may have been shocked to find that their research would help government and corporate engineers build detection and surveillance devices for use in Indochina. The basic research of molecular biologists, biochemists, cellular physiologists, neuropsychologists and physicians was necessary for CBW (chemical-biological warfare) agents, defoliants, herbicides, and gaseous crowd-control devices.

Anthropologists studying social systems of mountain tribes in Indochina were surprised when the CIA collected their information for use in counter-insurgency operations. Psychologists exploring the parameters of human intelligence for "purely scientific" reasons unintentionally created intelligence-testing instruments which, once developed, passed out of their hands and now help the draft boards conscript men for Vietnam and the U.S. Army allocate manpower more effectively. Further, these same intelligence-testing instruments are now an integral part of the public school tracking systems that, beginning at an early age, reduce opportunities of working-class children for higher education and social mobility.

Unfortunately, the problem of evaluating basic research does not end with such obscene misapplications as these. One must also examine the economic consequences of basic research, consequences which flow from the structure of corporate capitalism under which we live. Scientific

knowledge and products, like any other products and services in our society, are marketed for profit—that is, they are not equally distributed to, equally available to, or equally useable by all of the people. While they often contribute to the material standard of living of many people, they are channeled through an organization and distribution of scarcity in such a way as to rationalize the overall system of economic exploitation and social control. Furthermore, they frequently become the prerogative of the middle and upper classes and often result in increasing the disadvantages of those sectors of the population that are already most oppressed.

For example, research in comparative and developmental psychology has shown that enriching the experience of infants and young children by increasing the variety and complexity of shapes, colors and patterns in their environment might increase their intelligence as it is conventionally defined. As these techniques become more standardized, manufacturers are beginning to market their versions of them in the form of toys aimed at and priced for the upper and middle classes, and inaccessible to the poor. Research in plant genetics and agronomy resulted in the development of super strains of cereal crops which, it was hoped, would alleviate the problems of food production in underdeveloped countries. However, in many areas the expensive fertilizers required for growing these crops can be afforded only by rich farmers, and the "green revolution" has ended up by exacerbating class differences. Studies by sociologists and anthropologists of various Third World societies have been used by the U.S. government to help maintain in power ruling elites favorable to U.S. economic interests in those countries. The mapping studies of geologists, carried out in the interests of basic research, have been used by real-estate developers in California to lay out tract-housing developments that mean massive profits for the few and ecological catastrophe for the entire state.

On a larger scale, nearly all of the people and most organizations of people lack the financial resources to avail themselves of some of the most advanced technology that arises out of basic research. Computers, satellites, and advertising, to name only a few, all rely on the findings of basic research. These techniques are not owned by, utilized by, or operated for, the mass of the people, but instead function in the interests of the government and the large corporations. The people are not only deprived of the potential benefits of scientific research, but corporate capitalism is given new tools with which to extract profit from them. For example, the telephone company's utilization of the basic research on laser beams will enable it to create superior communication devices which, in turn, will contribute toward binding together and extending the American empire commercially, militarily, and culturally.

The thrust of all these examples, which could easily be elaborated and multiplied, is that the potentially beneficial achievements of scientific technology do not escape the political and economic context. Rather, they emerge as products which are systematically distributed in an inequitable way to become another means of further defining and producing the desired political or economic ends of those in power. New knowledge capable of application in ways which



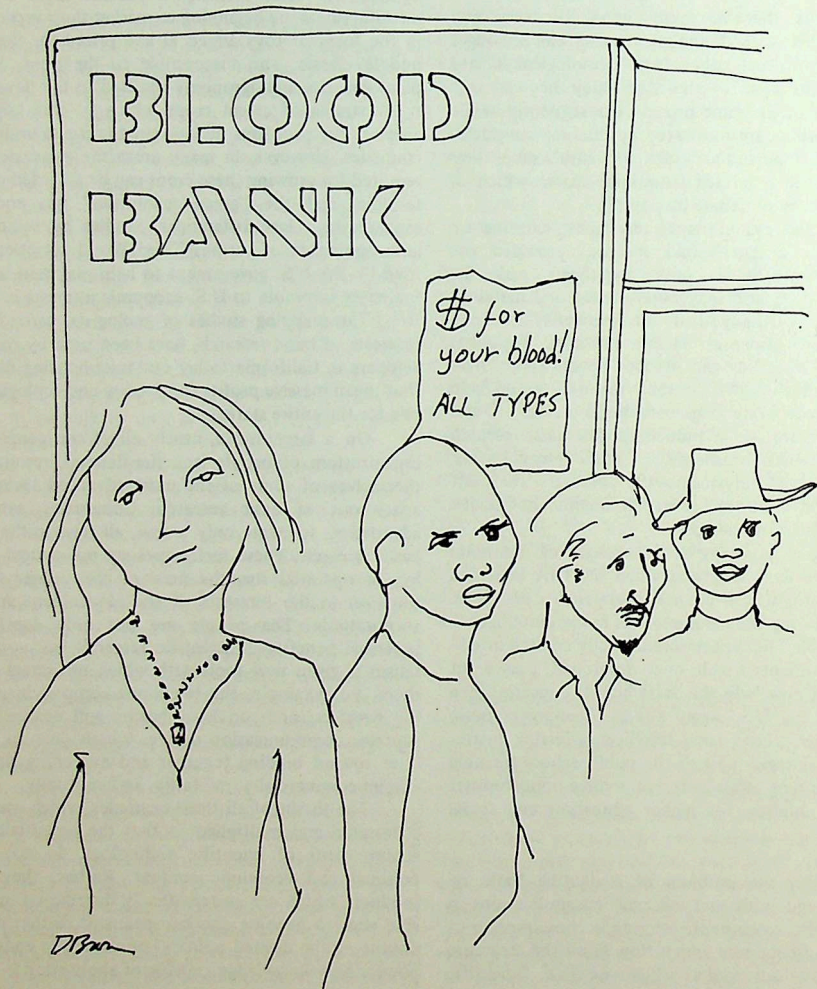
would alleviate the many injustices of capitalism and imperialism is either not created in the first place or is made worthless by the limited resources of the victims.

If we are to take seriously the observation that discovery and application are practically inseparable, it follows that basic researchers have more than a casual responsibility for the application of their work. The possible consequences of research in progress or planned for the future must be subjected to careful scrutiny. This is not always easy, as the following examples might indicate.

Basic research in meteorology and geophysics gives rise to the hope that man might one day be capable of exerting a high level of control over the weather. However, such techniques might be used to steer destructive typhoons or droughts into "enemy" countries like North Vietnam or China. As far back as 1960, the U.S. Navy published a paper

on just this possibility and the need to develop the requisite techniques before the Russians did. (One has premonitions of future congressmen and presidential candidates warning us about the weather-control gap.) Rain-making techniques are already being used in Indochina, according to some reports, to induce cloudbursts over the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Physicists working in the areas of optics and planetary orbits have provided knowledge which the American military was, and might still be, considering for the development of satellites in stationary orbit over Vietnam equipped with gigantic mirrors capable of reflecting the sun and illuminating large parts of the countryside at night. While scientific workers perform experiments on the verbal communication of dolphins, the Navy for years has been investigating the possibility of training them to carry torpedoes and underwater cameras strapped to their backs. Not surprisingly,





much of the support for basic research on dolphins comes from the Office of Naval Research.

Neurophysiologists are developing a technique called Electric Brain Stimulation, in which microelectrodes capable of receiving radio signals are permanently implanted in areas of the brain known to control certain gross behaviors. Thus radio signals selectively transmitted to electrodes in various parts of the brain are capable of eliciting behaviors like rage or fear, or of stimulating appetites for food or sex. The possibility of implanting these electrodes in the brains of mental patients or prisoners (or even welfare recipients or professional soldiers) should not be underestimated, especially since such uses might be proposed for the most humane and ennobling reasons. Again, the list of examples could be extended greatly.

### Science Is Political

An analysis of scientific research merely begins with a description of how it is misapplied and maldistributed. The next step must be an unequivocal statement that scientific activity in a technological society is not, and cannot be, politically neutral or value-free. Some people, particularly after Hiroshima and Nuremberg, have accepted this. Others still argue that science should be an unbridled search for truth, not subject to a political or a moral critique. H. Robert Oppenheimer, the man in charge of the Los Alamos project which built and tested the first atomic bombs, said in 1967 that, "our work has changed the conditions in which men live, but the use made of these changes is the problem of governments, not of scientists."

The attitude of Oppenheimer and others, justified by the slogan of truth for truth's sake, is fostered in our society and has prevailed. It is tolerated by those who control power in this country because it furthers their aims and does not challenge their uses of science. This attitude was advanced centuries ago by people who assumed that an increase in available knowledge would automatically lead to a better world. But this was at a time when the results of scientific knowledge could not easily be anticipated. Today, in a modern technological society, this analysis becomes a rationalization for the maintenance of repressive or destructive institutions, put forth by people who at best are motivated by a desire for the intellectual pleasure of research, and often are merely after money, status, and soft jobs. We believe it would be lame indeed to continue to argue that the possible unforeseen benefits which may arise from scientific research in our society will inevitably outweigh the clearly foreseeable harm. The slogan of "truth for truth's sake" is defunct, simply because science is no longer, and can never again be, the private affair of scientists.

Many scientists, even after considering the above analysis, may still feel that no oppressive or exploitative technology will result from their particular research. Two arguments are relevant here. First, even research without foreseeable practical application serves to advance the field generally, and to provide a more sophisticated background from which technology may be derived. The Department of Defense recognizes this and annually invests millions of

dollars in such "impractical" research, knowing that in the long run it pays off. The preferential funding of certain areas of basic research makes it more likely that those areas and not others will advance to the point where the emergence of this technology becomes more probable. Second, while formerly scientific activity consumed only an infinitesimal amount of society's resources, the situation has changed drastically in the last 25 years. Scientific activity now commands a significant amount of social resources, resources which are in short supply and are necessary to meet the real needs of the majority of the people. The point here is not that scientific activity should cease, but rather that it should truly be a science for the people.

Some scientists have recognized this situation and are now participating in nationally coordinated attempts to solve pressing social problems within the existing political-economic system. However, because their work is usually funded and ultimately controlled by the same forces that control basic research, it is questionable what they can accomplish. For example, sociologists hoping to alleviate some of the oppression of ghetto life have worked with urban renewal programs only to find the ultimate priorities of such programs are controlled by the city political machines and local real estate and business interests rather than by the needs of the people directly affected by such programs. Psychologists, demographers, economists, etc., worked on a Master Plan for Higher Education for New York City that would guarantee higher education for all. In practice open enrollment was restricted to the lowest level which channelled students into menial jobs set by corporate priorities while the main colleges remained virtually as closed as before.

Behavioral and clinical psychologists have tried to develop procedures for applying conditioning techniques to human psychopathology. Their work is now used in state hospital programs which, under the guise of "therapy," torture homosexual people with negative reinforcement, usually electrical, in order to convert them forcefully to heterosexuality. (There are still 33 states in which homosexuals may be "committed" under archaic sexual psychopath laws for *indefinite* sentences). No one is impugning the motives of Pavlov or Skinner, but this is what it has come to in the United States. Thus the liberal panacea of pouring funds into social science research to create Oak Ridge-type institutions for the social sciences is no more likely to improve the quality of life than the namesake institution has. The social sciences are not performed in a political vacuum any more than the natural sciences are. They all ultimately serve the same masters.

Even medical research is not without negative social impact. The discovery of a specific disease cure or preventive measure invariably depends upon prior basic research which is frequently linked to nonmedical misapplications, often before it is used to produce disease cures. For example, the work of microbiologists who are decoding the DNA molecule gives hope for the genetic control of a wide variety of birth defects. Already this research has been used by government and military technicians to breed strains of virulent microbes for germ warfare. Further, it is not unreasonable to expect that someday this research will lead to genetic engineering capable of producing various human subpopulations for the use of those who are in technological control. These might



include especially aggressive soldiers for a professional army, strong drones to perform unpleasant physical labor, or "philosopher kings" to inherit control from those already possessing it.

Applied medical research, as well as the more basic variety typified by DNA work, is no less free of the possibility of misapplication. More than purely humane consequences could emerge from one of the latest dramatic medical advances, organ transplantation. Christiaan Barnard has publicly urged that people be educated to "donate" their organs. It is not overly visionary to imagine that society's underclass, whose labor in decreasingly in demand, might be nourished as a collective "organ bank." If this occurred, it would most probably be on a *de facto* rather than *de jure* basis, as is the case with other forms of class and racial oppression. That is, monetary and other incentives would be instituted to encourage "volunteers" so that direct coercion would be unnecessary. Models for the poor selling parts of their bodies already exist in the form of wet nurses, indigent professional blood donors, and convicts and colonial peoples serving as subjects for experiments. An example of the last was the use of Puerto Rican women to test birth control pills before they were considered safe to market in the United States. (And now evidence that had been suppressed by the drug companies, the government, and the medical profession indicates that they are not safe after all—see J. Coburn in *Ramparts*, June, 1970).

The misapplication of medical or premedical knowledge is, however, only half of the problem. The tragically overcrowded and understaffed city and county hospitals of our large metropolitan areas testify to the inequities and class biases in the distribution of medical knowledge as well. People here and throughout the world needlessly suffer and die because the money to pay for, the education with which to understand, or the physical proximity to, modern medicine has been denied them. By virtue of this, much of medical research has taken place for exclusive or primary use by the affluent.

Some medical discoveries have been equitably and, at least in our society, almost universally distributed. The Salk and Sabin vaccines are one example. Yet one is forced to wonder if this would have occurred had polio been less contagious. If the people who are in charge of our public health services could have protected their own children without totally eradicating polio, would they have moved as fast and as effectively? Witness their *ability* to prevent or reverse effects of malnutrition, while thousands of children within our borders alone suffer from it. In fact, while polio vaccines may have been an exception, the gravest problem we face in terms of disease is not discovering new cures or preventive measures. Rather it is discovering ways of equitably distributing the medical knowledge we already possess, and that, ultimately, is a political problem.

#### What Is to Be Done?

**I**n this society, at this time, it is not possible to escape the political implications of scientific work. The American ruling class has long had a commitment to science, not mere-

ly limited to short-range practical applications, but based on the belief that science is good for the long-term welfare of American capitalism, and that what is good for American capitalism is good for humanity. This outlook is shared by the trustees of universities, the official leaders of U.S. science, the administrators of government and private funding agencies. Further, they see this viewpoint as representing a mature social responsibility, morally superior to the "pure search for truth" attitudes of some of the scientists. But they tolerate that ideology since it furthers their own aims and does not challenge their uses of science.

We find the alternatives of "science for science's sake" and "science for progress of capitalism" equally unacceptable. We can no longer identify the cause of humanity with that of U.S. capitalism. We don't have two governments, one which beneficently funds research and another which represses and kills in the ghettos, in Latin America, and in Indochina. Nor do we have two corporate structures, manipulating for profit on the one hand while desiring social equity and justice on the other. Rather there is a single government-corporate axis which supports research with the intention of acquiring powerful tools, both of the hard- and software varieties, for the pursuit of exploitative and imperial goals.

Recognizing the political implications of their work, some scientists in recent years have sought to organize, as scientists, to oppose the more noxious or potentially catastrophic schemes of the government, such as atmospheric nuclear testing, chemical and biological warfare development, and the antiballistic missile system. Others shifted fields to find less "controversial" disciplines: Leo Szilard, who had been wartime co-director of the University of Chicago experiments which led to the first self-sustaining chain reaction, quit physics in disillusionment over the manner in which the government had used his work, and devoted the rest of his life to research in molecular biology and public affairs. In subsequent years other physicists followed Szilard's lead into biology, including Donald Glaser, the 1960 recipient of the Nobel Prize in physics. Yet in 1969, James Shapiro, one of the group of microbiologists who first isolated a pure gene, announced that for political reasons he was going to stop doing *any* research. Shapiro's decision points up the inadequacy of Szilard's, but is no less inadequate itself.

Traditional attempts to reform scientific activity, to disentangle it from its more malevolent and vicious applications, have failed. Actions designed to preserve the moral integrity of individuals without addressing themselves to the political and economic system which is at the root of the problem have been ineffective. The ruling class can always replace a Leo Szilard with an Edward Teller. What is needed now is not liberal reform or withdrawal, but a radical attack, a strategy of opposition. Scientific workers must develop ways to put their skills at the service of the people and against the oppressors.





## Political Organizing in the Health Fields

How to do this is perhaps best exemplified in the area of health care. It is not by accident that the groups most seriously dealing with the problem of people's health needs are political organizations. A few years ago the Black Panther Party initiated a series of free health clinics to provide sorely needed medical services that should be, but are not, available to the poor, and the idea was picked up by other community groups, such as the Young Lords, an organization of revolutionary Latins and Puerto Ricans. Health and scientific workers, organized by political groups like the Medical Committee for Human Rights and the Student Health Organization, have helped provide the necessary professional support, and in the past few years literally hundreds of free people's health centers have sprung up across the country.

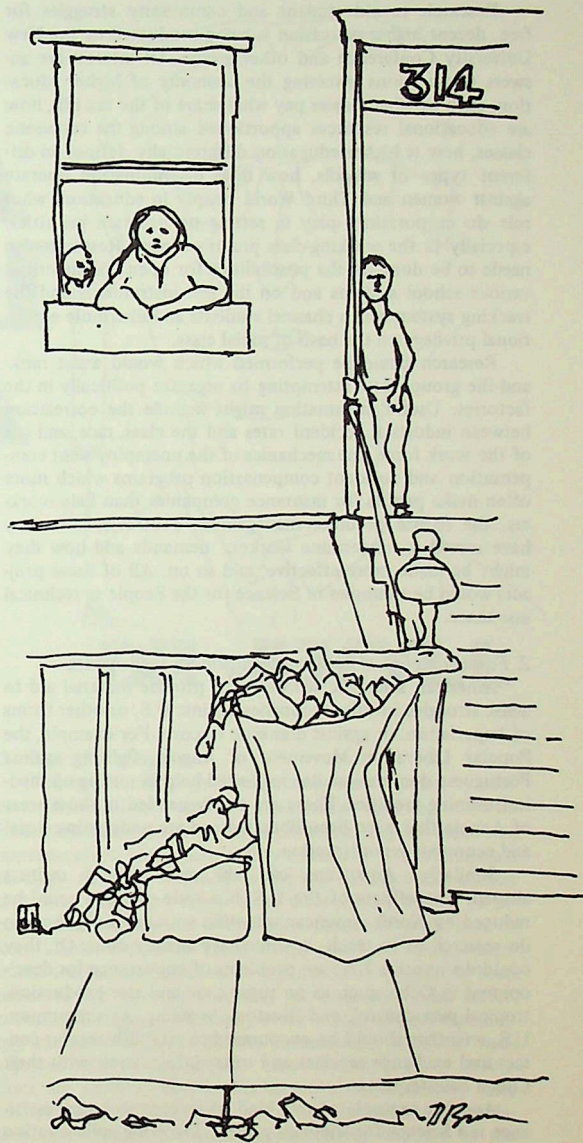
Health workers, organized into political groups, can provide more than just diagnosis and treatment. They can begin to redefine some medical problems as social problems, and through medical education begin to loosen the dependence of people on the medical profession. They can provide basic biological information, demystify medical sciences, and help give people more control over their own bodies. For example, in New York, health workers provided a simple way of detecting lead poisoning to the Young Lords Organization. This enabled the Young Lords to serve their people directly through a door-to-door testing campaign in the Barrio, and also to organize them against the landlords who refused to cover lead-painted walls, often with the tacit complicity of the city housing officials.

It is this kind of scientific practice that most clearly characterizes Science for the People. It serves the oppressed and impoverished classes and strengthens their ability to struggle. The development of People's Science must be marked by these and other characteristics. For example, any discoveries or new techniques should be such that all people have reasonably easy access to them, both physically and financially. This would also militate against their use as a means of generating individual or corporate profit. Scientific developments, whether in the natural or social sciences, that could conceivably be employed as weapons against the people must be carefully evaluated *before* the work is carried out. Such decisions will always be difficult. They demand a consideration of factors like the relative accessibility of these developments to each side, the relative ease and certainty of use, which will of course depend on the demand, the extent to which the power balance in a specific situation could be shifted and at what risk, and so forth. Finally, scientific or technological programs which claim to meet the needs of the people, but which in fact strengthen the existing political system and defuse their ability to struggle, are the opposite of People's Science.

There is a wide range of activities that might constitute a Science for the People. This work can be described as falling into six broad areas:

### 1. Technical assistance to movement organizations and oppressed people.

The free people's health centers have already been described as an example of this approach. Another example



would be designing environmental poisoning detection kits for groups trying to protect themselves from pollution and trying to organize opposition to the capitalist system which hampers effective solutions to pollution problems. The lead poisoning test was such an effort, and other kinds of pol-



lution are equally amenable to this approach. These kits would have to be simple to operate, easy to construct, and made from readily available and cheap materials.

Research to aid student and community struggles for free, decent higher education is being conducted by the New University Conference and other groups. Of interest are answers to questions involving the economy of higher education, such as what classes pay what share of the tax bill, how are educational resources apportioned among the economic classes, how is higher education differentially defined in different types of schools, how does discrimination operate against women and Third World people in education, what role do corporations play in setting up program priorities, especially in the working-class junior colleges. Research also needs to be done on the possibilities for open enrollment in various school systems and on the test instruments and the tracking system which channel students and distribute educational privilege on the basis of social class.

Research could be performed which would assist rank-and-file groups now attempting to organize politically in the factories. Useful information might include the correlation between industrial accident rates and the class, race, and sex of the work force, the mechanics of the unemployment compensation and accident compensation programs which more often make profits for insurance companies than help workers, the nature of union-management contracts, how they have served to undermine workers' demands and how they might be made more effective, and so on. All of these projects would be examples of Science for the People as technical assistance.

## 2. *Foreign technical help to revolutionary movements.*

American scientific workers can provide material aid to assist struggles in other countries against U.S. or other forms of imperialism, or against domestic fascism. For example, the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola, fighting against Portuguese domination, has requested help in setting up medical training facilities. These are sorely needed in those areas of Angola that have been liberated and are undergoing social and economic reconstruction.

Similarly, Americans can aid revolutionary regimes abroad. The effects of the U.S. blockade of Cuba could be reduced by North American scientific workers going there to do research or to teach, as some have already done. Or, they could do research here on problems of importance for development in Cuba, such as on sugar cane and rice production, tropical pest control, and livestock breeding. At a minimum, U.S. scientists should be encouraged to establish regular contact and exchange reprints and other information with their Cuban counterparts.

Another example of this kind of foreign technical assistance is a Science for Vietnam project, involving collaboration between Americans and scientists from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam on such problems as locating plastic pellets in human flesh (several years ago the U.S. Air Force increased the terrorizing effect of anti-personnel bombs by switching from metal fragmentation devices to plastic pellets, which do not show up on x-rays), reforestation techniques, how to decontaminate herbicide-saturated soils, and many

other problems now facing the Vietnamese as a result of the U.S. intervention there.

This kind of foreign technical assistance has important political significance in addition to its material consequences, for it is the most direct way one can oppose the imperialist policies of the U.S. government, undermine its legitimacy, and go over to the side of the oppressed people of the world. If an important sector of the population, like scientific workers, begins to act in this way, it may encourage similar action by workers in other areas.

## 3. *People's research.*

Unlike the technical assistance projects described above, which are directly tied in with on-going struggles, there are areas in which scientists should take the initiative and begin developing projects that will aid struggles that are just beginning to develop. For example, workers in the medical and social sciences and in education could help design a program for client-controlled day care centers which would both free women from the necessity of continual child care and provide a thoroughly socialist educational experience for the children. As such, it would be useless to those who are trying to co-opt the day care struggle into an extension of social control or as a means of making profits.

For use in liberation struggles, self-defense techniques could be developed that would be readily available to the people, and useless to their highly technological opposition. Biologists and chemists, for example, could develop an all-purpose gas mask for which the necessary materials are simple, easy to assemble, readily available, and inexpensive.

Physiologists and others could perform definitive research in nutrition and disseminate their findings so that poor and working-class people would have information on how to get the most nourishing diet for the least cost. Furthermore, such research could aid them in avoiding the possibly dangerous food additives and contaminants that are now found in most packaged foods.

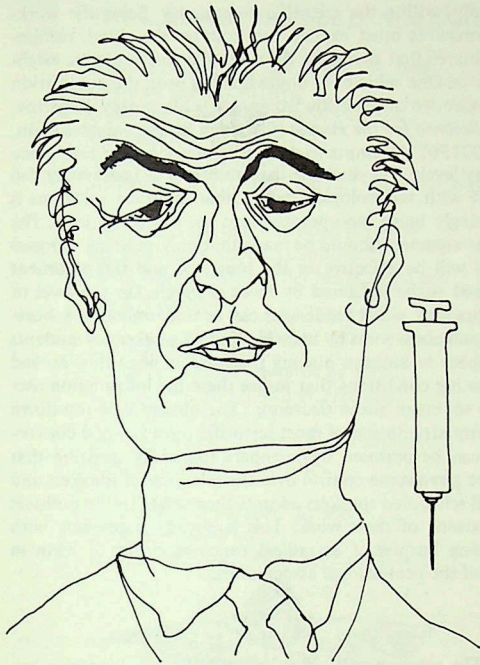
As a minimal effort, medical researchers could begin to concentrate their work on the health needs of the poor. The causes of the higher infant mortality rates and lower life expectancy of a large part of the working class, particularly nonwhites, should get much more research attention. Occasionally funds are available for this kind of research but the class background and biases of many researchers often predispose them toward work on other problems. In addition, new ways of distributing and utilizing medical knowledge, especially with respect to prevention, must be designed.

## 4. *Exposés and power structure research.*

Most of the important political, military and economic decisions in this country are made behind closed doors, outside the public arena. Questions about how U.S. corporations dominate foreign economic markets and governments, how corporate conglomerates control domestic markets and policy making, how party machines run city governments, how universities and foundations interlock with military and various social-control strategies, how the class struggle in the U.S. is blunted and obscured, etc., must be researched and the conclusions published to inform all the people.

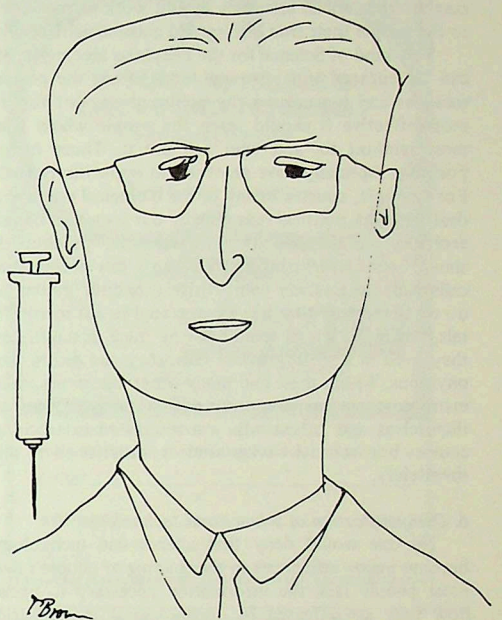
Exemplary work of this kind has already been performed





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by research collectives like the North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA), the National Action Research on the Military Industrial Complex (NARMIC), the Africa Research Group, and others. These groups have provided valuable information for community and campus groups in campaigns such as those against university collaboration with the Indochina War and exploitation in various Third World countries, against anti-personnel weapons manufacturers (like Minneapolis Honeywell), and against specific corporations involved in particularly noxious forms of oppression (like Polaroid's large investments in South Africa and their current contract to provide the government there with photo-ID cards for all citizens which will help that government to implement more effectively its racist apartheid policy).

There is growing need for research in the biological and physical sciences to expose how the quest for corporate profits is poisoning and destroying irreplaceable and critical aspects of our environment. Research on the specific pollutants, their variety, their quantity, the dangers they pose, should be combined with research on the polluting companies, their profits, the pollution control laws they disregard, their connections with pollution law enforcement agencies, and so forth. This information, in a form anyone can understand, should be made available to action-oriented community ecology groups.

### 5. Ideological struggle.

Ruling-class ideology is effectively disseminated by educational institutions and the mass media, resulting in misinformation that clouds people's understanding of their own oppression and limits their ability to resist it. This ruling-class ideology must be exposed as the self-serving manipulation that it is. There are many areas where this needs to be accomplished. Arguments of biological determinism are used to keep blacks and other Third World people in lower educational tracks, and these racist arguments have recently been bolstered by Jensen's focussing on supposed racial differences in intelligence. Virtually every school of psychopathology and psychotherapy defines homosexuals as sick or "mal-adjusted" (to a presumably "sane" society). These definitions are used to excuse this society's discriminatory laws and practices with respect to its large homosexual population, and have only recently been actively opposed by the Gay Liberation Movement. Similarly, many psychotherapists and social scientists use some parts of Freudian doctrine to justify sexist treatment of women.

The elitist biases of most American social scientists oppress students from working-class and poor backgrounds, as well as women and nonwhites, by failing to adequately portray their history and culture. Instead, bourgeois culture and ruling-class history are emphasized as if they were the only



reality. This laying on of culture is particularly heavy-handed in community and working-class colleges (for an elaboration of this point, see J. McDermott, *Nation*, March 10, 1969). To combat this, social scientists should work to make available to the people their true history and cultural achievements.

This kind of Science for the People as ideological struggle can be engaged in at several levels, from the professional societies and journals to the public arena, but for it to be most effective it should reach the people whose lives it is most relevant to, and who will use it. Those in teaching positions especially have an excellent opportunity to do this. For example, courses in any of the biological sciences should deal with the political reasons why our society is committing ecological murder/suicide. Courses in psychopathology should spend at least as much time on our government officials and our insanely competitive economic system as they do on the tortured victims incarcerated in our mental "hospitals," many of whom would not be there in the first place if they lived in a society where normality and sanity were synonymous. Within these and many other disciplines, individual instructors can prepare reading lists and syllabuses to assist themselves and others who are interested in teaching such courses but lack the background or initiative to do the work themselves.

#### 6. *Demystification of science and technology.*

No one would deny that science and technology have become major influences in the shaping of people's lives. Yet most people lack the information necessary to understand how they are affected by technological manipulation and control. As a result they are physically and intellectually incapable of performing many operations that they are dependent upon, and control over these operations has been relinquished to various experts. Furthermore, these same people undergo an incapacitating emotional change which results in the feeling that everything is too complicated to cope with (whether technological or not), and that only the various experts should participate in decision making which often directly affects their own lives. Clearly, these two factors are mutually enhancing.

In the interests of democracy and people's control, the false mystery surrounding science and technology must be removed and the hold of experts on decision making must be destroyed. Understandable information can be made available to all those for whom it is pertinent. For example, the Women's Liberation Movement has taken the lead in teaching the facts about human reproductive biology to the people who need it the most for control over their own bodies. An example of this is a group of women in the Chicago Women's Liberation Union who have written a series of pamphlets on pregnancy and childbirth, giving complete medical information in language everyone can understand. Free schools and movement publications teach courses and run articles on medical and legal first-aid, self-defense, effective nutrition, building houses, repairing cars and other necessary appliances, and so on. Much more of this kind of work needs to be done. In addition, the relevant scientific information on issues that have important political repercussions, such as radiation poisoning and pesticide tolerance, should be made available to the public.

Part of the job of demystification will have to take place internally, within the scientific community. Scientific workers themselves must expose and counter the elitist, technocratic biases that permeate the scientific and academic establishments. One vehicle for doing this has been the publication by a collective of scientific workers of a bimonthly magazine, called *Science for the People* (9 Walden Street, Jamaica Plain, Mass. 02130). Attempts to demystify science must take place at many levels. The doctrine that problems of technology can be met with technological rather than political solutions is increasingly being incorporated into the ruling ideology. The counter argument should be made that only political reorganization will be effective in the long run, and this argument will need to be bolstered by more research. On the level of daily practice, elitist tendencies can be undermined in laboratories and classrooms by insisting that *all* workers or students participate in decision making that affects what they do and by creating conditions that insure them the information necessary to make those decisions. The elitism and top-down authority structuring of most scientific meetings and conventions can be opposed by members forcefully insisting that they be given some control over the selection of speakers and that all scheduled speakers address themselves to the political implications of their work. This is already happening with increasing frequency as radical caucuses begin to form in many of the professional associations.

\* \* \*

The practice of Science for the People is long overdue. If scientific workers and students want to overcome the often alienating nature of their own work, their impotence in bringing about meaningful social change, their own oppression and that of most of the other people in the world, they will have to relinquish their uncritical devotion to the pursuit of new knowledge. Scientific workers must reorganize scientific work, not in terms of the traditionally defined disciplines, but according to the real problems they consciously set out to solve. The old breakdown into separate disciplines, which produces "experts" who can barely communicate with each other, must give way to new structures which allow more cooperation and flexibility, and which will undoubtedly demand the acquisition of new skills. Such work can be as intellectually stimulating as the work we do now, with the added satisfaction that it is meeting real needs of people.

If projects like those described above are to constitute a real Science for the People, they must achieve more than their immediate technical goals. They should relate to issues around which people can organize to act in their own self-interest. Research projects should both flow out of the needs and demands of the people, and be relevant to their political struggles. This requires consulting with and relying on the experience of community and movement groups, and taking seriously the criticisms and suggestions that they put forth. Scientists must succeed in redirecting their professional activities away from services to the forces and institutions they oppose and toward a movement they wish to build. Short of this, no matter how much they desire to contribute to the solution, they remain part of the problem. •



## THE WOMAN BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Because no one was sure where she lived,  
when we saw her striding  
under the elms at the side of the road,  
we imagined her to be  
in search of a destination,  
although it was we who did not know our way.

Her breasts lay flat, like dried jelly fish  
under a man's sleeveless undershirt.  
Her rawhide profile under her panama hat  
never noticed us.

She walked,  
a singular persona neutered by time,  
a daughter without plot or preterite,  
some mystery beyond  
the suburban self-assurance of our mothers'  
mascara and tuna casseroles.

At the side of the road she was  
a further female tale  
stalking the slide rule of light and leaves.



## MARGERY

Morning is scotch and milk on the sunporch—  
hair like a half plucked chicken  
and stuttering hands.

The Flatbush sunshine  
lays fat lemon puddles on the sidewalk.  
The children go to school  
and she, while the maid vacuums  
the upstairs hall,  
tries to find the doorknob to nowhere.  
Under the elms  
just breaking in their leaves  
her room is dark, an incoherent attic.  
She stumbles against her dead doctor father  
who takes her to the ward where the children,  
blinded by firecrackers on the 4th of July,  
lie behind their bandages.  
He teaches her their lesson bed by bed through the ward.  
Running away she finds her vice president  
husband vomiting vodka in the last cot.

In the shriveled flowers of her flannel bathrobe  
she waits patiently with scotch and milk for the doorknob,  
as the sun runs like butter between the leaves.

—Karen Swenson

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# HOW SIR ISAAC NEWTON HELPED RESTORE LAW 'N' ORDER TO THE WEST

David Kubrin

**T**his article is the first section of a longer work by David Kubrin, *How Sir Isaac Newton Helped Restore Law 'n' Order to the West: A Tragedy in Three Parts*. Part one, reprinted here, was originally entitled "Science and Ideology in a Culture of Repression"; part two is an historical essay, "The Scientific Revolution in England and the Rise of Bourgeois Ideology: Sir Isaac Newton and the Repression of Dialectic"; part three, "How Sir Isaac Newton Helped Restore Law 'n' Order to the West," is a "didactic poem."

**A** growing hostility to science has emerged in the past few years. Fewer students in the colleges and universities study science these days, not merely because of the fewer jobs available, but also because their interests are drawn more to fields in which their personal values—supposedly excluded from science—can be realized and nurtured. Many more voices are being raised against the way in which the rich and powerful men who control science (through the systems of grants, for example) refuse to direct it to attack the very real problems people face, but instead support only those kinds of scientific work which are either prestigious or profitable to the major corporations. Critics are concluding that the science which is patronized and directed by the ruling classes of the industrialized societies or by their representatives cannot help but be a bad science. Finally, and apparently far afield, there is a surprising amount of interest and belief these days in fields that seem, at first glance, to be totally antithetical to the scientific point of view: magic, alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, yoga, eastern philosophies, and occult studies in general.

Why should this hostility to science emerge now? The purpose of this essay is to connect the hostility against science, as manifested in all the above ways, with the social rebellions we have been witnessing in the past decade in the United States, France, West Germany, England and Ireland, the Netherlands, Italy, and Czechoslovakia, rebellions which themselves are closely related to the growth of national liberation revolutionary movements in the Third World. And the theme I wish to develop in this essay is the following: that since science is the foundation stone of Western culture, the questioning and criticism of science at this point of history, when so much of that Western culture is in chaos or under attack, makes perfect sense.

The genocidal war being waged in Indochina by United States imperialism is a logical place to begin, since it has been that fact which has had the strongest impact on the way millions of people now view science. Suddenly, the modern holy trinity of science, technology, and rationality has been

revealed in a far different light. No longer is it possible for us to accept the rationalization or cliché (which used to make us squirm anyway, but we had no arguments against it) about science or scientists not being responsible for the way their ideas are used. The ugly realities of a national policy of genocide being dutifully aided by a generation of Strangeloves have made us deaf to that banal excuse; the bombs are too loud for us to hear it any longer. By no means do I want to imply that most scientists support, especially by now, the crime of Vietnam and of Indochina. Yet there is no denying that for well over a decade, the cultural system—if I may so call it—of science, technology, and rationality has been used as the fundamental intellectual basis for these crimes.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, some of the most prominent and prestigious of the scientists in the United States, through governmental committees like the Institute for Defense Analysis, still devote their talents to devising new, better, and more rational ways to program death for the peasants of Southeast Asia. In addition, they advise the government of the United States how better to repress riots by angry black citizens, youths, anti-war GIs, or others.

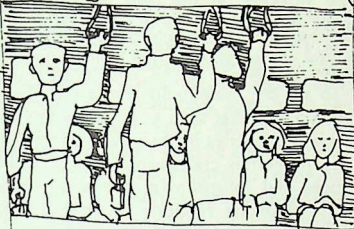
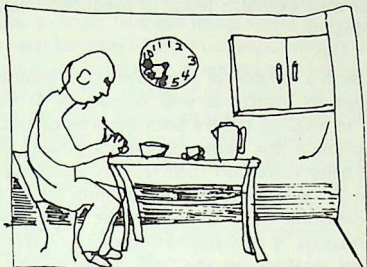
Nor is this all. A crisis of historically unprecedented proportions has just recently suddenly revealed itself. Many knowledgeable people now seriously doubt whether, as a result of the thoughtless—but profitable—poisoning of the air, water, and land by the rampaging technology of the capitalist West, the earth will long be able to sustain life. Many of the various species till recently nurtured by the earth are now rapidly becoming extinct or appear to be in grave danger of extinction. To those who say that this is more properly a crisis of technology than of science (forgetting for the moment the problem of clearly defining the differences between them), it should be emphasized that science, with its values, its goals, and its fundamental promises of control over nature, bears much of the responsibility.<sup>2</sup> Not only do scientific agriculture, scientific mining, scientific transportation, sci-

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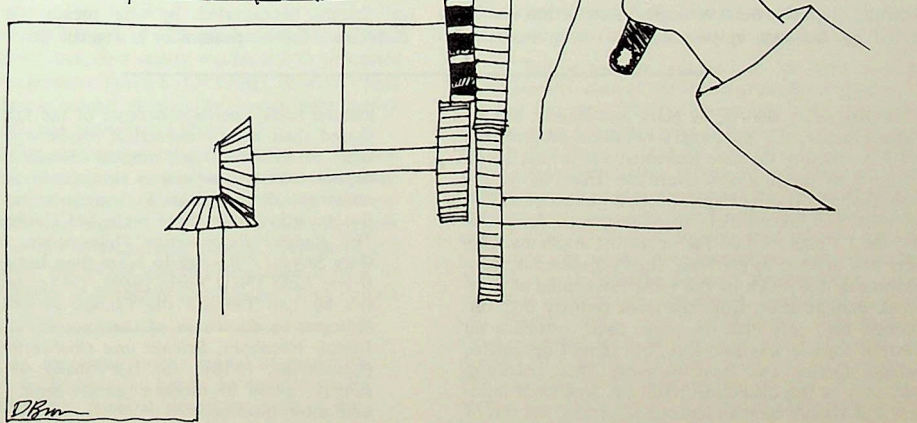
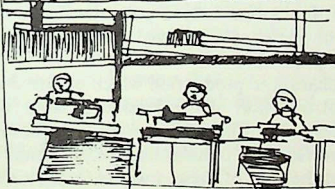
1. This includes the social "sciences" as well. Mary McCarthy once wrote in the *New York Review of Books* that on her visit to Vietnam she felt like she was visiting the field laboratory for a graduate seminar in political science at one of the United States' prestigious universities. But I will be confining my remarks to science as it is more generally understood.

2. Cf. Lynn White, Jr., *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford, 1962) and White, *Machina ex Deo: Essays in the Dynamism of Western Culture* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968).





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entific systems of communication, scientific information handling, not to mention scientific weaponry, have little or no concern with nature as a balanced organism. But in fact, as I will discuss shortly, the birth of science in the West was based on the *axiomatic denial* of this balance. As the results of that denial threaten to poison the basis of all life on our planet, science, the intellectual source of the idea that nature can be exploited at will, is deservedly coming under increasing fire.

In addition to threatening to kill or actually killing people and the life of the planet, science is an equally dangerous threat to the life of the spirit. Consider the effect of science on our consciousness. It is a modern commonplace that it is our fate to be forced to live atomized lives. We are split within ourselves into a dozen or so different parts and consciousnesses, split in our day-to-day existence (as lover, worker, citizen), split from our brothers and sisters, and split from nature. Yet too seldom has the root of this tortured existence been traced back to one of its most important ideological sources: science. Capitalism as a source, to be sure, for it is easy to see that the control of the means of production and distribution by the few in order (by exploiting nature and the work of the many) to make profits for themselves is at the foundation of much, if not all, of the alienation we experience. Technology as a source, of course, for it is easy to recognize our subjugation to the Machine. Why, however, are so few questions raised, by those who make a distinction between science and technology, about science itself?

Let us not say science as a *cause* of this atomization, for it is not my purpose here to seek for ultimate causes; let us consider, however, science as an *ideological justification* for that atomization.

Throughout most of this history of science in the West since the 17th-century scientific revolution, science has methodologically proceeded from the assumption—denied by dialectical reason<sup>3</sup>—that the great is more easily understood in terms of its smaller component parts, that all problems can and should be analyzed into lesser sub-problems, the sum of whose separate solutions solves the original problem. The essences of things are contained totally within the things, rather than being connected to other, separate, entities. Now significantly, when this methodological assumption was being established by the new epistemology of early modern Eu-

rope, inspired by the new science, the basis was simultaneously being laid for an economy which would increasingly be dominated by a capitalist mode of production based on the division of labor.

Now such a division of labor had to be justified to people, perhaps to owners as well as workers. It was a time, especially in England (where both the scientific and the economic aspects of this seem most clearly drawn), when peasants were being driven off their land by a growing “agribusiness” and by enclosures of the common lands, which the peasants depended on to survive, by the big landowners. The landless peasants, if they stayed in the countryside, could get by only by working on the land of those who remained owners, large or small but more often large. They became day-laborers. Or, if they flocked to the cities, they joined a steadily growing mass of urban unemployed: restless, rootless, easy to set off, potentially dangerous. Especially dangerous during a civil war such as occurred in England and in other European countries in the course of the 17th century. In the cities, numerous craftsmen, having served successively as apprentices and journeymen, found no work for themselves in the changing economy as master craftsmen and joined the rootless and the restless. If they were lucky enough to get work in their craft, often as not it was only without the many real privileges of independence, security, and favorable work-conditions enjoyed by craftsmen: they were forced to work for others, making what the others designed, supervised, marketed, and made a profit from. The participation by the workers in the making of the product was abruptly abbreviated. Instead of making a shoe, they sewed a last; instead of making a bridge, they polished its metalwork. Just, of course, as the landless peasants no longer grew rye, but rather helped pick the rye of someone else—perhaps of someone who lived far away in London, rarely even seeing his land.

The changes in production which occurred with the widespread introduction of the division of labor, and its intensified use, could not have been easy; early European societies underwent fantastic transformations as a result of this experience. Not the least of these, I would think, were the ideological changes necessitated. By what means was it possible to convince a former peasant or craftsman that whereas before

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3. Not only, that is, by Marx and Engels, but by William Blake, the poet-engraver-radical-prophet, by the 17th-century German alchemist and mystic Jacob Boehme, by the magician Giordano Bruno in the late 16th century, and by Hegel. Eastern philosophies, for the most part, have a dialectical basis, as in, for example, the I Ching, or Lao Tse. A sect of mathematician seers and mystics in the West, the Pythagoreans, were responsible for much of the most interesting of early Greek mathematics, from the sixth century B.C. on. Though they left little in print, their influence on Western science was immense, including Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, and Isaac Newton. Their teachings were part of this dialectical tradition. And their influence has always been an underground one, left out of most textbooks of science, as well as journals and

learned books, perhaps because of the fact that they shared their use of dialectical reason with most versions of alchemical and magical thought. Many Anabaptist thinkers, as well as thinkers in many of the numerous Reformation Protestant sects, belong to this tradition. (On these sects, see George Williams, *The Radical Reformation* [Philadelphia, 1962] and Gary Snyder, “Passage to More than India,” in *Earth House Hold* [New York, 1969]. On the use of dialectics by Lao Tse and the Taoists, as well as for an illuminating discussion of their social radicalism, see Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilization in China* [Cambridge, 1956], Vol. II.) Finally, as I’ll discuss shortly, much of modern physics seems capable of such interpretation.



he had participated in the making of something useful (a bushel of wheat, a wooden cask), now he was to be satisfied to make merely one part of something useful (it took a while for capitalism to begin to make things which were purposely useless)? It must have been hard to convince people that such a change was in their interests. From the very beginning, in a most obvious way, this change, this specialization, alienated man, woman, and child from their productive labor, from the fruits of the activity, their work, which filled a large proportion of their lives. The new scientific methodology of analysis of all problems into their smaller sub-units and the logic and expectations this gave rise to were clearly invaluable aids for anyone seeking to justify such an explosive change to peoples' lives and livelihoods.

Not only as a methodology did the new science introduce the process of analysis—science created a new metaphysics of analysis also. For the most part, throughout its history in the West (the exceptions are interesting, but significantly almost never with any real public influence), science has been mechanistic—never more so than during the scientific revolution itself. The world was a machine, to be analyzed into its component wheels, levers, gears, conveyor belts, flywheels, pumps, and pistons. The scientists nearly all agreed that the ultimate component parts of nature were the small, perhaps indivisible, corpuscles out of which everything was certainly made. These corpuscles were all independent of one another, for they were all endowed with similar properties, they all had size, shape, and mobility (and, except possibly for impenetrability, no other properties). The properties which the corpuscles possessed were essential to them, that is, there could be no corpuscles, even in the imagination, which did not have these properties.<sup>4</sup> To explain a gross phenomenon—the smell of a daisy, say, or the metabolism of an ant, or the fall of a branch—it is necessary above all to analyze it into its component particles, whose sizes, shapes, positions, and motion together provide the reason why the daisy, ant, or branch act as they do. It seems that the methodology of the new science and the metaphysical model of nature it projected, consciously or not, were becoming cosmic metaphors for the social division of labor then spreading in early modern Europe.

Two additional features of this mechanistic world-view demand comment: first, that reality resides not in processes through which experience flows, but in things, objects, which are essentially static; second, that reality is essentially quantitative, and what is not quantitative is not real.

The underlying assumption by science over the last few hundred years that reality can be analyzed into its component parts, that these component parts cannot change their essence, and that change consists merely of the re-arrangement in space and time of the underlying material corpuscles, is a model of physical reality in which real change is hard to imagine. If all change is merely re-arrangement, then certain

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4. Just as, according to the model of bourgeois man created by Hobbes and Locke, he could never be alienated from his essential properties such as life, liberty, property, etc.

essential things—the corpuscles—remain above change, outside of change even while they constitute it.<sup>5</sup> To be sure, all change had traditionally been conceived of as a form of motion in some sense, not necessarily of place, but now (with the rise of Galilean mechanics in the 17th century) even motion, if uniform, was indistinguishable from rest. A metaphysics emphasizing the fundamental importance of static objects rather than of processes provided an invaluable help to the new social order arising in Europe. Or could it have been merely accidental that such a static picture of the world should arise contemporaneously with a bourgeois social order? For since the first instinct of the defenders of the bourgeois order, when that order is questioned or challenged, has always been to deny the possibility of other forms of existence, to claim that present reality is the only reality, every manifestation or hint at the unchanging order of things is to them a most welcome ally in their defense of the *status quo*.

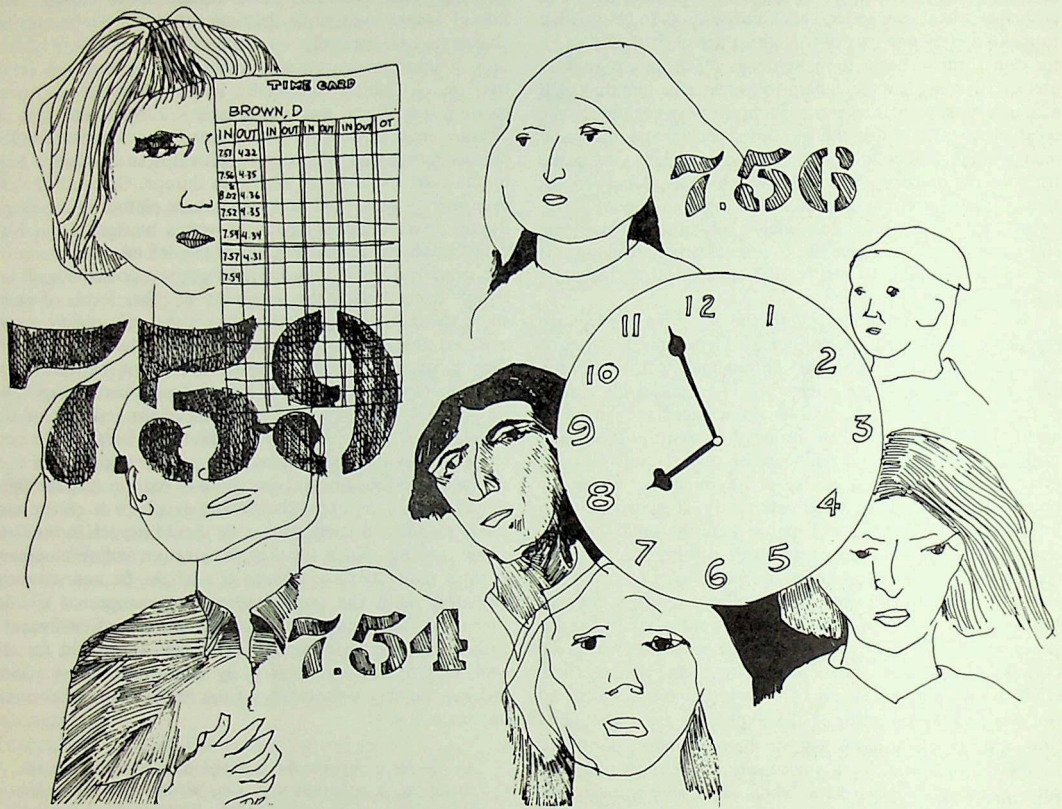
A metaphysics of basically static fundamental corpuscles was used, I think, to mirror the hoped-for stability of the social order. Even the most fundamental laws of the new science were its conservation laws, which told of the constancy of the fundamental quantities of nature. And the fight to convince a perhaps disbelieving people that nature was stable manifested itself also, as we should expect, in the field of cosmogony, which treats of the creation and development in time of the earth or cosmos as a whole. Because cosmogony dealt with the most fundamental changes of all—the change of everything, the beginning and end of existence!—cosmogony was an especially significant battlefield for the view that nature and society, by God's decree, are stable. Indeed, the very universality of the implications of cosmogony made it vital.

As we have repeatedly pointed out—a birth, a construction, a spiritual creation, always has the same exemplar, viz., the cosmogony. This accounts for the repeated recital, in so many different cultures, of the cosmogonic myth, not only on New Year's Day (when the world is symbolically created anew), or when a new king is enthroned, or on the occasion of a marriage, a war, etc., but also in the case of saving a threatened harvest or healing a sick man. The profound significance of all these rituals seems abundant—

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5. The world-view adopted at the time was in many respects that of the Greek atomism of Democritus and Epicurus. Their atomism had been put forth in answer to the arguments of Parmenides, Zeno, and the Eleatics in sixth century B.C. Greece that change was, in fact, impossible in the cosmos, that all that existed was an immense, unchanging, spherical Being, immune from all alteration. To this the atomists answered that change was possible, but that the agents of change, the atoms, were themselves unchanging. In essence, the unchanging Being of Parmenides became countless small beings, the atoms, coursing through a vast empty space. Quite significantly, Parmenides' views were put forth at a time of social upheaval, in support of conservative social and political ideology. The adoption of his fundamental critique of change, even in its highly modified form, by the Greek atomists, was quite important.





ly clear: to *do* something well, or to *remake* a living integrity menaced by sickness, it is first necessary to go back *ad originem*, then to repeat the *cosmogony*.<sup>6</sup>

Secondly, and equally significant from the point of view of the new social order arising in the late 16th and 17th centuries in western Europe, was the epistemological assumption that only those aspects of the world which were quantifiable were real. It was because of this assumption that the elementary corpuscles, with their quantitative sizes, shapes, and mobility, were singled out as being the ultimate physical reality; and it was owing to this assumption that the world of senses, of a pungent smell, a salty taste, a vivid blue color, a silky surface, the song of the bluejay—all qualitative in nature—was considered less real. It is probably obvious, but still necessary, to point out that this quantitative epistemology took hold precisely as the development of commerce in Europe necessitated a new, quantitative mentality able to calculate accurately quantities of goods bought or sold, invest-

ments made, profits to be gained, inventory to store, tons to ship, interest to charge, taxes owed, miles to travel, man-, woman-, or child-hours of labor, or, in the rising area of agribusiness, acres to sow or bushels to harvest. How to have a developing commerce, let alone sizable mines and ships that travel far on the high seas, without instilling a mathematical sense in the potential clerks, foremen, and navigators?

Though the birth of science, in one respect, was empirical, in a deeper sense it rested on the denial of the senses. For all sense-impressions were meaningful only if reduced to something quantitative—in this case, to the more fundamental sizes, shapes, and motions of the elementary corpuscles. Thus, people were taught *not* to trust their own senses, that reality was far different from what they personally experienced, and that they needed a new kind of expert, the scientist, to be able to know what truly existed. And the scientists became officially sanctioned by the State in England and France in the 17th century, in Russia, Prussia, the United States, and countless other places by the next century. By the 18th century, even provincial towns boasted of their own scientific societies, which might be called in from time to time *to settle disputes* having a seemingly scientific basis—as with Mesmerism or medical cures based on a theory

6. Mircea Eliade, *The Forge and the Crucible* (New York, 1971), pp. 156-57.



of animal magnetism, in the 18th century; cancer cures, pollution, the purity of food additives, herbal medicine,<sup>7</sup> or UFOs today. The penalty for refusing to believe this official definition of reality can be a steep one: though you may only be called a "crackpot," it is also possible that you may be institutionalized as insane, an increasing practice since the 18th century (the age of reason). Since reality is defined by a new set of experts, woe to him or her who believes differently, who has "hallucinations" or "visions," who seeks a path which rests on or supposes other assumptions about space, time, matter, the nature of life, disease, health, happiness, or society.

Finally, and I think most significantly, the rise of science was based on a startling definition of the whole of the cosmos as dead. Reacting against medieval, renaissance, and ancient (and Moslem) beliefs that the cosmos was some kind of animal-alive, able to move itself, capable of self-activity—the new science<sup>8</sup> based its studies of nature on one central teaching: the concept of inertia. According to the concept of inertia, bodies by themselves are capable only of preserving themselves in the state of motion (or rest) in which they already exist or of reacting to *outside* stimuli (forces) to undertake a new motion. But all change has to come from outside. Matter, and in the last analysis, nature, consisting only of matter and motion, is dead. Again let us consider the ideological needs of a growing capitalist order intent on seeing the land, sea, and air of our world simply in terms of the resources it hopes to plunder.<sup>9</sup> A capitalism which is capable, in the name of profits, of robbing the soil of its nutrient ingredients, thus ruining the land in the course of a few years, in order to grow larger and more profitable crops *now*. A capitalism that at the same time, for identical reasons, will grow and sell food that is literally poison, owing to the thousands of non-food additives, all highly profitable. A capitalism that views the earth solely in terms of its exploitable resources of oil, timber, minerals, in pursuit of which the air, land, and sea will be poisoned beyond comprehension. Is there any question but that this capitalist system should welcome a new culture justifying in explicit terms this naked exploitation of nature? For a nature which is dead cannot conceivably demand or deserve consideration by those who, because of their immense power, are in a position to mine

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7. One of the best-selling herbals in the United States, Jethro Kloss' *Back to Eden*, cannot be advertised in the mail because of scientific rulings. In several Western countries, including the United States, acupuncture is illegal. It is with medical practice that this scientific *expertise* is most often used, in the name, of course, of protection of the public; however, everyone knows that the governmental bodies supervising such decisions are in the control of the drug companies.

8. This is especially true of physics and astronomy in the 17th century, but eventually it spread to all the sciences.

9. See Frances Moore Lappé, *Diet for a Small Planet* (New York, 1971), pp. 16f.

her resources. They cannot be called to account for their crimes. Their crimes, in fact, have no real meaning, for the ultimate implication of a nature which is dead is the destruction of *all* values, a world in which nothing seems to have any *real* significance, worth, or beauty; a world not so much immoral as amoral, in which every action seems equally meaningless.

Finally, from the fact of nature's being everywhere dead, inert, and passive, comes the implication that we, as people, should also be passive, should do only that which a higher authority orders us to, should follow the orders of Church, State, or Company.

Thus science is responsible in large measure for an ideological justification of the most profound alienations imaginable in three different but related senses: of people from other people, as in imperialism's genocide in Indochina; of man and woman from nature, as in the runaway ecocide of the world; and as man and woman within themselves, as in the repression of consciousness I have been discussing.

**B**ecause of its use as a basis for an ideology of alienation, I see science as one of the most basic foundations of Western culture. Since the rise of the nation-state in the 17th century (the century, significantly, of the scientific revolution), science has been the intellectual basis for the civilization and culture of the industrial, technological, bureaucratic, and capitalist West. This ideological function of science provides still another reason for the hostility to science at the present time. Rebellion against that civilization, which has been slowly growing since shortly after the West explored the rest of the world (for exploring was soon followed by conquering, colonizing, and enslaving, and it is absurd to think that *these* were lightly regarded by their victims), has certainly reached a climax quite recently. For nearly two decades now a simultaneous rebellion against the power of the imperialist West by the Vietnamese and, within the United States, by Afro-Americans, has called that civilization into question: its values, its purpose, even its highly regarded efficiency. And these rebellions by Vietnamese and Afro-Americans have created the free spaces for successive races, castes, classes, or groups of oppressed people to begin to understand their *own* oppression at the same hands. Once having understood their own oppression, these new groups have acted on the basis of their new consciousnesses: white youths, women, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Native Americans, high school and junior high school students, gay people, GIs, young workers, and people confined in prisons have joined the revolutionary movement. Though the movement is most intense in Indochina and inside the United States (since there it is on home ground), it exists nearly everywhere—in Latin America and Africa, in Europe, Canada, Japan, and Czechoslovakia. One measure of the coherent integration of various nations into a rationalized, imperialist system is how readily rebellions have spread, with an amazing ability to transcend boundaries of language, history, and culture.

This revolutionary movement does not dare stop merely at attacking the economic and political institutions of imperialism. As the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China has emphasized, the culture of a repressive civilization too must be called into question, for in a repressive society



culture can hold us captive no less than prisons. Culture can reinforce hierarchy, dependence, alienation, fear, weakness, authority, inadequacy. Or culture can try to liberate people from these. Since the civilization of oppression and repression is much more a unity than we have been willing to assume, all of its aspects must be carefully scrutinized to see how each one is related to the purpose of oppression. This includes the universities, colleges, and schools; it includes what they teach. Nor will this scrutiny necessarily be carried on in a coherent way, or by people fully conscious of the meaning of their inquiries. Someone interested today, say, in the seemingly anti-scientific studies of yoga or magic does not necessarily think his or her interest derives from the defeat of Western imperialism in Indochina. And the reaction against science described in this essay is not taking place in the Third World countries now fighting against imperialism, no doubt because the material needs of the people there are so great that science is seen primarily as a tremendous aid in reducing their deprivation. Rather, the reaction is taking place in the imperialist countries of the West, where science has helped bring about not only an apparent surfeit of consumer goods (as I'll discuss below) but also a real surfeit of spiritual impoverishment (as discussed above). Interestingly enough, however, the one exception to this acceptance of science by Third World people is the critique of science by some activists in the revolt of America's first internal colony, the Native Americans. Their exception, perhaps, springs from their being direct witness to the *total* effects on society of science, though more important still is the fact that their culture, crucially important to their physical survival, is in essence *tribal*, and not easily reconciled with technology or industry, the handmaidens of science.

Finally, we must realize that science as a cultural institution has been almost exclusively the product of two *minorities*: men and whites. So long as science has been able to pose as a totally objective, culturally neutral discipline, this white male domination might be thought to be merely an historical accident, irrelevant to the substance or form of science itself; but thankfully, that image of the neutrality and objectivity of science is hard to defend today. We must, therefore, consider, or at least ask, what are the implications of the fact that even more than literature, art, philosophy, religion, music, or other aspects of Western culture, the voice of science has nearly always been a male one? Female consciousness, female concerns with nature and the renewal and perpetuation of life, have been shamefully excluded from the formation of our scientific culture.<sup>10</sup>

**A**s for the white domination of science today, it is important to realize that this was not always the case. Most histo-

10. Shulamith Firestone, *The Dialectic of Sex* (New York, 1970). One of the major weaknesses of my essay, in fact, is that I've ignored witchcraft, the one area having (at least in part) to do with nature and dominated by women, mostly of the lower classes. There is evidence for witchcraft being an early movement of women unhappy with both their class and caste status in society. In a later version of this work, I hope to have more to say on this.

ries of science today, it is true, trace the roots of ancient science back to the thinkers in pre-Socratic Ionia, in sixth century B.C. Greece. Yet, certainly during the scientific revolution, this was not the opinion of the scientists themselves. Rather, many of them agreed that their knowledge and discipline was more properly traced back to Egypt. To take merely one example, Isaac Newton wrote in his *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms Amended* that it was after 655 B.C., when Psammiticus became king of all Egypt, that the Greek Ionians had "access into Egypt; and thence came the Ionian Philosophy, Astronomy, and Geometry."<sup>11</sup> Note that Greek culture, to which most historians today attribute the ancient roots of science, was the fount of rationalism; Egypt, of magic and mysticism. But more to the point here, Greece is European, white; Egypt is African, nonwhite. Yet these non-white roots of Western science have been nearly completely obfuscated, at least until recently.<sup>12</sup>

The history of dialectical thought in the West, owing to its repression, has been badly misunderstood. This misunderstanding has badly damaged not only Western culture in general, but in particular the Marxist tradition there, which has been based on dialectical thought. To a surprising extent, I think, Marx and Engels seem to have been heirs to a glorification of science and a mechanistic understanding of it which was a product of the bourgeois culture in which they lived. Even though outwardly critical of the mechanical tradition,<sup>13</sup> in several crucial ways, Marx and Engels seemed to accept much of it. Marx for example offered to dedicate his *Capital* to Darwin, whose mechanistic version of evolution, based on the principle of natural selection, Marx seemingly preferred to other, dialectically conceived theories of evolution written by Darwin's predecessors and contemporaries. It would, no doubt, be little more than a wild speculation to claim that the weakness on this point of Marx and Engels is connected to the overly mechanistic, rigidly dogmatic condition of much or most of the Marxist tradition in the West; whether there be any connection or not, however, it is certainly the case that only in the underdeveloped nonwestern world—in which both dialectics and mechanism are necessar-

11. Newton, *Chronology of Ancient Kingdoms* (London, 1727), p. 37. This was Newton's only published work on chronology, a subject on which he labored for years. See Frank Manuel, *Isaac Newton, Historian* (Cambridge, 1963).

12. See especially P. Rattansi and J.E. McGuire, "Newton and the Pipes of Pan," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* (1966), pp. 108-43; Giorgio de Santillana and H. von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill* (New York, 1969); and Tons Brunés, *The Secrets of Ancient Geometry—And Its Use* (Copenhagen, [1967]) for some exceptions.

13. See especially Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*. Marx, interestingly enough, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the differences between the atomism of Democritus and Epicurus, the latter ostensibly being less mechanical and more in line with dialectical thought because of a built-in randomizing aspect of the motion of the atoms.



ily viewed differently, being based on different histories than they are in the West—has Marxism proved full of life and promise.

Moreover, that Marxist tradition today faces a crucial choice. Tied till now, for good reasons, to revolutions in underdeveloped countries which must raise production and consumption, as the revolutionary movement becomes a more serious force in the industrialized countries of the West it must, in these different circumstances, change its views on production to prove its relevance to Western societies. Most Western societies already have a production and consumption so disproportionately high today that the earth is being robbed of its resources at a rate which is capable of totally denuding it of soil, forests, minerals, breathable air or drinkable water in the near future. To be sure, this overutilization of the earth's resources does not result, given the distribution of the products and the poor quality of things produced in capitalist countries, in a real easing of most peoples' lives in the West. Washing machines and freeways, A & P food and air-conditioners, power saws and color TV cannot make up for a life of powerlessness, ugliness, and spiritual impoverishment, nor for the fact that the freeways connect only with each other. Still, it is clear that whatever must be done to raise production and consumption in Third World countries,

where starvation and peonage are the fate today of countless peasants, in the West of the future, if there will be any future, fewer goods will have to be consumed *per capita*.<sup>14</sup> Of necessity, therefore, for Marxism to have any relevance to the needs of a revolutionary tradition in the West, one with full consciousness of the dangers of ecological disaster, the Marxist tradition in the West must completely redefine its relationship to the concept of "progress."

Two things have constituted the sole content of the notion of progress in the West: science and technology. Not by accident did the important cultural debate in the West over whether civilization was progressing, regressing or remaining constant take place in the 17th century, the century of the scientific revolution.

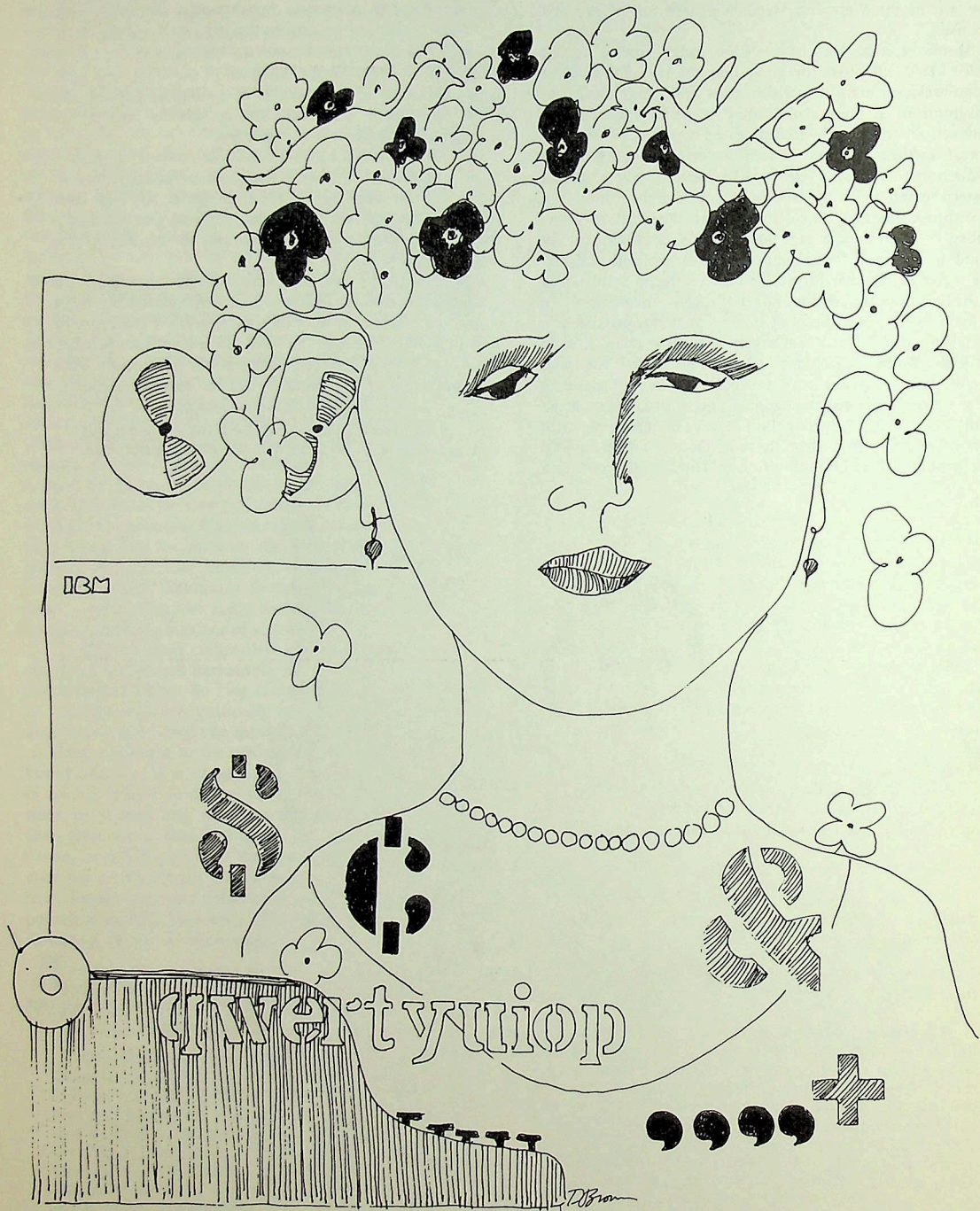
Now despite the fact that many of the main figures of the scientific revolution believed that their science was but a dim and imperfect mirroring of a more ancient tradition, of which they felt themselves to have but a scanty knowledge, the history of the scientific revolution has till recently been viewed in terms of the necessity for the nascent science to

---

14. It would probably be best for the apparatus of production to be used, but for consumption *elsewhere*.







IBM

qwertyuiop

D.Brown



sever its ties to the views held by antiquity. While Copernicus, Bruno, Kepler, Leibniz, and Newton, among others, have told us how much they owed to the wise men of the past, history has listened mainly only to Descartes of the *Discours sur la méthode*, eschewing all authorities, all traditions.

It turns out, however, that historians are now discovering there was such an ancient tradition of wisdom, whose scientific accomplishments are simply astonishing, if we but forget for a moment our cultural arrogance which makes us unable to admit it. A few examples will have to be sufficient. Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid, dating back thousands of years, both among other purposes astronomical observatories, reflecting an unbelievably "advanced"—it's hard escaping our presuppositions—knowledge of the cosmos.<sup>15</sup> Acupuncture, an Asian medical tradition dating to the 27th century B.C., capable of simply and safely curing many serious illnesses that have perplexed Western medicine for centuries. The insights of an herbal tradition in Eastern and Western medicine, much of it thousands of years old.<sup>16</sup> The medicine and cosmology of the Native American medicine men. The wisdom of yoga. And consider the fact that we have only a very tiny fraction of the many, many books written in antiquity about philosophy, nature, medicine, the body, the cosmos, etc. Most were destroyed in library-burnings at the hands of terrified political leaders, both in the West and in the East.

The "magic of plants" is not merely an evocative phrase today. Countless numbers of people in the West in the past decade have had direct experience of the mind-altering, experience-transforming properties of plants such as the mushrooms *amanita muscaria* or *psilocybin mexicana*, the weeds marijuana or jimson weed, the cactus *peyote*, as well as the synthetic LSD, and have become much more sympathetic and understanding of the claims of magic and alchemy, both of which were based on the use of plants to alter consciousness.<sup>17</sup> With the help of these plants, the way can be lit on a path to an ancient wisdom.

What does this lead us to? An ancient wisdom . . . magic . . . to what purpose? Perhaps precisely the kind of wisdom necessary today, especially in the West, where there is a civilization which has become totally antagonistic to nature. Pos-

sibly the kind of wisdom flowing out of the form of existence taken by peasant societies which, for millenia, have been capable of living in *harmony* with nature; a kind of wisdom which, dialectically, is necessary today in a society so diametrically opposed to nature that it is unable to know the difference between life and death. And the revolutionary tradition in the West, whose rise in the 19th century was, unhappily, accompanied by the development of a false consciousness of Western superiority, must separate itself from that consciousness if it is to be capable of answering the questions people, and nature, are asking today.<sup>18</sup>

Ironically, by pursuing our questions where they lead, even if they take us to magic or to an ancient tradition of wisdom, we will not be abandoning science so much as uncovering some of the roots of science which, though they have been hidden from us for centuries, have been of crucial importance as a source for many scientific insights through the ages. It is commonly acknowledged by those familiar with modern theoretical physics that its view of nature is now far more akin to certain Eastern mystic philosophies than to the mechanistic tradition which still, significantly, dominates most peoples' conception of nature. The writings of Einstein, Erwin Schrödinger, Werner Heisenberg, Max Born, and Murray Gell-Mann, for example, all discuss or allude to the similarity of the notions of contemporary physics, dissolving away the concepts of space, time, matter itself, individuation, or causality, to Eastern philosophies thousands of years old, which also managed to avoid those logical traps but which started in a totally different way. Nor is it merely in modern physics that one finds these similarities. If we go back to the sixth century B.C. in Greece we will find the mystery-cult of Pythagoras—who was both the disciple of the magician-priests of Egypt and the father of much of Greek mathematical thought. Pythagorean thought, even though hardly any of it survives in written form, existed throughout the history of Western science as an underground movement. In the early stages of scientific development in western Europe, in fact, it was not even so underground. Galileo, Kepler, Copernicus, and Newton, to name but a few, all openly referred to their allegiance to the Pythagoreans. Modern historians have chosen to interpret those references to be restricted to Pythagoras the mathematician, rather than Pythagoras the disciple of the Egyptian priests, or the Pythagoras who is said to have studied in India with sages. But surely it is the fuller interests of Pythagoras we must consider when searching for the real roots of Western science, the Pythagoras with intimate connections to Hermetic magic, alchemy, cabala (an occult body of interpretation of Scripture, in terms of its mathematical symbolism), and astrology. It is a difficult job digging up these roots of Western science because they lie buried under layers of cultural repression. But it is a necessary job, and I hope these pages will serve as some kind of historical shovel. •

18. The concept of finding, if not necessarily looking for, power over nature exists in magic, but the demand that this control be tied to some spiritual purpose is much more strongly emphasized; it is integral to the tradition.

15. Gerald Hawkins, *Stonehenge Decoded* (Garden City, 1965); Peter Tompkins, *Secrets of the Great Pyramid* (New York, 1971).

16. Nicole Maxwell, *The Jungle Search for Nature's Cures* (New York, 1961), for example.

17. *Amanita muscaria*, *peyote*, jimson weed, and *psilocybin mexicana* are used by the shamans of Siberia, the druid priests, the *brujos* (sorcerers or magicians) of Mexico, and some writers have recently conjectured, by the pre-Vedic ancestors of the Hindus and the priest-magicians of ancient Egypt. See Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (Berkeley, 1968); Andrija Puharich, *The Sacred Mushroom: Key to the Door of Eternity* (Garden City, 1959).



HOMES

I.

Eleven  
eighteen  
twenty five  
it still comes back to  
five o'clock winter dusk  
walking along under trees  
smelling dinners  
looking in lighted windows  
wondering.

II.

Heavy black lines  
selections.  
The belt moves  
you miss you lose.  
The street is full of children.  
Year by year  
they disappear  
into houses, apartments,  
a wedding  
a name on a bell  
then what?

III.

Little girls sitting in a tree  
swinging legs talking,  
I remember.  
    Adolescent confessions,  
    don't you think?  
It's very awkward.  
of course we would ask her  
to come along but  
    of course  
so busy  
    my husband  
awkward  
    lets  
get  
    together  
    for lunch  
sometime  
    next  
    week.

IV.

Come out and play  
damn it.  
walking—winter dusk  
throat ache tight  
hands close on nothing  
fading away.  
Shabby slum sidewalk  
flashing broken glass  
glittering swooping wheels around  
spinning foggy night.  
Lumberjack freight-train images  
bars full of Irish poets  
trading songs, plotting revolutions,  
shipping out of Portland,  
slipping through New York.  
A car slows down  
    —Hey girlie wanna ride?  
better get off the street,  
I guess I'll go home now.

V.

Look at that poor lady  
waiting at the counter.  
One pork chop, half dozen eggs,  
skinny quart of milk,  
cat food.  
Going back  
to some little room  
somewhere.  
    —Yeah  
    wonder what she does  
    with those cats—  
She's not so old  
    —bet she thinks  
    she's real sexy  
    with those earrings.  
    Did you see her flirting  
    with the counterboy?—  
I wonder what she  
used to think about.  
Obituary:  
a dance  
to keep the rain away.





VI.

When I was nineteen  
I sat in my father's study  
crying.  
He said—  
When you get older you'll realize  
your only real friend  
is the person you'll marry.  
It was July,  
the last summer I spent at home.  
He said—  
I never talk to women  
at parties.  
If they're not married,  
they might get the wrong idea.  
If they are married  
what's the point?  
He was smoking a pipe,  
wearing a green and brown shirt.  
Sun slanted in the window.  
I felt like a broken toy.

VII.

It always gets back to  
walking alone in winter dusk.

It always gets back to  
sitting together in a tree  
October Saturday  
orange and blue,  
legs swinging, talking.  
Survey:  
"Why do you want to get married?"  
One hundred high school girls  
sixteen and seventeen  
answer instantly:  
"For security."

VIII.

I'm going to stand here  
and lean against your doorbell  
til you give me an answer.  
Why can't we all run away  
and live in a big house  
all together  
with lots of music  
and stay up talking  
as long as we want?

—Jean Tepperman

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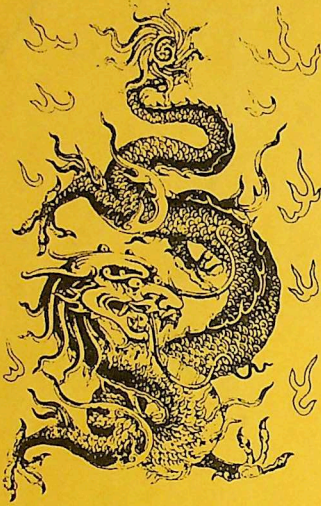
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October 1972

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ART BY BETTY LEVINSON

## In this issue

As we face the prospect of another four years of Nixon, none of us is very encouraged. It is not so much that Nixon will again be President, but that we live in a country which has in most cases only weakly resisted his attempts to subvert and destroy many of the positive values which have allowed us to make at least some progress toward meaningful social change. Naturally we must expect setbacks of this nature, but we hope that, faced with obstacles that are more clear than ever before, we will be able to galvanize a new unity, strength and sense of purpose in the coming period.

We are pleased this month to have broader coverage of radical movements in other advanced, industrialized countries. The growing women's liberation and workers' autonomy movements in Italy provide informative parallels—and contrasts—to workers' struggles and the women's movement here, as Ellen Cantarow illustrates in "Women's Liberation and Workers' Autonomy in Turin and Milan," written after a journey to Italy this past spring. The chronicle of the Red Army in Japan, written by Kitazawa Yoko and Muto Ichiyo (whose article "Mishima & the Transition from Postwar Democracy to Democratic Fascism" was printed in our January 1972 issue), offers a valuable—and chilling—example of a group whose relationship to the New Left in Japan is surprisingly similar to the relationship of Weatherpeople to the New Left here. The Red Army's violent, offensive tactics—bank robberies, a plane hijacking, attacks on government buildings—and rigid discipline, which extended to execution of dissident members, were based on an unrealistically apocalyptic analysis of external events which carried the ideology

of the Japanese New Left of the late Sixties "to its logical extreme and to bankruptcy." This article and our cover art originally appeared in *AMPO*, No. 13-14 (May-July 1972), and has been edited for *Liberation*.

Excerpts from the notebooks of Dan Brown, a revolutionary artist whose work appeared in our January and March 1972 issues, are a reminder of events on the radical left in this country during the late Sixties and early Seventies. Dan's drawings and commentary also suggest further possibilities for the creative synthesis of art and politics. An ominous threat to creativity is described by Peter Breggin, who outlines the current resurgence and growing sophistication of psychosurgery, which "cures" problems of "maladjustment" to society by destroying the higher mental capacities of those who are deemed to be out of phase. "Lobotomy—It's Coming Back" is a revised and edited version of an interview conducted by Judy Miller on WBAI (Pacifica, New York) in the spring of 1972. Peter Breggin, a psychiatrist in Washington, D.C., has written two novels, *The Crazy from the Sane* and *After the Good War*.

The plumed snake figure on page 15 comes from pottery excavated at a Hopi pueblo in Arizona.

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# Excerpts from a Diary:

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## WOMEN'S LIBERATION and WORKERS' AUTONOMY in TURIN and MILAN

ellen cantarow

*Last spring I made a trip to Italy. For two weeks I met continuously with comrades in Turin and Milan. In describing the trip I thought it best to concentrate on those parts of the left I found most interesting, and which were probably less known to radicals here than the general contours of the Italian New Left already described in the American movement press. Moreover, between the nascent Italian women's movement and the rank-and-file movement in the shops there seems to me to be an obvious dialectic. I hope the following essay will make that apparent, and will offer a somewhat different perspective on the struggles of our comrades in Italy than has been available so far. Further information about the Italian left, including a good many first-hand documents, is available from The Europe America Communications Service, 6th and Rogers Streets, Cambridge, Mass.*

\* \* \*

### June 5, Turin

There is a left in Italy. The left has a history. That history with its legacy of massive class-consciousness among workers, unbroken even by twenty years of fascism, is something I can feel here. I can see it, practically touch it walking around Turin, as I could in Genoa, in Rome, in the centuries-old neighborhoods where the proletariat almost invariably lives—though state housing projects are beginning to go up American-fashion on the outskirts of the larger cities. In the old neighborhoods, the working class lives amidst all the architectural, historical stability of these districts, as well as amidst all the deteriorating or non-existent heating, plumbing, plaster, of the houses and apartment houses. The buildings are often converted *palazzi* with big stone arched doorways through which you enter to find a courtyard and several stone passageways leading to stone stairwells that mount upward to the apartments.

History hasn't been systematically destroyed, destruction hasn't been rationalized as "urban renewal" in any city but Milan, perhaps, or the outskirts of Rome: but even in Milan the old *quartiere* remain. In the buildings in Rome centuries cluster visibly upon centuries. Renaissance apartment houses are built under the arches, into the crevices of Roman ruins; seventeenth-century upper stories have been added to Renaissance bases. History is part of the landscape of daily living. Its contours fix themselves in the deepest part of your consciousness. If you go from America to Italy you've got to know the difference even if you don't know who Guarini

was. Here buildings aren't blasted away, blocks aren't razed to a pitiless wasted rubble. You don't see barren lots with their burden of broken glass, bricks, dogshit, planks with jutting nails, the weeds an indomitable timeless life thrusting up through the waste people heap on the waste that's been heaped upon them. No: not yet visited upon Italy is the ultimate violence of capitalism, rendering its citizenry a race without memory, animals torn away from habitat, a mass lobotomy that leaves but a dull ache, occasionally stirring the heart to anger with no real understanding exactly why.

It is in these old neighborhoods that you come on the CP office, open to anyone who might want to come and sit. (I've never seen anyone sitting there; I suspect it would be mainly the older folks who would.) The CP has long sold out on its revolutionary origins. Indeed, it has close to thirty years of history here, as elsewhere, of putting the brake on rank-and-file militancy. Having made its compromise in the Forties with the Christian Democrats, the big ruling-class party, to gain a toehold in Parliament, it has grown more and more "respectable" ever since. At the same time it is the only left formation with a mass following. Last election it polled 20,000,000 votes, second only to the Christian Democrats. It's clear that the working class—particularly the young people—aren't entirely satisfied with the CP. On the other hand there's really nothing else as powerful: the New Left is splintered and immature.

In regard to the New Left the CP predictably plays a despicable role. The new, or extraparliamentary left (called this to distinguish it from the CP and the Socialists), is now suffering the worst repression ever visited on it. One kid just got 14 months for writing a political slogan on a tablecloth in a restaurant. It was argued by the court that the slogan might have "corrupted the morals" of the waitress had she seen it. Every day in *Manifesto's* daily or in the *Lotta Continua* newspaper are tales of mammoth sentences meted out for nothing—for graffiti, or for distributing leaflets in "unauthorized places." In all of this the CP not only sits on its hands: it cries for more "law and order," so that you're hard pressed to tell it apart from the Christian Democrats. Yet, as a comrade at the *Manifesto* office in Turin remarked wryly to me, "As we say, the CP may be pretty bad now, but she's still the big mama of us all . . ."

On the walls of the working-class neighborhoods are many posters. Wall posters are obviously a traditional means of mass political communication here. At this moment the





May elections are just past. *Manifesto*, the organization founded two years ago by former members of the CP central committee, who had been expelled by the Party, ran its first candidates this month. And so the legend *CON IL MANIFESTO PER IL COMUNISMO (WITH MANIFESTO FOR COMMUNISM)* is plastered everywhere. There's also the *Manifesto* poster with the photograph of Valpreda, their chief electoral candidate. Valpreda is the anarchist on whom the State tried to pin the Agricultural Bank of Milan bombing committed in December, 1969, by fascists. *Manifesto* ran Valpreda as their chief candidate in an effort at once to free him, to raise the issue of the growing repression of the left to a mass level, and to enter the arena of mass electoral politics as an organized force. Valpreda lost. In its campaign *Manifesto* was deserted by the rest of the extraparliamentary left, partly, I am told by comrades in Turin, because other groups shunned the electoral path as reformist, partly because of the factionalism rife in the Italian movement at present. Among the comrades I meet there is much condemnation of the desertion of *Manifesto* by the rest of the left, even though many feel that *Manifesto* is a bunch of ex-heavyards from the CP, intellectuals who don't engage in much everyday practice.

There is something else here, which I find a continuing miracle: every day when I wake up and go out for coffee, I have my choice of three communist dailies! One, which I never buy, is *l'Unita*: that's the CP's official organ, and everyone agrees it's for shit. I usually buy both *Manifesto* and *Lotta Continua*. *Lotta Continua*'s daily suffers from the same

sort of "triumphalism," and movement-centeredness that the *Guardian* does—the comrades-are-struggling-on-land-and-seas sort of politics. *Manifesto*'s paper consists mainly of broad analysis, of local strike coverage, and of important international events. Written by people like Lucio Magri, Rossana Rossanda, *Manifesto*'s national and international analysis is consistently provocative, often first-rate, but usually pretty flat in style. Who in Italy reads *Manifesto*? Mainly intellectuals, and the advanced cadre in the factories.

How much a national left press, especially a daily one, contributes to your sense of movement on a national level, prevents you from feeling isolated in your own local work, you discover only where such a press exists. But it is everything taken together that gives this impression of vibrant life on a left that continues to rally now as fifty, a hundred years ago—the newspapers, the posters upon posters, the demonstrations into which I've occasionally stumbled, like the one in Perugia a week ago, organized by the CP about Vietnam.

#### June 7, Turin

MT's apartment houses the Turin Women's Political Collective. The collective's office is a large room with sculpted cornices and ceiling, an ordinary feature of buildings in Turin, which is an eighteenth-century city. This elegant room, with its high ceilings and ornate detailed work, is barely furnished. There's a work table composed of a slab of some sort of synthetic material and two wooden "horses"; a daybed with an old blue cover; a carton with some clothes in it. Against one wall there's a bookcase piled with newspapers,



magazines, a few books. Among these there is much international material, and browsing one day I found *Ms.* and *Notes from the Second Year*. Above the bookcase are a series of photos taken at a women's demonstration. They could have been taken in America, but for the Italian placards: *ANCHE NON PAGATA LA DONNA LAVORA!* (WOMEN WORK EVEN IF THEY AREN'T PAID FOR IT!), *3,000,000 DI ABORTI IN UN ANNO! 20,000 DONNE CI LASCIANO LE PELLE* (3,000,000 ABORTIONS IN A YEAR! 20,000 WOMEN DEAD). Above the photographs the legend, *DONNA E BELLO* (TO BE A WOMAN IS BEAUTIFUL). Next to the tall windows that look out on the street hangs a large placard made out of some lightweight metal. Printed in red at the top is the legend: *NON C'E RIVOLUZIONE SENZA LIBERAZIONE DELLA DONNA* (THERE IS NO REVOLUTION WITHOUT WOMEN'S LIBERATION); in the center, the women's symbol; at the bottom, *NON C'E LIBERAZIONE DELLA DONNA SENZA RIVOLUZIONE* (THERE IS NO WOMEN'S LIBERATION WITHOUT REVOLUTION).

Though I'm struck by how greatly this group—the only one with which I'm to have any extended contact—seems to have borrowed from the American women's movement, still its atmosphere is unmistakably Italian, for like any group on the left it has been shaped in the crucible of Italian socialist and communist history. In America we call each other "Sister," and how much more than this the women's movement owes to the early civil rights movement requires no little reflection. In Italy women address each other as *compagna*, comrade. While I was there I was always *la compagna americana*. How much other women's groups here owe to Italian communist history, I can't say. But in MT's group there is no doubt that people are cognizant of the class struggle. It not only exists in Italy: everyone recognizes that it does, there is no balking it. It is the frame of reference even of the unions, which, unlike American unions, at least profess a left perspective and use the parlance of Marxism. One member of MT's group, a working-class woman from the South, might declare: "You may all be Marxists, but as for me I'm a feminist *e basta!* (and that's that!)" But even this declaration is uttered within the context of a Marxism absorbed into popular consciousness, assimilated into daily life and thought.

Tonight the regular meeting of the collective is to take place. Around seven o'clock women begin arriving. No question of having meetings during the day: most of the women work, or are occupied with their families. As they enter the room, I am struck by the fact that their average age seems over 25. I am struck, too, by the difference in dress: MT and perhaps two or three other women wear slacks; there are no work shirts, peasant blouses, huaraches, no American youths in costume. Many of the women wear skirts, dresses; many wear makeup.

Several of the women are schoolteachers, but others are not professionals: I learn later from MT that a good many women in her group, as in Italian women's groups generally, are white-collar workers. A secretary at Fiat opens the meeting. She asks the others if they are willing to send representatives to her union. The men there have expressed an interest in finding out about feminism. Smiles around the table; a

moment of silence; murmurs of skepticism. M, who is among the marchers in the large photo on the wall, speaks: she doesn't see much use, she says, in sending representatives

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In P as she speaks and in the other sisters as they listen, there is a sense of novelty, indeed of fascination, not just about homosexuality, but about the sheer fact of any freedom of sexual expression for women.

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where they will surely be seen as curiosities. Another woman, who belongs to a different union, seconds M's skepticism, but allows that there may be some usefulness in going to the meeting.

The item of greatest interest on the agenda is the report of three comrades on a visit to a homosexual group in Turin. P, a stylish young woman with dark hair strained back into a bun, modish-looking glasses, and a yellow dress, makes the report. A distinction from the American women's movement: this whole accounting is done in an almost formal manner. Only parliamentary procedure is lacking. This feels odd, but it places the visit in the context of political decision-making: Should the Turin collective have anything further to do with the homosexual group, or should it not, and on what basis?

P reflects that she and the other comrades had felt edgy about the visit. They hadn't known what to expect. At one point in the meeting one of the lesbians put her hands on P's breasts and announced: "You see? I'm no different from a man." (Murmurs, expressions of irritation, indignation, dismay on the parts of the sisters sitting around me.) The lesbians seemed to pride themselves on being "just like men," P says, and had no other notion of liberation.

In P as she speaks and in the other sisters as they listen, there is a sense of novelty, indeed of fascination, not just about homosexuality, but about the sheer fact of any freedom of sexual expression for women. Later MT confirms my feeling that the lives of the vast majority of Italian women are extremely restricted, even though increasing numbers of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois women are going to universities. Few, for example, live together away from their families, as do MT and the sister sharing the collective's apartment. There is a distinction between the lives of working-class women, still stiflingly cloistered, and those of students among whom "sexual freedom" is growing, but both groups clearly feel unhampered sexual relations is a positive goal as yet to be reached.

The judgment of the comrades is to suspend further contact with the homosexual group. The three comrades who visited the group repeat several times that they found the visit extremely beneficial: they understand and sympathize with a phenomenon that had seemed ludicrous before, and fearsome. (It seems clear throughout the whole discussion that gay liberation is not soon to become part of the Italian left, given the country's backwardness in all areas of sexual



definition and expression.) At the same time there seems to be no political reason for continuing to relate to what, after all, is a *groupuscule*: the most pressing need for Italian women's groups, after all, is to begin becoming a movement, and this, one comrade remarks, hasn't gotten underway yet. In order for it to happen, the masses of Italian women have to be reached: the homosexual group doesn't represent them. Some brief discussion of other business follows, among which there is talk of a meeting of representatives from various women's groups all over Northern Italy: this is to take place tomorrow evening in Milan for the outlining of a women's manifesto. It seems the meeting is an extremely important moment, perhaps the springboard from which the groups, as yet isolated among themselves, will announce a real movement.

### June 8, Milan

Tonight I go with MT and P to the meeting in Milan. The drive from Turin takes an hour and a half. The meeting begins late, at 10 p.m., and we're surprised—indeed, disappointed—that there are only fifteen women present. The meeting is in a fifth-floor walkup; again this is in a converted seventeenth-century *palazzo*. In the room where we are meeting, bookcases surmount the worktable: I notice in them a large volume of Gramsci beside the works of Lenin, of Marx, of Engels. On the edge of one of the shelves is the motto, humorous, outrageous, obviously a felt accompaniment to the classics ranged above it: *IO SONO CLITORACRATE* (I AM A CLITOROCRAT). Down the shelf from the volumes of Marx, Lenin, and Engels, is *Sisterhood is Powerful*.

Before the meeting one of the women puts a record on. It is a work song, the song of a woman worker explaining the difficulties of her work, and what she has to do when she goes home. Then another, in which a young woman sings about her wedding day, "How happy I am! I have bought my gown, my veil, I will put on my new shoes and carry flowers . . ." The song has a self-mocking edge to it. During it everyone sits silent, ironic. There is a pervasive feeling I've not experienced since the early women's movement in America. It's the spirit of new recognition, in which every time-worn motto, every banality, every careless phrase takes on a sharpness, a poignancy one realized before only dimly; in which normality is revealed as crippling restriction; in which beyond all else one discovers that those private chafing reflections, that occasional sense of pervasive dull dissatisfaction one had felt a mark of one's own failure, are shared by thousands of other women; that other women are one's own self and one's self is to be found in other women. Out of such feeling in America four or five years ago came the motto, *SISTERHOOD IS POWERFUL*, the fallacies of which (there are differences among us, of class, of race, of politics) were later shown as the entire left splintered and entered a longer, harder and more workaday phase.

After the records A is urged to sing. She is the oldest woman in the Turin group—in her late forties, perhaps fifty. She has long dark hair; like some others in the group she wears makeup. Before the women's movement she had never participated in politics. She supports herself as a translator, and recently she translated the Bread and Roses pamphlet, "Our Bodies, Ourselves," for a medical project planned by

the Turin group. She has grown children; she separated from her husband some time ago. (Despite the recently liberalized Italian law, divorce is nearly impossible to get; the courts either refuse to grant it or tie you up in the knots of bureaucratic procedure.) Only in a slight initial shyness, in the mild self-mockery of A's humor, might one sense the mark of her age. Otherwise there is nothing in her of the hesitancy, the sense of their difference, the uncertainty how to relate to much younger women, that one finds in many older women in the U.S. who have joined the women's movement.

In a low, strong, pleasant voice, A sings a feminist song written by an Italian woman. After she's finished there's a moment of silence. Then we remember it's 10:45 in the evening and the meeting hasn't begun. Only around 11 does a discussion of the proposed manifesto begin. The chief questions are the form in which it should appear, and the audience to whom it should be addressed. Someone suggests it should be a wall poster, perhaps with the legend, *Donna è Bello* ("Woman is beautiful"). Another woman observes that no one outside of the women's groups understands the meaning of that phrase. (I secretly agree, given not only the grammatical oddness of the statement in Italian, but given also its genealogy, which few Italians can know: it comes from America, and from the black power movement—Black is beautiful.) Another woman, who has a strong, blond face, begins a long discourse in which she talks about the identification of the personal with the political. Perhaps this is what the manifesto should stress, but clearly this sister is telling us, elaborately, and with no small pedantry, what we already know. B, a woman in MT's group to whom I have taken immediately, finely intelligent, small, delicate, with a serious, beautiful Semitic face, speaks up in irritation: "What the comrade has been doing is lecturing us, just as if she were in one of the extraparlimentary *gruppi*. It is the style of the Italian male heavy. The comrade should be telling us simply and plainly what she thinks the manifesto should consist of, to whom it should be written, and above all what its purpose should be." B continues, "It seemed to us from Turin that we had met together here in an effort to write something like a Communist Manifesto for women, something the writing of which would bring together groups formerly isolated, something that would announce our existence as a political movement." Therefore the manifesto itself, B continues, announces a new chapter in the development of women's politics on the left, as a movement. She related that the conception of the Turin collective was that the manifesto should be broadly political, sketching in bold strokes the large, urgent reasons for the existence of a movement for women's liberation.

A moment of silence follows B's remarks, then comrades begin considering what she has said. All agree that the statement should explain the concept of women's liberation. There are questions, however, about how the large politics underlying the concept are to be expressed. One sister observes that the manifesto shouldn't be a denunciation (women are exploited, underpaid, abused, miserable). It should be a positive statement: first and foremost it should explain that women's liberation is indeed a political concept, not the psychological triviality male comrades on the left would sneeringly make of it. There is much defensiveness in this



remark, and I sense behind it the history of the experience of some of the women in the Italian New Left groups, or *gruppi*, as they are colloquially called. MT has told me that about half of the women in the Turin collective have worked with *Lotta Continua*, *Potere Operaio*, and other extraparliamentary groupings. The experience of the young women in these organizations is much like that reported by American women of SDS in its early days. The women who left the *gruppi* did so because they were treated the same on the extraparliamentary left as in society generally. The women comrades did the typing, stenciling, filing. They were infantilized, sexualized, by their supposed male comrades. The wounds incurred in this experience still ache, and the women still justify themselves with an eye to the *gruppi*. The question of audience is thus a pointed one. Should the manifesto be a document to be circulated throughout the left, or should it be addressed to a mass audience outside of the left?

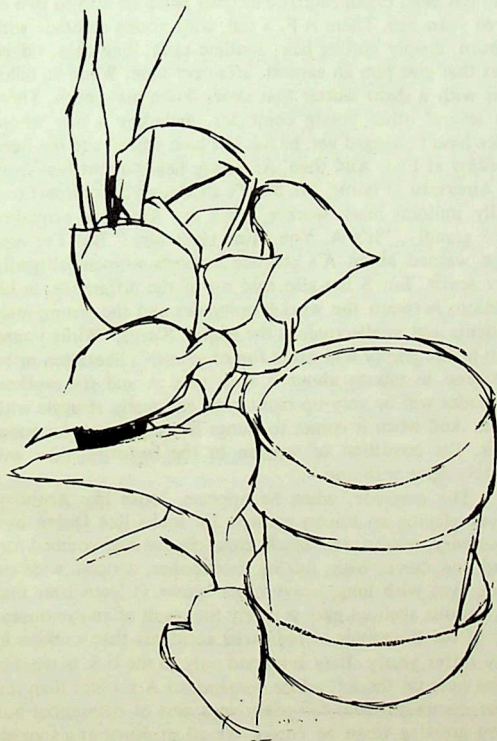
B speaks again. The situation of the left as a whole, she observes with some passion, is an ugly one, in which there is much violence, a violence that reflects the violence of capitalist society. She stresses the word, leaning forward with intensity as she does so. I'm not entirely sure what she means, but I have the dawning sense that at least in part she is implying the extreme sectarianism that has riddled the left under the increasing pressure of repression, a sectarianism that for example led the *gruppi* to desert *Manifesto* during

the elections. B talks as well about the competitiveness and egocentrism of the left. Feminism, she continues with increasing warmth, can change the nature of the movement; there is a need to create a counter-culture. But at the same time as B urges the other women in the room to emphasize the cultural implications of feminism she also includes mass political themes—the economic exploitation of women in the home and on the labor market, and the question of abortion. I wonder at B's perceptiveness, her imagination, for cultural issues as they are understood in America are in general almost wholly foreign here. I am moved, even shaken, as I realize that in all of Italy the only part of the left that may be able to fuse the larger questions of political economy, of class, of power, with the politics of personal experience, is the women's movement. In America it was the great contribution of the women's movement to have made clear the identification of the so-called "personal" with the political. But there was some historical background for that. Here in Italy there has been no such preparation. Indeed, my greatest culture-shock here is my sense of the general absence among Italian movement people of a critical examination of one's own experience and practice in relation to one's comrades. Only in MT's group or here, tonight, have I found the deep stirrings of what Americans on the left take so much for granted.

As the end of the meeting is drawing near, MT outlines a possible form for the manifesto. Sharply, clearly, even with eloquence, she points out the necessity to make the document as brief as possible. She says that it should be a wall poster. It should announce briefly and in plain language the major points women's liberation as a movement wishes to make about the social condition of Italian women. It should then announce a program in which concrete goals are undertaken, goals that speak to the needs of the masses of Italian women. Of course, among the issues to be touched upon are employment, household work and the community, abortion . . . . When MT stops there is a moment of silence; the outline shimmers there before us waiting to be elaborated. Various comrades make additional suggestions, and it is decided that a meeting should take place in Turin a week from now to begin the actual writing of the document.

It is 1 in the morning. Down in the darkened street it is quite silent. A streetlamp casts a bright circle of light around which we gather for a moment before separating to go. Suddenly a motorcycle passes. Speculatively P and A regard the young man as he goes by. "Mm-mm!" says P to A, "nice, isn't he?" A strikes an inviting pose, hip thrust forward, eyebrows raised appraisingly, cheeks sucked in. "You could do worse," she says, intoning the cadences of a small shopkeeper. We burst out laughing.

Before we leave the city we stop at a bar that is just about to close. A man and his daughter are cleaning up behind the counter. We order *panini* (rolls) with ham and cheese, a quick *espresso*. We talk about the meeting. MT observes there weren't many comrades there; on the other hand the meeting came to an agreement on continued work in common, and this in itself was a mark of success. The young woman behind the counter listens covertly while she prepares the *panini* and coffee. Clearly four young women who travel alone at one in the morning and discuss politics—





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feminism!—are oddities to say the very least. As we leave, I can see the young woman and her father gazing after us, shaking their heads, laughing . . .

On the way home, P and I talk about her teaching and the integration of her politics into her teaching. Her history is a fairly common one here. In high school she worked with PSIUP, which was a split-off party from the Italian Socialist Party, to the left of the latter. Before 1968 it purported to be an alternative to the CP, and attracted many students who later left it when the extraparlimentary left surged forth. After high school P went to university and started working with comrades in a *doppo scuola* (lit: "after school"), a supplementary educational program for young workers. Now P works actively in one of the large industrial unions that is organizing among high school teachers. Such participation isn't uncommon, but many comrades still scorn working in any of the unions, which are controlled by the parliamentary left. But P feels the union to which she belongs is reaching masses of teachers. The only other union is extremely right-wing. Union organizing among high school teachers, she says, is a growing reality. You must come to grips with that, or you risk marginality, even extinction as a political influence.

### Sunday, June 10

S, a friend of MT's, has kept saying to me, "You'll have to meet some workers and ask them what *they* think of the extraparlimentary groups. When you meet them you'll be talking with people who are at the center of the whole problem." So today I've come to the apartment that S, a former partisan in his forties, shares with two young workers from the South: one of them works at Fiat, the other was recently fired from there. Not only "a proletarian commune," as S and the two other men call it, the apartment is also an office. Sparsely furnished, like MT's place it has large rooms and high ceilings with ornate moldings. At the entrance to the apartment is a long metal bookcase on which are piled pamphlets, leaflets, newspapers.

The young men who live with S are in *autonomia operaia*, workers' autonomy. *Autonomia operaia* isn't a formal organization here any more than women's liberation is in America. It is a mass desire that has been given a name—that is, the desire for autonomous power distinct from both the unions and the bureaucratic, arteriosclerotic albatross that is the CP. In the fall of '69 the disaffection of the rank and file assumed the proportions of mass struggle as a chaos of strikes erupted around the triennial, industry-wide contract renewals. It was during "the hot autumn," *l'autunno caldo*, as it was named, that *autonomia operaia* arose as a movement and not just a sentiment. Now, three years later, the question is whether September will bring another hot autumn. It is against this possibility that the unions are preparing their

platforms: in particular, the union of the *metalmecanici*, the auto workers, has taken the initiative from the rank and file by including several points on the all-important issue of job ranking and classification in the program they'll present to ownership. But if there's another hot autumn, will the comrades in *autonomia operaia* be sufficiently organized to seize the initiative and come out ahead of their own class managers—the unions and the CP—as well as ahead of the ruling class? These are questions I'm impatient to ask the worker-comrades I'm about to meet.

In S's kitchen are several young men. Clearly they aren't students. Their bearing is at once deferential and courtly; from the moment I enter I'm not only the American visitor, but *compagna*, and woman. For this reason the young worker-comrades are somewhat shy, attentive, careful of my halting Italian. There is a small, dark young man, almost a boy, who can't be more than 20 or 21, with bright, dark eyes, grave thin-lipped mouth, round face and pointed chin, who has been organizing at Fiat ever since he arrived two or three years ago. There is F, a tall, wiry young comrade with auburn, crisply curling hair, aquiline nose, long chin, ridged eyes that give him an earnest, attentive look. When he talks, it is with a slight stutter that slows down his speech. There are several other young comrades, including a boy whose voice hasn't changed yet; he has left high school and has been working at Fiat. And then, A: I have heard about him from an American at home. "If there's an Italian counterpart to a really militant black worker," said my American acquaintance grandly, "It's A. You must meet him." But I've also been warned about A's attitude towards women—allegedly very sexist. But S has also told me of the difference, in his opinion, between the worker-comrades and the young male students and intellectuals in the *gruppi*. S says, "While young men in the *gruppi* will make fun of women's liberation or be dishonest in talking about it with you, A and the worker-comrades will be very up front, you can really struggle with them. And when it comes to things like equal pay for equal work, the condition of women in the factories, they will entirely agree with you."

The comrade, when he appears, looks like Anthony Quinn playing an Italian worker. He looks like Quinn in a more wiry, tense form: black, close-clipped hair combed forward and down, high, jutting cheekbones, curious, wide-set black eyes with long, heavy black brows. (I learn later that A's curious abstract gaze is partly the result of an eye injury, one of the thousands of industrial accidents that workers in Italy suffer yearly. Italy is second only to the U.S. in what is called here on the left *white homicides*.) A is older than the other comrades, who fall silent in a sort of deferential but warm greeting when he enters. We all sit down at a longish



table. One young comrade stands at the stove, cooking *pasta* and a joint of beef in tomato sauce for lunch. To my left are two young Americans visiting Turin. As lunch goes on, more and more young brothers enter, and at one point a young woman, obviously not working-class, takes her place across the table from us. Finally there are some fifteen people in the room.

A speaks with a heavy Southern accent. There are jokes all around about how he should slow down because otherwise the *compagna americana* won't understand his terrible Italian. But A talks with a fluency and eloquence I've found in no one here so far; that's obviously the point of the joke. Often, as the conversation proceeds he grasps my arm or hand, and with the other arm gestures compellingly. As he speaks you have the sudden impression of a long history of participation in workers' assemblies, in shop meetings. He is self-consciously a leader, an orator. Throughout the conversation I have the feeling that A uses me as a reference point, ignoring the other Americans and S. This is partly because I've taken over for S as translator, but I sense it's also because I'm a woman. This makes me very self-conscious, but it seems no one else has noticed what I'm so acutely aware of. The Italian comrades listen seriously, attentively, to A: what he says provokes continual side discussions and arguments among them.

A is a proletarian and a communist—he describes himself as these. He is a communist with a small c, not a member of the Communist Party. He talks not of himself but of his class. "*Noi proletari siamo i veri comunisti*," he says at one point with pride: "We proletarians are the true communists." He goes on to discuss the internal committees, the small groups that express *autonomia operaia*. Among the masses of workers the desire for autonomous power, frequently submerged or slumbering just beneath the surface of apparent allegiance to the unions and the CP, articulates itself in a myriad of informal organizational forms. Exactly what form *autonomia operaia* takes depends not just on the particular factory but also on particular departments within given factories. In one factory the *consiglio* (council), an official body, may become the expression of workers' autonomy. In another the *consiglio* may be completely under the union's control and therefore worthless as a truly representative body. A and the comrades in the room today aren't on the *consiglio* (A, in fact, has been fired from Fiat, and apparently can't get work anywhere else). They are part of an independent collective.

A, who has been in the North for eleven years, and the other young men in the room, are among the millions of young people who have emigrated over the past decade from the agrarian, underdeveloped South to Northern Italy and Germany. That South stands in relation to the North as colony to imperialist country, and this relationship has over a century of history. "The meridional question," the exploitation of a South maintained in backwardness by Italian capital, has become more intense over the past five years. During this period the increasing flow of workers northward has been comparable to the mass exodus of black workers from the American South after World War II. Indeed, in Italy the *emigrati* are the niggers of the country. You see them work-

ing in the same kinds of shit jobs that black people have in the U.S.—as parking attendants, as low-level service workers, as domestics. Often enough the *emigrati* are forced to eke out a scant living as street hawkers. And you also find them in the black market and fence trade that ferments, for example, in the port city of Genoa. But they are also an increasing majority on the assembly lines. It is the *emigrati* who emerged in '69 as the spearhead of the struggles of the hot autumn. It is they who have become the most militant and politically conscious force in an historically highly politicized working class.

Since the mid-nineteenth century Italy has experienced the steady development not just of a militant proletarian tradition—which America has, for example—but of a socialist tradition. It is here in Italy that I begin to have some inkling of what communist consciousness means—the gradual, pervasive acceptance of the basic ideas of Marxism. Not every working man and woman in Italy has read the Communist Manifesto, but nearly every working-class person knows its basic ideas on a gut level, and knows the experience, both actual and historical, that it describes. In America liberalism and bourgeois ideology in general are so pervasive and deeply rooted, that articulating the most elementary ideas about class, power, and the state is an effort, a deliberate act that small groups of radicals here and there are engaged in making. Here in Italy such elementary ideas are popular ones; people accept them as facts.

A communist culture exists in embryo. It is there when A says proudly, fiercely: "We proletarians are the true communists." It is there in the personal lives of many of the worker-comrades whose parents and grandparents participated in the historical development of socialist and communist movements. It's as common to find young working people who say, "My grandfather was a Socialist; my mother was a Communist," as it is in America to find young people who say, "My grandfather came over from the old country, and he opened up a drugstore all on his own."

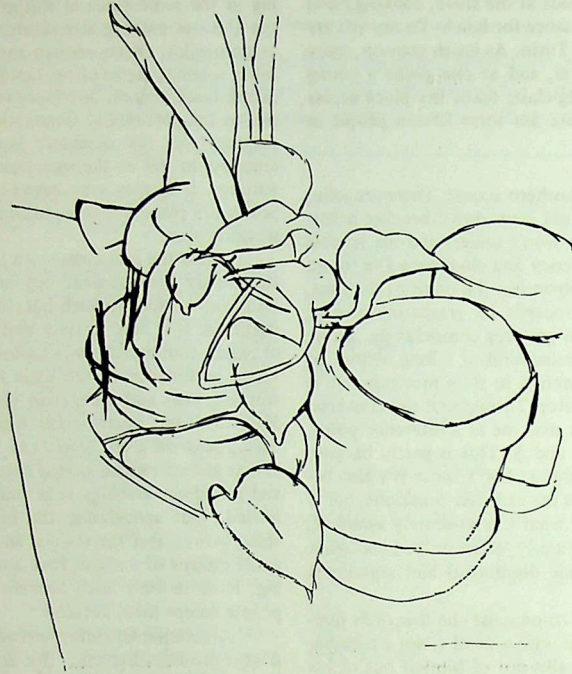
While such thoughts are passing through my mind, A begins talking about the student groups, the extraparliamentary *gruppi*. Helpful at first in doing things the workers weren't in a position to do—writing, printing and distributing leaflets, organizing mass assemblies—later they tried, says A, to curb the workers' desires and movements towards inde-

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pendent organization and action. "Also," remarks A, "there'd often be as many as six theoretical leaflets about the same thing. The comrades didn't know what to think, and they became disgusted." The student groups held assemblies to which the workers came, but perforce remained mute while the students debated abstract ideological issues that had little to do with the actual conditions the workers suffered in shop and community. "You can't talk revolution right away," says the dark young comrade with the bright eyes. "First you have to talk about what's bothering people, what problems they feel need to be solved."

It was after splitting with the *gruppi*—with *Lotta Continua*, for example—that the Fiat movement towards *autonomia operaia* assumed its own character and took its name. A emphasizes that the workers' struggles haven't been wage-hour struggles, but struggles to change the nature and organization of work. Nowhere, says A, is the dehumanization of work seen so clearly as in *nocivita*—pollution and hazardous health conditions. "Nowhere is our reduction to wage slaves so clearly seen as in the fact that the bosses want to pay us higher wages for more dangerous jobs. But we won't bargain anymore over the degree to which we'll be exploited: we won't negotiate about life." He goes on to say that competitive divisions among workers must be abolished. But to change the nature of work in the factories the struggle also has to be linked with life in the *quartiere*, the neighborhoods. This means housing, rents, food, education. A worker is someone who goes back from work to a neighborhood and community—to eat, to sleep, talk, argue, laugh, think, in short to live. And he lives a certain way because he is a

proletarian. The struggle for communism, in short, must embrace one's whole life.

While this conversation is going on, an argument erupts across the table between F—the auburn young comrade—and the young woman who entered the room earlier: the argument is about feminism. Now, wherever I happen to be I'm nearly always asked about feminism, and discussions—or arguments—break out among the Italian comrades over it. But today's argument has occurred without any apparent participation on my part. F's remarks reveal that the male comrades here believe feminism to be hatred of men, pure and simple. Feminism arouses bitter memories of the workers' sexual rejection by women students who went to the factory gates from *Lotta Continua* to leaflet in '69-'70. A and the men in the room perceive *Lotta Continua*'s sending the women to the gates as exploitation. They feel the women students were prostituted by the men students, and they are infuriated by this. On that score alone, "We wouldn't have touched the women," F says. The sympathy and indignation of F and A are obviously themselves openly sexist, but ironically F and A may well have understood the situation of the women students better than others would have understood it. I reflect that the women must have been doubly exploited, first by the sexism of the New Left groups, second by the sexism of the Southern emigrants who saw them only as potential sexual companions or conquests, not as political comrades. Moreover, A and F accuse the women students of being *fascisti* because they wouldn't socialize or sleep with the workers. F's face grows dark, bitter, as he relates how he and others were rebuffed. His expression conjures up the world



of the young Southern male immigrant, wholly without society or sex. Indeed, the young men from the South suffer terrible ostracism of all sorts in the North, but the most frustrating deprivation in this country, where mores are beginning to relax only among a small subculture of students and intellectuals, is sexual deprivation.

My feelings about all of this are contradictory. I find myself siding at once with my absent sisters and with this young, bitter comrade whose anger and hurt evokes the larger social conditions of Southerners up North. I finally ask: Didn't you think of the women as comrades? But the question of the women students is deeply imbedded in F's memory, bound up with the memory of the male students, of their arrogance as F perceives it, their false superiority, their know-it-all attitudes, their ham-handed attempts to channel the workers' struggles, to play little Lenins. F's mouth is set, tense, bitter. It is clearly useless to go on.

### *Evening*

There is a meeting late this afternoon to tape an interview with several of the women from MT's group; after this F and A are to come for dinner and more talk.

The tape begins with difficulty; everyone is tired, the week has been an endless round of meetings. Moreover, one of the women, who has a good deal to contribute to the discussion, has had to bring her one-and-a-half-year-old, and the child keeps screaming to draw our attention to her. We are caught in the absurd predicament of trying seriously to discuss the politics of women's liberation while having to do child care. Here in Italy the men on the left don't do child care; the movement, including the women, has apparently not considered that yet, even on the level of lip-service.

After about three-quarters of an hour, E arrives. She is short, stocky, dark, gusty, with an air of self-assurance, humorous decisiveness. E is from the South, and we decide that perhaps it would be best for her to talk about her life there; a sort of instant *presa di coscienza* (consciousness-raising is a device imported, together with its name, from the States; the Italian women have participated in it, as far as I can tell, with the same sense of exhilaration and sudden revelation as we did a few years ago). This turns out to have been the best possible decision: E is unusually expressive; her voice, her gestures, are fluid and eloquent. E speaks of her cousin, married in the South to a Southerner, and childless. This is of course a big problem. At first E thought her cousin had purposely refrained from having a child, and was using birth control. On congratulating her upon what E supposed was her shrewdness, she found her cousin was quite distraught about her "barrenness." This was a situation that she, her husband, her parents and parents-in-law felt was her fault. "But hasn't Franco gone to the doctor to have tests made?" "Whatever for?" "For godsake, girl, don't you know there could be something wrong with *him*?" "Oh no, that could *never* be! There are so many children in his family! No one has ever had any problems!" This woman's relatives hold her in light contempt, E continues. They listen to her when she speaks, but with condescension. "They don't give the weight to her words that they would if she had a son. For them she is a thing, a problem they discuss, not a person. She is like a barren earth, like a tree that gives no fruit. . . ."

While E talks the rest of us sit spellbound; her words rush forth like a bitter poetry. She talks about her own family, about her father who seems to know no other way to relate to his wife, his daughter, but through brutality. E's mother died a year ago. The two women had been very close. The mother poured out her frustration to the daughter, and though the code of sexual ethics forbade E's making similar confidences, she knew that her mother knew that she, E, had already gone to bed with the man who shortly thereafter became her husband. Earlier, when she was growing up, E's relationship with her mother was walled round with the close, stifling Southern taboos regarding women. When E first had her period, she relates, she went for several days terrified lest anyone should discover the shameful thing that was happening to her, which she didn't understand. Finally, unable to keep washing out underwear and hiding rags beneath a pile of old clothes, she showed her mother. "Oh, Madonna!" breathed her mother, growing visibly pale. A second of silence, then: "Now you are a Signorina." The words came down like a cascade around the bewildered E: "You're a young lady. You have to learn what to do every month, I'll show you. And you mustn't play with boys anymore."

But E was "an unnatural young lady. I was everything a girl is not supposed to be. I played with boys. I refused to stop. Why should I just because I was a woman? When I

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found out about how children are born I was so shocked I got sick. How could that dreadful thing be visited upon me for the simple accident of my birth, because I was a woman? Besides all this I was short, I was fat, I was dark, I was homely, and I had pimples. Yes, I wasn't what a girl is supposed to be at all. . . ."

Because she was a rebel there were many quarrels between E and her father. As recently as several years ago, when she was in her early twenties, her father threw a plate at her, but she gave him as good in return. In their last exchange the father finally said: "*Quando sono io chi ha il piccio, e tu che hai la figa, quando io parlo, tu chiedi.*" ("When it's me that has the prick and you have the cunt, you shut up when I talk.") Whereupon E: "Who told you the prick is better than the cunt? *Who*?" "Never mind who told me, that's the way it is." "If you can't explain it," retorted E, "you can go to hell."

**H**aving taped all of this, I'm naturally still thinking about it when F and A arrive. They sit uneasily in MT's kitchen. A young man doing his military service is there, an ex-student. He is talking to me in English . . . about esthetics! The conversation is luckily cut short by the announcement that there is no bread in the house. Who will go and buy it?



My husband Louie and I have a car: it is decided one of us should go with either A or F. I volunteer: instantly A's and F's glances veer questioningly to Louie to gauge his reaction. There is none. A moment of undoubtedly mystified silence; then it is decided A should go.

It is pouring rain outside. A talks like a machine gun. In an effort to understand him I keep missing turns. We talk about Louie's and my vacation. "We have renounced all privileges," A says firmly. "You saw how we live. We have a proletarian commune. In our commune everyone shares. If

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**A emphasizes that the workers' struggles haven't been wage-hour struggles, but struggles to change the nature and organization of work.**

---

you need bread I'll give it to you, we divide money equally, we have all things in common. . . . That's what communism is, as a beginning." A talks about workers' struggles in the South. "One time," he says, of a town whose name I have forgotten, "they burned down the police station with fifty cops in it, the CP headquarters, the union hall, everything. When they fight, they really fight. They're tough people."

He asks if I have children; I answer that I don't, and query: "Why do you ask?" A sits in silence for a moment, then replies: "Don't make children. Children are a problem. It's particularly hard for women, bearing children is very hard. And when you're a revolutionary you shouldn't create that problem for yourself." We have come to the bread store; A gets out. I feel deeply moved, and I am newly aware of the deep contradictions underlying the simple description that A is "a terrible sexist."

**A**t dinner an odd exchange starts off the conversation. The two young Americans who are staying at MT's house want to know how A and F "became political." In the American movement that's a normal enough question, but when I translate A and F both look at me uncomprehendingly. "What do they mean, how I got into politics," A asks. "I was born a worker; I came from a communist family; my grandfather was a Socialist; my mother and father were in the Party. I went to strikes when I was a kid; later, when I began working in the factory, I worked for the Party. When I decided it was corrupt and not truly communist, I left. I was in the strike in '69; I'll always live the same way since I am a proletarian, I am part of the working class." He shrugs conclusively. F continues in the same vein: "My grandparents were anarchists; my mother was a Communist. I worked for PSIUP. Now I'm not in any of the parties; I work with the comrades on the shop floor. . . ."

How is work outside the traditional union structure organized? I press for information, and in doing so I ask A what position the comrades with whom he is working take on *inquadramento unico*, "the single grouping" proposed by the auto workers' unions, and one of the major union proposals for the contracts that are coming up this fall. "The

single grouping" proposes collapsing what are now two salary and job-classification scales—one for clerical and white-collar workers and one for blue-collar workers—into a single scale, with automatic passage from the lowest to the next-lowest rank of the new scale.

This proposal, which purports to attack the very structure and organization of work, is the union's attempt to harness the swell of mass militancy from '69 on. It has been quite clear to the rank and file since '69 that most of the classifications given to tasks on the shop floor as well as in the offices are phony. Ideally, as a comrade in Milan is later to tell me, there would be only two categories for blue-collar workers and two for white-collar workers: skilled and unskilled. The *avanguardia*, the cadre organizing independent of the unions, have their own ideas about *inquadramento unico*, as do the regular labor reporters for *Manifesto*. In one *Manifesto* story a worker from Bergamo reported that *inquadramento unico* had already been achieved at his factory (Dalmine) for all intents and purposes. The union upheld the notion of *inquadramento unico*, maintaining that "single grouping" would represent a victory over salary and rank distinctions. It would also introduce the criterion of *professionalita*: professionalism. This would overcome invidious distinctions between white- and blue-collar workers, and between workers in each of these categories. It would also make the nature of the work seem different; ostensibly, by attaching the notion of "professionalism" or expertise to the accomplishment of particular tasks, alienation would be overcome! Instead, reports the worker from Dalmine, what has happened where he works is that salary distinctions in fact have doubled. And the concept of "new professionalism" threatens to rationalize all political questions that attach to the job. "Among other things," reports the worker at Dalmine, "pollution, fatigue, discomfort, are transformed into elements of careerism, while the periodic raises in salary separate and individualize the interests of the workers, creating the groundwork for a decisive attack (on the part of ownership) against articulated contract procedure, and against mass struggle around the capitalist organization of work."

I relate this, and other opinions I've gleaned from reading *Manifesto*, to A. His response is: "Don't worry about *inquadramento unico*. *Inquadramento unico* is meaningless. It answers none of the workers' real problems." But, I persist, don't the autonomous workers' groups have to take some clear, articulate position on the fall contracts? Yes, replies A, but what is most important is to draw out the workers around their real concerns, and create moments of struggle in which those interests can be advanced. I agree, but keep pressing to know how much organization actually exists now. For it seems to me that if there is no effective alternative to the unions, and if the autonomous groups choose to ignore the unions, then the mass of workers will go where their interests have time-proven guarantees—the unions—and the autonomous groups will be the worse off for having removed themselves from the scene of greatest mass concern. A and F exchange meaningful glances. A says: "Right now it's very difficult. There isn't any overall organization." "What's going to happen in the fall, do you think?" "Un casino!" replies F, grinning. "Un casino," seconds A. ("All hell will break loose.") But, I ask them, do they plan any organiza-



tional meeting to get the groups that do exist outside the union structure together? Yes, replies A, it will be very difficult, but they plan some sort of meeting probably for September, for the groups around Turin.

Later on this evening the issue of feminism is again raised. This time MT is present. A makes an uneasy joke about feminism, F laughs: "Aren't all you women against men?" Instantly MT stiffens, her face is set, tense, adamant: "Ma chi ti l'ha detto? Tu non sai niente. . . ." ("Who told you that? You know nothing about it!") Wry and defensive, the men protest weakly. F says, "I'm a friend of women, I know what they want. I talk with them. I understand what they need." MT keeps at them: "You can't say what women want, you're not in any position to." F insists he can, he knows women, he can speak about their problems. MT grows angry, the voices rise. A reaches out, tries to pat MT placatingly. "Little MT," he appeals. He tries to placate her by touching her, caressing her hair, trying to calm her down in the way men do with women when they feel the women are getting out of hand, hysterical. He infantilizes her. She hardens, backs off several steps out of his reach towards the door. Louie, the other young American woman and I leap in, at once angry and supportive of MT. I try, however, to keep myself in check; I tell myself that it's Italy, and it's MT's struggle and that of Italian women, not mine. But I also keep thinking of E's story this afternoon, and an image, like a kind

of lurid vignette, keeps obtruding into the memory of what E said: a truck I saw passing on the Via Madama Cristina this afternoon, with a large decal of a pin-up girl on the window—black lace nightie revealing pointed breasts, the legs spread wide and apart in invitation, the whole body arched and leaning back. This image so dismays and angers me that I describe it to S and demand: "How can they live with such images of their comrades, their sisters?" S nods seriously. "It's a big problem," he says. But F and A understand this differently. They feel I am championing women's chastity, women's virtue. Frustrated, I give up. I turn to S: "When A described *autonomia operaia* I was deeply moved, because what it made me think of was my own experience in the women's movement. We were saying five, six years ago, *basta!* We've had enough of your telling us how to work, what to do: we have to go our own way and tell you what our oppression is, what our needs are, and you have to listen." S nods seriously: "That's what they'll understand," he says. He turns to A, translates. A nods, this time attentive, sober.

But throughout this conversation what surprises me somewhat more than I had expected is the complete misunderstandings that keep cropping up. At one point, for example, S asks A what happens when a new woman comes into the shop, where in fact there are very few women employees: "Do you make an effort to talk to her? Do you include her in discussions?" "And how!" simpers F. "That's what they meant," shouts S, "you don't see her as an ally!" But this doesn't clarify, it only mystifies F, who turns to me, appealing for sympathy. He leans toward me, begs: "If you were to walk into the shop and I saw that wedding band on your finger, I wouldn't bother you for a minute! I wouldn't think of touching you!" "But that's not what we mean," I say, gentler. "What's the first thing you think of when you see a woman? It's whether or not you can go out with her, whether or not you can sleep with her, isn't it?" "Yes," F agrees. I continue, "But what we're saying is that we want to be regarded as political allies, not just as bed partners. If I get up and speak in a meeting I don't want the men all saying how pretty my legs are, I want them to listen to what I'm saying, because I'm a revolutionary just as they are." F nods slowly, really trying, it seems to me, to understand. But it will take more than understanding to break through the ideologies that are the warp and woof of family life and of Italian society generally.

The conversation continues for some time. Afterwards, Louie and I give A and F a lift home. We decide to go for a coffee. We get out of the car. But my husband's presence makes the two young men uncomfortable. It's not only a matter of sex, but of class. We walk behind them in the darkened street; however much we may be *compagni*, they are the workers, we are the American tourists. F, in fact, slips and addresses Louie with the formal *Lei*, and A angrily corrects him: "What do you mean, *Lei*? *Tu, Tu!* He's a comrade!" But we continue to walk behind them. They continue at some distance ahead of us, talking to each other. It turns out we have miscalculated the time: there are no bars open. We say goodbye with warmth, but with some finality: the distance is still there. We shake hands; we give the fist; we part.

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## Dutch Elm Disease

trees  
down

hot sun  
beating  
on the neighborhood

an old couple  
pauses  
in the spot of shade

heads  
slow  
lungs move  
more smoothly—  
the fragile mechanism  
rights itself

trees  
down

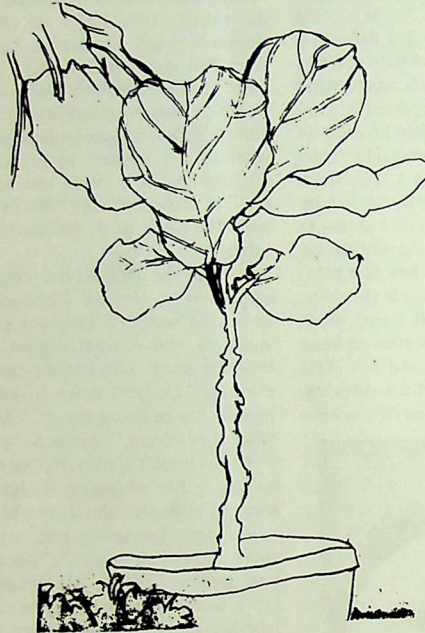
hot sun  
beating  
on the neighborhood

## Baby Bird

slightly flattened  
from the impact,  
a baby bird  
dead from the fall—  
feast for the ants

small children  
crouch and watch—  
a whispered  
exclamation,  
an occasional  
shudder

they are learning



## After the Demonstration

sitting in a circle,  
a member missing,  
another wanting to go home—  
vague shame,  
we'd hoped to find  
a way  
to struggle with the Vietnamese,  
to be their comrades.  
We found none.  
We can hardly speak now.

## For Josh #1

mistrust all generals  
my son,  
especially  
General Foods and General Motors

They have a policy  
of Genocide.

## Mr. President

“pig—  
fascist,  
fucking  
criminal  
pig.”

words,  
like small clenched fists  
against the enormous  
obscenity  
of your policies

guess I'll just  
stop shouting  
at you,  
guess I'll  
talk to others

poetry by warren friedman





an interview with dr. peter breggin

## LOBOTOMY—IT'S COMING BACK

Dr. Breggin, how did you get interested in the whole question of lobotomy?

Well, I've been interested in it for a number of years. I first heard about it back in college in the Fifties. Then, recently I happened to open up a copy of *Psychiatric News*, which goes to thousands of physicians and psychiatrists around the country, and read a headline that said: "Psychosurgery Said To Be Of Use For Certain Neuroses." I again became disturbed by the idea that there were people still doing psychosurgery and that now they wanted to do lobotomies on individuals who were said to be neurotic rather than psychotic, people who were walking around on the streets. I started to do research in the library. I pursued some of the names I had and started to write to people around the country. I found out that in fact psychosurgery had never stopped. In England, for example, it didn't even decline. I started examining America (where we don't have a register) and discovered that there were thirty or forty psychosurgeons and their assistants who were quite active in the country, ten or fifteen fairly large projects going on at major medical centers, including the University of Pennsylvania, the Massachusetts General, the Boston City, the University of Mississippi and the Childrens' Hospital in San Francisco. One of the first things I discovered was that in 1970 a new International Association for Psychosurgery had been formed. The president, William Scoville, is an American and he is a lobotomist. He doesn't even do the newer forms of psychosurgery. He does a variation on what was known as the old prefrontal lobotomy—which the public associates with the notion of lobotomy—and he's on the staff at Yale and works out of Hartford Hospital. The more I got into my research, the more I discovered that lobotomy was very much here and that we were in the middle of a promotion, that the new association was promoting itself. *Newsweek* then came out with an article which was called, I think, "Probing the Brain," which was filled with psychosurgery—sometimes thinly disguised as probing the brain with electrodes, but still psychosurgery, since those electrodes are used in part to coagulate tissue, to destroy tissue.

Can I ask you, for the benefit of the layman, what is a lobotomy, technically?

Psychosurgery is any brain surgery aimed at modifying behavior *without* curing a brain disease. Lobotomy, which mutilates the front of the brain, is its best known and oldest variation. The best way to understand it is in terms of the development of the animal. Human beings look different

from apes largely because we have a big forehead filled with the frontal lobes which are the bud, the tip, of the development of the brain; just as if you had a twig whose last bud developed a flower. It's in these frontal lobes that all the functions that have to do with the highest things in human development are organized and mediated. Creativity, sensitivity, empathy, understanding, judgment, the ability to project into the future—all those things which make human beings particularly different from animals—evolve up in those frontal lobes. The lobotomy is a method of interrupting the function of those lobes and the nervous-system relations between those lobes and the remainder of the brain. So lobotomy, in effect, either blunts or destroys the highest functions of the human brain. Of the original estimated fifty thousand operations that were done in this country and, in the first wave, the fifteen thousand done in England, almost all involved slipping a knife under the brain, usually under direct visualization, and slicing the connections at the base of the lobes. Today in America the same operation is done, usually with a more limited cut. Psychosurgeons are also planting radium seeds in the frontal lobes—in England a man's done hundreds of them. At San Francisco Childrens' Hospital a man named Peter Lindstrom is using ultrasonic radiation on the frontal lobes. He notes in *Medical World News* that he's done this on children as young as age eleven. He sent me an unpublished article which he gave at the August 1970 international psychosurgery conference in which he describes a thirteen-year-old girl on whom he used this method. Another method is to put many electrodes in the frontal lobes and to slowly coagulate the tissue through these electrodes by heating them up with electricity or by passing a poison through them. In England, a man named H.J. Crow has a therapist sit beside his client, who is awake while his brain's being coagulated. The patient can't feel it because there's no pain sensation in the brain, but the therapist can sit there and watch the slow blunting take place and then he can call off the session and talk with the family and say, "How is Jack or George now; is he easier to get along with?" Everybody says, "Well, he's still a little tough to get along with," and then they can do it to him again. Crow has done over a hundred patients in this fashion. These are just the frontal lobe techniques. There are others.

What are some of these others?

The main other techniques involve implanting these electrodes down further into the brain, into the cingulum, thalamus, hypothalamus, and other areas of the brain. In general I agree here with Scoville that the main differences are of



degree only and that they are all blunting operations. The higher up in the brain you cut, the more you seem to destroy intellectual functions. Follow-up studies on the original lobotomy patients—the fifty thousand in America, the fifteen or sixteen thousand in England—show that they not only have the old illnesses they always had, but that now they also have severe brain disease from the surgery, in the form of the loss of their intellectual capacities. But if you go further into the brain, instead of hitting intellectual capacities you hit the feeling tone.

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**These psychosurgeons really have tunnel vision; it's as if you see somebody on the street and shoot him and say "I cured his heart disease."**

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I have examples of patients being treated for alcoholism, drug addiction, pederasty, homosexuality, frigidity, all kinds of various "crimes." One man, named Marks, somehow managed to get together twenty people who were afraid of open spaces, and he lobotomized them in England. Now these psychosurgeons really have tunnel vision; it's as if you see somebody on the street and shoot him and say "I cured his heart disease." You attack the brain and you blunt whatever symptoms a person was showing. It's no more specific than that in my experience. Some of the new surgeons think by attacking the amigdula they manage to reduce aggression, but if you read the studies on the children to whom they are doing these things, you find out that the children simply lose spontaneity. I might read you some of the very simple descriptions of the effects of the surgery.

Yes, that's really what I would like to know. What's a person who's had a lobotomy like?

Well, again it would depend on the level of the cut. After the higher-up lobotomies like the ones that used to be done, people are just a mess. If you're talking about the newer surgery, I can read you some of the descriptions of these. I'll start with an account by a man from India who is very active in the international movement. He calls it sedative surgery, and he says that sedative neurosurgery is the term applied to that aspect of neurosurgery—and here he means psychosurgery—where a patient is made quiet and manageable by an operation. His name is Balasubmaranian, and he says the most common thing that he operates for is restlessness in children. Talking about children that were difficult on the ward, Balasubmaranian says: "The improvement that occurs has been remarkable. In one case a patient had been assaulting his colleagues and the ward doctors. After the operation he became a helpful addition to the ward staff and looked after other patients. In one case the patient became quiet, bashful, and was a model of good behavior."

In Japan—and these people have a great deal of influence here—they talk about "children characterized by un-

steadiness, hyperactive behavior disorders and poor concentration, rather than by violent behavior. It was difficult to keep them interested in one subject or a certain situation." And here's their best result: "Emotional and personality changes: the patient became markedly calm, passive and tractable, showing decreased spontaneity." And this is the same surgery that an American neurosurgeon will tell you he's doing for aggression, or homosexuality, or drug addiction. Naturally, if you can make the person more calm, passive, tractable, showing decreased spontaneity . . . Well, as one West German said, the patient became incapable of having sexual fantasies so he was no longer a homosexual! It's very disturbing.

How many of these operations would you say are done every year in the United States today?

Well, we have no register, so it's hard to tell. The most active psychosurgeons estimate four to six hundred operations a year in the U.S. I got this estimate from Ballantine, who is at the Massachusetts General in Boston, from Lindstrom in San Francisco and from M.H. Brown and Jack Lighthill in Santa Monica, California. These three groups together, by the way, have done more than five hundred operations in the last five or six years. I collected a thousand recent cases just by talking to people and reading the literature. All the psychosurgeons agree that we are just at the beginning of a new wave, and *that's* the important fact, not that we're doing four to six hundred now. We once did fifty thousand. That's called the first wave and now people are talking about doing it again and maybe more and this time on *neurotics* and, by the way, on women more than on men. In the three groups I've mentioned, it's predominantly *women* . . .

Is there a difference on whom lobotomies are being performed between the first wave and what you now consider to be the beginning of a second wave?

Well, they are very definitely saying that the stuff that was done on the chronic state hospital patients was a failure because the patients were too far gone. So now, for example, Walter Freeman, in an article within the last few months in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*—he's an American, though—is saying we have to do them on schizophrenics in the first year that they're sick. This can't be an operation of last resort. But Freeman's conservative. The vast majority of operations in America right now are done on people suffering from severe chronic anxiety, from obsessions and compulsions. Typical studies will show that 78 per cent are neurotics. Among this group maybe two-thirds will be women. In England, where there is a register, more than 60 per cent of the first ten thousand operations were done to women. In America there are massive studies, like at Pilgrim State, which show that the possibility of being lobotomized is about twice as great for women. And after you were lobotomized, the odds were again two to one if you were a woman that they'd say it did you good, because it could send you back home as an impaired housewife with a chronic brain syndrome.

(continued on p. 30)



# RESISTANCE ORGANIZES ITSELF ON ALL PURE FOREHEADS

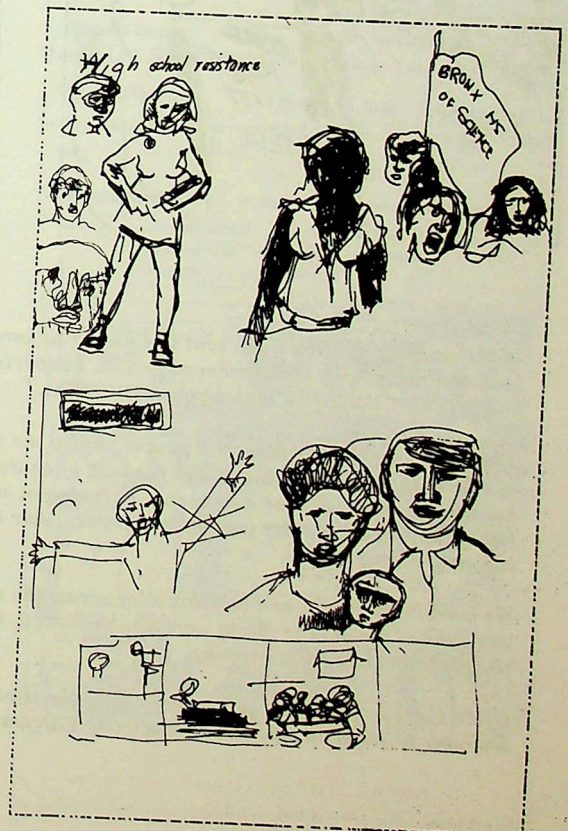
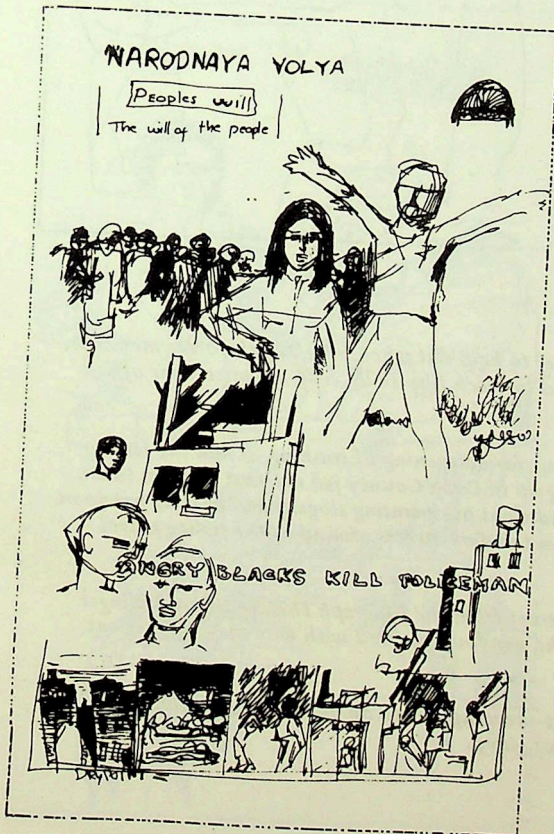
—Tristan Tzara

## notes-drawings on the past 3 years by Daniel Brown

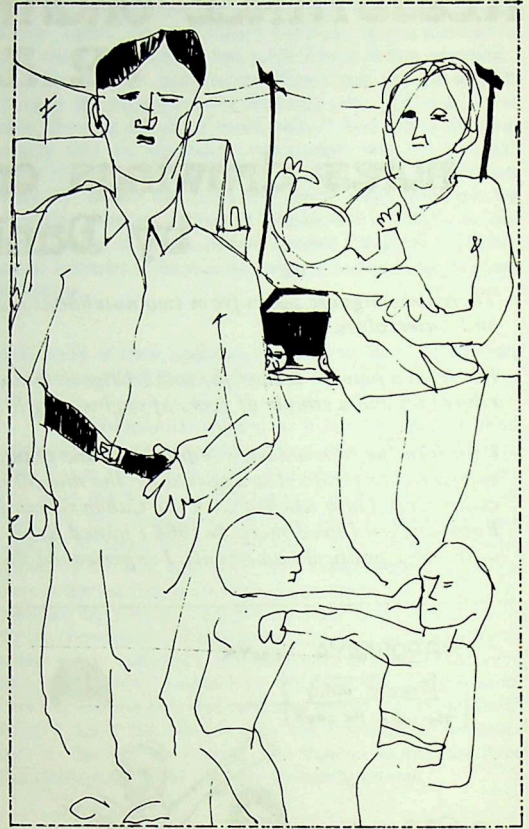
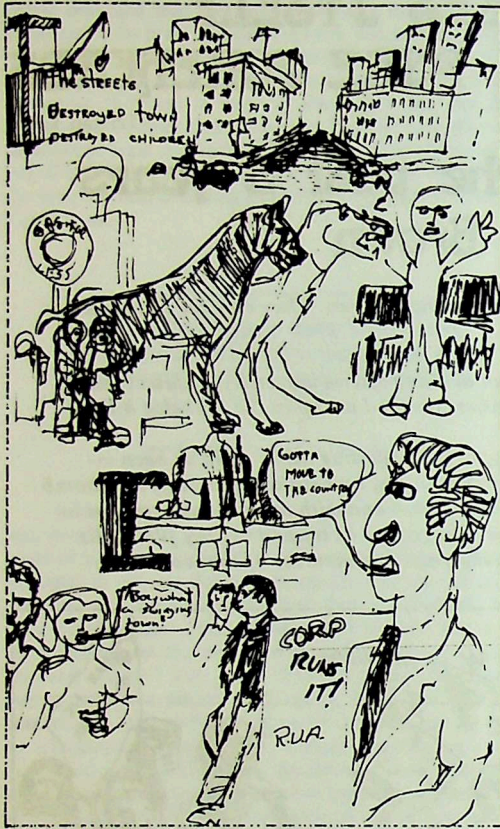
*These drawings are taken from two notebooks made over the past 3 years. They contain 174 drawings and watercolors.*

*I've been a painter-drawer for some 18 years now. I began drawing after a university architectural education and a couple of years of engineering B-52 bombers cracked me up in the Berkeley hills.*

*I got into the film industry—editing—at one point, to support my painting habit, and I've been involved in our political struggles since the mid-50's. Civil rights sit-ins, rent-strike organizing, anti-bomb campaigns—I also worked with the Cuban revolutionary movement and with revolutionary groups in Europe when I lived there. In 1968 I joined Newsreel—the film group—to try and use my film skills in the new political movements. I experienced the following years as a member of that collective.*







*In the summer of 1969 I was sent to Chicago Newsreel to help out when they lost the older members, leaving a few young, inexperienced people. I expected to teach film skills, help organize their office and get them started on making their own films.*

*The night I arrived the Newsreel people invited me out for an evening of trashing. It had the feeling of a local sport. I didn't much like the idea of ending up in Cook County jail my first night in town, but I went. We piled 6 or 7 of us in a Volkswagen and went out painting slogans and busting windows, falling all over each other getting in and out, while on the dark streets around us the police patrol cars nosed around.*

*We lived in an abandoned bowling alley across the street from the Biograph Theatre where Dillinger was gunned down. The doors were double-barred, the windows covered with wire mesh to prevent teargas cannisters from entering.*

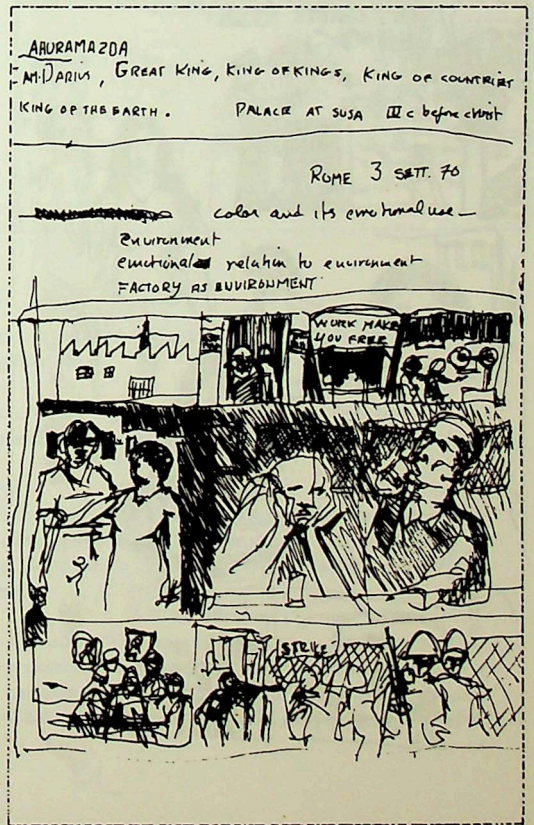
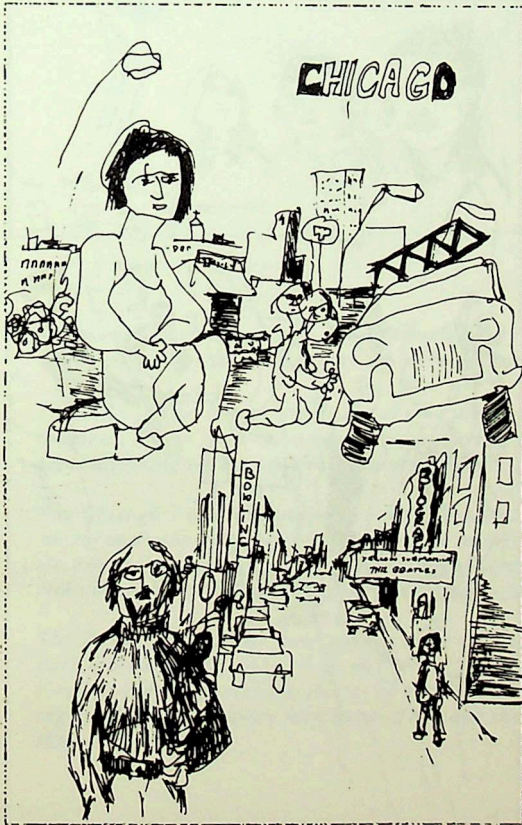
*Often there was a police car parked across the street—keeping an eye on us, or perhaps waiting for Dillinger to show up again. A Chicago cop's dream of glory.*



We took our films (on the Vietnam war, Black struggle, and liberation struggles abroad) to high schools, big universities, street gang gatherings, churches, and community colleges.

The community colleges interested me most. The students were (like myself) the children of working people who felt the desire of expanding from their closed community of family and neighborhood—and the treadmill of meaningless work. And, found that the difference between rich and poor was a lot more than money; that the universities, education and culture, belonged to the middle class and that they had to fight to get even a piece of it.

Into this we brought our films on Vietnam. Here was no polite liberal response or academic argument. Here was a tradition of unquestioned patriotism—they fought the wars. The most interesting in the discussions afterward were the Vietnam veterans. They would begin sounding pro-war, but as the descriptions of what they had experienced came out, the full horror of the racism, destruction of the land, murder of civilians, ran through the rooms with a shock. The pro-war people dwindled to a few who couldn't listen to what they had heard.





On the streets white kids hung around a Burger King or at the Gas For Less station. A police car would slowly pull in. The cops came out slow—walking like western movie gunfighters, daring a reaction. The kids stood their ground sullenly. On the order to move on, someone protested—a quick head-bashing—and the offender would be dragged off to a felony booking and the slam—Cook County jail.

In the Black and Latin communities the cops could—would—push it further. Every few days someone was murdered by the Police. The Panthers and other groups would point out who was responsible. Then the inevitable repression.

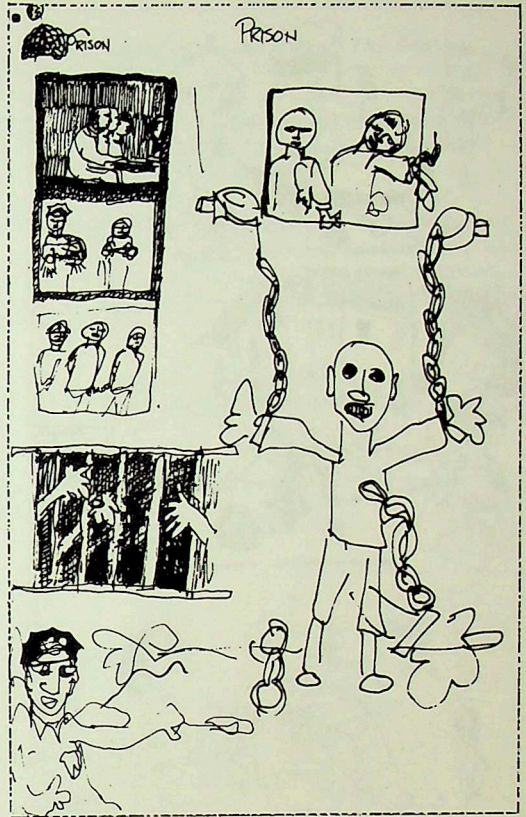
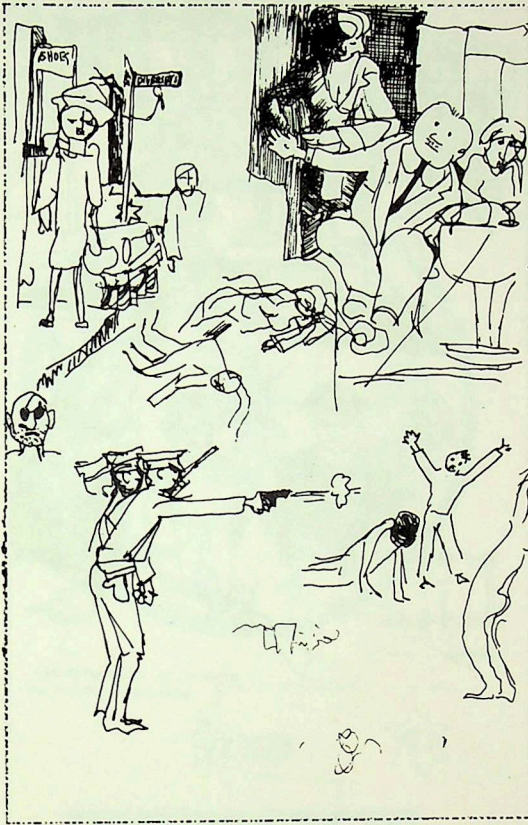
Sometimes it had a pathetic humor. Fred Hampton that summer went to jail on grand larceny for taking \$78 worth of ice cream from a Good Humor truck and giving it to black kids who couldn't buy it.

We got stopped pretty often by police—held under guns while they searched us and the car—keeping us in suspense while they toyed with the idea of planting dope on us or trying to provoke a reaction so they could book us for assault and resisting arrest. They took whatever literature they found on us.

We were always hunting for bail for street kids and movement people arrested; doctors for those injured by the police.







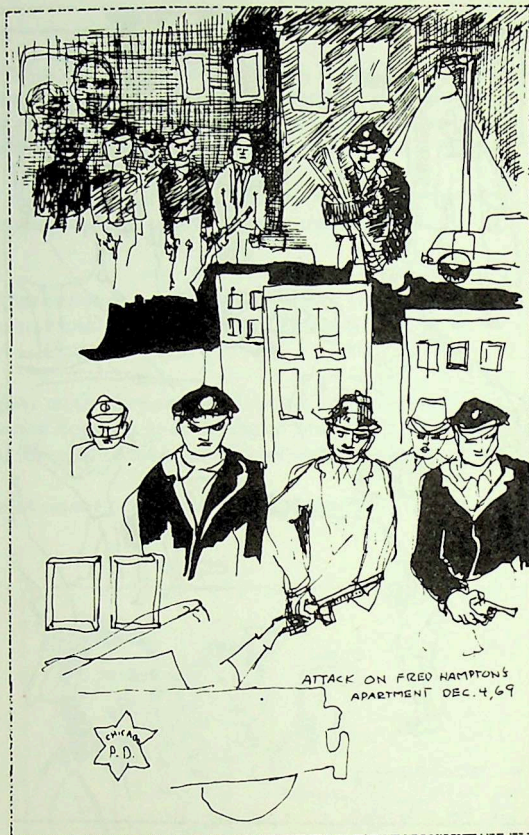
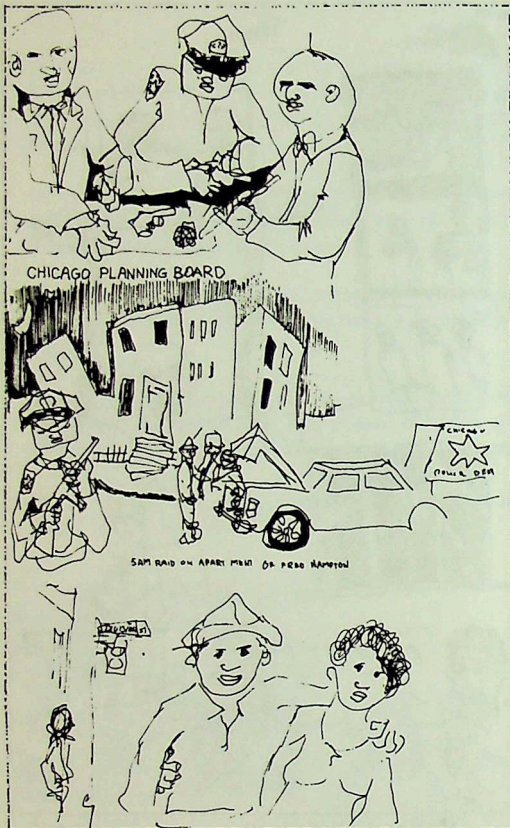
*We learned a street wariness—eyes automatically searching streets for unmarked police cars—and had a prepared innocuous story why we were in that neighborhood.*

*I found a public library under the el on Fullerton Ave. I would go to read a book and feel safe for a moment. I even took out a card—to feel part of a normal quiet world, I guess—but I tore it up. I didn't want anything on me with my Chicago address.*

*The Chicago 7 trial was going on—daily demonstrations at the Federal courthouse. The Panthers were strong and gave us all courage. The police interfered often with the demonstrations. I had a feeling we were taking on the whole government. There were hundreds of FBI men, Army Intelligence, Federal marshals, all to keep us from protesting-organizing.*

*The Days of Rage. The Weathermen came to town in October. The first evening they gathered in the Park only 400 kids showed up out of the 10,000 they wanted. A bust. But they ran anyway, ran through the foggy evening streets of the Gold Coast, shouting slogans to bolster their courage, breaking windows. The police met them. The cops shot and killed 2, wounded 8 and beat up everyone else they could find.*





*We ran with them. It was our business to photograph the action. Out-of-town Newsreel people came in. Some of the LA and NY people were street-wise, but others of us lost our buddies and got busted. One of our young women from Chicago was caught by the Captain of the red squad. 3 felonies.*

*The police repression got worse.*

*The cops mounted an automatic weapons assault on the Panther headquarters.*

*I photographed the aftermath for the Panthers. Bullet holes all over the front of the building—in the completely destroyed office. I felt inadequate with only a camera in my hand.*

*Rising Up Angry (a street gang organization) and the Young Lords were attacked. A priest helping the Lords was murdered by a vigilante right-wing group that began to follow the police example.*

*In an early morning assault on December 4 the police murdered Fred Hampton and Mark Clark in their beds and wounded other Panthers.*

*Blood-soaked mattresses.*

*State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan will be remembered.*



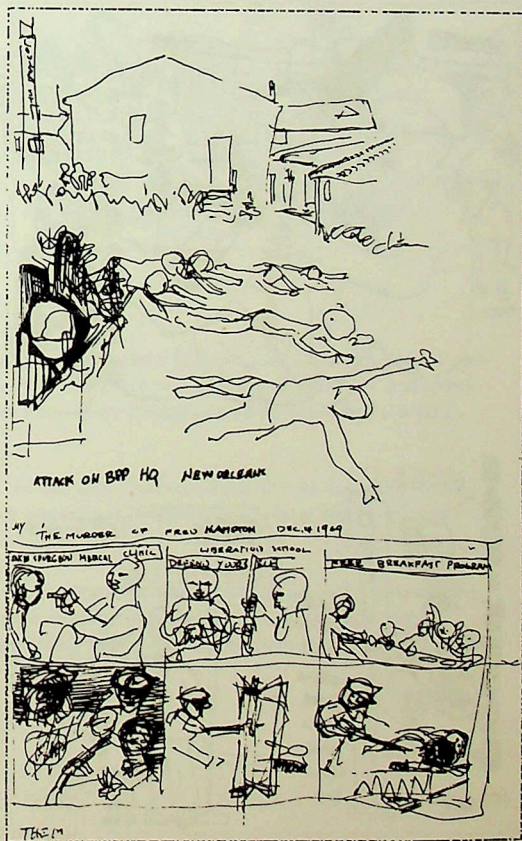
Fred Hampton spoke for all of us. He gave us all courage; more, made us see the future. The Beat of the People. He was 21 years old.

Through all of this the Panthers, Lords, and Young Patriots (a white N. Chicago group) established breakfast programs for kids, and began medical clinics for the people in their communities. It seems impossible now that there was the energy to do this, in the midst of the destruction.

Several days after Fred's funeral I was walking on North Lincoln when I heard my name called out behind me. A sinking ball of fear in my stomach. The police got me into their car—and took me for a ride to the park, roughed me up a bit, asked questions. I was worried it was a general sweep and hoped someone had seen me and would tell my group so they could scatter. After a while they let me go.

There were many good, strong people in Chicago then, but all these pressures had their effect—a couple of the Newsreel people joined the Weathermen—one went into carpentry, another to a steel mill. I was recalled to New York.

Now, the street and community organizations continue in Chicago, the clinics and breakfast programs are working. Daley is still mayor, Hanrahan still State's Attorney.





The night bus from Chicago. 14 hours on the turnpike. Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Philadelphia. A string of Howard Johnson cheeseburgers and chocolate milk. And then the (to me) safe streets of New York.

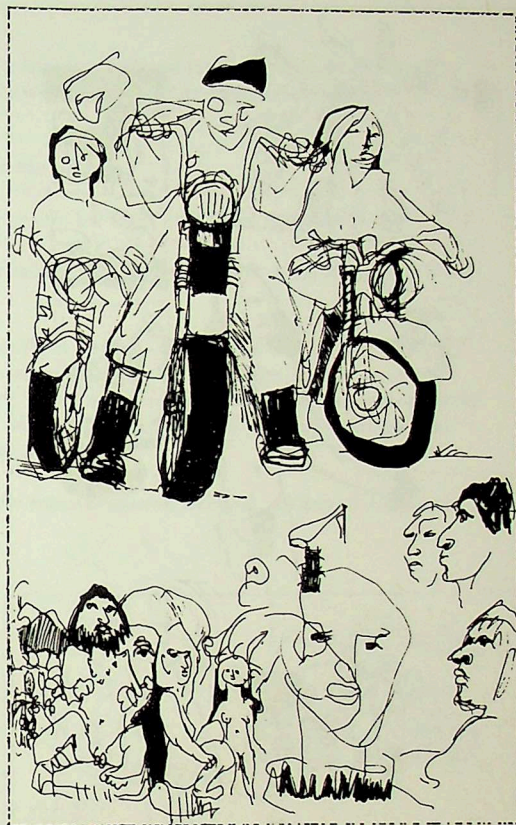
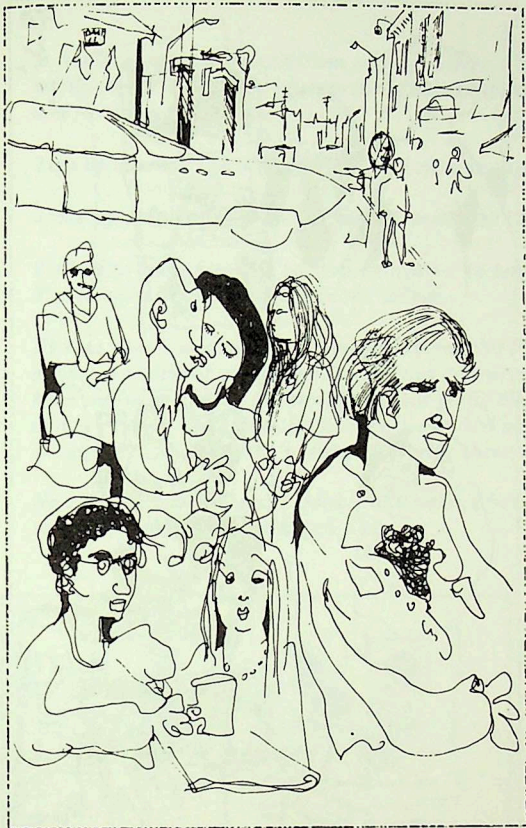
Those nightrides through the Pennsylvania hills brought back to me the times we had visited my mother's people when I was young. Her father was an immigrant coal miner from the Carpathian mountains. He died young of silicosis. Now my uncles and cousins work throughout the Lehigh Valley, in steel mills and auto assembly plants. Their women keeping the homes. I'm tied to this, then and now.

Slovak weddings, hard work, lots of beer drinking, angry drunken fights, family love.

Working with poor white kids in Chicago opened up the memories of my youthful struggles 20 years ago. I had relegated my own struggles not only to my past, but to history; I thought no one would have to go through all that anymore. But the kids I met in Chicago seemed to be repeating those same struggles; although I was raised in a western town with open country around, they raised hell just as







*I did, they felt the same limitations and vague desires for some kind of liberation. I mostly found outlet in hotrodding cars and drinking. Volunteered twice for the Korean war. They used cars and drinking the same way, and they volunteer for the Vietnam war. They found the same class barriers as I did when I went to college.*

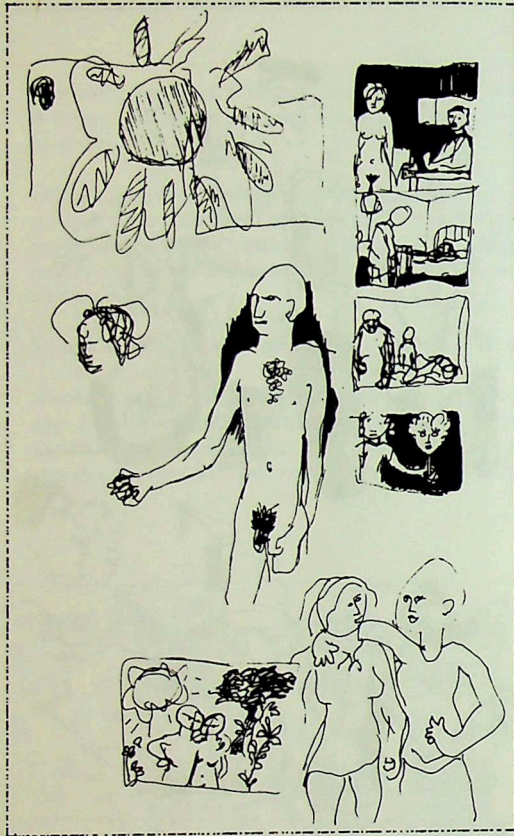
*There's no doubt that those kids in Chicago understood our discussions about the industrial empire—how racism operates, how and why the wars and more covert colonialism exist, how the land gets raped.*

*Working days, and going to dingy dark buildings for night classes so they can get out of working in the dime store, tool room, laundry truck—and into clean clothes in an office; they've got a pretty good idea that they're near the bottom of the pile. And they know about the penalties for opposition.*

*Their situation is complex.*

*When will they be able to decide on political action?*





The women's caucus of New York Newsreel had begun an analysis of the male chauvinism in the group, and we started criticism-self-criticism sessions. The group then numbered around 45, evenly split between the sexes. These sessions were mandatory in attendance. We could only reply to criticism by self-criticism—no justification. For many of the women it was visibly difficult to speak out—the tradition of passivity for women left them tongue-tied. This was in itself a demonstration of the reality of the chauvinism in the group. The criticism-self-criticism process took a long time and was very painful.

It was impossible for us men to evade the charges of paternalism, sexism, etc., given in such specific detail and corroboration, person after person. Women I had hardly ever spoken to had very detailed criticism of my actions. It left me light-headed with shock and confusion. I believed and agreed with what they had said, yet I didn't know what to do.

It seemed as if us men had to abandon our characters, moulded since the crib. Not to theorize or abstract, but to let actions move. Not to fill pauses or hesitations but let that space exist. Not to help women or teach them. They would teach each other.



*It felt like we were barred from taking initiative. Our whole male characters had been built on this—to fill silence and voids; possess the space; to do. If you didn't occupy the space someone else would—and diminish you.*

*Two of the men reacted with physical violence against the women.*

*Some of us reacted by not taking any initiative in the group; we were criticized for that.*

*We had to learn how not to step on others, to take initiative that opened or left open space for others. To see ourselves collectively in the world.*

*At that time I was visiting a young woman who I knew from before—she was no longer politically active. A bottle of good wine, music and conversation about old friends. A refuge. But I could not keep out of my mind the struggles I was going through. After my descriptions of the criticism sessions, and my self-doubt and questionings, we talked about her and her background and experiences. She decided to join a women's group to clarify these things better.*

*Now, several years later, I think I understand better the transformation needed. Although I cannot swear to having changed much. I try.*



Home sequence



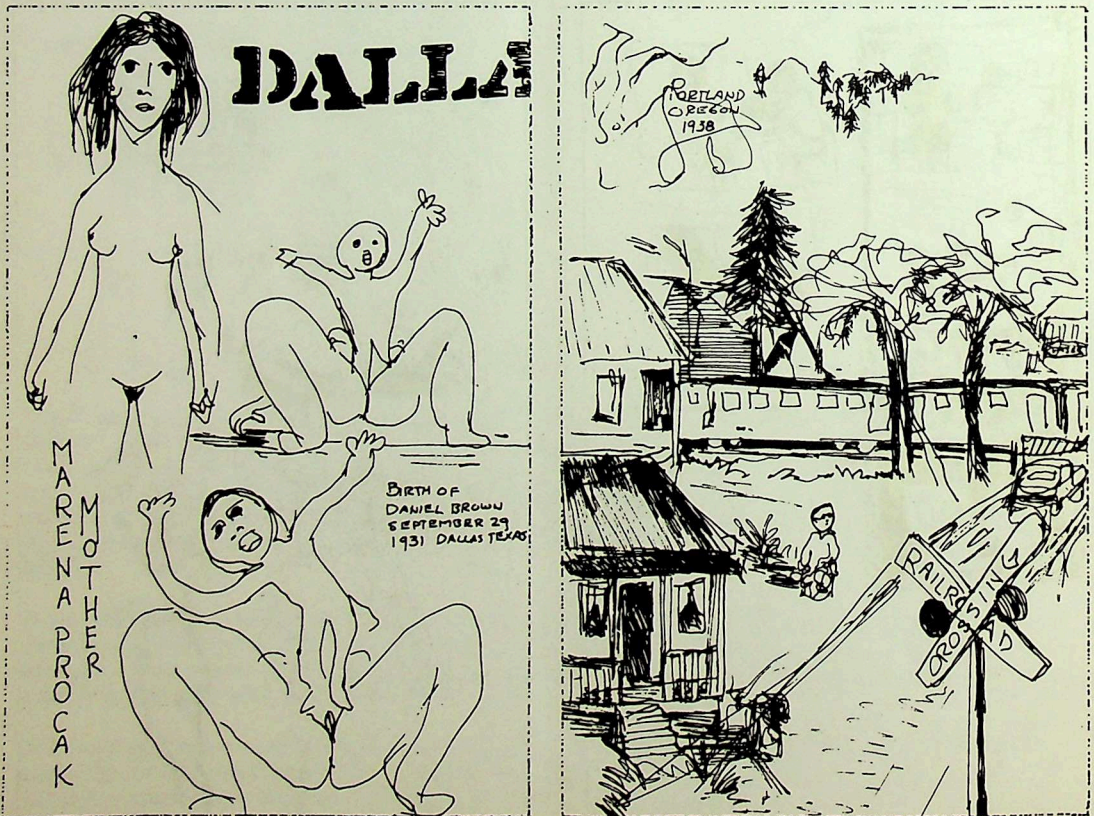


What has changed for me in this time is the necessity to change myself.

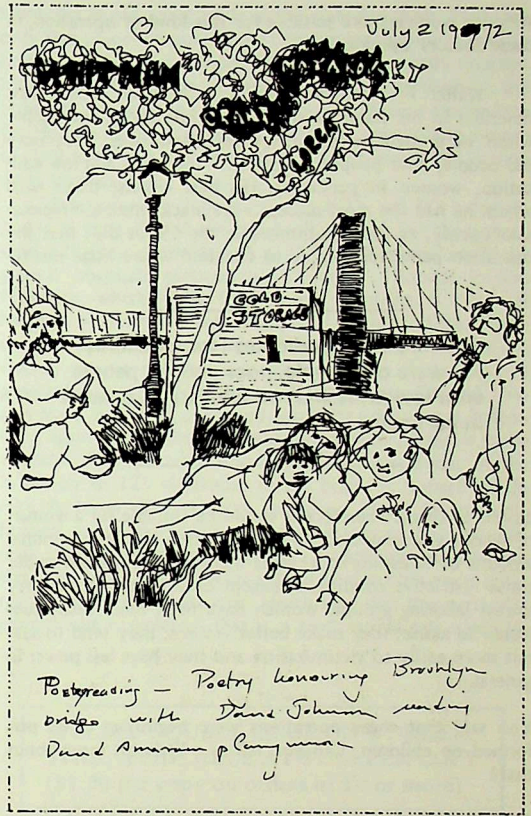
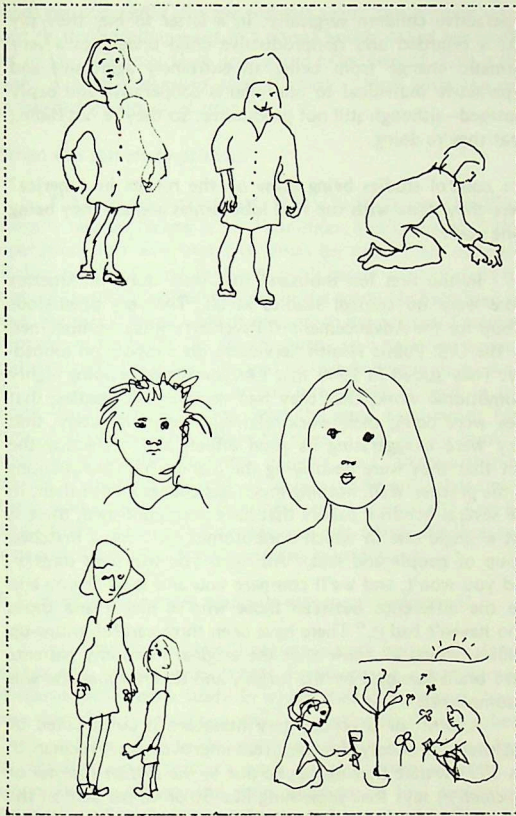
In all my political activities prior to 1968 I had pretty simple politics. The good guys against the bad guys. History was on our side. We were morally and historically correct. The forces of the people would sweep to power. All would change, our flowers would bloom, everyone would benefit.

I think that is a very deluded conception. I don't think the good guys really know how to behave like good guys. We are all sunk into materialism and competition. We have not learned to value what we come from, we don't know the values we are pointing to.

I believe we all think creatively with sense pictures, like in dreams. There is unity, contradiction, dialectical change all wrapped up in them. Then we find words to transmit those images. Political analysis—words then categorize them, limit them.







*Peace, Land, and Bread. It meant something real and complex to the Russians.*

*We tend to think of "revolutionary" or "political" art as posters, satirical cartoons, or murals. Simple forms—simple experience. We think we have to think like that to make revolutionary change.*

*Something complex. The drawings here are part of my method of exploration of the process of change in myself. Now I have added words to help with the deficiencies or to add things I haven't drawn. I had not really thought out this process of change in words until now, but I was drawing it all the time.*

*The changes we want, and need to make, involve individual self-exploration coming out of collective experience. Art, in all its ways, is a tool for doing that. It lives in the contradictory world. It itself reflects the dialectical process of living and is a way to explore and understand it.*



Why are women more suitable for this kind of operation, in these doctors' opinions?

Walter Freeman, who did four thousand lobotomies, describes in his classic textbook, *Psychosurgery*, the people whom he thought were the very best candidates. They were old people, poor people, people with low skills and low education, women in particular. His best clients, those with whom he had the most success, were black women. Freeman said openly, as the lobotomists in the 1950s did, that the operation permitted people to function where little was re-

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**The very best candidates [for lobotomy]  
... were old people, poor people, people  
with low skills and low education, women  
in particular.**

---

quired of them. Therefore it would be suitable for a woman of whom you expected nothing but that she do a minimal amount of housework; whereas men weren't wanted under those restrictive conditions, except occasionally in the very lowest laboring groups. Women have been more easily subjected to abuse; they make better victims; they tend to submit more easily to victimization and they have less power in general.

You said that these operations were beginning to be performed on children. Can you tell us a little bit more about that?

Well, in America we're just beginning to do them on children. But in Asia it's been going on for some time—and I want to emphasize this because it gives us a massive precedent for what's now starting in America. They've been operating on children in Japan, in Thailand, in India, and to some extent in Europe, and in these places they operate largely on mentally defective kids who are hyperactive, who are too active and too aggressive to be easily handled in the abominable institutions into which they're put. Now in America, there's one particular group in Mississippi. The man's name is O.J. Andy. Dr. Andy is the Director and Professor of the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Mississippi in Jackson; he works with a man named Marian Jurko. They don't seem to have a psychiatrist involved. They have had a number of other surgeons helping them, whom they credit, and they also had a Federal grant at one time in the past. They have done thirty to forty patients. Andy writes to me that they start on children age seven. Jurko writes to me that they start on children age five, and that the majority of their patients are children. They say that the children have a syndrome of what they call hyper-responsiveness, hyperactivity, emotional lability and aggressiveness. They also say that the operations which they do are particularly good for calming aggressiveness and for making it easier to handle the children. These men really represent the first American step, as far as I can tell, in the attempt to treat

hyperactive children surgically. In a letter to me, they say that a retarded and nonproductive child undergoes a very dramatic change from being an extremely aggressive and hyperactive individual to one who is cooperative and easily managed—although still not productive. So they're not hiding what they're doing.

Are control studies being done on the results in America? Were they done with the first lobotomies and are they being done now?

In the first ten thousand that were done in America there were no control studies at all. The very prestigious Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry was commissioned by the U.S. Public Health Service to do a report on lobotomy. They stated in 1949 that lobotomists were doing highly promotional work, that they had no scientific studies, that they were doing their work relatively indiscriminately, that they were exaggerating its good effects and neglecting the fact that they were destroying the highest human functions in the process. Well, nothing much has changed since then. In the several hundred papers that have been published, there is not a single one in which a lobotomist has used a matched group of people and said, "All right, you will have surgery, and you won't, and we'll compare you and look at you and see the difference between those who've had it and those who haven't had it." There have been three careful follow-up studies, which all show that the original lobotomy patients were brain-damaged by the surgery and that *nothing else* was accomplished.

Almost all psychosurgery literature is constructed of statistics supposedly showing great improvement. Freeman, in his 1971 article that just came out in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, says that something like 30 or 40 per cent of the patients are home—but "home" includes nursing homes and county homes. I only know of one study in the whole literature of the last decade that is more than a page or two long which actually describes a patient. This one comes out of the *Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, a very prestigious scientific journal—not even an ordinary clinical journal—and it's written by Vernon Mark and Frank Erwin. It's a description of three operations on a patient who had an agitated depression. The interesting thing about this case is that the operation was a success but the patient killed herself. Now throughout the article, they talk about the gratifying results. They use the word about three times: "gratified." This is a woman who had a very poor psychiatric history. She came in with her mother—which is typical of people who submit to these operations; they don't come in by themselves, I suspect, but with someone who wants to have this done to them. Now this mother was at the end of her rope and supposedly, so was the patient. The patient was operated on once, and they left the electrode in to coagulate her again. She became enraged at her physicians, at her surgeon, at her psychiatrist, and was said to be paranoid because she was so enraged. She wouldn't even speak to one of them again—her neurosurgeon, I think. After three operations, she said she'd never let them do it to her again. But everybody said she seemed in high spirits now. And the interesting thing is that during one of her "high-spirited" periods, when her mother



said she was really like her old self again, this woman went out of the hospital, went to a phone booth, called her mother to say goodbye, took poison and killed herself. This is the only published detailed clinical study. Think what the unpublished studies must read like.

When was this study printed?

I'm glad you asked that. It was in 1970. Now hostility toward neurosurgeons is very common. Moniz invented this operation, and was shot five times by one of his patients. Walter Freeman laments that Moniz's career was cut short by one of these bullets hitting him in the spine. He happened to live. We don't know what happened to the patient. Freeman himself, in his book *The Psychiatrists*, says that two women patients pulled guns on him and he had to disarm them. And he says laughingly—you can feel him laugh, at least in the book—that he didn't know who the guns were meant for, him or their husbands. Now he doesn't say in the book if these women were lobotomy patients, so I talked with him on the phone one day and asked him: "Did you lobotomize these women before or after they pulled the guns?" And he said "After," adding that people don't do things like threaten you with a gun after they have been lobotomized. . . .

Is it usual to have more than one lobotomy performed?

In America multiple lobotomies were frequently done, particularly on children. Walter Freeman and a man named Williams published a study in which they complained about how hard it was to quiet a child by cutting his frontal lobes. They said they had to do multiple lobotomies on a number of children. In Freeman's book *Psychosurgery* he's got a story about a six-year-old child to whom he first gives electroshock to knock her out for neurologic studies. Then he gives her two lobotomies. He reports several years afterward that mother is delighted because this child doesn't tear her clothes anymore; she gets dressed; she doesn't fight with Mommy anymore. This is a six-year-old child. This is going on in 1950. The medical profession never complained publicly. There was never an article in the medical literature that said this is unethical and this is dangerous in principle.

What brought about the end of the first wave? What led to lobotomies being discredited?

Well, when we got the major tranquilizers, we were able to control almost any patient. If you or I took fifty milligrams of thiorazine, we'd get sleepy, we might have a little double vision, our mouths would be dry, our bowels would get sticky, and so on. We'd really have trouble managing if we took fifty or a hundred milligrams of these so-called tranquilizers. Well, psychiatrists found that if they gave a patient three thousand, four thousand milligrams of this stuff, so that he could hardly move around, it was just as good as giving him a lobotomy. In fact, he could function better and be more useful around the hospital. Everybody, in all the literature I've read, pro and con, agrees that it was largely the advent of the tranquilizers which ended the first wave of lobotomies, and I think this is one reason why now

lobotomy is not going back to the state hospitals. There are only two places I know where they are being done in institutions, and that is in Mississippi on those mentally retarded kids, and in California, where they were doing them on the prisoners in Vacaville until the Berkeley Medical Committee for Human Rights got hold of what was going on. In America, lobotomy did indeed decline; I do believe it did decline quite significantly.

Psychosurgery is now coming back and it's being directed at people to whom you don't want to give three thousand milligrams of thiorazine a day. And it's being done in the general hospitals particularly. Childrens' Hospital in San Francisco, where Petter Lindstrom's operating, is a general hospital. M. Hunter Brown and Jack Lighthill in Santa Monica are operating in local general hospitals. Ballantine is operating on the neurosurgical service at the most esteemed general hospital in the world, the Massachusetts General. Vernon Mark and some of his colleagues are operating at Boston City, again one of the most esteemed general hospitals in the country. Another man who works with electrodes in the brain—up to 125 electrodes in the brain—is Robert Heath. He's Professor of Psychiatry at Tulane. Heath has patients hooked up to transistorized pleasure-packs so that they can walk around stimulating themselves toward orgasm up to one thousand times an hour. One patient he describes never quite reaches it: he gets frustrated. Heath says that this particular patient had narcolepsy, that is, a tendency to fall asleep in-

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appropriately, and when he would fall asleep inappropriately one of the men on the ward could press his button for him and wake him up. And can you imagine the potential control in this? There's a man in Norway who was trained at the Mayo clinic here in America. He describes the severe terror and fright that can also be created by the use of these implanted electrodes. I think a great deal of the future psychosurgery will be in that direction if it's not stopped.

I imagine a lot of psychosurgeons say: Well, we do these operations on people who volunteer for them. How do you feel about this argument of voluntary cooperation?

Let me first say that the vast majority of those lobotomized during the first wave were probably not even token voluntary patients. Permission was gained not from the patient at all—nobody even cared about that—but usually from a relative. If a patient was in the hospital for a year or two that was easy to get. But I don't think the question of volunteering is relevant here. There are certain kinds of things a person should be allowed to do to himself but that no one else should be allowed to do to him. I read in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* that physicians in China must take any new drug themselves before giving it to a client. Well, I think that if we did that with psychosurgery we'd be in fine shape; we wouldn't have any more psychosurgeons very shortly. But quite seriously, I don't think anybody should be permitted to perform psychosurgery on another person. At best it blunts the emotional responsiveness of the individual; at worst it destroys his/her higher capacities in general. I believe that it directly attacks the concept of a human being. The way we're different from other animals, as far as I'm concerned—to the extent that we are different—isn't that we're so much smarter than the animals as that we have feelings of a more sensitive nature: We love, we hate, we care, we project our love and our hate and our carings into the future, and when you take that function of the frontal lobes or the limbic system and you destroy it, you partially destroy the human being. I think it's roughly equivalent to euthanasia. I think the best rationale for it is euthanasia and I'm against euthanasia, again not because I don't want to end suffering but because it's too powerful a tool to leave in anybody's hands. And for this reason I'd be against euthanasia even in those cases where a lot of other people wouldn't be, for the dying cancer patient, and so on. There is some misery in life that is deep and real, but I'm against doing away with it by giving life-and-death power to other people. And for that reason I'm against all forms of psychosurgery. Russia abolished it in 1951. I think we're too far behind them.

Did any other countries abolish it?

As far as I know, no other countries have abolished it. . . . In Canada, for example, even though there has been some negative reaction in the medical literature against psychosurgery, it hasn't been outlawed. The Russians pointed out something which we had openly admitted—that lobotomy was being used to adjust people to the horrendous living conditions at the state hospitals and to make it cheaper and

easier to keep them. The Russians said this was a perversion of capitalism. On the other hand, the Russian argument was also filled with what looked like anti-Semitism and some very, very bad reasoning. So I certainly wouldn't want to say their hands are clean, but they did abolish it.



Betty Levinson

We talked about the use of tranquilizers to replace the lobotomy and thus the end of the first wave of lobotomy in the United States. Why do you think it's coming back?

Well, I think in part it's that you just can't repress the psychosurgeons. There are always going to be large numbers



of people who think that the best way to cure humanity is to mutilate humanity. And these operations are simply mutilations of normal brain tissue. None of the tissue involved in any of the lobotomy studies has been proven to have anything wrong with it. There are always people who want to intervene like that, and right now we're seeing it in other areas, too. The president of the American Psychological Association came out with the notion that we should drug the world's leaders. It's a complete misconception about the nature of human relationships that you can accomplish something, not by dealing with the environment, not by dealing with the improvement of human relations, the slow terrible process of cultural growth, but by getting right in there and doing something really quick to the brain.

How would you recommend trying to stop it, if it can't be stopped by the medical community? Should it be stopped by the medical community?

Well, I know that in at least one of the hospitals I've mentioned some of the physicians are trying to stop it. You know, I'm very critical of my own profession, psychiatry. I've written a great deal in criticism of what I feel is a lot of totalitarianism and authoritarianism in psychiatry. But I have to say that this is not a product of psychiatrists that we're

approach this as a class action problem. I think we might also have state and federal legislation. Although I think that legislation generally enlarges government influence in a way that I'm against, in this particular case, I would like to see it. Certainly hospitals need to set up review committees in which they decide if psychosurgery is going on—and that's pretty easy to determine because it's aimed 1) at the emotions and 2) at conduct. It disrupts tissue in which there is no pathology. Very easy to determine. Any clinician knows what is psychosurgery and what isn't. Only the psychosurgeons seem to get confused sometimes. But these review committees should get together and investigate what's going on in their neurological services and prohibit psychosurgery. Certainly that could be done independently. A hospital could do that itself. So you have the approach from within the profession, you have the approach of lawsuits, you have the approach of legislation, and of course, general public pressure finds many different ways in which to operate.

Dr. Breggin, has any lobotomized patient ever given a testimonial in behalf of the operation?

A number of follow-up studies on the original large group of lobotomized patients, including Walter Freeman's own book on psychosurgery, show that afterward, a third of

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**Just as a civil rights rebel is shot down and killed, so a rebel mental patient who is fighting against his/her environment is cut down by the surgeon's knife.**

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seeing now; it's a product largely of the neurologists and neurosurgeons. They'll have a henchman psychiatrist helping out. I think that we can oppose it partially from within the profession, but I don't think that's the major way to stop it. I think the most powerful way to do it would be through the method of lawsuit. And I think there are two possible grounds: First there's the question of informed consent. The lobotomist psychosurgeons, as the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry noted long ago, have had a tendency to exaggerate their claims. That means that patients being submitted for surgery sometimes may not know what they are letting themselves in for. It's my personal belief that they *never* know. And class action suits might also be undertaken, I think, on the basis of the Federal statutes which prohibit you from robbing a person of his/her civil liberties, because I believe that psychosurgery can rob a (wo)man of her/his capacity to pursue happiness, pursue her/his personal freedom, to pursue the things outlined in the Declaration of Independence and presumed in the Constitution to be the rights of an American citizen. Just as a civil rights rebel is shot down and killed, so a rebel mental patient who is fighting against his/her environment is cut down by the surgeon's knife. I believe this may be a fit subject for defense. Even if (s)he is not capable of defending him or herself—that is, even if (s)he doesn't know enough anymore—there may be some way to

them didn't even have enough brain power left to know they had been operated on. So we're talking about people who after the operation are incapable of knowing what's going on. I think that this is especially true with the older lobotomies. I think the best way to answer your question is to read you a description of a lobotomy taking place. I have a couple of them, taken from Walter Freeman's book—*Psychosurgery*, by Freeman and Watts, published in 1950. This is a description of the first patient ever lobotomized in the United States. She had never even been hospitalized, this woman—and of course she's a woman. Freeman's own description of her seems to be filled with hostility. He says, "the patient was a past master at bitching and really led her husband a dog's life." Then the anesthetist appears at her door for a pre-operative medication: "'Who is that man, what does he want here, what is he going to do to me? Tell him to go away. Oh, I don't want to see him.'" Then she cried out, writhing about in bed so that the nurse was scarcely able to control her sufficiently to administer *avertin* [a sedative] by rectum." After the surgery, however, the patient becomes docile, and the first question that Freeman puts to her says a great deal about the aim of lobotomy. Question: "Are you content to stay here?" Answer: "Yes." Question: "Do you have any of your old fears?" Answer: "No." Question: "What were you afraid of?" Answer: "I don't know. I seem to forget." These



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**We're in a period of frustration, increasing anxiety, and my fear is that instead of elevating mankind in order to solve man's problems, we'll mutilate mankind.**

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people were not able to give testimony one way or the other, but they could giggle a lot. I have a personal description of this by one person who had a relative lobotomized. They would bring in this girl as a living demonstration of how wonderful lobotomy is . . . She'd be giggling, smiling and grinning, and she'd talk, and then they'd lead her out. This is *severe* brain damage. It was well known that old syphilitics who had terrible brain damage could smile and relate to you and put on what was called a confabulation. But they didn't have anything going on in their heads, no way of relating to another human being.

Let me read you one more thing. Freeman and Watts have several sections in the book where they describe operations. The brain doesn't feel any pain so they're able to open the patient's head up under local anesthetic and then conduct the operation, and you can actually watch the loss of the person's capacities during the surgery. Doctor: "How do you feel?" This is on the table. Patient: "I don't feel anything, but they're cutting me." Doctor: "You wanted it." "Yes, but I didn't think you'd do it awake. Oh, gee whiz, I'm dying. Oh doctor, please stop. Oh God." The patient gets very terrified at this point and Freeman says, "Sing 'God Bless America.'" In another, he tells the patient to pray. As the operation goes on, there's one stab and then another stab, which are cuts into the frontal lobes. Now I'm going to quote Freeman in his summary of what happened to the patient during the cuts. "This patient was scarcely controllable during the drilling but with encouragement and an extra dose of morphine, managed to get along. He continued to be apprehensive after the sweeping incisions had been made on both sides. He was still restless when the radial stab incisions were made on the left, but quieted down and became disoriented when the final stabs were made on the right side." Freeman and Watts and some of the modern psychosurgeons agree that the degree of manageability and quietness of the patient was proportionate to the amount of disorientation you got the first several months after the surgery. It was the brain damage that did it. Now, just let me say one thing. A lot of lobotomists are going to rise up in arms, saying, "But we're doing something different now." But are they? They're doing the same operations but with narrower cuts, sometimes in the same areas. According to Scoville, who is president of the Association, the cingulotomies, which are largely what are being done (the cingulum is an area between the hemispheres of the brain at the base of the frontal lobes), are

nothing more than, as he says, fractional lobotomies. And if you listen to the quotes I gave before about the operations on children, it's very clear that the surgeons know they're doing a blunting operation. Just not quite as gross as before, but the process is the same.

Nowadays we also have the ultimate refinement of the use of electrodes in the brain. People are saying it isn't psychosurgery to put an electrode in the brain, to change somebody's behavior, to control him for three or four years at a time, to have him hooked up to buttons and IBM machines and so on. So I want to get a little detail in here about the work of the best known of this group, Jose Delgado, who expresses the politics of psychosurgery very clearly. The book he's written is called *Physical Control of the Mind: Toward A Psychocivilized Society*, published in 1969. Delgado's goal is nothing less than the physical control of other people for the advancement of what he says is civilization. He advocates setting up national agencies "in order to coordinate plans, budgets and actions just as NASA in the United States has directed public interest and technology, launching the country into the ventures and accomplishments of outer space." Then he talks about mass media and how everything will be organized around neuro-behavioral institutes. He mentions remote-controlled space craft: "These accomplishments should familiarize us with the idea that we may also control the biological functions of the living organism from a distance. Cats, monkeys, or human beings can be induced to flex a limb, to reject food, or to feel emotional excitement under the influence of electrical impulses reaching the depths of their brain through radio waves purposely sent by an investigator." He's very aware that people are going to be mad at him, saying that he is producing robots, and he denies this. But then on page 97 he says: "We have the possibility of investigating experimentally some of the classic problems of mind-brain correlations. Is it feasible to induce a robot-like performance in animals and men by pushing buttons of a cerebral radial stimulator? Can the mind be physically controlled?" In one of the clinics he's involved in he's gotten so far that the women wear little fancy headgear over their implanted electrodes and then go out, walk around and come back, and so on.

**He's one of the people who are planting electrodes in the brain?**

Yes, though it's hard to tell from his book exactly who is doing what. I know that he himself is directly involved with active psychosurgeons. Let me read some quotes: "A two-way radio communication system could be established between the brain of the subject and a computer. Anxiety, depression or rage could be recognized in order to trigger stimulation of specific inhibitory structures." What he's talking about there is a functional lobotomy achieved by exciting an area that inhibits another area. He describes doing it to monkeys, inhibiting the very areas the lobotomists have to cut out; he can do this better by electrically inhibiting them. And this isn't pie in the sky. I'll read you some of the cases he has: "The patient reported a pleasant tingling sensation in the left side of her body 'from my face down to the bottom of my legs.' She started giggling and making funny com-



ments, stating that she enjoyed the sensation *very much*. Repetitions of these stimulations made the patient more communicative and flirtatious, and she ended up openly expressing her desire to marry the therapist." Then he's got a case of an eleven-year-old boy—there must be three pages of descriptions of experiments done on him to stimulate him during an interview. I can't see how that has anything to do with any medical therapy. "Following another excitation, he remarked with evident pleasure, 'you're doing it now.' And then he said, 'I'd like to be a girl' " to please the male therapist. In another case, they produce behavior in a client, like searching under beds and moving his arms, which the client doesn't know is under the control of the electrodes and so makes up explanations for his actions like "I'm looking for something," and so on.

Finally, Delgado says that his experiments are going to clarify controversial subjects like freedom, individuality, and spontaneity. He says that there's nothing wrong with doing

develop his own mind while remaining independent and self-sufficient." He concludes, "this kind of liberal orientation has great appeal but unfortunately its assumptions are not supported by neurophysiologic and psychological studies of intra-cerebral mechanisms." What Delgado is calling a "liberal orientation" just happens to be the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Dr. Breggin, is this really what you're afraid of if the lobotomists are allowed to continue their work—this continued hacking away at the idea of individual responsibility, individual freedom?

I'm so afraid of so many things that they're already doing and that they're going to do that I hardly know where to begin. I'm appalled by what they do on the individual, single basis of mutilating one human being. And then, I think if anything I'm awed by their intentions for the whole com-



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these things because we lock up people involuntarily in mental hospitals, and we give them electroshock. But then he goes on to complain that electroshock "is a crude method of doubtful efficacy in normal people." He's talking here about a therapy that's no good because you can't use it on normal people! Now listen to his complaint about psychoanalysis: "Psychoanalysis requires a long time and a person can easily withdraw his cooperation and refuse to express his intimate thoughts." This is the intellectual spokesman for the psychosurgery movement. Finally, let's take a look at some of his closing remarks: "The individual may think that the most important fact of reality is his own existence, but this is only his personal point of view, a relative frame of reference which is not shared by the rest of the living world. This self-importance also lacks historical perspective, for the brief existence of one person should be considered in terms of the world population, mankind and the whole universe." Then he goes on to attack the notion that man has "the right to

community. But what always really gets me is the vision of the individual patient and what's being done to her or him, like the psychiatrist sitting next to the patient while the patient has electrodes in her/his head and the psychiatrist talking while the patient slowly is destroyed by the neurosurgeon's hand on the switch, or like the little nine-year-old boy with four operations and six incisions in his brain who is "intellectually deteriorating" down in Mississippi. That's what gets me the most because I work with individual patients in my own practice, and as a novelist, I'm fundamentally dealing with the individual. But in the long run, of course, I believe my greatest fear is the general application of these techniques, and there are lots of reasons to believe we'll have them. You know, Delgado isn't alone. There's Skinner. Skinner is the Delgado of psychology, or Delgado is the Skinner of neurology. We're in a period of frustration, increasing anxiety, and my fear is that instead of elevating mankind in order to solve man's problems, we'll mutilate mankind. •



# ICARUS FALLS: THE RED ARMY in JAPAN

kitazawa yoko  
muto ichiyo

In some senses the dual defeat of the Red Army—dual because it was both political and moral—may be seen as a defeat of the political thinking of the Japanese revolutionary New Left. Japanese police exposés of lynchings and “executions” of their own comrades by the leadership of the Red Army had a traumatic effect on the entire New Left, and a disastrous political effect.

During the three years which followed its first public declaration at the rally of 20,000 students for the founding of the *Zenkyoto* (September 1969), the Red Army pursued a meandering path, studded here and there with startling events—from the mass arrest of RA soldiers in a hideout on Mount Daibosatsu in 1969, through the hijacking of a Japan Airlines plane in 1970, to the recent gun battle with the police in Asama village and the final exposé of the internal executions.

New Left groups in Japan have been almost unanimous in their criticism of the Red Army. Nevertheless, they cannot but admit that it was a group which incarnated in its special way the dynamism, radicalism, and ideology of the New Left which, through unprecedented militant street fights and campus struggles in the 1960s, had successfully shaken the fabric of Japanese society and broken the facade of the united Nippon Empire. If we might be allowed to make a certain generalization, the Red Army carried to its logical extreme, bravely and with unquestionable sincerity, the line of the 1960s New Left, only to reveal in the end that this line, this political vision, can no longer guide us in the decade of the Seventies.

The turn of each decade seems to have a special significance in the postwar history of Japan, and this was particularly the case for the radical struggle of the Sixties. Although trends towards the formation of the Red Army can be traced back to 1968, the RA was actually born in 1969, a year in which the radical movement throughout Japan realized that it was facing a critical impasse. The RA was consolidated in the course of a factional struggle within the reunified Communist League (the Second Bund) and represented an attempt to break out of this impasse and open the way for a revolutionary decade in the Seventies. Was the RA successful in finding a new path? The simple answer is that it failed.

## 1967-1969: The Stormy Years

The significance of the brief history and final defeat of the Red Army can best be understood against the background of the situation in which it originated.

The bombing of North Vietnam by Lyndon Johnson and the American military in 1965 had a very critical effect on the Japanese scene. On the one hand it threw into relief the powerlessness of the Japanese Old Left (the numerically powerful Communist and Socialist parties and the four-million strong *Sohyo*, the labor organization of the Socialist party), which proved incapable of taking any effective measures of protest against the vicious escalation of the war. At the same time, the historic attack of several thousand students and workers on the police cordons guarding Premier Sato's departure for Saigon at Tokyo International Airport on October 8, 1967, focussed all eyes on the emergence of a new and forceful opposition. The sight of “armed” demonstrators—although they carried only wooden staves—was enough to set public opinion agog; newspapers screamed “bloody violence,” and the surprised and defeated police pledged revenge. But of much deeper significance was the fact that the actions of that day reinstated ideas long shelved by the Old Left: specifically, the conception of proletarian internationalism and revolutionary violence. In this sense the impact of the action was not so much political as ideological, and despite the barrage of hostile, almost hysterical, propaganda from the Establishment, young workers, students, and resistance-ready citizens quickly moved to formulate a common political outlook. The essence of this new outlook was that a spirit of internationalism was crucial—an internationalism which would pit itself against both Japanese and U.S. imperialism. Much of the ideology of the New Left in the Sixties was based largely on this concept. From this premise, for example, was deduced the idea that Japan is an accomplice to the aggressive war in Vietnam unless her people actively combat the status quo which has become part of the war machine. In contrast to the Old Left's vague idea of “solidarity” with the Vietnamese, the New Left contended that the best expression of internationalism was to attack Japanese imperialism directly. All the movements on the New Left, including the independently formed *Beheiren*, shared this rejection of the Old Left's priority on maintaining the status quo.

The Second Bund was established in time for the 1967 struggle as a conglomeration of the remnants of the 1960 Bund (the First Bund) which had exploded into political fragments after the struggle against the U.S.-Japan Mutual Security Treaty in 1960. The political struggle which developed in the next years was built around the alliance of this Second Bund with *Chukaku*, the Revolutionary Communist League, and later evolved into an alliance of eight political groups. Around this central alliance rallied the *Zenkyoto* (the



students' joint struggle fronts) and a Workers' Front known as *Hansen*; from time to time, the *Beheiren* also coalesced with these groups to stage joint actions. It was this coalition which carried out the series of militant street fights against American aggression and Japanese complicity in 1967 and 1968. In 1968 and 1969, the struggle on Tokyo and Nihon university campuses provided a new impetus. The campus struggle which developed at this time into an occupation of almost all the major campuses across the country was a real mass revolt of students against the social system—capitalism, to be exact—in the manner of the French revolt of May 1968. A fundamental challenge to traditional values, whether academic or not, captured the imagination of the students, and this ideological challenge was accompanied by spontaneous mass actions coordinated by the *Zenkyoto*.

During the same period, similar political actions in the streets against symbolic targets of Japan's complicity in the war and American military bases were carried out as a sequel to the 1967 airport struggle. In most of these street demonstrations, organized students and workers attacked targets, fighting against riot police, and the atmosphere of riot brought out thousands of unorganized citizens who confronted the police with stones, sticks, and Molotov cocktails. Police brutalities were countered by unidentified crowds of people, shouting and throwing stones, who stayed in the streets until early the next morning. In such struggles the fighters felt they were one with the people.

Sadly, this situation did not continue for long, for the decision of the Japanese government to push for the return of Okinawa to Japan dramatically changed the context in which the anti-imperialist struggle was being fought. Okinawa reversion, a milestone in the schema of Japanese imperialist expansion, now quickly became the focus of the situation. The task of the Japanese New Left became no longer simply that of fighting Japan's complicity in an American war, but

of confronting the program for war and expansion of the Japanese imperialists themselves. In this situation the previously developed relationship between the New Left and the masses was put to a new test.

In the past two years, mass support for the New Left's anti-war activities had in many cases been based on a tradi-

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**The task of the Japanese New Left became no longer simply that of fighting Japan's complicity in an American war, but of confronting the program for war and expansion of the Japanese imperialists themselves.**

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tional belief in "peace and democracy," rather than on genuine internationalism or class-consciousness. Thus, when the government and the ruling class appeared in full gear with their plausible slogan of returning Okinawa to Japan without nuclear bases, they easily drove a wedge into the fragile link between the revolutionary groups and the masses.

#### The Impasse

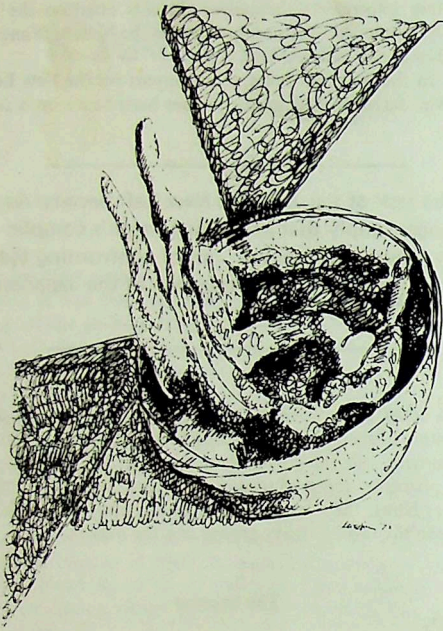
On Okinawa Day, April 28, 1969, came the initial signs of a change which would later take definite form. The established tactics of the New Left were losing their effectiveness, and to those who faced this fact realistically, the events of that day brought a sharp sense of defeat. The Bund had organized several hundred fighters to occupy the Tokyo Medical-Dental College, from which they intended to make a sortie which would ultimately result in the occupation of government offices in downtown Tokyo. This tactic, however, met with failure. Overwhelming police forces almost completely contained the group within the campus, and the fighters could not even approach their intended target area. Among those who experienced this defeat was a group of 50 men and women who referred to themselves as a "storm brigade" and who were, in fact, the embryo of the later RA. The group had planned, in the course of the struggle, to rally around them a few hundred people, a number which might snowball into several or scores of thousands by the time they dashed out to fight the police, thus achieving the effect of the masses themselves bursting into physical struggle against the police. When they found that this last stage had failed to materialize, an internal debate about the viability of the tactic began among the members of the "storm brigade" and intensified in the months which followed.

In the meantime, the nationwide campus struggle began to collapse. That summer the government railroaded through a special bill, directed against the student revolt, which led to the occupation of campuses by riot police. As autumn approached, the force of the police was not only further strengthened, but they also began a campaign to stir up the fears of citizens in order to turn them away from the New Left. Before the departure of Premier Sato for Washing-



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ton to sign the strategic Japan-U.S. Joint Communique, areas of downtown Tokyo were turned into veritable ghost towns as the police forced all offices and shops to close down so as to separate fighters from masses who might turn into "mobs." In addition, newspapers deliberately infused horror of the New Left into the minds of citizens. Streets where demonstrations were scheduled were almost totally cleared of passers-by and occupied by the police. When nevertheless an all-out struggle was waged by New Left forces against the Nixon-Sato collusion, thousands were arrested. The police had command of the situation.

In retrospect, the impasse reached by the movement in 1969 centered on the problem of the manner in which the revolutionary left forges its ties with the people. The only possible way of moving forward at this juncture was by a fundamental transformation of what had heretofore been a purely external relationship between the radical, militant groups and the masses who had supported their action without understanding their aims. Most importantly, this transformation had to be accomplished without falling back into the conservative position of the Old Left.

### The Red Army's Answer

The most tangible reflection of the changes in the anti-imperialist struggle by the spring of 1969 was the seemingly insuperable strength of the police. One immediate reaction to this was the formulation of tactics to intensify armed struggle in order to win a military victory over the police. It was those members of the Bund that sought to break out of their

impasse by emphasizing this build-up of military strength who formed the first contingent of the Red Army.

The unique system of concepts and tactics set forth as the Red Army developed must be seen against the background of a theoretical tradition which had always been strong in the Bund. The first ten years of the Bund's history had been characterized by the elaboration of a number of sophisticated theoretical systems which tried in various ways to comprehend the entire world and set forth sweeping revolutionary programs. Predictably, then, the impasse of the late Sixties stimulated factional struggles in the Second Bund, in which different intra-Bund groups backed their own grandiose theories.

The key concepts in the particular theoretical system worked out by those Bund members who later crystallized into the Red Army were those of "world revolutionary war" and "prerevolutionary uprising." These concepts, which were first elaborated in 1960 as part of the Kansai Bund's new program, rejected the idea of "economic crisis leading to revolution" and substituted a "theory of political process" in which the political struggle of broad strata of citizens and the economic struggle of trade unions would be combined into "mass violence" by means of the catalyst provided by the "active and the offensive" tactics of the Bund.

This "theory of political process" as such did not survive the subsequent years, during which the popular movement of the Sixties disintegrated and vanished. But in it we discover the Bund's initial emphasis on "offensive policy" as the catalyst of people's political struggle, in opposition to traditional ideas of economism and trade unionism and the pseudo-revolutionary theory of the "crisis-waiting" type, which the Bund criticized as a procrastinating, passive stance of "waiting for some social crisis produced by a failure of the bourgeoisie."

### RA's Analysis of the International Situation

In 1968, the Bund sponsored what it called an International Anti-Imperialist Conference in Tokyo to develop its struggle on a world-wide scale. The conference itself was not

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a great success, since it coincided with another internal split in the Bund; however, in the course of the conference the Bund developed its theory of offensive tactics more clearly. "The forces who are carrying on the class struggle can and should actively challenge the world in a way which will force a certain choice of strategy on the enemy side," it proposed.

By the end of 1968, several new developments had further affected the ideological development of the Bund, among them the Tet Offensive in Vietnam and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China. Unfortunately, however, the main trend of Bund thinking as it developed in this period failed to come to grips with the real significance of the Third World struggle. According to a "three-bloc" schema which the Bund developed to analyze the progress of the world revolution after World War II, Third World countries were classified as "backward countries," as compared with "advanced countries" and "workers' states," which comprised the other two blocs. The Bund held that the world revolution would result from a combination of class struggles in the three blocs, and thus that revolutions in "backward countries" would not emerge with their full significance in world history until the successful uprising of the proletariat in "advanced countries" had also taken place. The logical implication of this theory, whether or not the Bund clearly realized it at the time, was of course that the revolutionary struggle of Third World peoples will have world-wide significance only when it is endowed with that significance by the proletariat of "advanced countries." Within this vision, the Bund then proceeded to assign itself the special mission of building a world party and a world Red Army which could mobilize the international proletariat in this transitional stage. This world party and world army would unleash a world-wide revolutionary war which, in Japan, would take the form of an armed uprising.

### The Formation of the Red Army

The Red Army, which drew its initial membership from Bund groups in Kansai, Chiba, and Kanagawa, was born directly out of the ideological struggles described above. From the latter half of 1968 through the early months of 1969, this group had already been tagged as the "Red Army faction" within the Bund. The group eventually severed itself completely from the Bund through a series of bitter physical fights.

The first steps taken by the Red Army faction in the early days of its crystallization were to develop a "concrete" revolutionary program and to search for an appropriate vanguard from which to carry this out. They likened the Japanese situation in 1969 to the period of Russian history which spanned the brief interval between the February Revolution and the October Revolution of 1917. Just as the February Revolution had paved the way for the October Revolution, they insisted, full armed uprising in Japan could only come in the wake of a similar "prerevolutionary uprising." They chose autumn, 1969, when Premier Sato was leaving Japan to negotiate the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, as the date for such an uprising. Their attack was intended as an occasion to declare the establishment of a Provisional Revolutionary

Government in Japan. Despite this bold flight of imagination, however, members of the RA were never optimistic about the outcome of the prerevolutionary uprising they had planned. They were prepared for it to be bloodily suppressed, its perpetrators arrested or even killed, yet it was

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**Members of the RA were never optimistic about the outcome of the prerevolutionary uprising. They were prepared for it to be bloodily suppressed . . . yet it was still their dream that it would come as a declaration of war.**

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still their dream that it would come as a declaration of war on the part of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and would set up a concrete front for internal war in Japan.

### The Lessons of the Attack on the Self-Defense Agency

The first strategic and tactical program of the Red Army faction was directly related to its previous experience within the Bund. The precedent for this particular tactic was an attack made by the Bund against the headquarters of the Self-Defense Agency [the armed forces of Japan] on October 21, 1968. On that day, several hundred Bund people had attacked the front gate of the Defense Agency, using huge logs and Molotov cocktails, eventually breaking through and dashing into the compound. Although the effect of this move was intended to be primarily symbolic, the action had been an extremely significant one which had grown out of both severe intra-Bund debates and the Bund's critical attacks on other political groups. In practical terms, the debate had concerned the choice of a tactic for the anti-imperialist struggle at that point: whether to attack the transportation of fuel for U.S. planes at Shinjuku Railroad Station (Shinjuku, a recreation center, would have masses of people who might become involved in the riots) or whether, instead, to make an unprecedented direct attack on one of the "seats of government power." Although to some of our readers the issue at stake may seem surprisingly simple, it is common in the Japanese New Left for debates on ideology and strategy to take the form of controversy over the wording of slogans or the appropriate target for an action. In this case, the debate was a sign that a new crossroad had been reached in the development of the strategic thinking of the Japanese left. The choice lay between continuing the already familiar tactic of "local riot" or attempting something completely new: a "frontal attack on state power."

The surprise attack and almost unexpected success of the plan to invade the compound itself was hailed as a great breakthrough in the movement. The event left a deep impression on the minds of those Bund members who later became the Red Army, who summarized the experience with the slogan, "Be bold in uprisings!" The Defense Agency struggle thereafter remained in their minds as a concrete image of



“prerevolutionary uprising.” It was the continuing attraction of this image, combined with the traumatic sense of defeat engendered by the April 28 struggle of 1969, that finally led the Red Army faction to declare they were no longer part of the Bund but were withdrawing to form a real army.

The failure of the Okinawa Day actions in spring 1969 was followed by a period of several months during which the members of the Red Army faction were attempting to set up the internal structure of an independent organization while simultaneously withdrawing from the framework of the Bund. In order to form themselves into a “regular army,” members of the group were expected to live together, undergo physical training, and learn theory. They had to procure the money and space which would enable them to do this at the same time that they were fighting a fierce internal struggle within the Bund. This struggle included both the publication of policy statements in an organ bulletin, *Sekigun* (Red Army), and violent physical fights against intra-Bund opponents such as Bund chairman Saragi. All of this had to be carried on, moreover, under the siege of the police, since it would hardly have been possible to organize a “real army” secretly and underground. In August 1969, for example, the RA faction of the Bund called an open convention to try to settle the confusion which had resulted from the internal struggle.

Surprisingly enough, the Red Army group—although it had already committed itself to the idea that the Japanese proletariat was the revolutionary vanguard—chose student members of the university *Zenkyoto* as the first base for carrying out its independently developed programs. The occasion was the dramatic protest staged by the RA faction at a rally held on September 5, 1969, for the purpose of consolidating a national *Zenkyoto*. The Red Army group attended the rally under the banner, “Carry out uprisings and seek victory in war!”, expressing their opposition to the idea of “arming for self-defense” which had originated in the *Zenkyoto* movement. The RA group stressed that the building of an army capable of carrying out offensive strategy could never be achieved simply by the numerical expansion of “defensive” armed struggles. To dramatize the idea, they sent a band of 200 RA people into the *Zenkyoto* rally to engage in physical fights with other factions of the Bund. By carrying out this tactic, however, the RA had unwittingly chosen the student-supported New Left *Zenkyoto* as its first base of support. Almost a month after this conference, on October 21, 1969, the RA raised the slogan, “War in Osaka, War in Tokyo,” urging the unprepared *Zenkyoto* units to forge themselves into real armed troops for offensive armed struggle.

In *Sekigun* in the autumn of 1969, RA’s challenges to the domestic movement are accompanied by refinements in its analysis of the international situation. It forecast that a crisis would arise in 1970 over the question of Japan’s Security Treaty with the U.S. This crisis would be of the same magnitude as the popular upsurge against the Security Treaty in 1960 and in the course of it the Red Army, though its numbers might be small, would play a key role. According to the scenario outlined by *Sekigun*, the Red Army would stage an uprising in Tokyo at the height of the crisis, attacking the

political and military “nerve center” of Japanese imperialism. The effect of this uprising would be to aggravate class contradictions all over the world, thus ushering in a whole era of offensive revolutionary war waged by the world proletariat against imperialism.

Before it ever put its plan into action, however, the Red Army organization was dealt a shattering blow. As Sato was preparing to go to Washington to negotiate the extension of the Security Treaty, the RA began its own final preparations for the uprising from a base in the mountains outside of Tokyo. On November 5, 1969, riot police attacked this inn on Mount Daibosatsu, arresting 54 commanders and soldiers of the RA. (It was later learned that the troops concentrated in this mountain area had been infiltrated by a spy.)

Apparently, the failure of the attempted 1969 uprising did not lead the Red Army to a critical review of the idea of prerevolutionary uprising itself. *Sekigun* admitted such a tactic as occupying the prime minister’s residence was a mistake because it failed to give sufficient consideration to international factors, but maintained that the theory itself was correct. The lesson drawn from the failure was that RA should have conducted “partisan struggle on a world scale” in order to build the world party and the world Red Army. In plain words, the Red Army now hoped to persuade a series of “workers’ states” (specifically, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Cuba and China) to forego “preoccupation with the concerns of their own nation alone” and assume a role similar to that of the Red Army in expanding local wars of liberation into a world revolutionary war.

It was an attempt to apply this latest development in theory which lay beneath “Operation Phoenix,” the hijacking of a JAL plane on March 31, 1970, by nine Red Army cadres. The hijackers planned to go to Pyongyang, North Korea, and persuade the Workers’ Party of Korea to take the RA line. The hijacking itself was successful in the sense that the RA group, through the use of weapons, was able to force the JAL plane to cross the military border from South to North Korea. The purpose of the hijacking, however, was thwarted. The Red Army in Japan failed to get in touch with the hijackers in North Korea, and immediately after news of the hijacking got out, the security police cracked down on

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The RA group carried out consecutive robberies of small branch banks in the neighborhood of Tokyo. This was called the M operation—“M” standing for money.

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RA leaders and activists in Japan, including RA chairman Shiomi Takaya.

An active debate developed among those who were arrested about the problems which had so far been encountered in the RA’s various plans. Some members concluded that the mistake had been in the idea of the prerevolutionary uprising itself and proposed a strategy of “protracted urban



guerrilla warfare" as an alternative. A few of the numerous articles written and published from jail represented a genuine attempt to probe the very ground on which the idea of the prerevolutionary uprising had been based. But none of these letters, articles and statements from prison seem to have had much influence on the thinking of the organization as a whole. This was partly because by that time, the RA outside of prison was itself on the verge of being outlawed, and had to remain completely underground in the face of systematic police repression.

### Keihin Ampokyoto

On December 18, three commandos from a political group called *Keihin Ampokyoto* (the Joint Struggle Committee Against the Security Treaty), armed with steel pipes, at-

tempt, the analysis of external events which accompanied these forays was unrealistically apocalyptic. The period when the Diet session convened to ratify the Okinawa reversion treaty, RA predicted, would become the backdrop for a major war fought by the Japanese people against the "counter-revolutionary reorganization of the American-Japanese imperialist alliance." This war, it maintained, would become the "axis around which the revolutionary war in Asia and the world will turn." The tactics of the M operation, however, simply resulted in the arrest of more RA soldiers, including some officers, and invited yet further police repression. Arrest warrants were now issued for all leading members of the Red Army still at large, and every day the newspapers attacked its members with accusations of arson, murder, burglary, and riot, in an attempt to isolate them from other New Left groups and from the masses of people. The RA, in the meantime, showed a critical weakness in failing to communi-



Betty Levinson

tacked a police box in Tokyo to rip off pistols. The attempt failed; one of the attackers was shot to death and the others were wounded and arrested. However, on February 15, 1971, *Keihin Ampokyoto* sent another commando to break into a gunshop in Mohka, a suburb of Tokyo, to expropriate hunting rifles and bullets. Although two members of KA were arrested during this attempt, the spoils were successfully carried away. The main members of *Keihin Ampokyoto* then went underground with the weapons.

Dazzled by these recent exploits of *Keihin Ampokyoto*, the Red Army left its programmatic debate hanging in mid-air and began similar actions of expropriation. For a month beginning on February 22, 1971, the RA group carried out consecutive robberies of small branch banks in the neighborhood of Tokyo. This was called the M operation—"M" standing for money. But again, as in the case of the action planned at the time of Sato's trip and the hijacking

cate its own programs and aims to the masses. No documents were published which seriously attempted to explain the reasoning behind their actions to those outside of their own group. Of course, the tremendous expenditure of energy required of the RA at this time to fight police repression no doubt had something to do with this.

Since almost all the leaders of the Red Army were arrested during or after a gun battle with the police at Karu-isawa in February 1972, we can only guess at what was being discussed inside the organization during this period and what outside factors may have influenced it. It is clear that the organizational set-up of the RA was not changed. Two new external events, however, deeply affected the Red Army's course of action. The first was the explosion of a bomb thrown by an anonymous group against the riot police on June 17. This was the same day on which the Okinawa reversion treaty had been signed in Paris; the explosion took place



at a New Left rally which was being held in Meiji Park in Tokyo. As demonstrators were streaming into the street, the bomb was thrown at the police cordon, seriously wounding 37 riot policemen. Although the police failed to locate the throwers of the bomb, they almost immediately publicly attributed it to the Red Army. The second incident was the successful guerrilla-type attack on the police at Sanrizuka by peasants on September 16 in which three police were killed.

The Red Army, inexorably being driven underground as it clung to its idea of prerevolutionary uprising, seems to have been influenced by these two incidents without completely understanding them. It interpreted both events as signs that yet another stage in the revolutionary struggle was beginning, one which it called "the era of bombs." Claiming to summarize the meaning of these two actions, which they themselves had not even carried out, the Red Army members declared that an era of bomb-struggle and armed confrontation with state power had arrived, and in accordance with this view, resolved to intensify their efforts to solve all problems by military means. It is unfortunate that in so doing the RA seems to have completely missed the significance of the Sanrizuka peasants' September 16 attack. In fact, the Sanrizuka farmers in the course of their struggle had developed an ideology of their own which had much in common with those of other Third World peoples.

### The United Red Army

The RA's strengthened resolve to follow a military course to the end was accompanied by a move in the summer of 1971 to form a joint front with *Keihin Ampokyo*, which it felt resembled it in organization (in the sense that both were underground) and also in action-style (by making military attacks on the apparatus of state power). On July 15, RA and *Keihin Ampokyo* announced that they had unified their military units under the name, "United Red Army." A new "urban guerrilla" line was adopted and an attack on a bank in Yonago City is believed to have been the first joint action of the military units of the two organizations. The action was clearly a failure—all four attackers were arrested—and led to a debate about the wisdom of the unification of the two groups. It has recently come out, in fact, that only some factions in the RA supported the political unification with *Keihin Ampokyo*, while others walked out in protest. The final outcome, however, was unmistakable. The "urban guerrilla" line was shelved, the URA returned to the RA's "prerevolutionary uprising" line, and the limited combination of military units with *Keihin Ampokyo* developed into a complete merger of the political organizations.

At the end of 1971 the police began the most thorough round-up campaign ever attempted in Japan in an effort to track down the URA. Known as the "roller campaign," this consisted of door-to-door visits to 300,000 flats in Tokyo alone, not to mention extensive searching in the mountains. By this means the police learned that the URA had its bases in the mountains and finally detected some of the huts which the URA had built as headquarters, training center, and weapons depot. In the onslaughts that followed, some acti-

vists were arrested; five of those who escaped seized a villa at Karuisawa where they engaged in a gun duel with police in February of this year and were finally arrested after a siege of nine days. Seventeen URA members in all had been arrested by the time the Karuisawa incident had run its course. From jail, they revealed that 12 other members had been killed by lynching or execution while the URA troops were concentrated in the mountain base. All of these 12 had been soldiers mustered for military training at the direction of the seven Central Committee members beginning in November 1971. It was also revealed that *Keihin Ampokyo*, in August 1971, had already executed two members for their attempt to defect.

A few documents available from this period provide the most concrete information on what members of the URA were doing and thinking in these last days of the army's existence. *Shukan Yomiuri* (a weekly magazine published by *Yomiuri Shimbun* newspaper) carried what it called a "full text" of the "Service Rule of the United Red Army." The rule, consisting of 17 chapters, includes "Details on norms of living for party members" (chapters 3 to 16) and "Punishment" (chapter 17). This last chapter states that punishment should be directed against petty-bourgeois, lumpen-proletarian and counterrevolutionary ideology inside the party. The punishment should consist of "critical self-appraisal," "suspension" and "expulsion." "Expulsion" is divided into two parts, "expulsion" and "capital punishment."

On June 3 *Mainichi Shimbun* printed a document provided by the police which consisted of excerpts from a "confession" made by Mori Tsuneo, chairman of the Central Committee of the URA. This document of about 100,000 characters outlines all the steps from the formation of the URA to the execution of the 12 comrades.

But in the end, the people have been denied any means of knowing exactly what took place in the mountains, since newspapers and all the other mass media are only releasing handouts from the police at the police-chosen time and in the police-favored manner. In effect, the mass media has given its full cooperation to the police and the Sato government so that they could manipulate the information in their favor. Thus, the tone of all the articles is identical—"The super-extremist group, completely isolated from society, goes mad and kills its own members. In complete desperation, they seize a villa, hold an innocent housewife hostage, have a shoot-out with police, and perish." The press also did its utmost to impress the public with the "humane and just conduct of the police."

For nine days, from the seizure of the Karuisawa villa by five URA members to the final gun battle on February 28, the TV and all media were mobilized to pin the attention of the entire nation on the "hostage-saving operation" of the police. By means of this brilliantly chosen smokescreen, the government managed to divert public attention from a series of events, any one of which could have proved a fatal blow to Sato at the time—Nixon's visit to Peking (expected to cause irreparable damage to Sato's prestige); the stealthy occupation of the Tachikawa base by Self-Defense Forces after it had been evacuated by U.S. troops (March 7); the visit of SDF Chief of Staff Kinugasa to Saigon; the illegal smuggling of SDF materials into Okinawa; and finally the expose of the



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By thus killing itself, the RA put an end to the New Left movement in Japan. . . . It was the RA which carried the essence of that movement to its logical extreme and to bankruptcy.

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Japan-U.S. secret promise concerning the reversion of Okinawa. By utilizing the mass media to channel public attention away from these issues and focus it on the URA scandal, the government did everything in its power to suffocate the anti-government movement of the people.

Meanwhile, the police, using subpoenas, raids without warrants and arrests, cracked down on all those who had ever supported RA or *Keihin Ampokeyoto* in any way, and even those who tried to find some significance in their action or to perform some relief activities for the arrested. On March 12, the corpses of the dead soldiers began to be excavated. The uproar and scandal which ensued succeeded almost completely in stifling the anti-government movement, including the New Left movement.

Following the exposé of the lynchings and executions, some of the arrested URA members issued statements of "conversion" (such as those published by the five Central Committee members and 12 soldiers). Undoubtedly crushed by the weight of what they had done, they found themselves unable to hold out against the pressure of police interrogation. Self-criticisms were also issued one after another by those leaders of the RA who had been arrested before the merger of the RA with *Keihin Ampokeyoto*, and some documents were released by underground leaders and members of the RA outside of jail as well. On the question of the lynchings and executions, the Kansai committee of the RA criticized itself for "having executed comrades in a secret trial of the Stalinist type, instead of trying to solve their problems through a style-rectification movement or a people's trial aimed at establishing proletarian discipline in the revolutionary party-army. . . . Such conduct originated in RA's failure to overcome its limitation as part of the New Left movement, which basically was a movement of students and revolutionary intellectuals." The document goes on to say that the prerevolutionary uprising theory "reflected a leftwing infantilism that grew out of our organizational reliance on the student stratum."

In the end, however, the document of the Kansai committee holds that the RA's previous analysis of the world situation, especially the "combination of the class struggles in the three blocs" and the "idea of the world in a transitional stage where imperialism and world revolutionary war are confronting each other," is valid and correct. The statement simply criticizes the URA for a tendency to "substitute the army for the party, and urban guerrilla warfare for political propaganda, mass organizing and other types of political struggle."

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In spite of this and many other self-criticisms, however, the Red Army as a movement with a viable organizational base has ended; more significantly, the spirit and ideology of

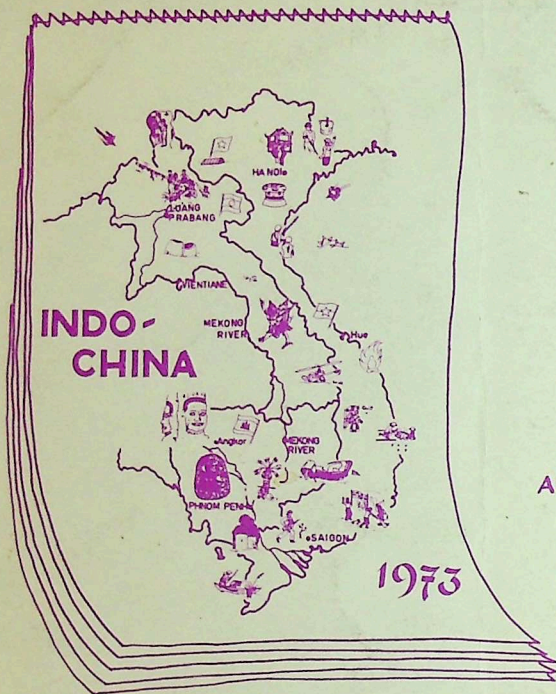
the Red Army have died. By thus killing itself, the RA put an end to the New Left movement in Japan as it had existed within the specific historical circumstances of the 1965-1969 period. It was the RA which carried the essence of that movement to its logical extreme and to bankruptcy.

Nevertheless, the great historic significance of the New Left movement should not be lost. It defied the prevalent Japanese-style liberalism of Peace and Democracy, exposing it as the dominant ruling system of this country, and brought into broad daylight the nature of the Japanese imperialist system. It shattered the traditional, economic "crisis-waiting" opportunism and corrupt parliamentarianism of the Old Left. During the period in which the main focus of the movement was directed against the war in Vietnam, it summoned forth a tremendous mass upsurge of the people. This period coincided with the period of the Tet offensive in which the American and Japanese ruling classes found themselves at a loss to devise any measures to counter their successive defeats.

But Washington soon hammered out its Nixon doctrine, returned Okinawa to Japan, and began to reorganize a counterrevolutionary set-up in Asia, with Japanese imperialism as its aide. This counter-move of imperialism which took definite shape in 1969 set up a new wall of repression against the New Left which the ideology and organization effective in the preceding three years failed to break through. The Red Army, which appeared just when the New Left movement entered this period of decline, ultimately found itself crushed by the tragic contradictions between its will to overcome the wall which it so clearly perceived and its attempt to do so on the basis of the ideology, strategy and actions developed by the New Left.

It is not within the scope of this article to propose alternative solutions to the problems the Red Army failed to solve. We can, however, outline the tasks which await the New Left in Japan in the wake of the ruin of the Red Army: (1) To find a way of basing ourselves more firmly on the Japanese people's struggle without returning to the Old Left approach of opportunism, chauvinism and non-violence; (2) To grasp in a way which is concrete, rather than sweeping and ideological, the factors in the international situation and struggle of other peoples which underlie all the struggles of the people in Japan (anything taking place in Japan involves particularly the fate of Asian people); (3) To formulate a clearer perspective on world revolution, developing a functional understanding of the Third World revolution (which proved to be a blind spot for the Red Army) and making greater efforts to learn from its spirit; (4) To develop confrontation with state power through a mass struggle which is so serious and uncompromising that it can be compared to the life-or-death struggle of the Third World, and in this way to get ourselves and all fighting people to overcome dependence on the "protection" of the Japanese state. ●





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# LIBERATION

- SPORTS RIP-OFF
- ITALIAN JOURNAL
- GREECE & REVOLUTION



photos by irwin klein



Dear comrades,

I just finished reading "Kommune 2" [in *Liberation*, January 1973] and wanted to write you all right away. It is one of the most exciting and revolutionary articles I have seen in a while, certainly the most open account of the deepest repression of all—sexuality. Too many comrades, Reichian ideology and all, do not have the courage to go into the deepest levels which require the hardest struggles. It makes a lot of difference when people realize that sexuality is *there*, right then, in their children's existence, and begin to deal with that (of course, most are not even dealing totally with their own sexuality). Many people with advanced political consciousness feel that the "sexual revolution" is simply the male-oriented, male-serving exploitation of sexuality ("movement-style repressive desublimation"), but the comrades in Berlin certainly have shown us that Reich's idea of a synthesis of political/social/sexual liberation is possible and desirable. . . .

In struggle,  
Phil Brown  
Somerville, Massachusetts

Dear Comrades,

. . . The October [1972] issue was really fine, especially "Icarus Falls" and the article on Italy. Hope to be going to Italy myself in a year or so with some friends from *Lotta Continua*—they are students here for the time being. Anything else you print on the movement in Italy will be greatly appreciated by me. I read a letter from one of your readers which requested more "down home" reports on what was going on in America (relating to social change). I personally like the articles on revolutionary movements drawn from the world at large—I think that by examining them critically we can draw as many lessons for our future reference here as we can by making more detailed analyses of our situation at home. Whereas the latter helps us get a better grip on the immediate situation, the former arms us against changes in our situation which will throw us into new and otherwise unexplored ground.

Yours against capitalism and  
all its bureaucratic running dogs,  
Phil Seymour  
Home Front  
Goleta, California

To the Editor:

I just read Stanley Aronowitz's article ["Miners For Democracy"] on the struggle in the coal fields in your January 1973 issue and feel impelled to respond to it. He commits many egregious errors of fact, he underplays the role of rank-and-file workers, and reaches some very questionable conclusions. This is a highly important struggle and these mistakes should be set straight for your readers.

#### A. Errors of Fact

Factual errors can be handled simply in the order they appear. I don't know where Aronowitz located the figure of 11 million tons for average annual coal production. For the past five years, annual production ranged between 545 and 603 million tons. Coal pro-

duction today is increasing sharply; the previous all-time high of 631 million tons in 1947 will be exceeded in the next two or three years. The coal industry is experiencing a boom, not a "mild resurgence" as Aronowitz states in his article. Coal comprises almost 85 per cent of our country's total energy resources. To suggest that it be eliminated seems naive.

Tony Boyle did not become UMW President until 1963, not 1960 as Aronowitz says. Thomas Kennedy was President between 1960 (when John L. Lewis resigned) and 1963 when Kennedy himself died. Royalty payments to the UMW Welfare and Retirement Fund will reach 80 cents per ton by the end of the present contract in 1974; they are now 70 cents per ton. The UMW built ten hospitals, not four. These hospitals were sold to private proprietors in 1963 and 1964 and now most coal miners can't even get admitted to them. The hospitals themselves could not withdraw miners' Hospital Cards, since they never issued them. The UMW Health and Welfare Fund began withdrawing them in the early 1960s. These cards were never returned to most of the miners who lost them. Thousands and thousands of retired miners in east Kentucky are without them to this day.

On UMW elections, Lewis was appointed to the presidency of the UMW in 1919. He faced opponents in only three elections: Robert Harlin in 1920, John Voyzey in 1924, and John Brophy in 1926. . . . Powers Haggood never ran for UMW President, nor was there even an election in 1927, as Aronowitz states. None of these men were "narrowly defeated." Lewis reported substantial margins over each opponent. . . . But, as any old-time miner can tell you, Lewis actually *lost* each of these three elections. He racked up large margins only by stealing hundreds of votes in almost every single local union.

#### B. Rank-and-File Miners

Aronowitz makes even more disturbing errors in his historical analysis. Both the Yablonski and Miller campaigns grew out of rank-and-file struggles; Aronowitz has it the other way around. Rank-and-file discontent smoldered in the Appalachian coal fields throughout the 1960s and burst into flame after the Mannington No. 9 Mine explosion in November 1968. Three months later, almost every miner in West Virginia walked off the job demanding a new health and safety law. This tremendously impressive strike of 45,000 miners won both a state law in March and was the major factor in winning the federal law that Nixon was forced to sign on December 30, 1969.

It was the Black Lung Strike which convinced Jock Yablonski to run. . . . Jock himself would be the first person to point out that he did not "win a mass base" with his "rhetorical appeal." He responded to a mass base which was already there.

This is not to belittle Yablonski's tremendous contribution to the rank-and-file movement, but a failure to recognize the central role the rank and file played is insulting to the miners. The Black Lung Association was formed out of this Black Lung Strike of February and March 1969, and the BLA con-

sists of thousands of working and retired miners. While doctors played an important role in assisting the Association, it is run by the miners themselves.

Miners for Democracy did not challenge Boyle in 1969, since MFD was first organized at Jock's funeral, by the miners who wanted to carry on the struggle. While the coal companies fought the rank-and-file movement, it is not true that "militants were ferreted out of the mines" in this period. The miners were already strong enough to protect almost any of their number who stood up against the companies and got fired as a result.

Aronowitz makes no mention of the militant Disabled Miners and Widows Organization of southern West Virginia. This was the third group in the coalition which backed Arnold Miller in the recent UMW election. The men and women in this group played a key role in the Black Lung Strike. It is also noteworthy that Robert Payne, a disabled black miner, was elected President of this rank-and-file group. Charles Brooks, another black miner, was the first President of the Black Lung Association.

#### C. The Struggle Today

The struggle in the coal fields is certainly not over, as Aronowitz makes clear. The coal operators are already *making* assaults on the new UMW leadership, having made serious inroads with the appointment of CIA operative Meyer Bernstein as UMW Director for International Affairs. The role the notorious anti-Leftist lawyer Joe Rauh plays in MFD is another disturbing development.

But Aronowitz's prognosis for the future is a bit bizarre. First, he fails to recognize the tremendous impact the miners' victory is having on the rest of our trade union movement. . . . Nowhere does Aronowitz convey that the miners are playing a leading role for the whole American working class today.

While he does point out the importance of struggles for health and safety, he fails to mention other items high on the rank-and-file movement's own agenda: the organization of the non-union mines (which most definitely is possible), the fight against racism in the industry, and the opportunities to unite with workers in other industries to fight against the combined power of government and companies.

MFD has already raised the demand for a 30-hour week. (To demand a 15- or 20-hour week right off seems a little impractical.) The 30-hour week would both give more people more work, and make the mines safer, since the MFD platform called for a special safety shift.

But to demand the abolition of coal mining is absurd at this point in history—and probably at any point in history. Aronowitz offers no suggestion for alternate forms of employment. How many Appalachian people can you organize around a program to abolish coal mining? Unemployment is as high in these mountains as anywhere in the country. Coal mining is by far the biggest industry here. When Aronowitz chides MFD for not questioning "the existence of the job itself," he reveals how distant he is from the miners themselves.

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY IRWIN KLEIN

## In this issue

There is a strange and quite unique mood in the country as we send this issue to press. The "news" is dominated right now by the Watergate affair, which for the moment seems to have shattered the consensus Nixon had been consolidating out of the Paris agreements and the return of the POW's. Just underneath the Watergate headlines are the economic problems evidenced by inflation and its myriad ramifications, and the situation in Indochina, where Nixon is engaged in the savage bombing of Cambodia and seems to be on the verge of ordering a resumption of the bombing of Vietnam. The domestic counterpart of the Indochina situation is still being played out at Wounded Knee, where the government and its collaborators seem every day more anxious to settle the dispute in their preferred fashion.

Dan Georgakas' editorial puts the story of Wounded Knee in a context that has been noticeably absent from most other accounts of what has been happening there. Gwenda Blair's editorial on the meat boycott analyzes its limitations as well as its positive implications.

Meanwhile, partly as a result of the "cease-fire in Indochina" (a phrase which is an even less meaningful description of the state of affairs there than "protective reaction raids" was to describe General Lavelle's missions over North Vietnam), the anti-war movement is, to put it kindly, in a period of transition.

The women's movement is also "going through changes." Barbara Deming's essay discusses women's struggle as seen through an exploration of literature and speculates more generally on the future of sexuality. Ellen Cantarow's article deals with the women's movement in Italy and its relationship to the movement for workers' autonomy in the industrial cities of Turin and Milan. The first part of this article

was published previously in *Liberation* and is available for \$1.00. The interview with Pericles Korovessis, an exiled leader of the Greek resistance, speaks of the need to change peoples' state of mind in order to change (or get rid of) the state.

Irwin Klein's photographs are from his two unpublished books, *Enclosures*, photos of Manhattan 1964-69, and *The New Settlers of Northern New Mexico*. His work has been exhibited in the Museum of Modern Art and the George Eastman House. Irwin lives in Brooklyn and drives a taxi part-time. The cover photo of the Esso-Pappas refinery outside of Salonika, Greece, is by Paolo Zappaterra.

Our regular readers have probably noticed that we have changed the magazine's format as of the last issue. Specifically, we have incorporated book reviews, news notes, editorials, letters to the movement, and letters to us as regular features in each issue. The change is in response to suggestions from our readers, which we found persuasive, that the editorial content of *Liberation* should be more varied. Because we are keeping the magazine the same length, most articles will tend to be somewhat shorter. We encourage your contribution to any of the sections of *Liberation*, including news items or clippings for "Yesterday's Paper."

Finally, we urge subscribers who have received renewal notices to renew right away so that we don't have to rebill you.

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## NO STEAK IN THE SYSTEM

The nation-wide boycott of meat during the first week of April failed to achieve its announced goal of lower prices for red meat, but its several accomplishments and its implications for the future are significant. More people—tens of millions—engaged in protest action, however mild, than ever before in this country—more than for all the anti-war and civil rights marches of the past decade combined. The most immediate comparison is to the almost total lack of visible opposition to Thieu during his swaggering U.S. tour which occurred during the same week—CBS's most pointed criticism of Thieu during that week was for eating roast beef with Nixon.

To begin with, why was the boycott so successful in gaining adherents? The basic reason, of course, was the large increase in the price of meat over recent months, but the essential ingredient was the media's decision to support actively, through extensive coverage, a "nationwide meat boycott movement"—in effect, to create it. Overnight, the meat boycott, like Spiro Agnew, became a household word and as natural to take a position on as the World Series—and who, after all, is in favor of high prices for meat? The boycott appealed to people's desire to do something about the uncomfortable economic squeeze in which they found themselves and provided a way to do so which is safe, completely lawful, and totally non-threatening—even Julie Nixon planned to participate.

The limitations and flaws in the boycott were numerous: for example, it was clearly middle-class in conception and appeal, as poor people have been forced to "boycott"

meat all along; the immediate beneficiaries of the boycott if it did succeed in lowering prices would be those who didn't join it and were still buying meat; and those hardest hit by the boycott were the small, local groceries and farmers who didn't have any large, corporate cushion on which to ride out the boycott. However, the greatest problem with this method of protest is that it freezes the participant in the role of consumer, at the final receiving end of the line in the whole economic process known as capitalist production and distribution. It seriously hinders our recognition of our roles at other points in the economy, e.g. as producers, let alone any realization that action at those other points would be possible and effective in changing society.

The boycott has given us some new lessons in Nixonomics. On the one hand, we are advised to eat less meat and to rely on free competition in the marketplace to lower the prices; on the other hand, we are told that the boycott will, if anything, drive prices up. And at the same time, Nixon jettisons supply and demand and imposes a ceiling on meat prices. This latter act seems to imply that the price the market will bear isn't determined by supply and demand at all, but by the suppliers alone. In fact, that old free marketplace has about as much relation to reality as a Walt Disney cartoon. The food industry, like virtually every other industry in this country, is dominated by big monopolies—in this case, agribusiness—and part of the nature of monopolistic enterprise is that prices go up. Supply is manipulated and kept artificially low, directly through government subsidies which keep agricultural production artificially depressed and food prices artificially high, and indirectly by such maneuvers as the huge grain sales to Russia which keep cattle feed away from American herds, thus further reducing the amount of meat available.

The boycott, whose "leaders" are asking for a follow-up, two-day-per-week abstinence from meat and a major rollback of prices, has now been banished to the back pages, but it could turn into a Frankenstein monster for the media. They are trying to exploit it in what is ultimately no more than a sometimes acrimonious family quarrel with the administration, but the boycott may be generating forces which both the media and the administration will be unable to control. The failure of Nixon's last-minute ceiling to defuse the meat boycott is a striking indication of the willingness of people (including the media) to ignore self-serving, ineffectual paternalism when they finally have before them irrefutable facts—in this case, the steady rise in prices, particularly in food—which have a direct impact on their daily lives and which can't be explained away by government "experts." The *New York Times* reported on April 6 that the nation's rate of inflation for the first three months of 1973 was "the highest since the Korean war and well above the worst inflation rate of the Vietnam war years." The wholesale price index for March rose 2.2 per cent, having increased 21.5 per cent during the first quarter of 1973—inflation is not just a state of mind, as Nixon seems to imply when he exhorts us, in effect, to "defeat" it by positive thinking and changing our eating habits.



(continued on page 29)



# WOUNDED KNEE II

The Oglala Sioux Nation has been reborn at Wounded Knee. On March 18, 1973, 14 of the 18 traditional chiefs of the Pine Ridge Reservation issued a declaration of independence from the United States in which they affirmed the area held at Wounded Knee to be territory of the Independent Oglala Sioux Nation. The declaration of mainly old chiefs was backed by the generally younger armed militants of AIM (American Indian Movement) and other allied forces such as the Oglala Sioux Civil Rights Organization. The government has tried to pass off the declaration as basically a propagandistic ploy but the declaration centers on the very basic question of the relationship of Native Americans to the United States. Every major treaty guarantees the sovereignty of the Indian nations and every United States government has systematically violated that sovereignty.

Indian national sovereignty was recognized as far back as 1789 when the United States Congress decreed, "The utmost good faith shall always be observed toward the Indians; their lands and personal property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and in their property, rights, and their liberty they shall never be invaded or disturbed unless in just and lawful war. . . ." But the actual attitude of the government was more accurately conveyed by John C. Calhoun, who, several decades later, interrupted his defense of black slavery to declare, "The Indians are not in fact an independent people, nor ought they be so considered. They should be taken under guardianship and our opinions, and not theirs, ought to prevail in measures intended for their civilization and happiness." Official U.S. policy has always followed the policy described by Calhoun while utilizing the language of sovereignty. Thus, when the Indian Bureau in the 1860-1900 period outlawed Indian languages, Indian religions, Indian dress, and even Indian hair styles on reservations, it was with the "best needs" of the Indian in mind. In 1924 when the Indian Reorganization Act set up electoral procedures to replace traditional ways in a rigged system of registration which has disenfranchised 75 per cent of the Pine Ridge population, it was for the purpose of "furthering democracy." Thus, the push in the past ten years for the elimination or termination of all reservations with a final settlement of all legal and treaty claims is proposed solely so that the Indian can have a citizenship "equal" to that of other Americans.

Behind the various masks of Indian policy there has always been the desire to get full control of all Native American land and mineral wealth. The present Pine Ridge council under the leadership of Dick Wilson is just the latest instance in which the U.S. recognizes a handful of "co-operative" Indians as representatives of the entire nation. In the 1830s almost 80 per cent of the sums given to Indian nations to move westward went as personal gifts to a few leaders. In the 1870s, when the government was after Nez Perce lands, it accepted an agreement signed by one-third of the chiefs as binding on the whole nation. The proposed *final* financial settlements of recent years are made to small leadership groups with the explicit purpose of eventually terminating all reservations—which would mean the Native American people

would be giving up their last ancestral lands. The conquest of North America would then be complete.

From the occupation of Alcatraz to the invasion of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., Native American patriots have been insisting on their treaty rights. The seizure of the Bureau offices in Washington resulted in securing evidence of wholesale fraud, corruption, and graft in tribal affairs. The demands advanced at Wounded Knee go beyond Oglala grievances to touch on these broader problems. The major demand is that the Foreign Relations Committee and other agencies investigate federal violations of almost 400 treaties now supposedly in force. Almost as important is an investigation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which controls over one billion dollars annually. This money is supposedly spent on services for one million Native Americans; yet the majority of Native Americans live in such poverty that five of the major causes of Indian deaths are linked to malnutrition. A third major area of demands calls for the suspension of Bureau-backed tribal councils and the removal of Dick Wilson and other officials in terms which mean returning tribal government to the people.

The demands are interlocking and touch on every major area of Indian life. Enforcement of the treaties would mean victory in cases as varied as the fishing rights disputes in the Pacific Northwest, Cherokee land claims in the Carolinas, and Iroquois claims on their flooded lands in New York. Key in such disputes is the role of the Bureau. Indian agents and government offices have long been the center for the cheating and swindling of Indian people. Unless these officials are under popular tribal control, any agreements or programs are worthless. The treaty enforcement demand could conceivably be a United Nations affair, as the question is one of international and not domestic policy.

The poverty of many individual Native Americans masks the tremendous profit that is still being taken from Indian reservations. Most of the best land and the tourist industry are under the control of whites. As late as 1966, white multi-millionaires were grazing cattle on Pine Ridge grass for a mere \$10 a year fee. Under Bureau election rules a full-blooded Sioux who lives a few miles off the reservation for purposes of work may have no say in tribal affairs while a quarter-blood Sioux who leases land for a white-owned diner can vote and be an official. Similarly, which individuals can benefit from the millions spent on reservation projects and services—officially for the use of the general population—is determined by discriminatory rules.

If the agreement signed the first week of April between the federal government and the independent Oglala is fully honored, the Oglala have won major concessions. The U.S. has agreed to re-examine the 1868 Sioux Treaty in council with the traditional chiefs. The U.S. has agreed to investigate any violations of federal law throughout the reservation, especially abuses by the tribal government and local Bureau officials. The U.S. has agreed to audit tribal funds, federal funds, and police financing. The Justice Department has agreed to a civil-rights investigation to guarantee the political, legal, and civil liberties of individual Oglala against unlawful

*(continued on page 29)*



# yesterday's paper

## Ban on Honeywell

The Ann Arbor City Council has become the first municipal body in the nation to call for a complete boycott of Honeywell Inc. products "until and unless the corporation ceases production and development of antipersonnel weapons." The City of Ann Arbor based its resolution on the "Nuremberg obligations" to do what it can to insure compliance with international law. (*American Report*)

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## Slow but Steady

The Justice Department has come up with a new criminal code, designed to prevent leaks in "national defense information." The draft of the new code, 336 pages long, was designed to assure that, among other things, no "national defense information" would leak out during the trial of a person accused of violating the new code. The White House apparently had only one input into the draft bill, a request that it incorporate a provision reviving the death penalty that would survive scrutiny by the Supreme Court. According to Justice Department attorneys, the classified information section was not influenced by the prosecution of Dr. Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony J. Russo, Jr., for disclosing the Pentagon Papers. As proof, the attorneys noted that revisions of the laws in this area had been under study in the Justice Department for a dozen years before that case broke.

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## The Pope Says

Pope Paul has finally spoken out on women's liberation: "Real feminine emancipation is not the formalistic or materialistic equality with the other sex, but is the recognition of that which is

essentially specific in the female personality: women's vocation to be a mother." (New York Times 3/29/73)

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## Today's Paper

The *Liberated Guardian*, which was formed after a split in the *Guardian* staff in 1970, published its last issue in February 1973. During its last year the LG was published by those who remained after yet another split. Together with new members, they are now publishing *The New York City Star*. According to the "Collective Comment" in the first issue, the *City Star* will be a "progressive newspaper" that "speaks to the needs of many communities." The first issue is about evenly divided between articles on local New York City issues, such as the school board elections and daycare, and stories on national and international topics, such as Wounded Knee and political prisoners in Saigon. The paper is to be published bi-weekly and will also carry such regular features as reviews and restaurant write-ups. Subscriptions to the *City Star* are available at \$5.00 per year from *City Star*, 149 Hester St., New York, N.Y. 10001. It's free to GI's and prisoners.

\* \* \*

## The Free World

Commodore Gil Fernandez of the Philippine navy, commander of forces in Western Mindanao, reports that the Philippine government has stopped routine spraying of mosquitoes on the island of Tawitawi in order to combat Moslem guerrillas there with malaria.

"There is a lot of malaria down there," Fernandez said, "so we have stopped spraying. Sooner or later the rebels will be too weak to fight." (NYT)

## McGovern Territory

Secretary of Labor Peter J. Brennan was reported by *Newsweek* to be carrying a pearl-handled revolver in a hip holster during an appearance before the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce. "He goes into a lot of tough areas," his press assistant explained.

\* \* \*

## Levy Wins New Trial

Howard Levy, who spent over two years in prison for refusing orders to teach medicine to Army Special Forces agents bound for Vietnam and for making antiwar statements while in the military, had his conviction struck down by a U.S. Court of Appeals on April 18. A new trial was ordered on charges having to do with "willful disobedience of a lawful command." In an interview with a television reporter, Levy, who could still be forced to serve another year in prison, said, "It's really good to win sometimes. It restores my faith in the law—of probability."

\* \* \*

## Care Package

Thomas Oliphant, a reporter for the *Boston Globe*, was arrested on April 23 and charged with conspiring to violate the 1968 Crime Control Act after he wrote a first-person account for the *Globe* of an air drop of supplies to the Indians at Wounded Knee.

The Federal Government has charged him with conspiring to violate anti-riot provisions of the 1968 act with the intent to "aid and abet" persons who were "participating in carrying on a riot."

Also arrested in connection with the air drop of supplies, which did not include arms, were Robert Talbot, Wil-



liam Zimmerman, and William P. Wright.

\* \* \*

William Safire, former speechwriter for Nixon, joined the *New York Times* editorial staff just in time to write about Watergate as it was beginning to break. Safire stated: "Our political enemies and media critics, from Larry O'Brien and Frank Mankiewicz to the Washington Post's Ben Bradlee and Philip Geylin, were right to keep the heat on Watergate. . . . Hats off to you fellows for hanging in there, which is more than any of you ever said to any of us when the President's bombing of

today] that American planes continued raids against suspected Communist positions in Cambodia today for the 44th day. (NYT)

*Pretty "smart" bombs to pick out the Communists.*

\* \* \*

A Cambodian villager, interviewed by an American reporter south of Phnom Penh, said in mid-April that Vietnamese influence in the area was declining, "No Vietnamese have been fighting us here for months," she said, adding, "We always know when the Vietnamese are around—their presence here is just as noticeable as yours."

combination with reconnaissance vehicles, helicopter gunships, assault and anti-tank guns, and missile launchers, all of which will give the tanks a "look at the other side of the hill."

"We ought to be shot if it doesn't work," said Desobry.

*Either way we think he should get a fair trial.*

\* \* \*

From an interview with Nguyen Van Thieu in the April 2nd issue of *Le Nouvel Observateur*:

Q: According to you, is the U.S. ready to resume bombing in South and North Vietnam?

Thieu: I cannot tell you, but we have assurances that the United States will react in the case of a serious violation.

Q: What is a serious violation?

Thieu: It's for us to decide. For the U.S. to decide. Let's just say anything which goes beyond our capacity to defend ourselves. . . .

I would never again ask for American ground troops here. The Vietnamese troops are strong enough. Battles such as that at Quang Tri have shown that. We still have a need for the strategic and tactical support of American aviation. The South Vietnamese Air Force is not totally Vietnamized.

Q: You still need American planes based in Thailand, Guam, and on the aircraft carriers in the Seventh Fleet?

Thieu: If a North Vietnamese offensive gets beyond our capacity, the U.S. has its responsibilities. It may even respond before we ask.

Q: Without consulting you?

Thieu: After consultation with the South Vietnamese Government, of course, but the initiative would come from the United States. . . .

\* \* \*

#### Mr. Compassion

Henry Kissinger pleaded for public understanding in the Watergate case while in New York on April 23rd. He said it was difficult "to avoid a sense of the awfulness of events and the tragedy that has befallen people alleged to have done these things for whatever reason." (NYT 4/24/73)



Hanoi brought the North Vietnamese back to the negotiating table."

*They probably just have weak stomachs.*

\* \* \*

#### Guilty Until Proven Dead

PHNOM PENH, April 20— . . . American sources reiterated the belief that Cambodian insurgents themselves were not homogeneous in political orientation—that some were Communists and some adherents of Prince Norodom Sihanouk and that others belonged to different political factions. (NYT)

HONOLULU, April 20—The United States Pacific Command [said

#### Tooling up for a Generation of Peace

The Pentagon has approved plans for a battle-tank of the 1980's with unprecedented levels of fire-power, mobility, and protection.

"We've put it all together," said Maj. Gen. William R. Desobry, head of the 33-man army team that recommended production of the new tank. The specifications of the tank, which was designated the XM-1, have been sent to General Motors and the Chrysler Corporation. The two companies will report on their ideas for the new tank to the Army Materiel Command. Each new tank will cost about \$500,000 (in 1972 dollars).

Arguing that critics of the tank too often think of it as operating alone, Desobry noted that it would be used in



## an interview with pericles korovessis



# GREECE: PROMETHEUS BOUND

by dan georgakas

Comunidad

Six years after a group of colonels seized power in Greece, the long-range goal of their American sponsors—using Greece as a staging area for Middle East intrigues—has become unmistakable. Athens has become the largest U.S. “home” port in Europe, with nearly 10,000 permanent American military personnel and their dependents. The ships of the Mediterranean fleet may now make short and convenient cruises instead of the six-month-plus cruises required in the past. This surfacing of the U.S. military presence in Greece was preceded by a long period of covert influence.

The coup itself followed a precise NATO contingency plan which outlined all steps to be taken. George Papadopoulos, the strong man of the regime, was the head of KYP, the Greek secret police, and was the contact man with the American CIA. Andreas Papandreou, who held cabinet posts in the governments of his father, has revealed that throughout the Sixties the KYP was paid directly by the CIA. All of the colonels who took part in the coup had received lengthy training in the United States. The key financial figure involved with the Junta is Tom Pappas, the Boston industrialist who has raised millions of dollars for the election campaigns of Eisenhower, Nixon, and Agnew. Pappas proudly admits

that his foundation and other enterprises have been conduits for CIA money. Other American economic, political, and military aid continues without interruption even though Greece has been expelled from the Council of Europe and suspended from the Common Market. This absolute backing of a dictatorship based on torture has been a key element in the rising anti-Americanism in Greece.

The coup of April 21, 1967 is the most decisive counterrevolution in modern Greek history. It shattered 30 years of illusions. The Center was convinced that the U.S. would aid them in their course of Kennedy-style reforms and would never allow an open dictatorship. The Left believed that the U.S.S.R. would not allow open fascism to be reinstated in Europe. The whiplash of super-power reality shattered all the old parties, particularly the youth sections. Even notorious reactionaries such as the publisher Eleni Valchous came to question whether Greece should remain in NATO once democracy was “restored.” Centrists such as Andreas Papandreou became more explicitly socialist and called for some kind of Greek “neutrality.” The most significant changes, however, occurred in the Left, where the hegemony of the KKE (the Greek Communist Party) was destroyed. The U.S.S.R. acquiesced to the dictatorship. Aside from securing the release of some prominent KKE leaders, the U.S.S.R. has thwarted all attempts at armed struggle, retained diplomatic relations with the Junta, and continued an Eastern-bloc trade making up 25 per cent of Greece’s foreign commerce. These actions, coupled with the failure of the KKE to mount an

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effective resistance, have led Greek militants, particularly students and workers who were in Europe at the time of the coup, to reassess the history of the past three decades.

The dissidents were astounded that what had been a majority, mass-based movement could have been wiped out overnight. They looked at the period of the Resistance in which the same phenomenon had occurred. It soon became obvious that the long-standing contention that the foreign policy of Stalin had led the KKE to relinquish its then-uncontested military control over the country was indeed correct. The bitter civil war of the late Forties could now be seen as a desperate self-defensive measure on the part of the KKE to recover the ground lost as a result of its mistaken decision to allow British and monarchist troops to return unopposed to Greek soil in exchange for KKE participation in a government of national unity. Attention was drawn to the figure of Aris Velouhiotis, the de facto leader of 50,000 World War II partisans. Velouhiotis had opposed key party decisions and had eventually been expelled. Further study showed how the guerrilla tactics employed successfully by Markos on a national scale during the civil war had been changed to massing troops at the Yugoslavian border at the behest of Moscow as part of Russian maneuvering against Tito.

Transcending these specifics and particulars of Greek history was a rethinking of just what socialism meant in an underdeveloped country such as Greece and just what the nature of the revolutionary organization should be. Greek groups participated in the French events of May 1968 and Greek groups were in close contact with the extra-parliamentary, worker-oriented forces in Italy. The period of 1968-70 was marked by a rereading of Marx and Lenin and a serious study of Trotsky, Mao, Guevara, and Luxemburg. A book entitled Democratic or Socialist Revolution in Greece by Panetlis Pouliopoulos was particularly important. Pouliopoulos had been General Secretary of the KKE in 1924-25, but was later purged. His theoretical attack on KKE programs was based on Greek conditions and accurately predicted the catastrophes of the Forties, Fifties, and Sixties even though Pouliopoulos was executed by Italian fascists early in World War II.

The groups which sprang up from this ferment were frequently small; often they were short lived or merged into new formations. Some of the names they took were Forward, Resistance, Midwife, Workers' Power, Revolution, Group Aris Velouchiotis, Popular Revolutionary Resistance, Independent Left, and 20th of October. Some characterized themselves as followers of a specific revolutionary thinker such as Luxemburg or Mao and others thought of themselves as urban guerrillas in a generalized sense, but even the most sectarian sought some new thesis to bring the movement within Greece back to its mass base. The new groups shared the view that the parliamentary road was not possible in Greece and that socialist goals must be posited from the very beginning of any movement. The groups looked for support amid the many political exiles, the 200,000 Greek workers in Europe, and Greeks remaining in the homeland.

The interview which follows was done in London with Pericles Korovessis, an individual having a long history in the Greek movement without being a leader in the conventional

sense. Korovessis was not arrested the first night of the coup but was picked up later as a suspected member of the underground. He underwent brutal torture and was spared prison because the KYP said being with the "professionals" would turn him into a hard-core KKE member. Once released, Korovessis was able to escape from Greece and make his way to England where he wrote an account of his ordeal in a book called *The Method* in which he emphasized the American training and techniques of his torturers. Korovessis presented testimony before the Council of Europe which helped lead to Greece's expulsion from that body. His signed account of torture was published in the now-defunct *Look* magazine and was the first major media exposure in the United States of torture in Greece. Rather than dwelling on the torture issue, Korovessis addresses himself here to examining the nature of socialist revolution in Greece. His line of thought would have been scoffed at as romanticism before the coup of 1967. Today, it reflects what is fast becoming the dominant tendency in revolutionary thinking and acting about Greece. Even within the United States, publications such as *The Front Line* (Box 5128, Clinton, N.J. 08809) and organizations such as *Greek Socialist Liberation* (Box 794, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55440) have begun to promote these ideas within the Greek-American communities.

—Dan Georgakas

The Greek Junta is moving closer to a facade of democracy. Their friends in Washington advocate bringing back Costas Karamanlis [right-wing Prime Minister of Greece from the late Fifties through the early Sixties] or some other "respectable" leader to head up a showcase government. How do you feel about that?

The candidacy of Karamanlis is totally unacceptable. Should he be made Prime Minister again we would have to begin working against him just as we work against the Junta. From the first day we would seek to create a mass movement to depose him. I think this applies to all the old political figures. The Greek people want their freedom and they will not struggle for those men whose manipulations and politics resulted in the dictatorship of April 21, 1967. The needs of the Greek people are profound. Any new social arrangement must be one that shuts off the possibility of new juntas. To be very hard-headed, we could say that everything that was part of the system before April 21st contains the seeds of continuing juntas and must be rejected. This applies to the politicians of the Center Union and also to those in the United Democratic Left (EDA) who persist in the politics and methods that have already proved incapable first of preventing and secondly of overthrowing the dictatorship. We must be prepared for a new movement of the masses, a revolution, or the cycle will continue. The only need now is to work among the mass of people to construct groups prepared to carry out a socialist revolution.

What organizations or individuals seem to be working toward this new organization of the people?

They are generally people who have cut loose from their old ties and affiliations. Often they have split their



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**The Junta has put a rope around the neck of our people and it is choking them. Socialism cuts that rope and lets a man be free without substituting a new "you-must-do-this—you-cannot-do-that."**

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former organizations in trying to find a new path. They are people with a political history but people who have not become dogmatic. Their organizations are small and have the character of the movement which coalesced into the EAM-ELAS (National Liberation Front) during World War II. There are also people who were not very active before the coup but who are now very active. I believe this is the only sector where we can expect something to emerge. There are many problems, of course. The groups have been weakened by arrests. Some have been all but destroyed as organizations. In general, they work quietly, doing basic work within Greece and among the exiles. They avoid dramatics and do not engage in propaganda wars with one another. Those with an explicitly Marxist framework are better able to see clearly what has happened and to see what tasks are ahead. The question of overthrowing the Junta needs a serious analysis and ideology. Those who are bringing in new ideas—ideas that were not permitted in the old locked-in system, whether you were of the right or of the left—tend to be younger people. They tend to be the generation educated and raised since the Civil War. You can say it is the generation between 20 and 35. But of course there are many under that age level and some above it. Some of our older fighters have been able to continue developing their ideas in relation to the new problems.

**Do Greeks in this sector look more to China than to Russia, or perhaps to Cuba and North Vietnam?**

I would say that they are not so much interested in finding models of revolution elsewhere as in developing one of their own. Without minimizing the vast range of disagreements and shadings of ideology, they are characterized by a rejection of the kind of socialism the Soviet Union stands for. Some of them lean to Guevarism or Maoism. Others have a Trotskyist bent. While I don't think any of these lines are correct in themselves, what we seem to be doing is learning from all the experiences, from Vietnam and Korea, and even from the early period of the Soviet Union. We should use whatever helps to develop a new revolutionary Greek perspective. It is easier to say what *cannot* be used. We cannot be dogmatic. We cannot be Stalinistic. We cannot be rigid. We need an environment which is dynamic, liberating, open-minded. We need a movement which is open to whatever is true or seems to be true or promising. This is an extremely difficult task. What is called for is nothing less than a cultural revolution which deals with wide ranges of problems and thinking. So far I can say I'm fairly satisfied that we are making progress.

**Could you elaborate on this projected cultural revolution?**

I see Greek socialism as something quite beautiful. It's not like putting on a shirt whose collar is tight and strangles. The Junta is like that. The Junta has put a rope around the neck of our people and it is choking them. Socialism cuts that rope and lets a man be free without substituting a new "you-must-do-this—you-cannot-do-that." Socialism means that every idea and tendency is allowed to contend because you are not afraid that you seek what is not correct. This would be something very new in Greece for we have tended to create movements in which you had to subscribe to a creed rather than to a process. We were actually going backwards. We didn't know where we had come from or where we were going. We had joined together in a kind of haphazard coalition. There were things we didn't talk about and things we were forced to talk about. The new organization must have clear objectives from the first and it must allow the kind of personal freedoms within political life that we look toward as our ultimate goal. All the goals of the revolution must be part of the life as well as the rhetoric of the struggle. This must be true from the beginning, from the smallest groups and earliest meetings. That is, it must begin at this point and not as the movement grows broader.

**How does the past revolutionary experience of the Greeks relate to what you say?**

The mass revolutionary movements of the past expressed the best that our people are capable of. This goes back at least as far as the kleftic bands and continues through various struggles to the partisans of EAM-ELAS, who were a magnificent expression of the people's desire to command their own lives. The kleftic bands were half-outlaw and half-patriot groups formed during the four-centuries-long Turkish occupation which ended in 1821. The environment of the kleftic bands not only provided support for armed resistance but also represented the finest characteristics of our culture. The most beautiful songs and poems of our language are found among the kleftic ballads. They not only kept the language alive but showed that the language of the common man was capable of the highest artistic expression ever produced in Greece. All these things go together.

The klefts kept the vision of Greece alive in the mountains. Today there is a direct parallel, as once more our people are besieged. They are thinking hard about their condition. It's like being obsessed. The problem goes round and round in your head. You can't rest until you solve it. The socialist revolution has to think the same way. It must retain those things which are helpful for building the future even as it creates that future by its concrete acts.



Some writers have compared the Junta to a cyclops that is a perversion of the revolution, a one-eyed monster that has demished the old order in its own perverse fashion.

Every nation has a profound side which expresses the best ideas of that society. Every people also has another side which mirrors every fault and ill. We had the klefts and we had those who collaborated. We had partisans and we had traitors. We have the Junta, which expresses everything which is most narrow, most fascistic, most deceitful, and most repulsive in our society. The amazing thing is that so much vileness could have accumulated in so few men. Our history unfortunately is full of their type, men who collaborated with the Nazis, traitors of every kind. The Junta is the extreme reactionary and backward expression of all our right-wing parties and personalities.

Yet some of the traditional right-wingers have been in real opposition to the Junta. How does that fit into your analysis?

We must begin by saying that there are classes and that some classes profit more than others. In Greece, the ruling class tends to be in the service of another country. In this particular instance, that country is the United States. What makes this gang different from the others is that they are somewhat trickier. The others were clear about where they stood regarding class society, but this anti-Junta group makes

some fake moves in order to confuse us. If you look carefully, you will see who the real masters are.

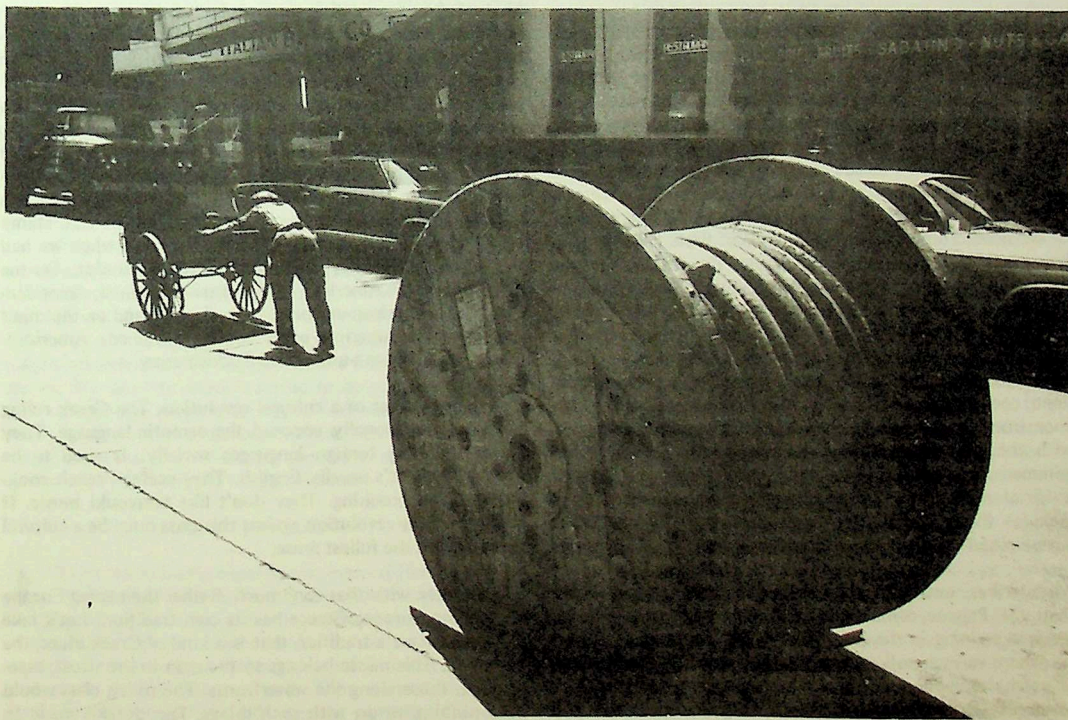
The Junta is in no way revolutionary. If you had collected 30 of its members in your house before April 21, 1967, they would have made demands, but not to overthrow the system which created them, only to strengthen it and to advance their own personal positions. Because they are so few, they must have a big show. They will need to deal with the others whom they used to work with. The Junta has temporarily knocked out the king and some professional politicians. Right now they are like demons off the leash, but you can be certain that in time they will bring back the king, that they will create a political party and have elections.

Would you call men like Onassis and Niarchos the real rulers?

Obviously they are big monopoly capitalists and in Greece they have almost complete freedom to do as they wish.

Jacqueline Kennedy's reputation as a liberal has been stained by her marriage to Onassis. Has she done anything to help the prisoners or otherwise acted on behalf of democracy in Greece?

She has done nothing of what she might have done. Her reputation among us is not good. The fashion magazines presented her as a model but she is no longer respected. She



*Little Italy, New York City*



used to be good-looking but now we say she does not look as well as she used to. Perhaps it is the climate. She is part of the ruling group, no different from the others.

**You seem to minimize the role of Niarchos and Onassis to some extent. What about Tom Pappas? His connections with Nixon, Agnew, and the CIA are almost as open as his connection with ESSO.**

Previous to the Junta, it was already known that Pappas was part of the CIA apparatus in Greece. He had worked with many different members of the right wing. It is difficult to know exactly what his personal preferences are or if he was a direct instigator of the coup. What is known is that from the first day his offices have been used by the Junta and that he has been extremely friendly with Colonel Papadopoulos. He has given numerous parties and conferences for the regime. Perhaps it means nothing but in the photographs of him and Papadopoulos together, Papadopoulos is always in a slightly lower position. Much more goes on than we can prove at the present time, but some things are rather open and clear-cut. I think almost everyone knows that Pappas is a personal friend and the main financial backer of Spiro Agnew. You may have the same saying we have: "Where there is smoke, there is fire."

**Do you think there is any chance that the Junta could take some weird turn to the left if Papadopoulos were replaced by younger members of the Junta with more independent ideas?**

I don't think there is any chance of that. They show absolutely no signs of what we might call Nasserism. To do that they would have to be sincere nationalists. They are not. They believe that to be a Greek is to be nothing, that to be a Greek is to be a servant. At least Nasser thought it was something to be an Arab, to speak Arabic, to have a history. The colonels only want a facade of Greekness to hide their hatred of being Greeks. They say they are performing a necessary operation, that Greece is on the operating table and needs to be cleansed. Think of the implications of that! That's coffeehouse talk. Every *taverna* keeper says, "I'm making you the best coffee in the world," but it's bullshit. They don't believe it themselves, which is why it sounds so bad. Most of their lives are involved with non-Greeks—with the outside, as it were. They are proud to have homes in other countries. They regard the Greeks as somehow quaint, good for changing the linen, cooking, and such. They cultivate a distance and difference from the average Greek. This is so absolutely the case with the Junta that I don't see the possibility of even a glimmer of nationalism. The only thing you see is a kind of artificial nationalism, a nonsensical conglomeration (which includes the thoughts of Colonel Papadopoulos) that they have cooked up. This cannot be taken seriously. It is a joke.

**What strikes American observers of the Junta as more sinister than the Pappas contact is that almost all of the colonels received training in the U.S. It is as if Greece is an American lab where various police methods are being tested. The kind of psychological and technical torture discussed in your book seems beyond the scope of the Greek government. Do you**

**think it's possible that what has happened in Greece might be a prelude of what is in store for American dissenters?**

I believe it. In countries where there is a deep and dynamic movement such as we had in Greece, there is very little alternative for the American interests. The world is rising up, seeking better things. So many countries are on the edge of revolution. Where the situation gets acute, I think you must expect what happened in Greece. That is their strategy. Wherever you get a revolutionary situation, you will see a Junta set up—more leftist, perhaps, or more rightist, or with some peculiar frill, but the same general model with the same general techniques. You can expect this even in America where the movement seems to be growing all the time.

**In your own experience as related in your book, the Junta seemed to want to change your thinking. They knew you couldn't be made to love Big Brother but at least you could be made to recognize his power and accept it. The desire to actually change your thinking seems a subtlety beyond the Junta's range and something more significant than the U.S.-aid items they like to sport in front of torture victims.**

This is true, yet it is not new. You must go back to the beginning of this phase, to when the Americans first came to Greece under the Truman Doctrine. They made tremendous propaganda for the American way of life, its things, its ideology, even its imperialism. Some of these were good but the center of American penetration was the army and it was that kind of Americanization they projected. Their radio station was the biggest and best paid in Greece. It was tireless in its pro-American campaigns. American libraries were nothing but propaganda centers for American politics, not the American life lived by most Americans but the ideological America which wages imperialist wars. Greece found it necessary to fight in Korea of all places! How many of us fought and died there cannot be known. We didn't know why. We had no interests there. This adulation of the American military was so thorough that everything in the army has the U.S. stamp on it. I mean that literally. During the period when we had the crisis with Turkey, there was a strange paradox. On the one side was an American-paid, American-trained, American-equipped, American-uniformed Greek army and on the other side was an American-paid, American-trained, American-equipped, American-uniformed Turkish army.

**You spoke earlier of a cultural revolution. The Greek ruling class had traditionally opposed the demotic language. They prefer speaking foreign languages socially. It used to be French. Now it's usually English. They prefer French cooking to Greek cooking. They don't like bouzouki music. It seems that any revolution against this class must be a cultural revolution in the fullest sense.**

I agree with that very much. Rather than aping Europe or needing Europe, Greece has its own tradition. Let's take music. We have a tradition that is a kind of Greek blues, the bouzouki. This music belongs to the man in the street, especially to those along the waterfronts. The ruling class would have nothing to do with such things. Theodorakis made an



immense breakthrough when he created *liaki* (people's music). The streams of popular feeling he sought to release were immense rivers of popular culture. The songs almost immediately became overtly political because of the history of Greece and the naturalness of this medium of expression. Theodorakis' music was a political experience of the first order. This brings us directly to the question of cultural revolution. Our demotic songs are particularly interesting in that respect. You find them everywhere. They have Arab and Albanian elements, as well as their own regional qualities, but there is a definite Greekness which unites all the disparate elements which have come into them. There is nothing static about them, nothing uniform. That should be the general dynamic of our culture. We should concentrate on the techniques which relate as directly as possible to the needs of the people. Rather than having them hide their fears or doubts,

tent that allowed them to draw parallels with their own life. We were not so concerned with what the play was or the manner of production. We would cut and simplify as needed, eliminating most of the academic material. The plays were a vehicle for us, even a weapon if you want to call it that. Others were doing similar things in film, painting, and writing. After the Junta, most of us were imprisoned, forced into exile, or made to go underground. A few have accommodated themselves to the situation. They need not praise the regime or denounce us. Just by allowing their work to go on, they support the Junta. They lend their names to the Junta, so to speak. The overwhelming majority of artists, however, have refused to do this, especially those who see a fundamental relationship between art and politics. I believe that if you speak out on any subject, if you create anything you expect the public to pay attention to, then you already are doing

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**The colonels believe that to be a Greek is to be nothing, that to be a Greek is to be a servant. . . . They only want a facade of Greekness to hide their hatred of being Greeks. . . . They regard the Greeks as somehow quaint, good for changing the linen, cooking, and such.**

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let people give expression to them, just as they express joys and sorrows. Let them be with truth and in truth. If they once conceal the truth, they will get into the habit of doing so. Everything they create will have that quality and thus it will ultimately be false and untrue, unstable, unworkable.

**Before the coup you were acting in a theater that did plays for workers. How do you relate that to this cultural revolution?**

That's a difficult question. I believe you develop your talent and your technique in order to do certain social work. We started in a university and then moved out into small halls in working-class areas. We were kept from using the streets by the police, but at least we had reached into the neighborhoods and the workers didn't have to travel far to see us. We went to them wanting to do political work and tried to present plays that would have meaning for them. After a performance we had discussions about the play, which often led to our learning about the problems and concerns of the people in the neighborhood.

**What kind of plays did you perform?**

There were many experiences, many different types of plays. We ended up doing mostly Greek works dealing with the present and satirical comedies because the workers told us they didn't come to the theater to see tears. They had worked from seven in the morning until ten at night and sometimes on Saturdays as well. They wanted to relax a little, to lighten up. We did classical comedies for them: Moliere, Goldoni, Aristophanes. These comedies had a con-

politics—although rather than enlightening others, many of us only succeed in further blinding them.

**Whether you speak of politics or art, the cultural or the political revolution, all of which are obviously woven together in your thinking, you seem to emphasize the rather classic virtue of truth with a capital T.**

Well, our job is to express truth, to help others express their truth. If one deals with hidden truths or covered-up truths, one deals with false issues leading to false solutions. We must help our people be brave enough to express the truth and deal with it, especially the man or woman who labors, the man or woman who has nothing of her/himself and must sell her/his labor. Our work must center on helping her/him to liberate her/his truth. When we say socialism, when we say revolution, what we have in mind should not be simply to make bigger and better material goods. It is false to say that this is what socialism and revolution are about. We are not interested in well-dressed and well-fed robots. The question is to begin now, at the beginning, as part of the revolution, as part of the solution, to break those habits, thoughts and prejudices which have enslaved us for centuries. This includes the question of women, the church—everything, now, from the start. These things should not be postponed into the future or their relative importance endlessly debated. People will come from the beginning for their direct liberation or you will find them dropping away somewhere along the way because they thought we would only count to eight. People who come for their direct liberation will push the revolution so that every ten, eleven, twelve, what-have-you, can be reached as quickly as possible.





*Metropolitan Museum, New York City*

Could you expand on the position of women in Greece? The Democratic Army of 1946-49 had women as 25 per cent of its front-line fighters at one time. EAM-ELAS also had many women fighters and leaders. Yet the Greek woman seems worse off than ever.

Yes, the place of women in Greece is dreadful. A woman is considered to achieve success only through her husband's accomplishments. She is one of his objects, part of his household goods. She is denied independence, first by her parents, then by her husband, and very often through institutions of law and custom. There are even areas where if a wife

or daughter smiles at another man, the husband or father can kill her and get at most only a light sentence of a few years in the county jail. The village will accept him back and even honor him for defending his rights. This isn't so common, but it still happens. It shows how far we have to go. Women are not well educated and when they are educated it is generally with the idea of achieving a good marriage. A woman is judged by the closeness her husband has to men like Pappas, Niarchos, Onassis. Direct marriage to such a figure would be the ultimate achievement. But to do that she would have to be an "exceptional" woman with a great distaste for things Greek. This view of woman as an object is deeply rooted. In



the last few years this has begun to break down, especially among the young, but the problem is enormous. Even in the Democratic Army and the EAM-ELAS it is a mistake to think of women fighters as liberated. They struggled to create new relationships, but we must admit, with pain, that they failed. It even came about that if a man had an affair with a woman guerrilla he had to marry her. There were thousands of such marriages, often ending in divorce. This wasn't liberation, but a new kind of authoritarianism with the revolutionary leadership acting as irate fathers. The situation in those armies was of course better than in normal Greek society. Women had responsibility and authority. They were treated with far greater respect than before. Some progress was made, but the basic task of the liberation of Greek women remains.

No matter where one starts discussing Greece it always ends with the enormous problems left by the bitter failures of the past. The Greeks have mounted two unsuccessful armed revolutions since 1940. Some groups believe the Greeks have suffered too much. You spoke of workers who wanted to laugh a little. Are the Greeks tired? Will the colonels remain just as Franco has remained?

I reject that line of thinking. I don't believe it for an instant. It rests on a misconception of what a people is. A people is not an animal—a race horse, say, that you allow to rest up so that he will then run faster than ever. Our situation allows for nothing but revolution. When you are in a closed room where the only escape is through an open window and a wild creature bursts through the door, you jump! You don't have any choice. It's not a question of Greeks being tired. This time the Greek people will be very careful. That's a sign of their political sophistication. The dangers and the opportunities are immense. It's not at all a matter of being tired. Sooner or later there must be an armed resistance. The blows being suffered by the people are intolerable and they will rebel. The revolutionary cadres will be ready at that moment for a struggle that will not be a mere episode but a true revolutionary process to wipe out the Junta and the entire environment which created it. Armed revolution is not something one wants. Armed revolution is not something pretty. No one asks for armed revolution. No one calls it a good thing. But there is no choice. It is the only struggle we can make. We are like a parent holding a child and someone has come to take that child. We have a knife. We must strike.

The Junta is like a steady surgical attack on the people. Day by day it cuts deeper and demands more. Every day the people realize it must be driven away, but the revolution is not only what the revolution makes, it is the way in which the revolution moves. It is the new relationships. The revolution is the faith, ideology, and relationships which develop in the course of a process culminating in the seizure of state power.

Most anti-Junta groups seem to operate on a far less ambitious level. They appeal to international bodies such as the Red Cross, Amnesty International, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations. Is there any value in those pressures?

They are not a bad thing to do. On the other hand, when they become the only thing you are doing, they are not very effective. Had such actions gone hand in hand with an organization of the people, then they would have had a tremendous effect. They could trigger off profound resistance. Such efforts are not bad even in isolation but they just don't produce anything concrete or lasting.

Most anti-Junta groups emphasize the tortures and the need to return to pre-April 21st "democracy." It seems to me people are not going to move on either of those bases. They are horrified by the torture but they aren't going to risk their lives in order to return to a situation that only looks good now in comparison with its ultimate product, the Junta.

Mistakes of that kind result from an incomplete analysis of the Junta. The colonels are represented as a group of hoodlums. They are treated only as a kind of joke. The situation within Greece is different. People are slowly being educated through the secret radios, clandestine press, and just by living under the regime. It is clear they are being educated and are not at all docile. They have shown themselves ready to act but they see no clear alternatives. They are presented with a kind of compromise that undercuts their enthusiasm to mount the necessary struggle. Too many times they are only given a rehash of all the old ideas crowned with a solution that can only lead to some new kind of junta, just as those solutions in the past led to this Junta. You do not teach someone to count only up to eight. You do not say nine and ten and beyond do not exist. You give people everything or they are not able to count at all. There is a real revolution or none at all. ●

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## eros in an insect

Do you know I like your butterflies best?  
The source of dancing cats  
Those colored bits who after eating flower's juices  
Fly in drunken paths through summer afternoons.  
Sometimes; drunk myself,  
I enter into smokey buttercups  
And rest on yellow walls;  
Then dip my naked lips  
And drink again,  
The golden swirling dust of dreams.

—James Barry





*East Broadway, New York City*

Excerpts from a Diary:

Part II

**WOMEN'S LIBERATION and WORKERS'  
AUTONOMY in TURIN and MILAN**



Milan is big. Not graspable, as was Turin, a small, eighteenth-century city surrounded by hills. Turin's beauty surprised me all the more because I'd expected it to be Italy's Detroit architecturally as well as industrially. Its proletarian neighborhoods, cast in the same eighteenth-century mold as its central tourist area, comprise the major part of Turin—*are* Turin. Milan, on the other hand, is not a proletarian city. It is less of a piece architecturally. More cosmopolitan. More bourgeois. More "American." It has more faceless glass and cement buildings, more urban renewal, more of a feeling of alienation. In a sense it is epitomized by its vast central Piazza del Duomo, which is like Italy's 19th century meeting Times Square. At one end stands the cathedral, at the other there are office buildings. At the top of one of the corner buildings is one of those long black strips that flashes ticker-tape news reports. On either side, 19th-century buildings and arcades alternate with Italy's version of East 60's Deli Modern (sandwich and hot buffet bars with tinted wall-length windows, wine-colored carpeting, imitation crystal chandeliers, the works).

This morning I go to the *Manifesto* office, a twenty-minute walk from the Piazza del Duomo. The office is down the Via San Gottardo, off the interior court of what seems a 19th-century palazzo. From the main street you enter through large, oak doors, then walk round a shadowed passageway that smells damp and cold, like a cellar. The interior court bursts upon you. Across this, at the top of a steep, narrow flight of stairs, is the *Manifesto* office—a large, bare room off of which there are several smaller offices. The large room is unfurnished, save for a clot of chairs and a couple of tables left over from a recent meeting. Stacks of mimeographed leaflets rise at intervals along the wall nearest the entryway. On one wall: DON'T FORGET THE SUBSCRIPTION DRIVE! EACH COMRADE MUST SELL 10 SUBS MONTHLY! Several posters line the walls, all from the recent failed electoral campaign. Valpreda gazes down at me. Banners from a foiled past; winds across empty spaces . . . And yet work obviously continues. There is the national daily. There are a myriad of projects on various job- and community-related issues. There is a forum series this week on high-school organizing, and the relation between student organizing and the fall industrial contracts.

I have come to visit Pietro, a teacher and a member of *Manifesto*'s central committee. His major political work is in the Milan Tenants' Union, whose work I wish to know more about, since I work for a tenants' organization in Cambridge. The Milan Tenants' Union is a mass organization that treats not just housing problems, but a variety of issues pertaining

to city living and including, for example, transportation. The organization's ideology is attractive, at once clearly socialist and nonsectarian. The union's literature makes clear that the organization considers housing but one element in the lives of workers, and that the badness of proletarian housing is linked to the badness of proletarian schools; to the scarcity, exorbitant costs and "bad delivery" of services like transportation and medical care; and to relations of production.

Pietro uses a large wall map that hangs beside his desk to review the city's development since World War II. He shows me the areas of greatest proletarian concentration, and within these, the neighborhoods where the Southern emigrants live. The struggle for housing may be easier here than in the States, he observes, if only because there is one clear and demonstrable enemy—the Public Housing Authority. In the tenants' movement there have been notable successes—a real, though sporadic, squatters' movement, and here, in Milan, a city-wide tenants' union with a real, mass base.

But on any other score, continues Pietro, organizing is hard. For example, the connections that must be made between factory and community struggles are accepted with great reluctance on the part of the worker in his capacity as community resident. The point, he reflects, is that workers' lives are fragmented. They see themselves as workers on the one hand, as tenants on the other, as parents on still another hand. And whereas they may be very militant in their capacity as workers, and comparatively advanced in political consciousness, as parents they are conservative, even reactionary. This, he continues, is because they see their children as property, as an investment. The whole ideology of capitalism crystallizes peculiarly in this area. Pietro's conclusion is that if political consciousness and activity are to develop most fruitfully, it will be necessary to criticize severely the role of the nuclear family, and to project its future dissolution. Otherwise, workers in their capacity as parents won't be able to understand basic issues—for example, the tracking system in education and the job market. They will continue to be co-conspirators with the class enemy in their desperate attempt to "improve the lot" of their children as compared with their own.

I ask Pietro whether he sees any relationship between this line and arguments that the women's movement may have made. At this question he halts, smiles slightly. He really isn't all that familiar with what is happening among women's groups, he says, though he understands the importance of the women's movement. He's aware that the women's movement is a mass one in the States, and may have raised such issues more cogently than the Italian women's groups

by  
ellen cantarow

*The first part of this article, focusing on Turin, appeared in the October 1972 Liberation. Both parts were edited for Liberation and will appear in longer versions, together with other essays, in a forthcoming book. In this second part of the article, unlike the first, names (all pseudonyms) are used rather than initials. The two pieces were the product of a visit Ellen Cantarow made to Turin and Milan in the spring of 1972; in January-February 1973 she went again to Italy and has added a postscript updating and amplifying her view of the situation there.*



have done so far. His attitude discourages further conversation on this point.

To be blunt, the situation of women on the left here is deplorable. Treating women as sex objects is not only commonplace, but no one outside of women's groups feels such episodes are offensive. No doubt they are taken for granted as human moments that lighten the day and lend humor to the hard work of organizations on the left; no doubt it is taken for granted that relations between men and women comrades must be so, and are normal and fun this way. For me, it's very hard to take. I walked into a movement office one day to find a group of young men theorizing about the Italian economy. On the lap of one sat a young woman. She gazed at him adoringly, nuzzled his ear, while over her head—literally and figuratively—he carried on a lengthy debate with the comrades. He punctuated his remarks by gesturing elaborately with one hand, while with the other he caressed the young woman, absently, as one would a dog.

As for women's participation in the work of *Manifesto*, it's not that there aren't powerful women on the central committee. But these are older people of vast political experience in the CP and the other parliamentary parties (the younger women students remain in the organization's lowest echelons). Rossana Rossanda, for example, was one of the original founders of *Manifesto*, a former member of the Italian CP's central committee. She is reputed to be one of the organization's chief theorists and one of its two or three major figures. But such older people exert no feminist influence on the organization's development. Although in *Manifesto*'s first comprehensive political statement, "200 Theses for Communism" (1970), there were several references to the failure of the international Communist Party in the West to take account of the subordinate social and economic position of women, this theoretical recognition of the problem doesn't seem to be reflected in any way in the current daily practice of *Manifesto*'s local chapters.

Years ago the Communist Party formed a mass women's organization called *Unione delle Donne Italiane* (the Italian Women's Union). UDI's accomplishments seem mainly to have been in legal reforms. They've gotten day-care and maternity-leave laws passed, as well as other laws that are supposed uniformly to apply to all communities and to all of industry. Apparently the laws are enforced, but given the prevailing sexism of the society, they often have little meaning. I've heard from various women comrades that maternity-leave laws open the door to widespread discrimination—women are kept in low-paid, low-status jobs because it's expected they'll take advantage of their legal prerogative. The law serves to keep women in the place to which society consigns them—motherhood. However, it's not the law itself that permits the discrimination, but the absence of a mass feminist movement to reinterpret the law and put pressure on industry to promote and hire women. And up to now there hasn't been the glimmer of a possibility that such a movement could exist.

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Tonight I have dinner at the home of my main contacts here—Franco and Margherita. The couple live in a working-

class section of the city. With them lives Antonella, a woman *emigrata* (one of the millions of people who have been emigrating to the industrial North from the South of Italy over the past eighty years or more; the exodus has become concentrated and massive over the past five years).<sup>\*</sup> Antonella is from Naples, and works at the Borletti factory, which produces sewing machines. Later I learned that she is quite militant; in the factory where she works, she ranks as an advanced cadre. But she entered very little into any political discussions Franco, Margherita and I had, perhaps because of my foreignness and my class.

Franco, who describes himself as a Marxist and a revolutionary, works as a public relations man at Alfa Romeo. Such a combination of job and political stance doesn't seem unusual here. Margherita is a nursery-school teacher. She has written a pamphlet called "Bambini, Mani in Alto!" (Hands Up, Kids!), an indictment of nursery-school education in Italy. A socialist analysis, it describes the function of the nursery school in the Italian tracking system. Nursery school begins a training in discipline, where the rhythms of industrial life under capitalism are instilled early into Italian children. The pamphlet is also a feminist statement. It is written by women teachers and by mothers. It continually emphasizes the role women are forced to play as collaborators with the ruling class, instilling severity and conformity, passivity and regimentation, the qualities demanded of the working class by capitalism. "The struggle against exploitation," ends the introduction, "must also be carried on through the *scuola materna* (the "maternal," or nursery, school). Putting oneself on the side of the children means beginning to remake school, family, society, in short everything!" Margherita herself is in no formal women's group. Her women's group is on the job.

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After dinner, Franco and I go to a meeting at the home of Donatella and Giorgio, who is a white-collar worker at Alfa Romeo and a delegate to Alfa's factory council. The council, it turns out, is in this case the expression of dissident rank-and-file sentiment—Alfa's *autonomia operaia* grouping.<sup>\*\*</sup> The meeting is on the fall contract, and how the council is to approach the platform that's been drawn up by the coalition of autoworkers' unions. We arrive to find five men seated around a long, low, modern coffee table in a fashionably modern apartment. In one corner of a deep, handsome sofa is huddled a woman, obviously the wife of one of the men. Donatella, Giorgio's wife, exquisitely made up and dressed with the elaborate care I associate especially with Italian women, ushers us into the room and from then on proceeds to play the role of hostess, pouring wine, attending to everyone's needs. I learn from Franco that several of the men are

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<sup>\*</sup>See Part I ("Women's Liberation and Workers' Autonomy in Turin and Milan," October 1972 issue of *Liberation*) for a longer account of the situation of the *emigrati*.

<sup>\*\*</sup>See Part I (*Liberation*, October 1972) for more detail on *autonomia operaia* and the groups that represent it in Turin.



white-collar workers at Alfa. A couple are lineworkers. Not surprisingly, all are from the South—Giorgio and Donatella are from Sardinia; one of the lineworkers, Pepino, is from Naples.

Several copies of the platform lie on the coffee table. The platform is entitled, "Al Contratto con l'unita" (To the Contract in Unity). It is prefaced with the approval of the United Executive of Auto Workers, a coalition of unions. The title of the contract is historically significant. After "the hot autumn" of 1969, when workers all over Italy staged massive strikes, taking by complete surprise the companies and unions alike, the unions saw that it was necessary to regain the allegiance of their rank and file. The economic situation in the country was extremely bad. In their desire to prevent strikes, enlightened capitalists like Pirelli (rubber industry) and Fiat pushed for tighter relations among the three national unions. They wanted the unions to be their watchdogs, keeping the lid on rank-and-file militancy, and they saw unification as the means to that end. Their desires coincided with the unions' own aims. Of course, there were political differences among the unions. CGIL (of which the autoworkers' unions are part) was historically affiliated with the Communist Party; Cisl was connected with the Christian Democratic Party; UIL was a Social Democratic and Republican union. From the post-war years through the Fifties, the two latter unions had collaborated in isolating CGIL and in the repression of CGIL members by Italian capital. Now, however, the three drew together in the face of the crisis posed

by "the hot autumn," during which the workers had demonstrated to both unions and capital their ability to act on their own—and in so doing, to throw the country into upheaval.

But *unita sindacale*, as it turned out, was achieved only at the top of the labor bureaucracy. Between 1969 and 1970, rank-and-file workers continued to stage wildcat strikes, and thereby to demonstrate that they were capable of acting without the guidance of the labor bureaucracy, and that they were also capable of opposing militantly the strategies of the ruling class. So it was that in 1970 Italian capital withdrew its support from "union unity," and many forces in Cisl and UIL followed suit. The one union that as a whole kept to "union unity" was CGIL. Cisl and UIL split on the issue; only certain elements of their hierarchies and constituencies continued to ally with CGIL on the question.

Thus, the contract before us represents a fairly complex historical and political situation. For one thing, it represents the desire within the national labor bureaucracy on the left to continue a policy abandoned both by big capital and by the labor bureaucracy from the center to the right. In this sense it represents a statement of principled opposition. It also continues to project greater centralization as an objectively progressive aim, though perhaps not for the reasons originally projected by the labor bureaucracy. Finally, the contract clearly reflects Italian CP policy, which of course dominates the direction of CGIL, and as such bespeaks the contradictions of the present situation of the rank and file vis-à-vis the Communist Party on the one hand, and the un-



Lower East Side, New York City



ion bureaucracy on the other. On the one hand the rank and file is dissatisfied with the CP as a political party and with the unions as the sole framework of workplace organization. On the other, *autonomia operaia* hasn't so far been able to generate coherent organization and strategy.

Therefore, certain leaders in the workers' autonomy movement seem to feel that the contracts must be dealt with as a reality. They can't be shunted aside in the vain hope that spontaneous actions by the rank and file will be sufficient in and of themselves to oppose the ruling class and to develop new, working-class economic and political organizations.

The point the men are now discussing is the first item in the autoworkers' platform, the famous *inquadramento unico* (single grouping) described in Part I of this article. Giorgio and Pepino tell me that in 1970 there was a very important strike at Alfa, one that resulted in a significant concession by management: after several months of work at Alfa, new workers would rise automatically from the lowest job classification to the next lowest. It is highly important, Giorgio and Pepino continue, that this gain not be erased in the fall contract struggles. Thus it is important that the autoworkers' unions be held strictly to the new categories they propose. In the single grouping to be made of blue- and white-collar job classifications, the union platform now proposes five classifications. It is entirely possible that when push comes to shove against the companies, the unions will fudge and introduce subcategories that actually create more than the existing five classifications. It is crucial that this not happen, and therefore imperative that debate and struggles be carried on around this point of the unions' platform.

Single grouping can't be junked. This would be impossible; it would be suicidal for the factory council to pose maximalist alternatives. Ideally, of course, there would be only two categories for each larger division of labor—blue- and white-collar (or unskilled and skilled). But it is folly to think of posing such ideal categories at present; there's been no long-term preparation for such a struggle. It is therefore essential to push for gains that are valid even though, Giorgio observes, rank-and file consciousness has surpassed what the unions are now proposing.

Posing short-term goals for the rank and file, and opening the possibility of struggle for clearly obtainable ends, will give the rank and file a sense of its own power. One such goal is the stipulation that succession from the lowest to the next-lowest categories happen only on the basis of seniority, a mechanism that would drain succession of its usual ideological implications. Between tasks on the assembly line there aren't real gradations of difficulty. The notions of "mastery" and "expertise" are tools in the hands of management to control the workers. It is the great advance of the Italian workers not simply to have realized this, but to have articulated it continually in the strikes occurring in 1969 and since.

On the other hand, particular goals like these are valid only insofar as the rank and file identifies with them, struggles for them, and wins them. Only through such struggle and the discussion that goes along with it can real consciousness be raised. Only through active engagement will the possibility for future, more advanced, more highly organized struggles be created. This notion is quite different from the essentially

anarcho-sindicalist view of the Fiat comrades in Turin—that the cadre of *autonomia operaia* must enter into "moments of struggle" as these erupt. But how do these moments erupt and what is the role of the advanced cadre in preparing for them? The Fiat comrades never answered this question. It seemed that they were depending on the spontaneity of the rank and file for answers, that they thrust aside the difficulties posed by the low level of organization among the scattered groups of the workers' autonomy movement.

Pepino, Giorgio and another comrade assure me that the fall contracts aren't final and definitive. In Italy there is still far greater rank-and-file participation in the shaping of the contract than there is in America. The factory councils, which are nominally—and, in cases like Alfa, actually—separate from the unions, have the power to call strikes between triennial contracts, and until now the unions have gone along with strikes which, in America, would be wildcats. An article by Lucio Magri in the June 20 *Manifesto*, however, reports that unions are now talking about assuming all power for calling strikes. This will undercut the power of the councils as these are understood at present. "Up to now," writes Magri, "the right of the workers and of their councils to struggle, not giving the least damn about the political philosophy of the union coalitions, had been permitted to survive... moreover, on certain occasions... this right had become the basis on which to build a new sort of union. For a long time this was the real, disruptive innovation of social struggles in Italy—not only that the struggles were sharp, and existed outside of the ordinary contractual procedure, but that the unions covered for, or at times even stimulated, such struggles. Today, however, the document [just issued by the unions and entitled, "On the Political Economy and on the Contracts," the subject of Magri's article] clearly states: let's still consult the workers and their councils, but in reality, even on the shop level, let's have the decisions made by the unions."

Apparently this hasn't happened yet, although it seems a logical succession to the earlier strategy of Italian capital, "union unity." As far as I can tell, Giorgio, Pepino and the others assume that rank-and-file wildcat strikes will continue to be endorsed by the unions.

*Sunday, June 18, Milan*

Pepino, the lineworker comrade, and his wife Maria Teresa (who was asleep on the couch during the meeting the other night) pick me up to take me to Giorgio and Donatella's for Sunday dinner. Maria Teresa apologizes for having been out of it the other evening. As I talk with her and Pepino, my impression of their relationship changes. I had assumed she was entirely subordinate to Pepino, but that is not at all the case. She is the sister of Antonella, who lives with Franco and Margherita. Like Antonella, Maria Teresa used to work at the Borletti factory. She left the job because it was mind-deadening, and it was taking a toll on her health. Now she works as a door-to-door saleswoman, a job she doesn't much enjoy; on the other hand, anything would be better than working on the line. Moreover, since Maria Teresa works for a big chain, there's an established customer list, a regular clientele; she needn't fear being continually turned away when she calls and can even build up friendly relation-



ships with her customers. This is what makes the job not only bearable, but sometimes mildly interesting. While Maria Teresa talks, Pepino listens quietly. He never interrupts, though occasionally, when she pauses, he interposes a remark which is supportive of her and at the same time elaborates her remarks for me.

When we arrive, Donatella ushers us onto the terrace. There, we are seated under parasols in low, comfortable garden chairs. Giorgio and Donatella's little boy is playing with a tricycle. The two other women begin a conversation; they excuse themselves and go to the kitchen while Giorgio, Pepino and I sit outside.

Both Giorgio, who is a technician at Alfa, and Pepino, are intellectuals. They represent a group whose active existence in the States is nearly if not entirely impossible. They are part of a group of people who haven't gone through the mills of "higher education," who work in the factories in either white- or blue-collar jobs, and who clearly constitute a growing working-class intelligentsia that is active in advancing and creating proletarian ideology. Both Giorgio and Pepino, for example, have written material that has circulated widely among Alfa workers generally, as well as among workers in other plants. Some of these remind one of the documents that came out of university strikes in America: for example, "Who Rules Columbia?" and "How Harvard Rules." One document, written by workers at a particular plant, is a lengthy diary, a first-person plural account of a strike that happened a couple of years ago, tremendously moving in its personal particulars and awesome in its analysis of tactics and strategy. Similar Alfa documents discuss the historical development of the firm, its role in the development of capitalism, its power structure—all treated clearly, simply, and humorously. Workers turn at once to cadre like Giorgio and Pepino for political interpretation and for tactical direction during strikes. But of such dependence Pepino, who has been sitting quietly throughout most of this conversation, says: "At this point I try to make myself as unobtrusive as possible. It's extremely important for new leadership to develop. Unless you have the confidence that the other comrades can take over and run things themselves, you haven't done your job right."

Since Giorgio is a technician, I'm eager to ask him how much radicalization there has been among white-collar workers. I ask him about his own politicization. Before 1969, Giorgio tells me, he wasn't politically active. Like most white-collar and technical workers, his consciousness was professional. He felt he had a specialty that distinguished him from the masses of workers who had no control over their jobs. By 1969, he continues, it had become clear to him that this distinction was illusory. Indeed, technicians and the mass of white-collar workers had no more control over the terms of their work and what they produced than did workers on the line, even though white-collar work seemed nicer, cleaner, and was performed at a desk, which gave one a false sense of importance. In 1969, some white-collar workers like himself were ready for radical political activity and entered eagerly into the upsurge of rank-and-file strikes that became known as "the hot autumn." Putting oneself on the side of the lineworkers was a conscious decision, continues Giorgio. He talks about a technician he knows, professional in con-

sciousness up to the long strike at Alfa in 1970. One day after certain white-collar comrades had helped the lineworkers to throw scabbing officeworkers out of the offices (a daily strike routine), the comrade had approached Giorgio and said: "You know, till now I used to go out to the assembly lines just to check the machines. Now I've begun to see that there aren't just machines there. There are men, too. From now on it will be different for me."

How widespread is such radicalization? Not very, says Giorgio, but what there has been is extremely significant. Together with other white-collar workers who have adopted a left perspective, he has been working among the office workers, trying to organize. The task is slow, but it's clearly possible.

In their dealings with me, both Giorgio and Pepino are very comradely and seem remarkably unsexist. But Giorgio's relations with Donatella are traditional; in the household sexual division of labor is sharply defined. Donatella apparently defers in all ways to Giorgio, does all the housework, raises the child, and recreates herself daily as a lovely package—finely, subtly mascaraed, coiffed, and dressed. On the other hand it seems that Pepino and Maria Teresa have made some effort to equalize responsibilities at home. The fact that both of them work seems to have prompted such a move.

After lunch we are joined by another couple—a man who seems in his fifties, and his wife, who looks about twenty years younger. They have their child with them, a little girl. The woman, Cristina, turns out to be Giorgio's sister. Her husband, Alberto, is an academic who teaches German literature at a university in Turin. He's on the editorial staff of the *Quaderni Piacentini*, which seems to command respect among some of the comrades I've met here.

Cristina immediately and eagerly enters our conversation, which is about feminism. Donatella has just finished describing her life as a housewife. She obviously chafes against it. Within the lovely doll she makes of herself, feelings are brewing. She talks about the continual round of mindless tasks she does around the house, about the ceaseless child-tending, about conversations she has with other housewives in the park. "Everyone feels the same way," she concludes, pushing her chair back from the table and folding her arms decisively, looking at us shrewdly.

Giorgio leans towards her, his dark, heavy face grave. "I know these conversations go on all the time," he says, "I understand the grievances. It's true," he continues, in reference to a reflection Donatella has made on the fact that her work is unpaid, "that you perform labor for nothing. But those conversations in the park, what makes them political? Why do such grievances, all of those psychological gripes, have to do with class struggle?" Donatella flushes, withdraws: "It's true, it's really only gossip," she says, reverting to the self-deprecation and the deprecation of her sex that is her usual mode.

But Giorgio's sister intervenes. Her women's group in Turin, she says, has the same sorts of conversations as the housewives in the park, but in the group the conversations have a clear purpose. They put the individual anxieties, frustrations and misery of the women into social and economic perspective. Such a perspective is illustrated by the group's





Bleecker Street, New York City

understanding of the unpaid labor of women at home. In response to Donatella's half-jesting complaint that she works more than eight hours a day for nothing, Cristina proposes that the housewife's husband is actually being paid for the labor of two people; hence the home is the focus of a double exploitation of labor power by capitalism. I later learn that Cristina has read both Margaret Benston's article ["The Political Economy of Women's Liberation," *Monthly Review*, Vol. 21, no. 4 (September 1969), reprinted in pamphlet form by the New England Free Press] (fairly well-known now in the Italian women's groups) and other American documents. (It should also be noted that at least some of the women's groups in Italy are beginning a Marxist analysis of women's socio-economic condition at a far earlier stage in their development than the women's movement did in the States.)

When Cristina has finished, Pepino interposes quietly: "But surely there's a difference between the wife of a worker on the assembly line and the wife of a professional. For instance the wife of the lineworker doesn't have the time to sit around having such discussions. And what about the woman who does work in a factory?" Cristina hotly defends herself. She recognizes the truth of what Pepino is saying, she says, but she maintains that the sorts of discussions that her group engages in are legitimate political forms, and help immeasurably to raise consciousness. Alberto, her husband, in-

terposes: "Yes, but at the same time you can afford to hire a woman to look after the child and the house. Therefore you must admit you have certain privileges." At this Giorgio explodes at his sister, "How can you sit there and pretend to be in favor of women's liberation, if you exploit a working-class woman? I can't see it!" An argument ensues between the two. It grows hotter and hotter, and bitter, too. The rest of us listen, uncomfortable. I glance from time to time at the gentleman of *Piacentini*: the thought has obviously never crossed his mind that *he* might be helping his wife. Finally it's Pepino who steps in, relieving the tension with a casual observation that sums up and defuses the debate.

There's a moment of silence. I recall certain remarks Giorgio made earlier this afternoon about the difficulty of rallying the clerical and general office workers at Alfa to strike. I use this occasion to ask him whether many of the office workers aren't women. "Yes," he says, "and that's really been on our minds. The organizers are all men, and it's a problem." Giorgio says he could see an important role for the women's groups to play in the area of clerical organizing. But in fact the women's groups don't seem to have been doing that, as far as he can tell.

In this conversation, what is different from others I've had with male comrades here is an openness on the parts of the men, at least to entertaining women's liberation as a serious question. The more usual reaction was illustrated by some young men I met at the Turin *Manifesto* office; when I talked about feminism they immediately began tittering and making sexual, half-bawdy allusions. They produced the usual slur, which has come to bore me mightily in my stay here, that the women's movement is merely an extended psychiatric session for middle-class women who've got nothing better to do with their time. By comparison, Giorgio and Pepino seem more serious and attentive, though their predisposition to listen quietly might be good-natured tolerance. But I would like to believe that these comrades, so unusual in other manifestations of their knowledge and practice, might be unusual in this too.

On separating this evening, we all embrace; both Donatella and Maria Teresa kiss me and tell me with real feeling to keep them up on what's happening in the States. Once alone, I feel strange, at once sad and buoyant. How fragile these two movements coming into being here! A women's movement still struggling to be born, existing only in scattered groups, and destined for an opposition and ugly ridicule hard to imagine in the States (though we've had our share too). And the workers' autonomy movement, larger, perhaps, than the nascent women's movement, but scattered, with no uniform direction. It has already experienced attack and repression. Pepino told me earlier this afternoon that the police are sending Fascists (members, that is, of the Movimento Sociale Italiano, the Fascist party in Italy) to take jobs at Alfa. The *avanguardia*, the leaders in the factory council, plan to make large wall-poster photographs of the spies and provocateurs, with rich descriptions of their party affiliation and activities and purpose at Alfa. They will post these photographs around the plants. This is a regular routine, inaugurated during the 1969 and 1970 strikes, when photos of notorious scabs were posted all over the factory to embarrass them. But



it is clear that a struggle, and an ugly one, is already well underway.

\* \* \*

What will happen? More pointedly, what will happen this fall? The triennial fall contracts constitute a moment of enormous importance in Italy. The left is clearly in a precarious state, for all its high degree of development and sophistication compared to what's going on in the States. In Milan, I attended a mass meeting on repression. All the *gruppi* (the extraparliamentary left groups) were there, after a year of intense factionalism and bitter in-fighting. Apparently, only a moment of such grave danger sufficed to bring them together under the same roof. Call after call for solidarity was made at this meeting. Yet who can say whether rhetoric can obliterate rancors that still run high?

Besides repression there are still other, longer-range problems. At this same meeting on repression, which was attended by some 1500 comrades or more, speaker after speaker mounted the platform to assert the primacy of the workers' struggle. Most of the speakers weren't workers, but were rather students, or older intellectuals. Finally, a burly, dark, bear-like man mounted the platform. As he turned and waved to the audience, I felt a repressed surge of feeling run through the mass of people packed around me. From a piece of paper held with apparent awkwardness, the man began reading—haltingly, it seemed. He looked out appealingly over the dark, expectant mass before him: his arms opened in a gesture of helplessness. "Comrades, I am a worker. I am not accustomed to speak in fine language." The mass sighed happily; comrades around me were smiling in grateful encouragement at the man on the stage, who, meanwhile, had let the paper fall idly to the podium. His voice assumed strength, timbre, depth: "I am a proletarian. I haven't much time to read Marx or Lenin. I am not educated as intellectuals are educated." The mass rippled joyously. "But I know one thing," thundered the man on the platform, gesturing eloquently with raised fist, "it is the proletariat that will lead the revolution! It is the proletariat, we who work in the factories, who are the heart and guts of the struggle. We must unite, yes. I agree with all the comrades who have spoken today," he continued in a humbler vein, his voice lower but still resonant, thrilling. "We must forget our differences. Let us forget them: we must cast out sectarianism. But let us also remember that the proletariat will lead the battle."

No other speech was greeted with the deafening applause this one got. I was disturbed by it, even as it thrilled me, for it demonstrated the same tendency towards slavish working-class tailism that has manifested itself in France, in Germany, and in America. When I recounted it to Pepino and Giorgio, they smiled in recognition and said, "*Operaismo*" (workerism). What is disturbing is obviously not the existence of a proletarian perspective, but rather, the oversimplification and sectarianism of that perspective and the fact that it may preclude examination by the growing professional and white-collar classes of their peculiar roles in revolutionary movements under advanced capitalism. Though some of the best writing on the changing nature of the work force in advanced capitalism has come from the pen of Lucio

Magri, it isn't clear that his ideas have become popularly accepted in his own country. Ironically, they have been much more widespread and have exerted far greater influence among American intellectuals on the left, young people working as teachers, and workers in other jobs. And though Italy is the country of Gramsci, whose provocative and penetrating commentary on the role of intellectuals and on culture have influenced us deeply here in the States, he is dismissed by many in the Italian extraparliamentary left groups. It isn't clear whether intellectuals on the Italian left are *generally* considering their function as anything other than a tail to a workers' "vanguard"—a vanguard, moreover, that is as yet quite hypothetical. Last but not least, *operaismo*, a vulgar proletarian perspective rather than a rich, inclusive and flexible one, can be used and is being used to denounce the movement most akin in the wellsprings of its feelings to *autonomia operaia*: the women's movement.

A brighter possibility for the left seems to lie with groups like Giorgio and Pepino's at Alfa, rich as they are in a reflective leadership, one that seems at least potentially to combine the better elements of broad intellectuality with the capacity to act promptly, strongly and creatively. Such a possibility doesn't seem to lie with groups like the one at Fiat, which seemed to lack care and circumspection, to be ultra-leftist.

In the women's groups, difficult tendencies will almost certainly develop as they did in America. For example, there is the latent radical feminism of the young woman in the Turin group who stated, "You may all be Marxists, but as for me I'm a feminist, and that's enough for me." There is also a tendency towards the pedantic dogmatism and sectarianism that riddle the extraparliamentary left as a whole in Italy.

As I am writing this conclusion, the fall contractual procedure is just beginning, and will finish only in December. Recently I heard that several hundred comrades in Turin were indicted on a vacuous "probable plan to conspire" charge, in an obvious move by the ruling class to ward off another "hot autumn." The struggle continues. Let us hope our side emerges with enough gains to give new breath and vigor for the next round of the fight.

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## POSTSCRIPT ON THE CURRENT ROLE OF THE FACTORY COUNCILS

I have just returned from a second trip to Turin and Milan in January and February, 1973. At this moment nearly all the contracts but that of the metalworkers have been signed. Ownership, and the center-right government of Andreotti, Italy's equivalent to Nixon, want to force upon the metalworkers a contract that would limit the right to strike, curtail or eliminate the factory councils, and increase production at the workers' expense. The situation is tense, volatile, marked by dozens of daily job actions, walkouts, demonstrations, strikes. Repression by the government and the local police is incredible. Dozens of factory council delegates and other rank-and-file leaders have been arrested, thrown in jail. Students have been shot at in Turin, in Milan, and in other cities: two have been killed. Guido Viale, one of the heads of *Lotta Continua*, languishes in jail while petitions soliciting his release have been signed by major figures all over the country. The largest demonstration of workers since the Second World War took place in Rome at the beginning of February; over 300,000 metalworkers and workers supporting them converged on the city.

The information that follows is the fruit of conversations I had during this period with rank-and-file workers in general and with members of two autonomous rank-and-file organizations in particular, the Coordinamento Politico Operaio di Turin (Workers' Political Coordinating Committee) and the Collettivo Politico Operaio di Milan (Workers' Political Collective). There is increasing contact and much political agreement between these two groups; I will refer to them both in the remarks that follow as the C.P.O. In both cities the C.P.O.s have put out some of the most interesting literature I have read on the capitalist organization of work in the factories; on new divisions of labor evolving out of capitalist development; on current managerial and union strategies to deepen and mystify such divisions; on the beginnings of potential rank-and-file counter-strategies and propaganda; on the matter of blue- and white-collar workers' parity. What makes such writing different from neo-Marxist writing already familiar to intellectuals in the U.S. is that it is the fruit of collective debate not among academics but among rank-and-file workers. I also find it significant that "A," the Turinese worker of spontaneist politics described in my first article, is now a member of the Turin C.P.O. together with people whose politics have historically been much more like that of the two Alfa Romeo council delegates described earlier in this article on Milan. This indicates to me that people whose politics have been quite different in the past are now getting together, in however small a way, in serious efforts to create a new political line and strategy, the focus of which is the factory councils.

All the comrades with whom I spoke agree more or less on the following points. Whereas in 1969 it had seemed as if the extraparlimentary left might possibly provide an alternative politics to those of the unions and of the traditional political parties of the working class, it became evident very quickly that this was not to be the case. In the 1972-73 contracting it has become abundantly clear that the masses of workers still look to the unions for their economic security. But at the same time, in certain plants—particularly

among sectors that have historically been vanguards for the class (e.g., the metalworkers)—the rank and file look to the factory councils to provide progressive leadership and to act as a spearhead for struggle against the union bureaucracies. This is particularly evident now, as in daily demonstrations, job actions and strikes, the metalworkers and their supporters resist the efforts of Italian capital and of the government to impose an unfavorable contract on them. At such a moment it is evident that the relation between the councils and the unions is very much in flux; it is clear, however, that the cadre work within the councils not to create an alternative organization to the unions, *but to contend for power within them*. Ever since their genesis in 1968-69, the factory councils have been in continual struggle against the union bureaucracies lest the latter impose upon them conditions inimical to the interests of the rank and file. For example, a partial though hardly unsalvageable defeat for the workers at Pirelli, Milan (rubber), has been the imposition by the union bureaucracy of a certain number of union hacks as council delegates; the councils retain revolutionary potential, of course, only in the degree to which rank-and-file cadre participate in them.

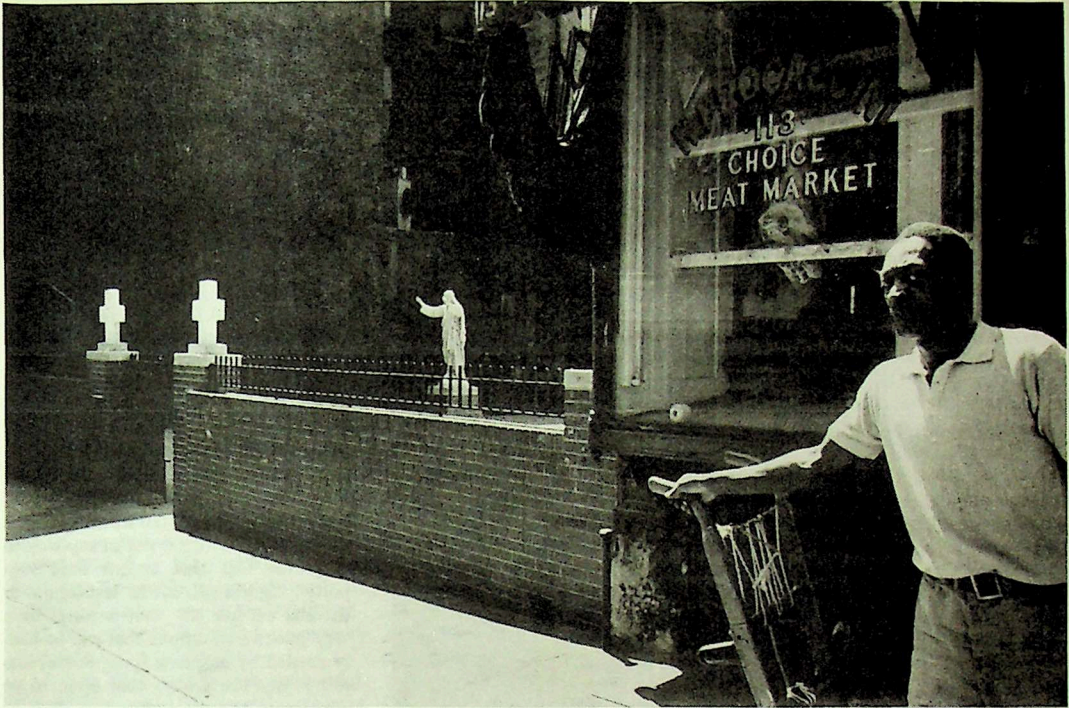
I spoke with council delegates from Fiat in Turin and from Alfa Romeo in Milan. In these two factories it is impossible to schematize the relationship of the councils to the unions, despite the fact that the union bureaucracy has given the union card, official recognition, and certain responsibilities to the delegates in obvious hopes that the councils will become absorbed by the union apparatus. What sort of decision-making powers do the councils have? How far are they able not just to express rank-and-file opinion, but to impose conditions on the unions? To what extent will they be able to create a different political line or lines within the unions? These are major questions that have not been solved. They are being hashed out daily, not in committee rooms but on the shop floor, in the daily strikes, job actions, workers' assemblies and debates that are occurring at present around the contract. As for the political function of the cadre within the councils, a Turin C.P.O. document comments:

The task of the workers' vanguards during the present time is . . . not only to struggle to transfer real decision-making power to the delegates' councils, it is also, and above all, the task of beginning to construct with and within the councils the first foundations of a new political economy that will inform future demands by the rank-and-file; the first elements of an alternative political program to the one imposed by the bureaucracy.

By "an alternative political program" it is not yet clear what is meant. One major goal is to build a single industrial union over which the rank and file will maintain firm control via the councils.

The relation between autonomous groupings like the C.P.O., the councils, and the union bureaucracies may be better understood if I briefly describe the debate that's currently going on around the question of *inquadramento unico*.





Bleecker Street, New York City

In relation to the matter of how workers will rise in the proposed "single grouping" from one job classification to the next, a proposal has been made by union bureaucrats representing a Communist Party line that workers be permitted 150 hours of schooling every year. Supposedly, time out for courses will permit the workers to "qualify themselves" to rise to higher categories, and thus to attain what has been termed "*nuova professionalità*" or "the new professionalism." Both the C.P.O.s have put out documents highly critical of this position. Their basic contention is that as capitalism advances, it is a given that machinery becomes more and more specialized, performing the skilled jobs that earlier were carried out by skilled laborers. Concomitantly, the industrial proletariat becomes *less*, not more skilled. The work force is progressively leveled down to a relatively homogeneous mass of more or less interchangeable parts. This massive leveling opens the way for unprecedented struggles around egalitarian issues, and thus for mass solidarity based on the rank and file's perception that in a very real, concrete sense, the condition of one worker is the condition of all. It is obscurantist and counterrevolutionary to block the possibility of such consciousness, and the progress of egalitarian struggles begun in 1969, by introducing mystifying concepts like "the new professionalism," "skills training," etc.

There is no expectation that such an analysis will at this time modify the *inquadramento unico* section of the union platform, for the simple reason that ownership has

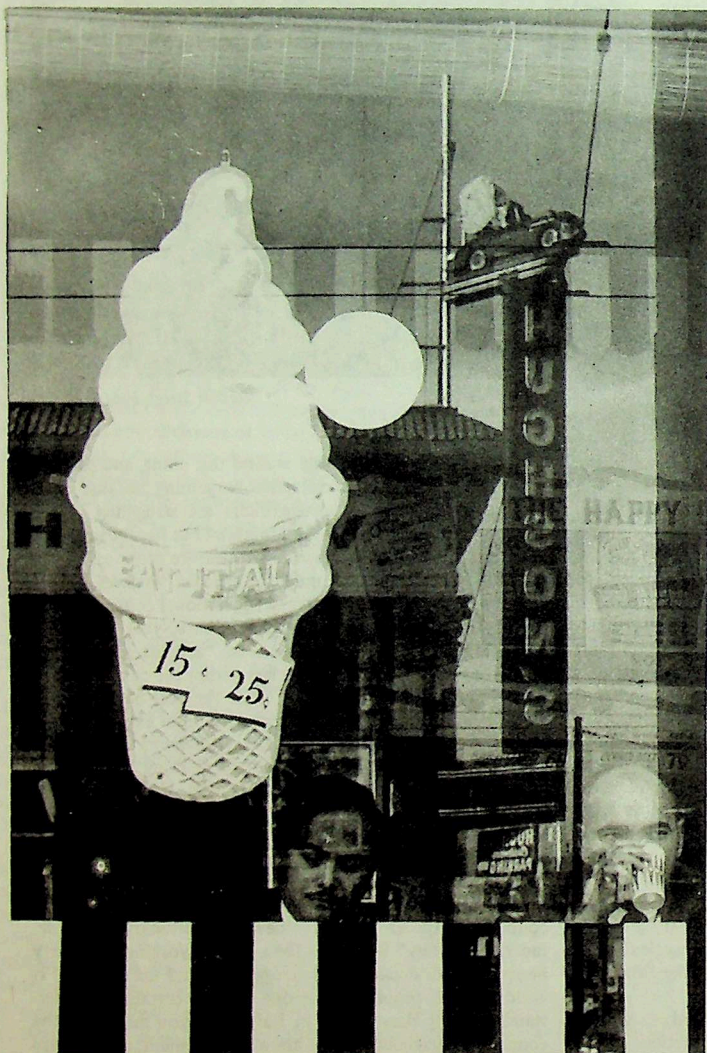
refused to negotiate seriously around this point, and has even periodically broken off collective bargaining because of it. Thus the rank-and-file metalworkers are struggling to preserve in the 1973 contract, as a minimal but hardly sufficient condition, this generally inadequate measure proposed by the union bureaucracy. But unlike American workers, Italian workers have the right to modify the national contracts plant by plant and shop by shop during the three-year period following the agreement. This process, "articulated contracting," was won by the working class within the past decade; it is there that in an important sense the real battles begin. Therefore, the cadre who have hammered out analyses of the deeper political implications of *inquadramento unico* in the C.P.O.s and other such groupings are working to raise consciousness in and around the councils—through talking, through leaflets distributed at factory demonstrations and occupations—in an effort to prepare the working class for struggles yet to come.

The relationship between the councils, groups like the C.P.O., and the union bureaucracies is dialectical. Can the councils be the embryo of a new, revolutionary union democracy in Italy? Will ideas for a future working-class party be spun off discussions and struggles around the councils? It is difficult to prophesy, but one thing is certain: to understand working-class reality in Italy now, you must take the councils into account. They are a vital element, and perhaps the most viable future, of the class struggle. ●



*frank riessman*  
*alan gartner*

## All Power to the Consumer?



San Francisco, California

With the coming of the service society—that is, a society in which service occupation expansion outraces all other forms of employment—the old axiom about working-class pressure points and potential for change may have to be re-examined. When one looks around at the forces in motion in our society, the absence of the industrial working class is most apparent. This is not in any way to deny the fact that unions have supported significant social legislation in the last decade, nor that workers have very positive traditions that will be badly needed by any new (progressive) majority. But the groups that seem to be advocating the most advanced ideas in the recent period are the women, the minorities, the students, the ecology people, the Naderites. . . . One could make a case that these groups are actually the vanguard of the new consciousness that proposes new rights and personal liberation, and opposes bureaucracy, alienation, meaningless work, etc.

The Sixties saw the rise of a broad range of new value patterns related to the quality of life, participation, self-actualization, etc. While few of these values have the sting and vibrancy that they had in their initial form, it is nevertheless interesting that they have become part of the consciousness and everyday life of large numbers of people in American society, possessing a force that should not be overlooked and cannot easily be reversed. However, it is striking that the enactment of these values in practices and institutions has been relatively restricted.

*Frank Riessman and Alan Gartner, respectively the editor and the publisher of Social Policy, are co-authors of The Service Society, which is to be published by Harper & Row in 1974.*



Equally striking is the fact that these values have arisen from groups largely in their consumer roles—from students rather than youth in general, from welfare recipients rather than union members, from service receivers rather than professional service givers, from consciousness-raising women's groups rather than from female factory workers. While these values may contagiously affect other segments of the population, the initial thrust seems clearly to have been coming from groups not integrated into worker roles, groups on the periphery of industrial society.

### The Consumer as the "Weak Link"

What are the social origins of the new consumer thrust? The role of the consumer is perhaps related to certain special conditions of neo-capitalism. A major change in the forces of production has taken place over the last 30 years, bringing a vastly expanded productivity without the need for a proportionately expanded labor force.

The state became the instrument for dealing with the special problems generated by the new productivity. Two basic problems had to be dealt with: the maintaining of purchasing power and the masking of increased unemployment and underemployment. Both problems were met by keeping large numbers of people off the official labor market—in colleges, on welfare, in the army, on unemployment insurance, pensions, and social security, in the home, in hospitals, in prisons, in part-time jobs, in training programs.\* This was all made possible by the huge surplus garnered from the industrial productivity. The society could afford the demands for more education, health services, social services, enabling it to absorb part of the unemployment and provide the consumer buying power that was needed. The result has been that the consumption of services has become as economi-

\*Bertram Gross and Stanley Moses estimate "real" unemployment at 25.6 million and the learning force (people involved in various types of educational programs) at 149.4 million. (See Gross and Moses, *Social Policy*, September-October 1972.)

cally important as the consumption of products in this society.

Moreover, since John Maynard Keynes, a major form of exploitation has taken place through the price structure—through constantly rising prices, endemic inflation and a regressive tax structure, all of which shift the impact of exploitation toward the consumer.† To some extent the consumer may be the "weak link" in the neo-capitalist structure—robbed on the one hand and less well integrated by the traditional industrial structures on the other—and therefore more open to different value-influences.

### New Vanguard and Old

It is interesting to contrast the revolutionary potential of the new consumer forces with the classical Marxist revolutionary vanguard—the industrial worker. Marx, in essence, argued that under capitalism the working class was the most revolutionary force for the following reasons: its centrality to capitalist production (more than any previously exploited class, the working class was indispensable for production); its concentration in the factory, leading to its capacity for self-organization; its exploitation in the strictly Marxian sense (i.e., the extraction of surplus value) which is to be distinguished from other forms of oppression. Moreover, Marx believed that the working class was the only class that could free everyone by freeing itself and had nothing to lose but its chains. . . .

Our modern consumer vanguard, if indeed it is that, does not appear to have many of the characteristics that Marx assumed would be necessary for a revolutionary role: The new groups, while oppressed and alienated, are not necessarily exploited in the classical Marxist sense because they are frequently unemployed and not producing surplus value. They are clearly not central

†Although, of course, the groups we have been discussing are exploited and oppressed in a great variety of additional ways, e.g., the unpaid housework of women, the racism experienced by minorities, the control and manipulation of students who are being prepared for bureaucratized work, etc.

to industrial production, although they may be very important to consuming that production. Many of the upper-middle-class women and youth have much to lose, and it is not at all certain that everyone's liberation would be accomplished through theirs.

While the new vanguard forces may have powerful needs for revolutionary change, they lack the power to produce it—they are not naturally organized at the workplace, although they may, by their concentration in neighborhoods and institutions, develop an affinity and a capacity for self-organization; certainly this has been apparent in the women's movement, among the students, and among the minorities in urban settings. Urban life produces this type of concentration.

Although the power of these groups is weakened by the fact that they are not crucial to production, as they increasingly move into service production (and even to some extent into industrial production) they may gain strength via their worker roles. This, together with the tremendous impact of the media and of education, which extend the new demands and new consciousness to ever-increasing portions of the populace, including industrial workers, provides a significant new potential. It may very well be that the new vanguard has only a limited revolutionary potential which cannot be fully actualized until the various groups—women, youth, minorities—become members of the working classes themselves and in turn enlighten the other members of the working classes.

Finally, the special significance of consumers as a productive force in the service economy may assist us in understanding their potential. Victor Fuchs points out that in service production, unlike goods production, the consumer frequently plays an important part in affecting productivity, e.g., "in retailing, health, education and many other service industries. In the supermarket and laundromat the consumer actually works, and in the doctor's office the quality of medical history the patient gives may influence significantly the productivity of the doctor. Productivity in banking is affected by whether the clerk or the customer makes out the deposit slip—and whether it is made out correctly or not. Thus the knowledge,



experience, honesty, and motivation of the consumer affect service productivity." (See Victor Fuchs, *The Service Economy*, Columbia University Press, 1968, pp. 194-195.) The consumer is thus a new force of production.

### What Is To Be Done?

**F**or the new vanguard to achieve a genuine egalitarian society the following seem minimally necessary:

1. The narrow agenda of each of the specific groups—women, youth, and minorities—will have to be transcended; visions must be projected for the future as well as demands for the present which go considerably beyond benefits for each of the specific groups. An ideology must be put forward which goes beyond alienation, negative radicalism and anti-capitalism.

2. It is clear, as Marcuse has said, that personal and social liberation must be combined with political and economic liberation, that the long march through the institutions, which is so necessary, must include the political and economic. While consumer politics has an especially important contribution to make to future politics, it will have to be integrated with electoral politics and worker tactics.

3. The new vanguard, especially the middle-class youth and women's groups, will have to accept considerable

redistribution of income and wealth and a reduction of gluttonous consumption if we are to have an ecologically balanced world and curtail the ripping-off of the developing countries.

If the new consumer-rooted values are to have any significant influence in the Seventies, they will have to take new forms and directions: the women's movement will have to move much more toward working-class women and women on welfare; the youth will have to raise issues in relation to work alienation, not simply issues related to the consumer-oriented quality of life; and the blacks and other minorities will have to go beyond a go-it-alone orientation and, as James Boggs suggests, take on the basic contradictions of our society.

Only by this integration of a consumer thrust with the strength emanating from the worker's role can we have any hope of overcoming the fragmentation of the early Seventies—a fragmentation which has divided the potential new progressive majority of youth, blacks, women and workers, and enabled an old, dwindling majority to be rekindled. The positive threads of the Sixties in their thrust for participation, new rights, concern for the quality of life, have to be transformed at a higher level of consciousness and integrated into the fabric of life on a much larger plane, particularly at the workplace, if we are to turn around the swing to the right

which thus far characterizes the Seventies and obscures the healthy trends that emerged in the Sixties.

### Conclusion

**C**onsumers seem to be a leading force in raising new demands; as consumers, however, they do not appear to have enough consciousness to go beyond small, isolated, institutional changes and move toward deeper societal transformation. Consumer groups are too disconnected from each other, are overly focussed on issues of the day, and do not possess sufficient organization and power *qua* consumers. Workers, service and industrial, white- and blue-collar, on the other hand, have great potential power, but thus far have not been in the forefront in striving for basic change.

A dialectical answer may emerge as women, minorities, and youth increasingly become a part of the labor force, particularly in the important service sectors. Then the progressive values deriving largely from their consumer roles may combine with the power deriving from the worker role. Revolutionary motive and revolutionary agent may unite. The danger remains, however, that some of the defensive self-interest stemming from the worker role may mute the advances of the consumer vanguard. ●

**a report on the JAPANESE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS**

# AMPO

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(continued from page 5)

abuses of the official tribal council. All these actions are to be carried out under the Indian Bill of Rights which is part of the 1868 Treaty. The other major arrangements have to do with the process of disarming the warriors and lifting the occupation. Russell Means of AIM describes the agreement as "a small victory, a preliminary victory, in our war with the United States over our treaty rights."

These government concessions are due to the skill and determination with which the occupation has been carried out. Secretary of the Interior Morton tried to smear the action as the work of a handful of "outsiders," but numerous Native American leaders have sent declarations of solidarity, and various public opinion polls show that 60-80 per cent of the general public support the insurgents. The possibility of an armed attack on Wounded Knee remains, but the occupation forces are well armed and have a formidable trench and bunker network. Some of the warriors have had combat experience in Vietnam and there is a persistent rumor that they possess machine guns and other advanced weaponry. Although the Native American forces would ultimately lose in an armed confrontation, Wounded Knee is not Attica—where the prisoners were virtually helpless—and this, along with a reluctance to bear the moral stigma of a second Wounded Knee massacre, may well account for the government's desire to avoid a real shootout.

The choice of Wounded Knee as the focal point of struggle was well conceived. The murder of Big Foot's band in 1890 was not the "battle" some historians claim, but an atrocity well known to all Native Americans. The Sioux had

(continued from page 4)

The meat boycott is at best a limited action whose main value is as a symbolic gesture, but it is positive in being an action directed at legitimate grievances and one to which nearly all Americans can relate and which the vast majority support. Another important aspect is that although the numerous appeals addressed by both pro- and anti-boycott forces to "Ms. Consumer" and "the American housewife" tended to reinforce women's subordinate role of "service" to their families and were scarcely designed to enhance their sense of independence and power, nonetheless many women have gotten a new glimpse, however brief, of their own potential as a group for action of awesome proportions. Whatever lasting significance the meat boycott may have will come from people being able to draw on this experience in other situations which offer more opportunity to make a real difference, such as rent strikes—or an extensive food co-op movement, which could bypass not only the supermarkets but the wholesalers as well, and deal directly with food producers. These actions are far more difficult to organize; moreover, the media won't cover them in the same approving fashion as the boycott (or even at all if they can avoid it) because the power structure to which both the media and the administration belong is more seriously threatened by them. But our ability to initiate and support these sorts of actions can be decisive, for instead of confining our protest to the narrow choice of whether or not to buy meat, they could be a vital step in the process of learning to act collectively and to develop actual alternative structures for our lives.

—Gwenda Linda Blair

been at peace for nearly a decade when a prophet in the far-off western desert proclaimed that the spirits would soon eliminate the white people from North America. The prophecy was proclaimed in 1888 and was accompanied by a set of songs and dances which became known as the Ghost Dance religion. As the movement spread eastward it became more militant and apocalyptic. Old Red Cloud, who had not fought in the wars of the 1870s, began to dance. When federal officials heard Sitting Bull was going to dance too, they feared a major outbreak was at hand. Police were sent to Sitting Bull's home, where he was killed for his resistance to being taken into custody. His followers fled to the hills where some of them encountered Big Foot's band.

Big Foot was so ill with pneumonia at the time that he could not ride his horse, and his hungry band was heading into the Agency for supplies. On December 28th, this group was "captured" by the troops of Brig. Gen. Forsyth. The bluecoats belonged to George Custer's old regiment and they led the Indians to an area surrounded by high ground. The Sioux were put in a circle and Gatling guns were mounted on the heights. The "disarming of the hostiles" occurred the following morning and produced only a few old weapons from bygone campaigns. When a young man became angry at the rough way his people were being treated, he began to fire his gun. The calvary men on the heights immediately opened up with their machine guns and repeating rifles. Within a short time 200 Indians and 60 bluecoats were dead. Almost all the dead soldiers had been among the Indians searching for weapons and were cut down by army bullets. For hours afterwards, women and children were lured from hiding places, many of them to be raped and murdered. Dead bodies of children were found two and three miles from the main murder site. A blizzard soon froze the corpses in their death stances and turned the bodies blue and green. In 1930, Black Elk, the famed oracle of the Sioux, would recall the gathering of the dead in a passage that has since become one of the most quoted in Native American literature:

When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plainly as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.

The Native Americans who now hold Wounded Knee seek to resurrect that murdered dream. Secretary of the Interior Morton dares not understand what is going on. To him, Wounded Knee II is to be written off as a messy spinoff of the black liberation struggle: "Nothing will be gained by promoting a national complex over past mistakes and nothing is gained by blackmail. . . . There has grown up in the wake of the black militant movement in this country a revolutionary Indian movement. Dramatic violence is its pattern. Some are renegades, some youthful adventurers, some have criminal records." Against this view Russell Means has stated, "We have bet our lives that we could change the course of Oglala history on this reservation and the history of the rest of Indian America."

—Dan Georgakas  
April 16, 1973



# TWO PERSPECTIVES on WOMEN'S STRUGGLE

~ I ~

"I cannot live without my life!"

—*Wuthering Heights*

I want to talk about women's struggle from two different perspectives—first, from the eye of the storm, as it were; next, from off at an angle.

A few weeks ago I was asked by Washington and Lee University in Virginia to join four other women writers for three days in a panel discussion of women in literature. We started off talking about women in literature and very quickly, of course, found ourselves talking about the women's liberation movement. I want to begin by reading from the brief opening talk I gave down there.

In preparation for the discussions I had reread many of the novels by women that I felt had meant the most to me: Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, George Eliot's *Middlemarch*; and from this century, Colette's *The Vagabond*, Willa Cather's *The Professor's House*, and some others I'll mention later. As I reread them I asked myself whether there was anything all these books had in common. They had been written by women very, very different from one another. Virginia Woolfe (in *A Room of One's Own*) says of the first four of them that four more incongruous characters could hardly be found. She points out that Charlotte Brontë failed entirely to understand Jane Austen. She might have added that Charlotte wrote of her sister Emily's novel: "Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know; I scarcely think it is." However different from each other they may have been, the more I brooded over their four novels, the more I found that is in common—and that could not, I think, be found in novels written by men. To put it in the briefest possible way: All four dramatize the danger in which the Self within one stands if one is a woman—the danger that it will be blighted, because of the authority of men.

Yes, how different *Pride and Prejudice* is from *Jane Eyre*. Yet in each there is a similar drama. In each a man proposes to the heroine with the assurance on his part that it is a rich gift he offers; but the heroine at first rejects him. At which he is amazed. Furious, too. She rejects him because she feels her own autonomy threatened.

In Colette's *The Vagabond*, too, the heroine rejects a man's proposal—although she loves him. And because this heroine is particularly articulate on the subject, let me quote a number of things she says. I think she speaks for the other women, too. She says (to herself, for she feels she cannot speak the whole truth to him), "I have met you before and I recognize you. Are you not he who, thinking he is giving,

takes for himself?" She speaks of his "superb authority, which disposes of me, my future, and the whole of my little life . . . That's all very well, but . . . what do I become in all that?" She says, "He is a thief, who steals me from myself." She says, "Instead of saying, Take me . . . I ask . . . What are you giving me? Another myself? There is no other myself."

I might quote the heroine of *Middlemarch* here, too. This heroine, Dorothea, unfortunately has not rejected Mr. Casaubon's offer. But after her marriage she speaks to herself comparable words, recognizing now that she has "shut her best soul in prison, paying it only hidden visits, that she might be petty enough to please him."

In *The Vagabond* the heroine rejects the man definitively—even though she loves him; and chooses to remain a vagabond—an actress and a writer. In *Middlemarch* the husband (no longer loved) fortunately dies. But *Pride and Prejudice* and *Jane Eyre* both end with the heroines finally accepting their suitors, because they can feel at last that there will be equity in the relationship. Jane can say, "I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine." And Elizabeth can have the same happy sense of things. The work of both these books has been to bring this equitable situation about. But it *takes* a lot of work.

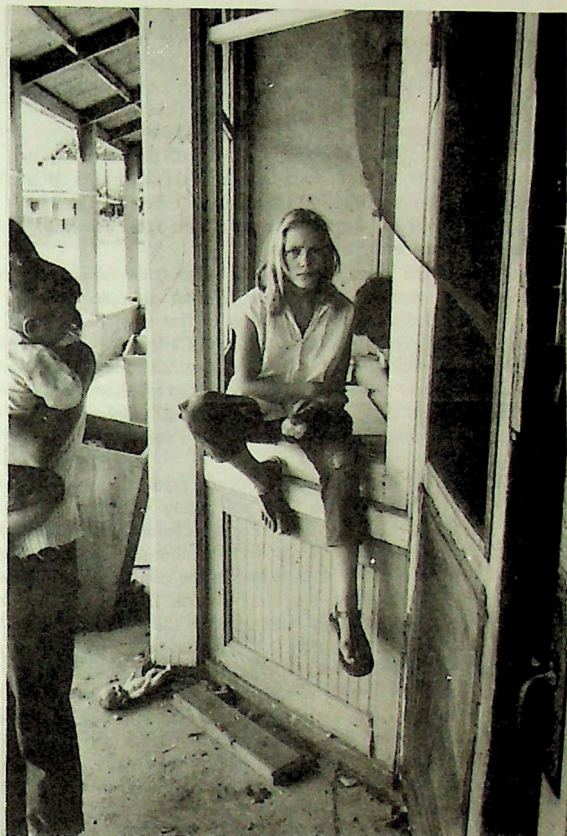
It is harder work in *Jane Eyre* than in *Pride and Prejudice*. Charlotte Brontë has to resort to something approaching melodrama—have the man's great house burned to the ground by his mad first wife, and have him badly crippled in that fire—before the heroine can feel that she can live with him as an equal. In *Pride and Prejudice* the hero's pride is moderated by less drastic means. And the crisis has not been as deeply felt by the author to begin with. At issue actually, as the title implies, is not only his pride but her prejudice. *Jane Eyre*, on the other hand, when she refuses Rochester, sees him clearly enough. The issue for Charlotte Brontë is solely his too masterful behavior.

Those of you who remember *Jane Eyre* may be objecting at this point that I am reporting the book inaccurately, objecting that Jane rejects Rochester not because of his attitude toward her but simply because she finds he has a wife already (who's insane) and she doesn't want to be anybody's mistress. My suggestion is, however, that you try rereading the book and taking it less literally. Charlotte Brontë, writing about her sister, says something that is very true about *herself*: "This I know: the writer who possesses the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master—something that, at times, strangely wills and works for itself." Much of



"Two Perspectives on Women's Struggle" was a talk given by Barbara Deming at the Catholic Worker on March 30, 1973. The author is a long-time friend and associate of Liberation and a frequent contributor to our pages; her books include *Prison Notes*, *Running Away From Myself*, *Revolution and Equilibrium*, and, most recently, a volume of short stories, *Wash Us and Comb Us*.

by  
barbara deming



Rio Arriba County, New Mexico

the material of this book is the author's conscious observation of life, but much, too, I think, is material thrown up out of her unconscious, which she makes what she can of, but never quite controls—as Jane Austen does control her material. Though I think, with Virginia Woolf, that she is the deeper genius.

Here is my suggestion: Read Jane's refusal of Rochester as though the mad wife did not literally exist as a separate character, as though she existed only for Jane, as a nightmare image of her own possible future state if she should marry him. In the scene in which she sees this woman in her room trying on her wedding clothes, then rending the veil and trampling upon it, it is not irrelevant, I think, that she doesn't see her directly; she sees her in a long mirror. Robin Morgan says somewhere that every woman wears around her neck the amulet of madness. I think Charlotte Bronte had this vision of women, too. The scene I have just described follows a series of other scenes after Jane has first said "yes" to Rochester and he then, in "boastful triumph," has taken her out shopping, to buy her new clothes, and has behaved so like a sultan that she has suffered "annoyance and degradation"—and spoken up rebelliously. I would try reading the book as though she refused soon after this not to be *literally*

his mistress but to enter a marriage in which she would *feel* like a mistress—feel, in her words, like "a slave who has been bought."

I would also recommend that you try a similar experiment while reading *Wuthering Heights* (a book utterly in the author's control, and yet this book, too, very much born from the unconscious). I suggest that you read it as though Heathcliff were not literally a separate person but were simply—as Cathy herself speaks of him—*herself*. "Nelly, I am Heathcliff," she says. She speaks of him as "my own being." Study her marriage—which she, too, hesitates to enter—as though Heathcliff were a Self within her which, when she marries, she abandons for a while. She marries Edgar to raise herself out of degradation. (It is true for all these heroines that they can only enter a more spacious life through attaching themselves to a man. In Charlotte Bronte's *Villette*, there is a sequence in which the heroine, an unmarried school-teacher, has to stay by herself within the walls of the school taking care of a cretin—while everyone else is off on vacation. Again I think one can see this cretin as a dream image of her own condition. Here is the woman's dilemma in these novels: Remain unmarried and undeveloped [the cretin] or marry—and become lost to herself in another sense, the maddened



slave.) By marrying Edgar, Cathy improves her condition. She has wanted to marry him partly to be able to pay for the education of the one she calls her "own being." But this being feels utterly abandoned when she does marry. After she has been married for a while, this abandoned Self returns, and her husband—who has been content with her behavior up to now—objects. He tells her, in almost these words: "It is impossible for you to be *my* friend and (to be the friend of this original Self of yours) at the same time, and I absolutely require to know which you choose."

This is the threat the heroine of each of these four novels has to consider. In *Middlemarch*, for example, Dorothea's husband dismisses in "a matter of fact way" "stirring thoughts" that rise in her. Dorothea and Cathy react to this suppression in very different ways. In Dorothea "the resolved submission (does) come." Cathy becomes so rebelliously distraught that she sickens and dies. As Heathcliff cries out after her death, "I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!"

Perhaps for some of you I labor my reading of *Wuthering Heights*. I suggest then that you study Willa Cather's novel, *The Professor's House*. The main character here is a man, but I think it is significant that she chooses to tell the very same story of a Self that is lost in the course of marriage. And it is interesting, too, that towards the end of this book, in the attempt to fully communicate the feeling of loss of Self, she uses consciously this very device I have been suggesting that Emily Bronte uses unconsciously (though with mastery)—the device of imagining that lost Self as a separate character: here a young boy who is left behind, but who, late in the hero's life, reappears to him in visions. "This boy and he had meant back in those faraway days to live some sort of life together." But it had not happened that way. He feels now quite "indifferent" to this life he has actually led, and it seems to him "like the life of another person."

A Self that has been lost, or that stands in danger of being lost. That is again and again the subject of women novelists. It is often the subject of women poets, too. I have just reread many of Emily Dickinson's poems. Here is a passage from a poem about spectres of different kinds:

Our self behind ourself concealed  
Should startle most,  
Assassin hid in our apartment  
Be horror's least.

And what is the women's movement all about? Women are now determined to bring this Self out from concealment—a Self still in pain, at this point, still grimacing strangely, as Heathcliff grimaces, still crying out as he cries out.

Emily Dickinson, by the way, calls her poems "nose-gays for captives." They are very much that. For again and again she sings, precisely, of "a soul admitted to itself"—"Itself its sovereign, of itself/ The soul should stand in awe."

"I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!" is Heathcliff's cry. Probably all of you who have read the book find him a very haunting figure. Well, he is a figure created out of the very depths of a woman's being. Here is how the narrator describes him as he utters that cry:

"He dashed his head against the knotted trunk; and lifting up his eyes howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears. I observed several splashes of blood about the bark of the trees, and his hands and forehead were both stained . . . It appalled me."

It is going to appall a lot of people, I am afraid, but in one mode or another, some more subdued than this, some not, that is what women now are going to keep on crying: "I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!"

As a matter of fact, I don't think the world can well survive without the release of that Self. But here is still another subject.

And I ended this talk by quoting again from *The Vagabond* (which was Colette's favorite among her books, by the way). That heroine cries out: "Whence come I and on what wings that it should take me so long, humiliated and exiled, to accept that I am myself?"

Here, then, I was talking about women's struggle from the eye of the storm. Whether you are a woman or a man, I urge you if you haven't done so (many of you, I'm sure, *have*, but if you haven't I urge you) to enter in imagination that storm center, and listen for Heathcliff's cry—in something written by a woman, or something said by her; or you may be a woman saying it to yourself, not quite audibly yet: "I cannot live without my life!" A lot of women still feel uneasy about uttering that cry aloud.

A fascinating book in *that* respect is Mary McCarthy's *A Charmed Life*. I reread that novel, too, before going to the conference at Washington and Lee. It's a book whose central drama is precisely the drama I have talked about in other novels. The heroine still lives under the shadow of her former husband. Her rational self does not concede him authority over her, but in one dramatic episode after another, she grants him that authority in spite of herself. She struggles against it, and by the end of the book she has struggled free. But it's the very end of the book I want to talk about. The heroine is driving along in her car, alone, and talking to herself about this victory she has just recognized: ". . . She could trust herself. For the first time in years, since the summer she had married Miles, she could say this aloud. She said it and her wonder grew. She had changed; she was no longer afraid of herself." In almost the next sentence she sees the headlights of a car coming round a curve—on the wrong side of the road—and realizes that she has been crashed into, and killed.

Mary McCarthy was one of the five writers at the conference and I asked her: Isn't it as though you were saying here, unconsciously: if a woman dares to say aloud to herself that her life is her own, Heaven will strike her dead? She answered that she hadn't intended such a reading and explained the ending in terms of a certain comic theme, about mortality, she had been working with throughout the book. But she is a wonderfully honest woman and she added: Who ever knows, of course, what one's unconscious is doing? I persist in believing that her unconscious was making the dramatic point: Better perhaps not to speak aloud—even to ourselves—of our struggle to possess our own souls. Better perhaps to wage that struggle secretly.

The other evening I went to a reading at the Manhattan



Theatre Club of a group of poems Louise Bernikow has been collecting for an anthology—the kind of poems by women that never have been chosen for anthologies in the past because the editors and publishers have always been men. The first poem read was a poem by Muriel Rukeyser about Kathie Kollwitz which begins: “What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? The world would split open.” Many women, I think, still hesitate to wage our struggle

although because they fear just that—fear that in one way or another the world would split open.

But I think one could answer the poet’s question in another way: What would happen if one woman told the truth about her life? She would reveal the truth that for a long time now, for too long a time, the world *has* been split open. It is about this split that I want to talk next. Here is the other perspective on our struggle that I’ll attempt.

~ II ~

*Perhaps the sexes are more related than we think.*

—Rilke

I think the world has been split in half for much too long—between masculine and feminine. Or rather, between what is said to be masculine and said to be feminine. “Vive la difference!” has been a popular saying—everybody pretending that it was something to be celebrated. Something to be forgotten at one’s peril, too. There is an obvious physical difference between us that serves to recreate the race. (Though it has served us rather too well.) But psychic as well as physical differences have been meant. And I would like to argue that perhaps our most crucial task at this point of history—a task for women *and* men—is not to celebrate these so-called differences between our natures but to question boldly, by word and act, whether they properly exist at all, or whether they do not violently distort us, whether they do not split our common humanity.

In *Jane Eyre*, by the way, when Rochester proposes to Jane under a great chestnut tree, a storm brews. As he begins to exult at her answer, the author suddenly asks: “What ailed the chestnut tree? It writhed and groaned.” That night she has the tree split in two, its life blighted.

I think the tree of all our lives has been split in two between the so-called masculine and the so-called feminine. Manliness has been defined as assertion of the self. Womanliness has been defined as the nurturing of selves other than our own—even if we quite lose our own in the process. (Women are supposed to find in this loss their true fulfillment.) But every individual person is born *both* to assert her or himself *and* to act out a sympathy for others trying to find themselves—in Christian terms, meant to love one’s self as one loves others, the two motions of the spirit not really divisible if one assumes that there is that-of-God in each of us. Jesus never taught that we should split up that commandment—assigning “love yourself” to men, “love others” to women. But society has tried to. And its assignment of assertion and sympathy to separate sexes has had fatal consequences.

Fatal in the first place to all of us as individuals—distorting our natures whether we are women *or* men. Women lost to themselves in one way—their selves merged in the selves of others; men lost, one can well say, in another way: Coming to feel that the energies of others belong to them by the right of their sex, and no need for mutuality here; coming to regard themselves as nature’s lords, and expected by the world to be just that, they have lost the sense of what their human natures really are. This has been hard on them, I am quite sure—though it has been intoxicating, too. Virginia

Woolf writes in *A Room of One’s Own*: “Women have served all these centuries as looking glasses possessing the magic and delicious power of reflecting the figure of man at twice its natural size.” Men have had to carry around these selves twice their natural size. A burden, because a lie. It is the truth that frees us.

I keep harking back to Charlotte Bronte, but I find her an almost inexhaustible source of images that enlighten this subject. So let me describe now two passages from her novel *Villette* that to me speak very clearly of the need in which we stand. They are very much flights of her unconscious mind. She hasn’t introduced them for any reasons that are evident. They are in no way necessary to background or to plot. She was just—moved to put them in; her spirit, I would say, trying to dream some cure for the disorder she describes again and again in her books: a deep disorder in the relations between men and women.

In the first passage, the heroine, who is a teacher at a girls’ school, is persuaded to substitute in the school play for a student who is sick. When she is handed a man’s costume to put on, she refuses, but then suddenly decides to wear *half* of it: She puts on a man’s vest, jacket, tie *over* her dress. She finds, then, that a mysterious energy fills her; she plays her part with great zest. On another occasion, she and the young doctor whom she loves attend an event at which prizes are given out. She wins a cigar case, the doctor a woman’s headpiece with a veil. He wants to swap with her but she refuses; she keeps the cigar case, and his mother, who has accompanied them, takes home the headpiece. Later in the book, the doctor sits dozing at home in an armchair, and the mother, seeing him sleeping there, tiptoes off to fetch the filmy headpiece, sets it upon his head, then wraps him in her shawl, and stands gazing at him—finding in this a mysterious satisfaction.

During the third evening of discussions at Washington and Lee, I spoke of these passages and said that they seemed to me to dream the saving answer for all of us, women and men. I presented the argument that I am making now to you—that the task for all of us is to erase the so-called differences between the sexes, bring out the woman in all men, the man in all women. And I expected a great deal of resistance to this idea. But to my astonishment the young men in the audience were no more alarmed than the young women. One of the other writers present, Caroline Kizer, told me that I should get a book that is just out, *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* by Carolyn G. Heilbrun. I’ve now read it and





42nd Street, New York City

Minneapolis, Minnesota







*Peace Demonstration, 41st Street and 6th Avenue, New York City*

*Williamsburg Bridge, New York City*





recommend it to all of you. (It's published by Knopf.) Here I found the very thesis I had struggled toward on my own. And who knows how many other people, unknown to each other, are arriving at this answer—because necessity is the mother of invention. Carolyn Heilbrun writes: "I believe that our future salvation lies in a movement away from sexual polarization and the prison of gender toward a world in which individual roles and the modes of personal behavior can be freely chosen. The ideal toward which I believe we should move is best described by the term 'androgyny.'"

She makes the point, by the way, that the androgynous ideal persists in all the dreams of mysticism. She quotes Norman O. Brown: "In the West, cabalistic mysticism has interpreted Genesis 1:27—'God created man in his own image . . . male and female created he them'—as implying the androgynous nature of God and of human perfection before the Fall. From cabalism this notion passed into the Christian mysticism of Boehme, where it is fused with the Pauline mysticism of Galatians 3:28—'There can be no male and female; for ye are all one man in Christ Jesus.'" (One human, he might better have said.) And Brown quotes Berdyaev: "According to God's conception of him, man is a complete, masculinely feminine being . . . Original sin is connected . . . with division into two sexes and the Fall of the androgyne, i.e. of man as a complete being." That vision holds great truth for me.

This Fall, one can add, has resulted not only in the distortion of both our natures, but in general violence. By splitting human natures into the so-called masculine and the so-called feminine we have got: lost women nurturing men who become the exploiters of others, and of Nature itself. A man is taught violence at his mother's knee, as he watches her let her Self be taken from her. Another novel I read before going to the conference at Washington and Lee was Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, and in it there is a wonderful passage that dramatizes just such a moment. Mrs. Ramsey is reading a fairy tale to her small son, when her husband appears, wanting sympathy. He has been feeling depressed about his work. The little boy is annoyed and tries to hold the mother's attention. "But no, nothing would make Mr. Ramsey move on. There he stood, demanding sympathy . . . Mrs. Ramsey, who had been sitting loosely, folding her son in her arm, braced herself, and half turning, seemed to raise herself with an effort, and at once to pour erect into the air a rain of energy, a column of spray, looking at the same time animated and alive . . . quietly though she sat . . . and into this delicious fecundity, this fountain and spray of life, the fatal sterility of the male plunged itself, like a beak of brass, barren and bare. He wanted sympathy. He was a failure, he said." She reassures him. A man named Charles Tansley thinks him the greatest metaphysician of the time, she tells him. "But he must have more than that. It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of his genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his barrenness made fertile, and all the rooms of the house made full of life." She reassures him again. "But he must have more than that . . . He must be assured that he too lived in the heart of life; was needed; not here only, but all over the world . . . Standing between her knees, very stiff, James felt all her

strength flaring up to be drunk and quenched by the beak of brass, the arid scimitar of the male, which smote mercilessly, again and again, demanding sympathy . . . He was a failure, he repeated." She reassures him still again. "If he put implicit faith in her, nothing should hurt him . . . not for a second should he find himself without her. So boasting of her capacity to surround and protect, there was scarcely a shell of herself left for her to know herself by; all was so lavished and spent." He is finally satisfied and leaves. And the child notes that his mother seems to fold herself together in exhaustion.

Perhaps some of you have read Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*. If you haven't, there is a chapter in which she reinterprets Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex. I find it very persuasive. And here is another look at the lesson the mother allows the child to receive. The writer submits that "the only way that the Oedipus complex can make full sense is in terms of power." Though both parents have power over the child, she points out, the child "has a bond with (the mother) in oppression" because she, too, is oppressed by the father. Deep down the child has a certain contempt for the father, with all his power, and sympathizes with the mother. But at a certain point the boy is expected to begin to identify with the father. He resists this, but the father makes it clear to him that he is the one who can show him the road into the world. So he finally represses his deep attachment to his mother, represses his contempt for his father, and emerges into the honorable state of manhood. She writes, "No wonder that such a transition leaves . . . a complex. The male child, in order to save his own hide, has had to abandon and betray his mother and join ranks with her oppressor." And, she stresses: here is "an all too beautiful transition into power over others." I agree. Here within the home is the primary imperialism. Not primary in the sense of the most cruel; primary in the sense that it is the first learned; here the habit is formed. And no wonder, too, that this child grows up willing to despoil the earth itself, that has mothered us. For this is not the way in which a child should come into manhood.

In the original story of Oedipus, you may recall, the way in which Oedipus has come to worldly power has produced at last a plague upon the land. And it is necessary for him to search back into the past and recognize the moment at which he committed violence against Nature—the act that led to his taking his father's place. There is certainly a plague upon our world today; and perhaps we, too, have above all to search back to that moment in every man's life when he commits a crime against Nature, so that he can take his father's place in the world. And where mothers, one had better add, commit the crime of letting him do it.

In the original story who is it who is able to see from the start what the crime has been? The seer, Tiresias, who, it happens, has been both man and woman in his life. Carolyn Heilbrun writes at some length about the Oedipus story, and I disagree in certain ways with her reading of it. But I agree very much that at the end of the story, when Oedipus puts out his eyes, this should be read not simply as the act of a man mutilating himself in grief and horror at what he has done, but as an act in which he tries to make himself like the seer Tiresias, who is literally blind, but has an inner vision that Oedipus has lacked. I think that we all have to seek the



vision of Tiresias now—of the one who is both man and woman.

If we do seek this vision—seek to return to a state of androgyny which we have lost—we will have to redefine many relationships. First, the relation of mothers to children. Fathers will become mothers, too, of course. And motherliness will be subtly redefined. Let it no longer mean giving one's very life for the father, then the son, to feed upon. Let the mother teach her son: yes, we must give of ourselves, "we are members one of another," but this is not to be read to mean simply: *we* (women) are members of *you* (men). Let her teach both son and daughter equity, mutuality. Which is to say, nonviolence.

(It has occurred to me lately, by the way, that nonviolent actions are by their nature androgynous. In them the two impulses that have long been treated as distinct, "masculine" and "feminine," the impulse of self-assertion and the impulse of sympathy, are clearly joined; the very genius of nonviolence, in fact, is that it demonstrates them to be indivisible, and so restores human community: One asserts one's rights as a human being, but asserts them with consideration for the other, asserts them, that is, precisely *as* rights belonging to any person—mine and therefore yours, yours and therefore mine.)

The relations between parents and children will be redefined. So of course will the relations between men and women. There are many men and women who very much fear still what any such change will bring about. Like the critic who reviewed Carolyn Heilbrun's book for *The New York Times*—who fears, in the absence of polarization between the sexes, an alarming falling-off of sexual desire. My own conviction is that there is sufficient difference between any two individuals born (if only they will allow themselves to be individuals) to create polarity enough for desire to flourish. I believe there is deep eroticism in comradeship.

Perhaps, though, the deepest fear among both women and men now is one that is rarely acknowledged. Here let me read one of the poems I heard the other night at the Manhattan Theatre that I found most remarkable. It is a poem by Elizabeth Barrett Browning:

I thought once how Theocritus had sung  
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,  
Who each one in a gracious hand appeared  
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:  
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,  
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,  
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years,  
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung  
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,  
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move  
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;  
And a voice said in mastery, while I strove,—  
"Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death," I said. But, there,  
The silver answer rang—"Not Death, but Love."

What an acutely painful vision. A vision that all too many women would confront if they dared look deeply into themselves: a vision of love—that force which is meant to create and to sustain—instead drawing her backward by the

hair; love acting upon her in such a way that she can mistake it for death. I think the truth is that many women fear at this moment to acknowledge even to themselves their own struggle, because they fear, if they look too closely, to find love wears this very aspect for them. And they fear that they may see the choice before them as one of renouncing love altogether. And men fear, too, that they will make this choice.

But of course it is not love itself that wears this aspect, but the distortion of love: a love that is supposed to move a woman in one way, a man in quite another—causing the woman to cleave to the man, the man to cherish her as his so-called better self, but as just that, merely that: a portion of his self.

With this ideal of love held for so long, no wonder that we have been taught to think of homosexual love as sick. For if such is the ideal, the example of two people living together simply in loving comradeship is of course very threatening. I could almost say that I think homosexual love should be the model for love between men and women. I cannot quite say it because homosexuals have for so long been half-persuaded to think of *themselves* as ill, that they—that we—rarely enough serve as such models. Still I do think that as men and women struggle now to work out new relationships, marked by equity, it will be helpful for them to ask themselves, at difficult moments: How would we decide this if we were simply two men living together, or two women?

Let me end with a passage from Rilke. For as Carolyn Heilbrun documents, poets as well as mystics long ago dreamed what others are now beginning at last to speak about. He writes in *Letters to a Young Poet*:

And perhaps the sexes are more related than we think, and the great renewal of the world will perhaps consist in this, that man and maid, freed from all false feeling and aversion, will seek each other not as opposites, but as brother and sister, as neighbors, and will come together as human beings.

Yes, if men and women—and women and women, and men and men—should finally learn to come together simply as human beings, *no more* and *no less*, then love would no longer draw women backward by the hair, away from themselves; and it would no longer drive men to seek themselves where they will never find themselves, in despoiling others, and in despoiling the earth itself. ●

## RADICAL AMERICA

VI, No. 6

### LABOR IN THE 1930s: WORKERS AND UNIONS

—Staughton Lynd, *Radicalism in the early 'thirties: The Case of Steel*, on pre-CIO militance and its "rationalization" by the union.

—James R. Green, *Working Class Militancy*, a synthetic-bibliographical essay.

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96 pp., \$1. Subscriptions, \$5/year.

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# NO JOY IN MUDVILLE

Rip Off: The Big Game  
The Exploitation of Sports by the Power Elite  
By Paul Hoch  
Doubleday Anchor Original  
New York, 1973; 222 pages  
\$1.95

Reviewed by Mark Naison

One of the most significant signs of the theoretical and organizational weaknesses of the American left has been its failure to generate a systematic analysis of mass culture. Although the U.S. first developed and institutionalized the major social forms of mass-consumer society—advertising, mass-circulation newspapers, mass educational institutions, the automobile, the radio, the phonograph, television, movies and mass spectator sports—it was not until the late 1960s that left theoreticians began to treat these institutions as integral parts of the political economy or as arenas in the struggle for social revolution. The most sophisticated writers on such phenomena were invariably isolated from the American left—either iconoclastic professors like Thorstein Veblen, Jules Henry, and C. Wright Mills, who had no connection with the Marxist movement, or European-trained Marxists such as Herbert Marcuse who had no political roots in America and had broken with the traditional Marxist parties. As a result, new left writers who have felt a need to come to terms with patterns of socialization and manipulation that occur outside the point of production have had almost no empirical work to build upon and no theoretical work with an American frame of reference to look to other than Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* and *Eros and Civilization*. To provide theoretical orientation to their work, they have invariably had to look to writers born and educated outside of the U.S.—Lukacs, Reich, Adorno, Gramsci, Marcuse, and C.L.R. James.

Finally, after a long and necessary period in which the major new left theoretical journals—*Liberation*, *Radical America* and *Telos*—have sought to expose the movement to the most sophisticated currents of cultural criticism and psycho-politics, empirical work is being done on various dimensions of American mass culture. Inside and outside the universities, new left intellectuals are doing research on advertising, popular music, film, sports, television, the press, as well as patterns of family life, sex-role socialization and community structure (churches, social clubs, bars, parochial schools, organized crime, etc.).

Paul Hoch's new book, *Rip Off: The Big Game*, is one

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of the first of these studies to come out in book form. An examination of the growth of the sports industry from the first professional baseball leagues (1860s and 1870s) to the explosion of televised sports spectacles in the 1960s, it is informed by both the political economic analysis of Baran and Sweezy and the cultural criticism of Gramsci, Reich and Marcuse. In addition, Hoch, a former athlete and journalist, roots his analysis in a very informative discussion of conditions in specific sports, amply documented by quotes from coaches, athletic directors, and politicians, and the writings of radical athletes and sports writers. Hoch shows definitively how sports have been self-consciously used to socialize the population to the norms of mass consumer society and to reinforce patterns of domination and social discipline consistent with the imperatives of monopoly capitalism at home and abroad. To quote Spiro Agnew: "Sports—all sports—is one of the few bits of glue that holds society together." (Speech before the Touchdown Club of Birmingham, Alabama; quoted by Hoch, p. 3)

The growth of professional sports leagues, Hoch shows, went hand in hand with the increasingly monopolistic character of American industry and the fragmentation of the labor process it produced. Although the first professional baseball team, the Cincinnati Redstockings, had a system of profit-sharing among the players (p. 24), the baseball leagues had become completely owner-dominated by the last decade of the nineteenth century and were exempted from the coverage of the Anti-Trust Laws by a 1922 decision of the U.S. Supreme Court. Moreover, as corporate domination of the leagues was consolidated (reinforced by a network of interlocking ownership with other spheres of American industry), "there developed (not by coincidence) the sort of mass-audience-oriented newspapers needed to sell mass-consumption products. A symbiosis between sports and the news media developed in which sports became *the* decisive promotional device for selling popular newspapers and newspapers were the decisive promotional device for selling sports spectacles." (p. 36) Even today, Hoch points out, 30 per cent of the readers of the New York *Daily News*, the nation's largest selling paper, *read nothing but the sports pages!*

What underlay these developments, Hoch argues, was the need to provide alternative "satisfactions" to a labor force whose work experience was becoming increasingly bureaucratized, alienating, and separated from other dimensions of their existence. In the first three decades of the twentieth century, mass spectator sports emerged as the new "opiate of the people," an antidote to *political* responses to proletarianization such as militant trade unions and radical parties. "In a situation in which workers were given less scope for creativity and decision making in production, it was only natural that they should be provided with some sort of pseudo-escape, and pseudo-satisfaction, and pseudo-community in consumption." (p. 38)



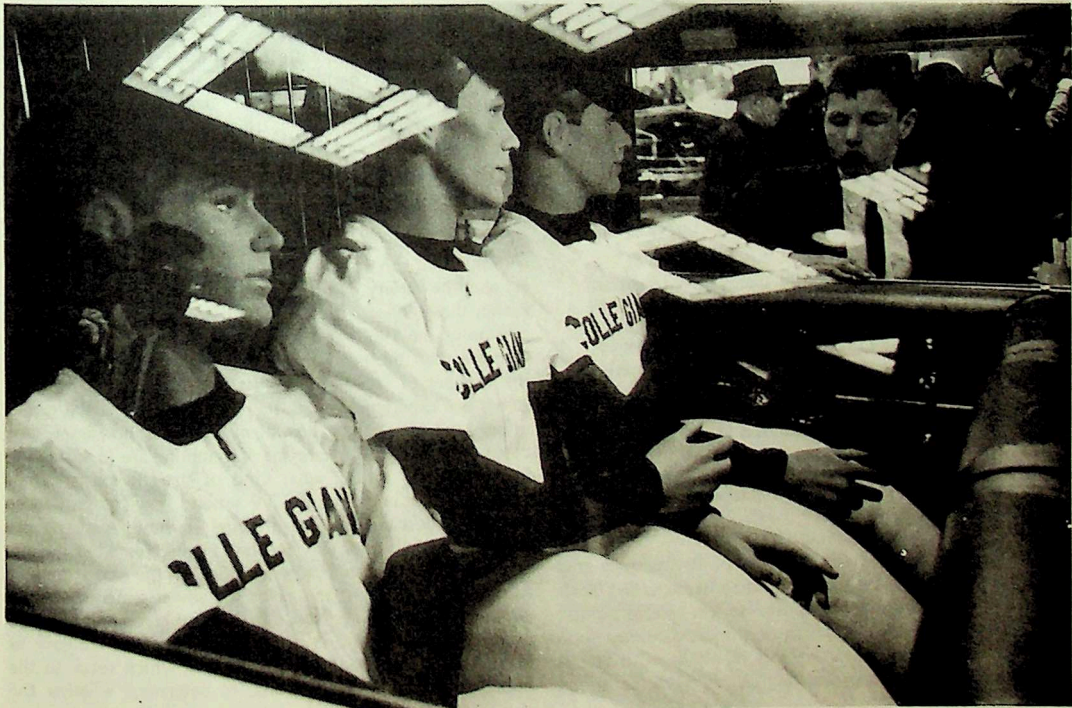
The use of commercial sports as an "opiate," Hoch claims, continued in the post-World-War-II period, but in an even more comprehensive and repressive fashion. In the most brilliant section of his book, Hoch demonstrates how the *current* expansion of commercial sports bears out Marcuse's prediction that "as the material wherewithal to do away with scarcity and alienated labor gradually came into being, the maintenance of this outdated form of social order would require greater and greater degrees of repression." (p. 169) Hoch correctly sees the growing social investment in athletic spectacles, their increasing penetration by patriotic rituals, and the escalating brutality of the games themselves (reflected in the compulsory use of amphetamines and steroids by the players and a sharp increase in the harshness of training procedures and the incidence of injuries), as part of a desperate effort by the ruling strata to reinforce sexist and competitive values that are seen as irrational by a growing part of the American population and to shore up the declining legitimacy of American institutions. At a time when the *potential* for non-dominative labor, sexuality and play seems greater than ever before, the instruments of physical and psychological repression, from the police and the military to spectator sports and commercialized sex, are being dramatically expanded. Hoch sees these events as signs of an approaching social crisis in which the outcome will be either socialism or barbarism:

As the surplus repression exacted to fulfill an authoritarian work ethic becomes less and less justifiable, the

old repressions . . . become more and more painful. At this point there are two possible paths. One can work to replace the old authorities, establish a society organized on the principle of for each according to his own needs, and liberate the new possibilities for sensuous fulfillment. . . . Or one can cling to the old authorities, the old society, and the old repressive Reality Principle. The first path tends toward socialism. The second toward fascism. The fascist path requires increased amounts of waste consumption to mask the fact that scarcity and repression are no longer necessary. It requires increased political repression (i.e., law and order) to keep the more sexually and politically aware young in their place, and provide sadistic, destructive outlets for their frustrations created by this increasingly irrational surplus repression. It requires a foreign enemy and a domestic scapegoat. The latter requirement leads to an upsurge of racism. (p. 166)

It does not require a great deal of imagination to see the validity of this analysis. The polarized cultural attitudes reflected in the last Presidential election, and the content of Nixon's budget message, calling for sharp increases in military spending (police as well as armed forces) along with cuts in welfare, anti-poverty programs and aid to education, show that the terms of the current crisis are nothing less than what former pro linebacker Dave Meggysey called "the death culture versus the life culture." (p. 212)

Nevertheless, if Hoch has managed to use his analysis



Auto Show, Coliseum, New York City



of sports to dramatize the broadest tendencies in the evolution of the American economy and American mass culture, he has been much less successful in showing the connection between these developments and the social relations of daily life. Hoch presents the developing sports industry (along with the other institutional components of mass consumer society) as possessing direct, unmediated capacity to shape the needs, desires and social behavior of the mass of American workers. The monopolistic infrastructure of commercial athletics, according to Hoch, gives it an almost totalitarian power to "socialize fans for production and consumption, for their roles on the assembly line or in the army, to be docile citizens in a nationalistic, racist, male-dominated and militarized country." (p. 21) He views the *political* organization of the working class as the only antidote to this manipulation, and claims its weaknesses in America have been decisive: "Every day, workers are enjoined and encouraged by the mass media to think of themselves as fans of a particular team, or as 'Americans,' or as 'consumers,' or as 'tax payers' or as everything and anything but workers who spend 100 per cent of their working lives *taking orders from bosses*. In other words, they are being asked to identify with every team but the real team, the only team in the only context that can really make a difference—workers versus capitalists." (p. 81)

Hoch here expresses the orthodox Marxist position that all forms of culture, even the enormous and diversified instrumentalities of mass culture, are expressions of class relations at the point of production. Hoch sees mass consumer society and the forms of socialization it brings with it as the conscious response of the rulers of monopoly capitalism to the class organization of the international proletariat (objective and potential). The dehumanizing consequences of mass culture—its perversion of natural human instincts for play and sexuality, its creation of false needs, its encouragement of the "poisonous ideologies" (p. 21) of nationalism, racism and sexism, can therefore only be dealt with by the establishment of workers' control of production, by the creation of international socialism. In his last chapter, Hoch tells us what we have to do to get there:

... In order to rid humanity of the scourges of elitism, racism, sexism, and nationalism, the international proletariat (that 98 per cent or so of the world's population who are wage workers and do not exercise control over people's means of production) must:

- (1) Smash the instruments of class rule (starting with the bourgeois state).
- (2) Eliminate waste production as part of the process of reorienting production around the satisfaction of human needs rather than profits.
- (3) Do away with scarcity entirely by establishing democratic (i.e., socialist) relations of production on a global scale.

This is all well and good—very few of us would disagree that something like this eventually has to happen. But Hoch fails to tell us how we are supposed to get to this point—especially since the cultural apparatus of mass consumer society has so effectively distorted and manipulated the consciousness of the American working classes. True, he points



Triad/LNS  
Drawing by Jan Faust

to a growing dissatisfaction with the repressive and hierarchical character of life under monopoly capitalism, dramatized by its own technological capacities, but he gives us no indication how this commitment to the "life culture" is going to translate itself into a unified working-class organization strong enough to overthrow capitalism. If there is no *ongoing process of self-organization* among the American population to mediate, subvert and deflect the impact of mass culture on the formation of character, then in the cosmic struggle between the "life culture" and the "death culture," between socialism and fascism, fascism triumphs.

Fortunately, the impact of mass cultural institutions on the American working population has not been as direct, or as free from creative resistance, as Hoch suggests. Sports spectacles, newspapers, popular music, etc. are not experienced by "atomized individuals" but by members of families, communities, ethnic and racial groups, classes and sub-classes, plus the variety of formal and informal groups that exist within these collectivities. In examining the pro football explosion of the 1960s and 1970s, for example, we must look at more than the economic infrastructure of the teams and the number of viewers; we must also look at the *way* the games are experienced—e.g., how many people watch games in bars and social clubs, how many in homes; how important betting pools and other forms of gambling are in sustaining interest in the games; what kind of struggle exists within families over the use of the TV set and how the growth of women's consciousness has affected it; how many people who watch the games play football themselves; what the differences are between the generations or the sexes in their response to the sexist nature of the advertisements and the commentary, to the patriotic rituals and ceremonies, to the actions, on the field and off, of black players. We have to know something about these questions, which speak to the impact of football on daily life, to determine whether the



sport is in fact serving as a "fortress that is holding the wall against radical elements," as one college coach suggests. (p. 5) My own experiences suggest that precisely the opposite might be happening—that the sport's monopolization of TV time and the self-conscious efforts of politicians and promoters to use it to legitimize militarism have actually helped to dramatize *the absurdity of the games's basic values*—competition, violence, sexism—to both viewers and players. When President Nixon made a point of watching the football game in his living room rather than the peace demonstration outside his door, or sent in plays to the locker room of the Washington Redskins during games, in a way he was providing propaganda for the life culture! Although a large number of Americans might have seen nothing wrong with this behavior, a sizeable proportion, including some prominent pro-footballers (Larry Csonka of the Dolphins and Billy Kiler of the Redskins), saw it as a reflection on the President's sanity. In living rooms throughout the country, the issue of the President's "mental state" was passionately discussed, and while it may not always have been "resolved" to our liking, it was brought before the American people, however unintentionally, with a clarity and intensity that organized left propaganda rarely achieves.

It is on social terrain of this kind—living rooms, bars, shop floors, schoolyards, offices, beauty parlors—and around issues of this kind, that the crisis in our society reveals itself and signs of change must be sought. Does the President have the right to root for a team and send plays in to its coach? Do husbands have the right to watch football for 12 hours each weekend and refuse to help with the chores? Should athletes be allowed to slouch and chat during the Star Spangled Banner? Wear long hair and beards? Join a union? Should women be allowed to be umpires and jockeys? Get the same pay as men in tennis and golf? Play on the same high school basketball or tennis team as the boys? Are blacks "physically superior" to whites? Are they intelligent enough to play quarterback? Are they stealing jobs from white people in advertising, announcing and coaching? These are conversations taking place every day, with sports as a focal point. They are carried on by people who have experienced considerable manipulation, but who have also resisted manipulation—by bosses, parents, husbands, politicians, union leaders—and who still have some of the resources to judge social issues and "to make up their own mind." For them, sports have been far more than an "opiate"; they have been a sphere in which many of the basic issues facing modern American society have been dramatized and revealed.

By skipping over how sports are experienced on this level, Hoch, in spite of his brilliant economic analysis, fails to point to a realistic path out of the madness he so eloquently describes. "Smashing the bourgeois state," "unifying the international proletariat," and "fighting for control over the means of production" are impossible for most of us to envision, much less implement strategically, yet these are the basic formulas he sets forth for the humanization of sports and society. Is this the only meaningful level on which transcendence can take place? Are there not more immediate and concrete ways for us to work toward the destruction of repressive institutions and values and the creation of non-dominative social relations?

If we look around us, we will see that there are new patterns of athletic participation and physical exercise *already emerging* that are radically antagonistic to the commercial sports scene in America. Men and women playing soccer, volleyball, basketball, and touch football *together* in newly non-competitive ways; women taking a growing interest in physical conditioning and the martial arts (karate, judo, etc.); parents bringing up male and female children with the same orientation toward exercise, sports and physical fitness; new patterns of diet emerging which emphasize health and natural balance rather than commercially defined definitions of masculinity and femininity—these are the germs of a wholly new approach to sports which emphasizes collective physical health, a co-operative ethic, the aesthetic dimensions of athletics and the transcendence of traditional sex roles. This approach to athletics is still confined primarily to white, middle-class young people, but its appeal grows as the old social values and relations, with their emphasis on competition, domination and male supremacy, become more empty and oppressive. Driven forward positively by the growing struggle of women for self-realization, and negatively by the increasingly fragmented and alienating quality of "official" cultural attitudes and ideals, it represents, in this dimension of our culture, the image of the new society.

For most of the last decade, we have been content to "live" this vision rather than consciously project it into political programs and struggles. If the way we played and exercised and brought up our children was liberating, we thought, it would spread by example. And so it has. But I think it is time to begin to translate these "life patterns" into institutional struggle, as some of our brothers and sisters are already doing. In elementary schools, high schools, colleges and community centers, we should begin to work to change the whole approach to sports. Funds should be diverted from "teams" to intramurals, women and men should be given equal access to athletic facilities and equal physical training, women should be free to play on school teams of their choice and form teams of their own. In addition, athletic administration and coaching should be revolutionized, with blacks and women placed in administrative positions and "democratic" methods of coaching institutionalized. Such reforms are not as dramatic as abolishing the National Football League, or establishing co-operative ownership of professional teams, but they are much more possible, and their cumulative effect may be more important because they erode the system through which professional athletes are trained and "fans" are socialized.

This approach has relevance to other spheres of cultural and political struggle. In a society in which the instruments of repression are too concentrated and too powerful to be challenged directly, the revolution proceeds best by subverting the system's legitimacy from below—creating non-dominative social relations in the course of daily life, reorganizing local institutions around the new principles and infiltrating the major centers of socialization to spread the image of the new society. If we do this steadily, and we do it well (and we have enough time), we may eventually reach the marvelous point where each repressive act serves as revolutionary propaganda and the system becomes the instrument of its own destruction. ●



(continued from page 2)

Aronowitz is correct when he says that accidents cannot be 100 per cent eliminated. But he fails to recognize that the accident rate in every single European coal-mining nation—Great Britain, France, German Democratic Republic, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Soviet Union, and others—is today much lower than it is in the United States. And in the socialist countries, where the accident rates are lowest, Black Lung disease has been almost completely eliminated. Because Aronowitz does not recognize this, the only solution he can come up with is the abolition of coal mining.

I have talked to hundreds of coal miners over the past three years, but have never heard even one miner suggest the abolition of coal mining. Is this because Aronowitz is infinitely more advanced in his thinking than are thousands of miners? I doubt it. I think there are other explanations. Even though mining is the most dangerous job in our country, coal miners are proud to be miners. They are proud of their union and their recent victory over Boyle. And they should be. Coal miners have always played a leading role in labor struggles in our history.

The huge monopolies which produce coal are hardly likely to act on Aronowitz's proposal. They have dug hundreds of multi-million-dollar mines, built huge coal-fueled power plants, and own enormous steel mills. About 55 per cent of the coal mined today goes to produce 60 per cent of all our electric power. And almost one ton in five is used to make coke, for which there is no substitute in blast furnaces.

The only attempt to take action along the lines Aronowitz suggests is in Great Britain. There, the government- and industry-controlled National Coal Board has been phasing out coal, and replacing it with natural gas and imported petroleum. The NCB is closing

down a disproportionate number of pits in Wales and Scotland, and in certain fields in England. Why? Because the miners in these pits are extremely militant. The Scottish miners have elected a Communist miner as their President every year since 1942. The capitalist class in Britain is supporting pit closures to wipe out the militant leadership the whole British working class is getting from the coal miners.

Can you conceive of a radical or socialist trade union movement anywhere in the world without miners? Coal miners in Spain, Belgium, and France were among the most heroic anti-Nazi fighters; they led the Resistance. Miners in France are the backbone of the CGT. Copper miners in Chile played a leading role in Allende's victory; tin miners in Bolivia have long fought for a radical government in that country. Coal and metal miners have provided the leadership for general strikes against the ultra-repressive colonial governments in southern Africa. Coal miners played a central role in the socialist revolutions in the Soviet Union and many Eastern European nations. And coal miners were well represented among the more than three million Soviet citizens who—in one of the most moving acts of international solidarity in human history—volunteered to fight in Vietnam if and when the liberation forces in that heroic country needed them.

Coal miners in our country must be given the credit for the recent election victory. Their militancy—which was not created by leaders, but which itself created those leaders—is the central lesson of the whole Miners for Democracy movement. The impact of this victory on every trade union in the country must be recognized. Today, all radicals and progressives must focus on how they can help consolidate and expand that victory, not offer

utopian proposals for the abolition of coal mining and coal miners. By doing so, Aronowitz isolates himself from this most significant sector of our working class.

Sincerely yours,  
Paul Nyden

Editor, Miner's Report  
Washington, Pennsylvania

#### Stanley Aronowitz Replies:

Following Nyden's form, I will deal with the factual issues in order:

1. We are both wrong on the annual production of coal. According to *Business Week*, annual production has averaged about 1.1 billion net tons during the past year (these are Bureau of Mines figures). My error was a typographical one. I simply copied the figures incorrectly. I do not know the source of Nyden's 600 million tons.

2. When Tom Kennedy replaced Lewis, the Boyle machine was in the making; the differences between 1960 and 1963 are not substantive in the life of the union. In fact, it may be said that the Boyle administration was in the great tradition of Lewis himself.

3. Nyden is right about the hospital issue. I was confusing the four hospitals in Eastern Kentucky that were threatened with closing in 1963.

4. Nyden's correction on the UMW elections seems trivial to me. Hapgood did not run against Lewis, but he was a key participant in the fight to unseat him. When Brophy was unable to visit UMW districts during his election campaign because he was a President of a UMW district, Hapgood was among those who attempted to do the campaigning, according to Brophy's autobiography (pp. 216-17).

Now for the substantive differences between us:

One of the problems that has plagued orthodox leftist policy in the trade unions is its failure to come to grips with the problem of the working class itself. How many times must we listen to stories of rank-and-file courage against venal leaders? If the rank and file is so effective historically, how did they tolerate the likes of Lewis for 40 years and his successors for another decade? When the challenge to the Boyle-Lewis machine finally emerged, it was a member of the palace guard, Yablonski, who was selected to make the race. This fact reflects the difficulty faced by all movements for trade-union reform in developing genuine rank-and-file symbols. The union structure reflects the autocracy of the workplace itself. The monopoly over the means of communications possessed by the bureaucracy almost always guarantees that any movement for change has to rely on a defector from the central administration for success. This issue does not obviate the value of trade-union reform movements. As long as rank-and-file workers cannot imagine an alternative to the bureaucratic unions except the wildcat strike, they will continue to support efforts from within the structure for some amelioration of the unions' worst features.

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Radicals should support these efforts but not participate in them.

When Nyden finally admits that the Miller administration is beset with difficulties, e.g., appointing a CIA operative to an important staff post, and a congenital anti-communist as an important advisor to MFD, he can only be "disturbed" but undaunted. These concessions to the right are not accidental. National union elections are always coalition efforts. Insurgents, however militant, are almost always constrained to make deals with the least noxious elements of the opposition, who, in turn, demand concessions from the insurgents. Miller is certainly an honest man. But the institutional limits of his ability to make a radical break from the past are already glaringly evident. It will be interesting to see whether the demand for the 30-hour week, the strict enforcement of health and safety standards, and the other parts of the MFD program will be rigidly adhered to. Naturally, radicals should make every effort to urge miners to press the leadership on these issues. But they should always be aware that unions are structurally unprepared to do more than make tentative steps forward. For example, Nyden pointed out the pledge of the present leadership to organize

the unorganized mines. Should the strip mines be unionized? If so, how can the union fight to eliminate them when some of its members would lose their jobs—in the short run, at least?

Which leads to the big question. Coal mining may account for 85 per cent of America's energy resources, especially the production of electricity, but this fact does not signify some technological inevitability about the situation. Such alternatives as geothermal energy are available and only the relatively high cost of research and development for commercial uses has prevented its introduction. But the *Wall Street Journal* and *Business Week* have reported substantial exploration by oil and gas companies of steam as a replacement for coal in the production of electric power. When Nyden reports that "coal miners are proud to be miners," he seems to be making a case for preserving the coal industry despite his admission that "mining is the most dangerous job in our country."

There can be no argument with Nyden's statement that miners are among the most militant groups of workers in any industrial country, including the Eastern European nations. But would Nyden suggest that the industry be preserved despite its dangers, de-

spite the fact that it almost invariably produces black lung disease in all of its workers and hundreds of accidents every year? To say that miners themselves would oppose the introduction of alternative fuel sources is only to report what everyone knows. Workers oppose any "improvement" under capitalism that deprives them of a livelihood. But it is not the business of radicals to defend the existence of an industry because its workers are more exploited and militant than any others. There is a perverse logic in this position—one that can only be uttered by a person who has no imagination, has given no serious thought to the future and is mired in the present.

Nyden is in the great tradition of the British working class. Like them, he possesses class-consciousness, but has not realized that the object of the proletariat's struggle is to abolish itself and all forms of alienated existence along with it. The great lesson of the socialist and communist movement's history is that its refusal to follow the best thinking of the utopians led to the transformation of the great left parties into staunch defenders of the status quo. Capitalism, they discovered, is much better at preserving the working class than communism. After all, communism demands the impossible. ●

*New York City*

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it's too late LESTER. i saw GLENN go down  
beneath a club in Seattle. he was I.W.W.,  
they shot his balls off. i saw him again  
in Arizona lying in the sun, dead of smallpox.  
he was sitting on the corner of Bleecker St.  
and Bowery, wrapped around a bottle. i stood  
beside GLENN once in Frisco in a bread line,  
his pale blue eyes glazed with something more  
than hunger. he beat me at poker in Vegas,  
but that was back during the Great War. i  
took the pictures from his wallet in Korea,  
gave the six bucks to a young girl. he was  
the guy who installed all the driver side  
windows on the chevy convertibles in Detroit,  
for 22 years. i did the passenger side. i  
saw bits and pieces of him riding up up  
on a booby trap in Nam. i just bought a paper  
from him down on the corner. he shifted on  
his crutches, looked hard at me, his pale blue  
eyes glazed with something more than hunger.  
it's too late LESTER.

— Todd Davis Jefferson





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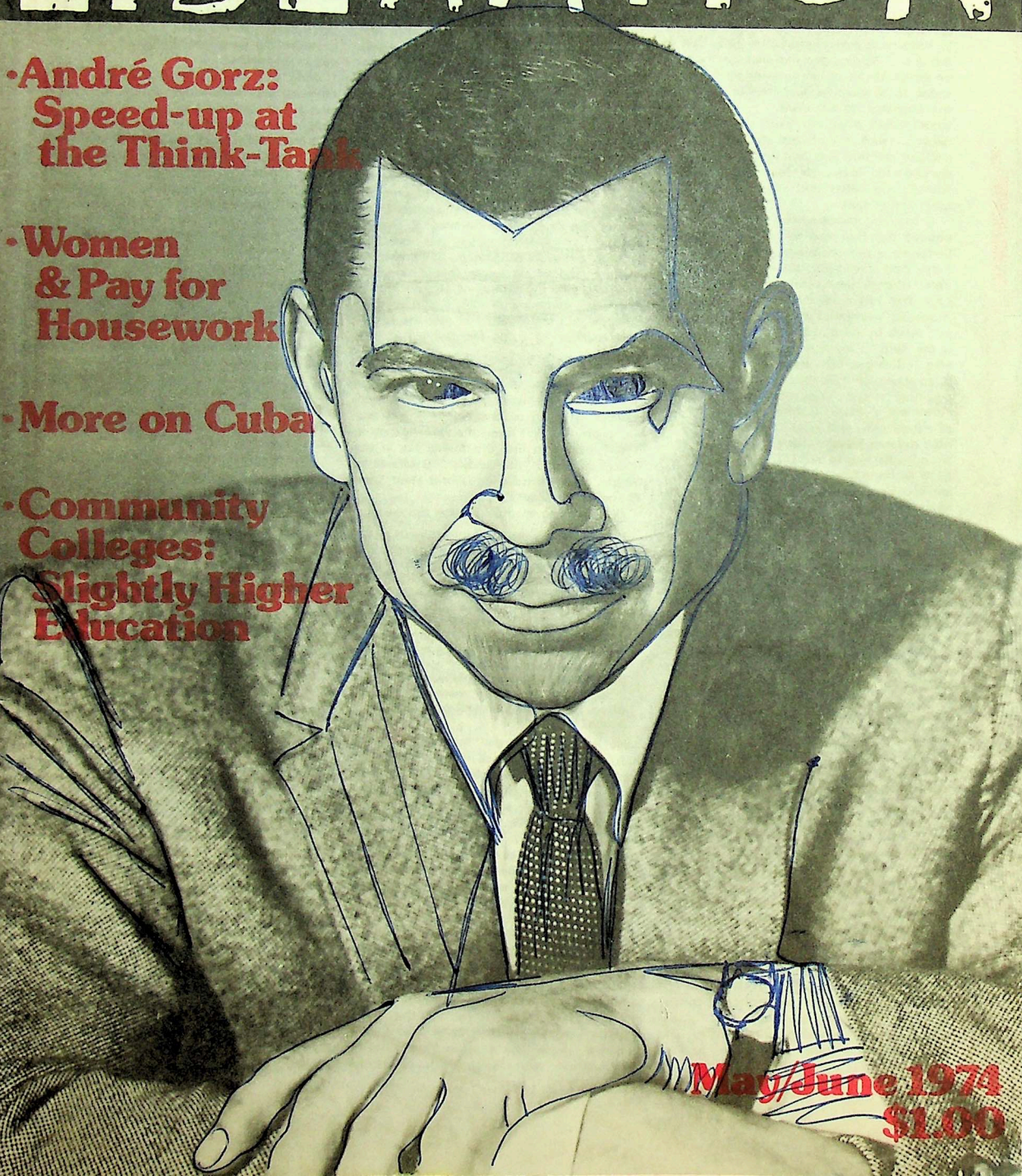
# LIBERATION

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## LETTERS

BERRIGAN & THE MIDEAST  
(February 1974)

Dear Dave Dellinger,

Dan Berrigan has said nothing new about the Jews and the "role" they should be playing in the world. The Christian community has always asked Jews to be "The Last of the Just." So Berrigan has placed a mandate on Israel to be different from other nation states, to be more humane, to live the life of the prophets, to lay down its arms, even if Israel should disappear from the earth as a result of such a unilateral decision. My immediate reaction was that Dan speaks like a disappointed lover. He has found out that Israel is no better and no worse than any other nation state.

I, too, am disappointed. But I am disappointed that Dan read too well the New Left literature and he began to believe it. Unwittingly Dan played into the hands of the New Left. Strange bedfellows, because the New Left does not have that same love for the prophetic vision that Dan has. The New Left just thinks in terms of Israel the Imperialist. It is my turn to lay a mandate on the people who influenced Dan Berrigan. If they truly cared about Israel, as they sometimes say they do, they would have supported the peace movement in Israel all these years, the voices of moderation and reconciliation. But they have isolated those voices by ignoring them. I am not referring to the Uri Davis people who seem to be totally disillusioned with Israel. I am speaking of people like Joseph Abileah, who I have considered for a long time to be the A.J. Muste counterpart in Israel. Joseph and others have long believed that Israel should not be an outpost of the West. A "Confederation of the Middle East" has been formed, with Joseph Abileah as its secretary. Send Joseph a few dollars (55a Hillel Street, Haifa, Israel) and he will send you their latest pamphlet, "Confederation of the Middle East . . . various proposals." You can read for yourself, without the New Left interpretation, of a confederation of states, under a "roof-type" government: Israel, Palestine and Jordan.

Sincerely,  
*Thalia Stern*  
Berkeley, California

P.S. I hope that the WRL is awarding Dan Berrigan the 1974 peace prize for his struggle in the past, not for his attempts in being the newest Israeli prophet with American citizenship.

The assumption of Dan Berrigan, and many others who criticize Israel, is that the Israelis are capable of "sane" and therefore "moral" conduct. Dan's argument is based on pointing out the glaring contradiction between professed Jewish ideals of justice, expressed in the remarkable tradition of Jewish humanitarianism, and the behavior of Israel, which seems in many respects to ignore and contradict that tradition. He believes the Israelis aren't always behaving consistently, and therefore aren't "sane" or "moral," as they should be.

Noam Chomsky makes the same assumption about Israeli policies and those who've criticized Dan's speech. Noam's article is a model of scholarship. It's encyclopedic in its discussion of numerous, intricate, and subtle facets of the Middle East situation. With the tactical assurance of a linguist, semanticist and rationalist, Noam goes to only one arbiter on every point and issue—the arbiter of fact. He exposes the glaring omissions, distortions, and inconsistencies in the arguments of Dan's critics. Noam's appeal is almost totally to evidence and reason, hence to "sanity."

A few days ago, I asked a Jewish friend of mine why she was attracted to Dan's speech. She said it was because Dan had spoken the truth about Israel and Zionism. As our conversation progressed, it developed that she felt deeply humiliated by Israel's betrayal of democratic socialism, and simple justice in the case of the Palestinians—betrayal, in sum, of the part of Judaism which was most important to her, its enlightened humanism. To her, the Jews, of all people, should have been able to avoid the pitfalls of elitism, racism, militarism, corporate capitalism, and imperialism. She too seemed to feel that the Israelis were capable of being reasonable and consistent.

I was puzzled. Why did these people, for whose knowledge and judgment I had very high respect, feel strongly that Israelis were capable of being rational, while I had profound doubts? As I thought about the matter, it seemed to me that the answer lay in our understanding of the nature and effects of certain kinds of suffering—World Wars I and II, and the holocaust.

Dan refers to the holocaust in this passage:

A common assumption exists in the West, buttressed by massive historical and religious argument, to the effect that Israel is exempt from moral criticism. Her people have passed through the gentile furnace; how then shall the goy judge the suffering servant? And is not the holocaust the definitive argument for the righteousness of this people, heroically determined to begin again, in a promised land, that experiment in survival which so nearly went awry, so often, under such constant assault at our hands?

He goes on to argue that the suffering endured by the Jewish people does not exempt Israeli policies and actions from criticism. Dan is logically right. On the other hand, that suffering may have made it impossible for most Jews to be objective about Israel.

Noam's article has few references to the holocaust. From the point of view of a scholar, it doesn't have to. Reasonable people should transcend their suffering. It may be, however, that much of human behavior—much of history—testifies to the inability of reasonable, highly educated, sensitive people to transcend their suffering.

The friend I talked with had much the same attitude toward the holocaust as Dan and Noam. She seemed to feel that the Jewish Defense League's slogan "Never Again!" was overdone, *passé*. She expressed no sense of identification with Golda Meir or Moshe

Dayan. I felt that she, too, believed that people should be able to transcend their suffering, to forget, forgive, and act reasonably and humanely.

My view about suffering is somewhat different. I think that all suffering leaves a mark. All suffering is difficult to transcend. Some kinds of suffering so damage people that they can't transcend it. Some suffering tends to brutalize the most educated, reasonable, and cultivated people. . . .

What was the effect of suffering of the intensity and dimensions of the two world wars and the holocaust? Reasonably, it should have made people more humane. It should have made them recoil against war, militarism, mass murder, torture, power politics, corporate capitalism, totalitarianism, and everything that helped to create such evils. Some did recoil. But the majority of people reacted in a different way. They learned a simpler lesson. It was that the ultimate "reality" is power. Those who have it live, and enjoy the good things of life. Those who lack it die. That lesson has nothing to do with morality or ethics or idealism, or humanity. It is a simple, causal statement about a simple notion of physical "reality." And it's a lesson that was learned more than intellectually. The wave upon wave of unrelenting horror and brutality of the world wars and the holocaust seem to have generated a primitive "conditioned reflex" in the survivors. The reflex operates independently of the subtleties of reason and morality. . . .

How does our understanding of this "insanity" help us view Israel and the Mideast? Certainly, it should not silence us, for there can be no cure for any of us unless we communicate with one another, and share our visions of what "sane" behavior is. But as we communicate, let us remember that the disease isn't isolated in one nation, race, cultural group, political viewpoint, sex, or individual. We all suffer it, in various ways, and to various degrees. No amount of knowledge, no degree of intelligence is a sure antidote. There can be, therefore, no room for judgmentalism and self-righteousness, no feeling we are "better," they "worse," we "moral," they "sinful." As we talk with each other and offer suggestions, hoping that somehow humankind can save itself, only compassion seems a "sane" perspective.

*Brad Lyttle*  
New York, NY

### Dear Liberation,

The solidarity expressed by both Chomsky and Dellinger goes far to clarify Daniel Berrigan's address. Nonetheless, a fundamental question must be raised. This question is not concerned with Berrigan's intentions; nor the Arab-Israeli conflict; nor the anti-Semitic smokescreen with which the "leaders" of the American Jewish community so viciously assailed him; nor even with the socio-political conditions within the U.S., Israel, and the Arab states that inspired his just criticism. For I support and agree wholeheartedly with his criticisms. Rather, my question is directed at the religiously inspired politics of guilt which underlies his address. . . .

(continued on p. 22)



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## IN THIS ISSUE

It's spring again, the impeachment trees are in blossom on the Potomac, and here we are again.

Dum-de-dum-dum. Dum-de-dum-dum-daaaah. Yes, that is Jack Webb staring out at you from our front cover this month. We hope that Pete Knutson's analysis of the *Dragnet* world-view—and how it reflects and shapes our everyday reality—is the start of a lot more articles on the mass entertainment media. We'd like to examine not just the good/bad "politics" of a film, a book, a record, but also to look more closely at *why* certain media productions or performers are so popular, what they reflect (and do to) people's needs and desires. We hope you'll send suggestions and manuscripts.

It may seem to be a gigantic leap from an article on "mass culture" to the "lofty realm" of science. But André Gorz's article forces us to stop and reconsider just why we look at some things as "scientific" and others not, some people as "scientists" and others as merely "workers." Gorz argues that the development of a genuine "people's science" would mean not just a change in scientific goals or scientists becoming conscious of themselves as workers, but a whole re-evaluation of what we mean by "science" to encompass knowledge that is available to all, that increases people's capacity to organize their own lives.

Is more formal education for more people one way to do this? Not necessarily, according to Ira Shor, who sees the mushrooming of two-year community colleges as a strategy whose essential purpose is the further pacification and oppression of workers—as a new version of the "American Dream." But he also sees contradictions in this strategy—the "products" turned out by these colleges may not be what was expected. A number of our readers either teach at or

attend community colleges and we hope they'll send us their reactions to this article.

Carol Lopate's "Letter to the Movement" offers a critique of the idea that women should be paid for housework—a demand which seems to be under discussion more and more as women get together to figure out what a concrete feminist program would look like. While this demand may be concrete, to Carol it is also dangerous: it implies the reinforcement of repressive tendencies (for example, the sexual division of labor), and it mistakenly attempts to validate women's work and identity by borrowing from the categories of Marxist analysis when what women need is to develop a new terminology.

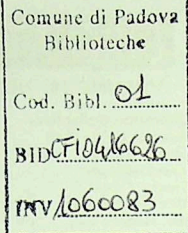
Finally, our lively dialogue on Cuba continues with an article and more letters.

You may have noticed that this month's cover isn't our usual heavy, shiny production and that it (and the issue before it) was very late in reaching you. We're having trouble keeping up with our printer's bill, so we're trying to economize a little on production costs; unfortunately, this isn't nearly enough to close the financial gap. There are ways you can help keep *Liberation* coming out on a more regular schedule. Send us a contribution in the forthcoming fund appeal—especially if you didn't send anything last time. Renew your sub when we send you a notice; renew before we send a notice; better still, get a gift subscription for a friend. And see the box on page 5 for how you can help us get more material and improve the distribution of the magazine.

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# The GREATEST SHOW on EARTH



Every day the television, radio and newspapers continue to tell us how terribly and deceitfully the President and his closest aides have behaved. We also now have the edited transcripts of over 40 "Presidential conversations," which at best do nothing to disabuse us of the negative impression that the more external evidence had given us all along.

What most of the press is trying desperately to convey is that Nixon is different, that *he* is dishonest and corrupt and that he has surrounded himself with people of like minds. The mass media wants to make Nixon look as bad as possible in the narrowest possible way—in this case, in terms of morals. He is being faulted for the low moral level of his conversations—for his "obscene" language, for his indecision, and, of course, for his attempt to conceal the truth about Watergate. But the press is equally concerned that Nixon *not* look corrupt, dishonest, or irresponsible on matters not related to Watergate. The message which comes through is that though Watergate is a horror, Nixon is at least competent, if not great, on foreign policy and domestic concerns like the economy, military spending, and all the other issues that affect our daily lives. Thus, the separation between Nixon's personal and Presidential responsibilities is being made so that when he is finally out of office, whether in '76 or earlier, he will be able to take with him all the "bad vibes," leaving the White House pristine for Ford or whoever else takes over.

The media may not be entirely successful in conveying this separation, but they, the Congress and everybody else in government is working pretty hard at it. To most people it is not crucial whether Nixon stays in the White House or not, yet the press has devoted so much coverage to the issue that subjects of greater national concern, such as the deepening recession, are given relatively little attention compared to the specific moral misdoings of a specific President.

While it is in the nature of the capitalist system for money to buy power and for corporate interests to control the Federal government and foreign policy ("foreign policy": an innocuous term for anything from a fleet of ambassadors to a fleet of B-52's, depending on "the problem"), the national press's treatment of the Watergate affair tries to create the impression that Nixon's transgressions were unrelated to the pressures, not to mention the nature, of the system within which he operates. Thus Nixon is being held to a standard of behavior to which, as some of his staunch defenders rightly claim, no previous President or government has been held. It may be cheap of Nixon to defend himself with this complaint, but it would be foolish of us to assume that he's wrong just because he is cheap. Nor is it necessary for us to rely on his protestations: the Pentagon Papers give us pretty good evidence that Kennedy and Johnson acted in similar—at times even more excessive—ways.

We can take little comfort that Congress is in charge of setting things to rights. If they impeach Nixon, they will only

demonstrate that a realistic sense of governmental power dictates that such power must continue to appear legitimate and that Nixon endangers this legitimacy in the eyes of the people.

The whole issue of Nixon's actions in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia is being ignored by the Congress. Nixon cannot be held accountable for them, not only because Presidential power in "foreign policy" has been so undefined, but because these issues are simply too broad in their implications. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that it is on these foreign policy and major domestic issues that Nixon has committed the greatest "crimes." By comparison, it is as if he were being considered for impeachment mainly because he has bad manners.

By now the whole Watergate affair has developed into a kind of three-ring circus, with Nixon, St. Clair and Haig in one ring, Congress in another, and the Judiciary in the third. All three supposed pillars of our government are trying to save the show from the miserable string of flops in Nixon's ring, with Congress making a valiant effort to gain attention as it moves towards impeachment. The whole circus company would really like to pack up and go home, but until they can replace the present raucous boos (mainly from the press) with a big round of applause (say, for a spic 'n' span White House), they are afraid to do so, for fear that we will never come to see their show again.

The dilemma for Congress and for the President and his supporters is that ultimately, whatever course is followed, certain deep-seated myths about power in America will be shaken. Already exposed is the myth that the leader of this country will naturally be fundamentally honest and decent, rising above the petty corruption that distinguishes "politicians" from leaders. Since people can see clearly that this is not true in Nixon's case, there are two choices left: to pressure him into resignation, or to impeach and then convict him. His resignation would satisfy those who believe that the country must not be subjected to the "trauma" of impeachment lest it founder and be subject to great external (and possibly internal) danger. Many of the same people would just as soon have Nixon stay; those who favor his resignation do so not because he has been corrupt and dishonest but because he has been discredited. It is notable that by and large the national press seems to take the position that the most important thing is to have a strong man at the top, not the correct Constitutional procedures. Thus, many newspapers demanded resignation from Nixon before they would dare call for impeachment. The presumption of innocence, not to mention the spirit of the democracy in which we supposedly live, would seem to call for impeachment and a trial first.

By contrast, impeachment is favored by those who think that democracy will best be served—and maintained—



by adherence to the Constitution (the law) which, in this view, is far more important than any individual leader could be. If impeachment results, and if Nixon is convicted, it will be, among other things, a victory for those who believe that the Constitution is the guarantor of the nation's survival.

If Nixon leaves office, by whatever route, before his term is completed, his successor will be the first President who has not been elected by the people, however indirectly. Furthermore, the new President will have been chosen by the very man who is being forced out, whose judgment in selecting advisors and co-workers has been so completely discredited. The effect this will have on the American people, whose overall faith in the essentially democratic nature of the U.S. government rests on the belief that we at least choose the person who rules us, is impossible to measure at this point. It can only be said that it is the fear of what effect this might ultimately have that keeps Nixon in office now.

Some people on the left are saying that they would rather see Nixon stay in office than either resign under threat of impeachment or actually be impeached. They feel that if Nixon leaves, the Constitution would then appear re-validated and we would be forced to live with Gerald Ford, who has demonstrated little potential for being any improvement over Nixon, but who, after the ritual purification of the Oval Office, won't be subject to the same kind of criticism and limitations that Nixon now finds on his power.

It's hard to imagine, however, that much more good can come of Nixon's staying in office. A great deal of demystification about government and the White House has taken place during the past year, and no doubt that will benefit all of us. On the other hand, as the Congress and the press discuss Nixon's transgressions ever more narrowly, and concern fades over all but the most exacting interpretation of his crimes, no great educational process is taking place. It is good for people to know that Presidents talk like everybody else, that they are no more high-minded, and possibly less so. But ultimately Watergate is viewed too much in terms of the people immediately involved and too little in terms of what lies behind them.

Limited as impeachment is, it is still preferable to Nixon's either resigning or finishing out his term. While many people are tired of Watergate and would like to see it "taken off TV," to ignore the situation at this stage is to contribute to the further legitimation of authoritarian government and its removal from challenge; its very existence would increasingly be used for its justification. At the same time the notion would once again be put forward that since Nixon is "the only President we have," the need for strong leadership must override even the appearance of accountability. Meanwhile, those of us who have no great love either for Nixon or for the legitimacy of governmental authority are left with a feeling of total powerlessness, a kind of defensive cynicism. Although present Congressional action toward impeachment is "obscene" in its narrowness, as Dan Ellsberg has pointed out, it is at least in part a response to people's anger and therefore seems to us less dangerous than allowing Nixon to remain in office, or than a resignation in which he can still proclaim his innocence, the press can be blamed for hounding him out of office, and a new regime can take power with the attitude that they saved us from the danger of impeachment and an accompanying "leadership crisis."

Nixon's exit from office may well usher in a very difficult period in which people believe that there should be

no more criticism, the press again becomes docile, and the transgressions of high government figures are kept secret. But a change of guard can hardly provide more than the most temporary band-aid for the divisions and conflicts which intensify continually in this country. We needn't fear—Gerald Ford, even with all the King's corporations, cannot put this broken country together again. We can.

—Dick Goldensohn

### NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

Even though our last two issues have been dated March/April and May/June, *Liberation* is not going bi-monthly. Unless our cover date is within shouting distance of the month the issue actually comes out, it gets buried on newsstands—they don't want to be displaying a magazine labeled "April" when it's already the end of May! So, with our monthly schedule constantly being messed up by financial problems, we're sometimes compelled to date the magazine ahead. Subscribers please note: we do *not* calculate the expiration of your sub on the basis of months, but by volume and number. Regardless of the twists and turns our dating may take, it's purely for the purpose of better newsstand exposure—you'll still get all the issues you're entitled to.

### HELP!!!

We want *Liberation* to be a more participatory magazine for both you and ourselves. To begin with, we encourage all of you, known and unknown, to send us your manuscripts (double-spaced, typed, and accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope, please), poetry and graphics. We want to print provocative articles by a lot more people and to avoid conforming with the usual distinctions between writers and readers, producers and consumers of even alternative culture.

We also need lots of help with distribution. Our chronic financial bind and our equally chronic underexposure are mutually reinforcing, and the only way to break the cycle is to build our readership. We hope that you consider *Liberation* worth sharing with your friends, but this time we are also asking for a conscious effort to help us improve our distribution in libraries, faculty and student lounges, newsstands, bookstores, counterculture stores (health stores, record shops, bicycle stands) or with other interested people. We will gladly replace any copies you give away for promotional purposes, and we will send any store or newsstand five free copies as a trial order. Please send us the following information for any newsstand or store interested in carrying *Liberation*: name, address, number of copies wanted, and the name of the store's distributor. Our own national distributor is Eastern News Co., and we will place an order with Eastern for any newsdealer who already has an account there. Otherwise, we will either set up an arrangement with one of our local distributors or send the magazines directly to the newsdealer ourselves. We are also happy to send sample issues and promotional material to interested libraries.

Finally, please send us the names and addresses of any dealers who already carry *Liberation* and are sold out. This information will enable us immediately to increase the number of copies which the newsstand carries rather than waiting six months until all the national returns are in.



# yesterday's paper

## Finders Keepers

*The Pentagon has told a Senate committee that it has found \$266 million extra for military aid to South Vietnam this year—funds that defense officials said they did not know they had. The upshot is that the Saigon Government will receive \$266 million more in arms this year even though Congress will refuse the Administration's request to raise the spending ceiling. (New York Times, 4/17/74)*

\* \* \*

## Bertrand Russell Tribunal

The Bertrand Russell Tribunal, meeting in Rome, recently completed its investigation of the crimes being committed against humanity in Latin America. Members of the Tribunal are: Lelio Basso, a former leader of the Resistance against Mussolini and now an Italian Socialist senator; Alfred Kastler, a French physicist, Nobel Prize winner; George Wald, an American physicist, Nobel Prize winner; Gabriel Garcia Marquez, author of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*; Benjamin Spock, ace childcare whiz; and Jean-Paul Sartre, honorary chairman, seriously ill in a French hospital.

Hortensia Allende, widow of the slain President, asserted that the Chilean junta maintains itself on force alone and that this is an act of genocide. Carlos Vasallo, the former Popular Unity ambassador to Italy, termed the coup which overthrew his government the result of a "vast conspiracy."

The Tribunal summed up the testimony on Brazil by stating that the country "is reaching the peak of disregarding all international law" by now officially permitting the President of the country to either approve or disapprove of plans for a more systematic use of torture as a political weapon.

The chief Uruguayan witness stated: "We are small in number, just two-and-a-half million inhabitants, but at the moment, 40,000 of us are being held as political prisoners, while the number of people being tortured on a regular basis is near 5000."

According to the Tribunal, the situation in Bolivia is even worse: "(The Regime imposes on people) bestial assassinations and incredible tortures whose sole purpose, in contrast to other countries, is to slowly kill the victim."

The Tribunal came to a close April 5 after hearing testimony given concerning governmental activities in Guatemala, Paraguay, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The witnesses from Haiti described a particularly heinous practice of their government: the blood and corpses of those killed are sold—at a profit to the regime—to "scientific institutions" in the United States.

The evidence before it proved beyond doubt to the members of the Tribunal that the true beneficiaries of the fascist regimes it studied are the multinational corporations (mostly U.S.-controlled) and the local bourgeoisie who carry out their orders.

An Appeal was launched by the Tribunal to all the governments of the world to cut off all military and economic aid to the four countries which were focused on. International pressure, it said, must be brought to bear on them in the form of a campaign to release all political prisoners held by those regimes. (People's Translation Service)

\* \* \*

## Bureau of Labor Sadistics

The Nixon Administration has come up with a unique solution to unemployment. The administration is upping the definition of full employment from 4 per cent to 4.8 per cent unemployed. The significance of this move can be seen by noting that each one-tenth of a percentage point represents 90,000 workers—so over half a million workers could lose their jobs (about as many people as Greater Portland) and the nation would still have "full employment." (New Times)

\* \* \*

## Measured Diagonally

*Are you ready for the 87-inch TV screen?*

*A Cambridge, Massachusetts, firm is beginning to mass-produce color TV units that give you a full-color picture—six feet wide and four feet tall.*

*The Advent Videobeam Company is already test-marketing the screens in 50 homes around Boston. By the end of*

*the year, the company expects to have between 5,000 and 10,000 of the sets mass-produced for home use.*

*Each unit costs a nifty \$2500. (Zodiac)*

\* \* \*

## Our Neighbor to the North

The Government of Canada, in a significant departure from its past policy, has decided to give humanitarian aid to the insurgents who are fighting guerrilla wars against Africa's white governments.

The aid, which will be channeled to the guerrillas through private Canadian or international groups, is to be used for peaceful purposes only, according to Mitchell Sharp, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, who said, "Under no circumstances would there be any arms or cash granted." In the opinion of officials in Ottawa, the decision moves this country into a much more explicitly pro-rebel camp than almost any other Western nation, except for the Scandinavian countries.

"The Canadian people have made it very clear that they abhor the racist and colonialist policies existing in southern Africa," according to Mr. Sharp. "The present Government fully shares this view. We must do something more to demonstrate our support for the millions of people who are denied the right to choose their own future in a free and open society."

The nations specifically mentioned by the Canadian official were South Africa, South-West Africa, Rhodesia, and the Portuguese territories of Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. (NYT, 4/13/74)

\* \* \*

## Continental Can

If National Airline's "Fly Me, I'm Cheryl," wasn't enough for you, get ready for Continental Airline's new slogan: "We Really Move Our Tail For You."

According to the Los Angeles Times, Continental claims that its multi-million-dollar Madison Avenue ad campaign conveys the idea that all employees—pilots, mechanics, chefs—are hustling on behalf of passengers. However, the company has acknowledged that



National's "Fly Me" campaign and resulting 19-per-cent increase in passenger growth in 1972 (compared to overall industry growth of 10 per cent) had a good deal of positive influence.

Continental provides employees with a choice of snappy rejoinders in its introduction of the new campaign as well as a monthly contest for the best reply from an employee.

A suggested answer to the passenger who asks, "Will you move your tail for me?" is, "Why, is it in your way?"

A second answer was offered in a film at the campaign's introduction: "You bet your sweet ass I will."

"Obviously, those are not quips a man would say to another man," said Camille Crosby, a stewardess for twelve years. "They're not something a passenger would say to a ticket agent." (LNS-CUPI)

\* \* \*

### Bullshit on America

Applicants for the position of account executive at Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith, the largest stock brokerage company in the US, take an evaluation examination which asks which qualities in a woman are most important. According to the Wall Street Journal, an answer of "dependency" or "affectionateness" wins the applicant 2 points. "Beauty" scores 1 point, and the job seeker who answers "intelligence" or "independence" gains no points. (LNS)

\* \* \*

On April 18, the Internal Revenue Service took over the bank account (which totaled \$2,259.77) of the War Resisters League, a 51-year old pacifist organization. The sum seized represents most of the federal income tax owed by WRL employees for the years 1969, 1970 and 1971—plus interest. The League had honored the moral principles of its staff members by NOT withholding federal taxes, over 60% of which go for weapons of war.

For more than six months I.R.S. had been trying to collect the money which it claimed War Resisters League owed. The League consistently had refused to pay the money voluntarily. Finally, I.R.S. located and froze the bank account and then emptied it. I.R.S. records indicate that over \$1,000 is still "owed."

The War Resisters League, which advocates tax resistance as one means of war protest, maintains the right of individuals to take this position, al-



These panels (acrylic paint on wood) on the exterior of the entrance to the Washington Square Methodist Church, New York City, were designed and executed by Lucia Vernarelli in January 1973. This is the only formally commissioned, public anti-war mural we know of in the U.S.

though it is legally bound to withhold taxes. Another pacifist organization, the American Friends Service Committee, took a position similar to that of the League and filed a lawsuit against I.R.S. on behalf of two of its employees. A federal judge in Philadelphia then ruled on constitutional grounds that the Friends were not required to withhold income taxes from the salaries of these two employees, who are opposed on religious grounds to paying war taxes.

In an attempt to broaden this decision to include all tax resisters, whether religious or secular, WRL is discussing with attorneys the possibility of a class action suit against the government.

\* \* \*

### What's Good for General Motors?

"The Luftwaffe's most important bomber," "the backbone of the German Army transportation system," "the world's first operational jet fighter—"the most important military aircraft to come out of Germany"—and fuel production and experimental facilities without which "the German method of warfare would be unthinkable" were all smilingly supplied by certain U.S.-based multinationals named General Motors and Ford, according to testimony before the U.S. Senate Monopoly and Anti-Trust

Subcommittee by Bradford Snell, a research economist for the subcommittee.

While GM plants in the United States produced aircraft engines for the U.S. Army Air Corps, GM's plants in Germany built thousands of bomber and jet fighter propulsion systems for the Luftwaffe. In 1938 GM's chief executive for overseas operations was awarded the Order of the General Eagle (first class) by Chancellor Adolf Hitler. Henry Ford received the same commendation.

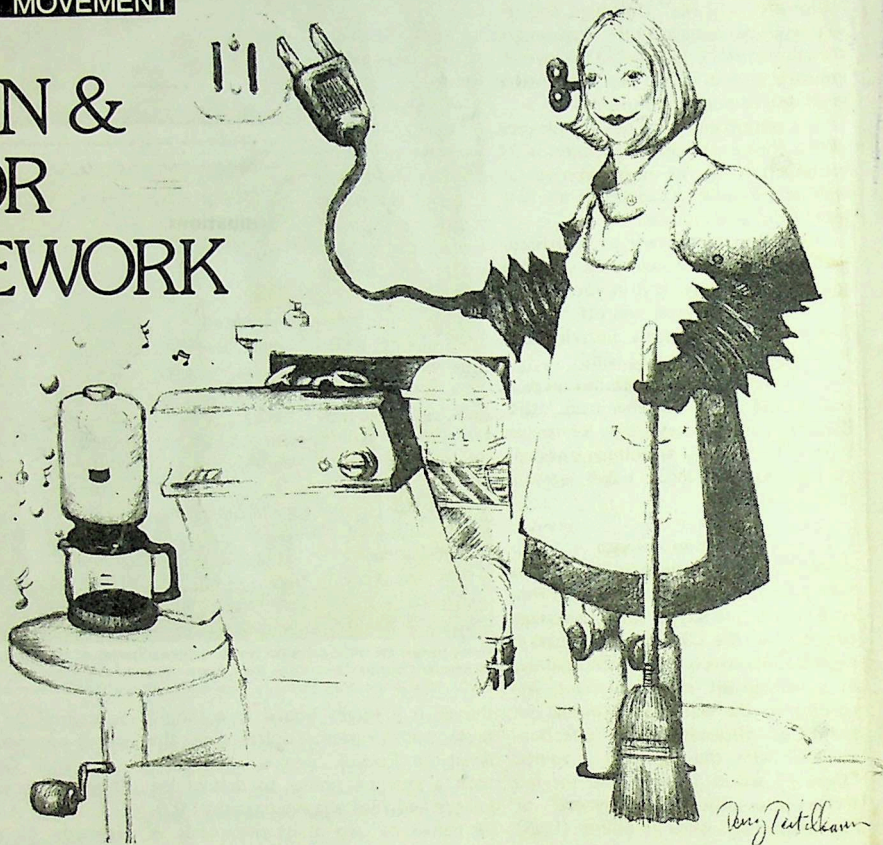
After the cessation of hostilities, GM and Ford demanded reparations from the U.S. government for wartime damages sustained by their Axis facilities as a result of Allied bombing. By 1967, GM had collected more than \$33 million; Ford got a paltry \$1 million.

GM's recent reply: "The allegation that GM assisted in Nazi Germany's war effort is false. . . . The operation was under control of a German alien custodian." Snell's rebuttal: "GM was in complete management control of its Russelsheim warplane factory for nearly a full year after Germany's declaration of war against the United States. . . ." More important, GM made no effort to deny its participation in the German preparation for war. (LNS)



# WOMEN & PAY FOR HOUSEWORK

by  
Carol  
Lopate



Pay for housework is an idea which has been around for some time. Recently it has begun to receive serious consideration among feminist groups here, largely as a result of the publication in February 1973 of the English version of Maria Della Costa's pamphlet, *The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community*.\* Dalla Costa's analysis comes out of the Italian women's movement and was first introduced to the American women's movement in her article, "Women and the Subversion of the Community," published in *Radical America* (January/February 1972, Vol. 6, no. 1).

Quite briefly, the pay-for-housework argument goes like this. Traditional analyses of the working class have excluded women because their work has not been considered "productive"—or, more commonly, has not been considered at all. These analyses have called women "oppressed" but not "exploited," because "exploitation" would imply that surplus value is extracted from their labor. In contrast, Dalla Costa and other feminists say that women's work in the home produces use value, rather than exchange value, and is

thus a remnant of a pre-capitalist structure existing within capitalism. But, say these feminists, it is clear that women as housewives produce and reproduce capitalism to at least as great a degree as any other working sector. The work of women in the home forms the basis from which emanates all other labor, from which, in turn, surplus value is extracted. Women help reproduce capitalism both through childbirth and through socialization; they keep capitalism running smoothly by servicing its current (and future) workers with food, clothes and sex. Thus women in the home are part of the working class, but they are not recognized as such because they are unpaid. Producing only use value, they remain part of a pre-capitalist structure. To legitimize women as part of the working class, and to free them financially from men, they must produce exchange value. The subsequent demand proceeds directly from the analysis: pay women for housework.

The attraction of this theory is not difficult to understand. First, in a brief and efficient manner, women are

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analytically integrated into the working class. Second, a platform for concrete action flows directly from the analysis. Moreover, this demand can be readily understood as developing out of a comprehensive theoretical framework, a fact which might attract the large numbers of women who have not as yet been drawn into the women's movement despite the partial successes of the campaigns around such piecemeal feminist demands as abortion and childcare. Finally, given a capitalist society in which personal autonomy as well as status are gained through money, it may well be that women need to be wage-earners in order to achieve the self-reliance and self-esteem which are the first steps toward equality.

But the attraction of "pay for housework" is not unlike the attraction of union demands: better wages, shorter hours, increased benefits. All of these are far easier to conceptualize and communicate to workers than the demand to change the nature of work itself, a goal which, even when packaged as "workers' control," is comparatively utopian and hard for workers to visualize. Just as unions have generally pushed only quantitative demands and have become reformist institutions for integrating workers into the system, feminist concentration on the pay-for-housework demand can only serve further to embed women (and men) in the clutches of capitalism.

Before going further, I want to make it clear that I am not against "reformist" demands as such, i.e., I'm not automatically opposed to demands whose goal is to ameliorate rather than change the basic structure and relations of society. For example, it is irrelevant to me that capitalism may have accepted abortion reform only because its need for workers no longer requires such a high birth rate. I support abortion reform because I believe that the right to decide whether or not to have a child *fre*es women. In a similar vein, I am not opposed to pay for housework simply because it is a reformist, quantitative demand that the system could one day accept, but because instead of freeing women, it will serve to rigidify the sexual and other forms of oppression that we are already fighting against. In the following pages, I want to present a number of reasons why I am against women spending their energies on the pay-for-housework demand.

1) The women who support pay for housework say, quite rightly, that work outside the home is being glamorized and held out as a false carrot. But I do not believe that there has been a sufficient understanding of the quality of work and life inside the home. The lives and aspirations of most housewives have undergone major changes over the past thirty or so years. As men increasingly commute to work, women's daily lives have become more and more separate from those of their husbands. Moreover, the greatly accelerated geographic mobility among both blue- and white-collar workers has left women also bereft of continuity and community with neighbors and, with the decline of the extended family, without the support of relatives who once provided both friendship and assistance. The decrease in house size and the mechanization of housework has meant that the housewife is potentially left with much greater leisure time; however, she is often kept busy buying using and repairing the devices and their attachments which are

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Instead of simply paying women to do increasingly trivialized work, we need to look seriously at the tasks which are "necessary" to keep a house going and to make new evaluations.

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theoretically geared toward saving her time. Moreover, the trivial, manufactured tasks which many of these technological "aids" perform are hardly a source of satisfaction for housewives. Finally, schools, nurseries, daycare and television have taken away from mothers much of the responsibility for the socialization of their children; few women can feel that their children's upbringing is really in their hands.

Instead of simply paying women to do increasingly trivialized work, we need to look seriously at the tasks which are "necessary" to keep a house going and to make new evaluations. We need to investigate the time- and labor-saving devices and decide which are useful and which merely cause a further degradation of housework. We need to investigate the isolation of work done in the home and look for new, possibly communal, organizations for doing housework—even when living arrangements may not be communal.

2) The demand to pay for housework comes from Italy, where the overwhelming majority of women in all classes still remain at home. In the United States, over half of all women *do* work. The women who stay at home are predominately the very poor, usually welfare mothers who in a sense are already being paid by the state to work in the home (or stay out of the labor market, however one wishes to conceive of it); and women of the upper-middle class. The wives of blue- and white-collar workers usually do not remain at home, even when they have children. They work. The project of bringing American women into the working class is therefore not merely a question of material conditions, but of ideology. Women who work in America are still seen in terms of their husband's or father's class designation; women themselves remain as if classless, no matter what they do or do not do for a living.

The proposal to pay women for housework does not deal with the fact that the ideological preconditions for working-class solidarity are networks and connections which arise from working together. These preconditions cannot arise out of isolated women working in separate homes, whether they are being paid for their work or not.

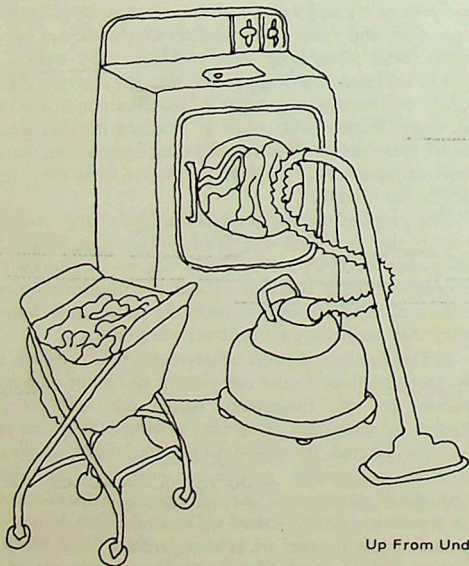
3) The financial aspects of payment for housework are highly problematical. Under our present system of corporate capitalism, pay for housework would not lead to any significant redistribution of income or wealth from the rich to the poor. Instead, the money to pay for housework would come from an already over-taxed working class, either through direct taxation or through special corporate taxes which would in turn be passed on to consumers. Moreover, since most men's incomes are at least partially determined on the basis of their being "family incomes," removal of all



women from financial dependence on men would probably lower the income standards for male work. Concentration on the demand for pay for housework without acknowledgment of the effect on other segments of society would have the same devastating effect on any long-range strategy for alliance and solidarity between men and women workers as the demand for compensatory education and social welfare programs for blacks during the 1960s had on white-black relations. Workers knew that they, not the corporations, ended up paying for those programs.

note

The question of how one would evaluate what houseworkers ought to earn has provoked some almost funny alternatives, if one has a morbid sense of humor. For example, in Canada in the late 1960s, a plan, actually brought before the government, proposed that women be paid according to their educational background; that is, PhD's doing housework would get the highest rate and high-school drop-outs the lowest. The use of this salary scale for creating intra-class solidarity and inter-class antagonisms among women is not difficult to imagine. A second proposal which I have seen suggests that a composite of all the activities included in housework be made up with their respective average salaries (nursery care at X amount, sweepers at Y, dishwashers at Z, etc.), and that a final salary be based on the proportion of time generally spent in each of these activities. Since the only job on the list with any financial status is nursery teacher, houseworkers' wages would be very low. Finally, a third means of allocating payment might be to make housework competitive with what the woman (or man) could make on the outside. Naturally, this would again create a hierarchy of pay among women, with some women able to make \$30 an hour for washing the dishes, while others would do their dishes for the minimum wage. Obviously, men would receive the highest wage for their work at home.



Up From Under

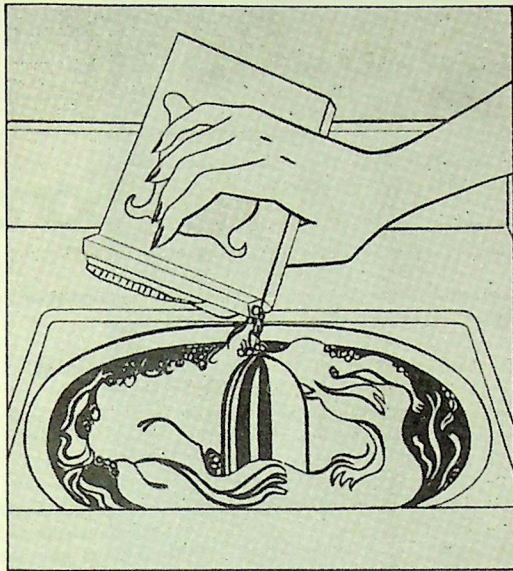
Another question is how houseworkers' work would be judged, and by whom. If the woman (or man) did not sweep behind the couch, would she (or he) be docked? Would there be increases for taking (or demerits for forgetting to take) the kids to the dentist? If the children cleaned their own rooms, would they get paid? Obviously, there would have to be some kind of institutionalized supervisor to investigate the cleanliness of homes and the health of children, since otherwise pay for housework would merely be welfare or a minimum standard income. But the vision of the visiting weekly supervisor smacks of yet another form of welfare investigator or inspector, of yet another arm reaching in from the state.

4) The elimination of the one large area of capitalist life where all transactions do not have exchange value would only serve to obscure from us still further the possibilities of free and unalienated labor. The home and family have traditionally provided the only interstice of capitalist life in which people can possibly serve each other's needs out of love or care, even if it is often also out of fear and domination. Parents take care of children at least partly out of love, and children are nourished by the knowledge that the care they are being given is at least partly on that basis. I even think that this memory lingers on with us as we grow up so that we always retain with us as a kind of utopia the work and caring which come out of love, rather than being based on financial reward. It seems to me that if a child grew up knowing that he cost the state more than his sister because he was a more difficult child, and so took more labor power to raise, that some of our last, ever more flimsy notions of humanity would be blown away like dust in a draught.

There are at least two strong counter-arguments against keeping the family, or whatever living group, in the private sphere: 1) The distinction between public and private should anyway be erased; and 2) This lovely domain of "free giving" that I am calling for has always been at the expense of women. I don't want to go into a long argument in favor of the private sphere. Let me say merely that I believe it is in our private worlds that we keep our souls alive, and that this is not merely because we live in a capitalist world, but that we will also need private worlds if and when we live under socialism. The problem raised by capitalism is that it is so difficult to keep the private sphere alive when it is being constantly battered down by the commercialization of everyday life and the constant threats to it by the mass media. But we must fight this encroachment, and not simply abandon our last bastion under the guise of liberating women.

Women do not have to transform their labor into a commodity in order to be considered an intrinsic part of the working class or to be part of the struggle for human liberation. The commodity form is an alienated form and women will simply be perpetuating that alienation. The proposition that women must enter the commodity form in order to liberate themselves stems implicitly from a theory which regards capitalism as the inevitable transition stage between feudalism and socialism. Thus women must first be paid for their labor power if they are to move on to the next stage. But I believe there is no such inevitability in these stages. Moreover, to look at housework as a vestige of





Roy Lichtenstein, "Washing Machine," oil on canvas (1961).

feudalism is to see it merely from one side. The separation between use value and exchange value is itself part of the capitalist stage of development. Unfortunately, in fact, attempts to bring underdeveloped sectors into the capitalist sector have done just that. Nothing more. The revolutionary project is quite another matter.

5) I have left for the end what I feel is the most obvious objection to the pay-for-housework demand: it does nothing to solve the sexual division of labor. Because I believe that feminist goals must be integrated into a total theory of revolution, I would not struggle for a feminist goal which sought to undermine the sexual division of labor if it did not at the same time seek to undermine the commodity form. But, conversely, I am not interested in revolutionary projects which do not include a constant attack on the sexual division of labor.

It is highly likely that the institution of pay for housework would solidify the nuclear family. It is difficult to conceive of the mammoth bureaucracy which would be required, whether public or private, allowing pay for communal houseworkers, pay for a man in a homosexual couple, pay for one of two women living together, or even pay for a man and a woman living in a nuclear situation but out of wedlock.

The demand for pay for housework is clearly an easier one to move on than is the call to abolish the sexual division of labor. The latter would involve a total restructuring of private work. Most of us women who have fought in our own lives for such a restructuring have fallen into periodic despair. First, there were the old habits—the men's and ours—to break. Second, there were the real problems of time: many of us have lived with men who work an eight- or ten-hour day, while we have found ourselves preferring or finding less consuming jobs, which have left us more time for housework.

Ask any man how difficult it is for him to arrange part-time hours, or for him to ask for special time schedules so that he can be involved equally in childcare! Finally, as we have argued and struggled with the men we have chosen to live with, we have found ourselves with little other than moral imperatives to bolster our side. I have noticed the relief of women in meetings when talking about the Dalla Costa analysis: it gives scientific validity to our struggle for equality; we need no longer resort to men's being "good" people.

But let us go back to the analysis of housework as production, from which the demand of pay for housework derived. There has been an argument in circles of left or Marxist feminists over whether the importance of woman's role within the family to capitalism lies in her role as producer/reproducer or as consumer. The argument for women as consumers is obvious, given the advertisements and commodities which are structured around the created needs of women. And yet, as most feminist Marxists like to point out, production is a more deeply essential category than consumption. The rhetorical battle goes back and forth, in my experience, with a lot of anger on each side. There is almost an unstated presupposition that if women can be shown to be the unrealized "producers," the spine of capitalism, then they will also be the "vanguard of the revolution."

I do not have my own analysis to propose; nor do I have a concrete, radical platform for feminist-socialist action. But I do have one insight which I hope can become part of a framework for analysis which I and others will do in the future and on which I and other women—and men—will act. This is that we women must stop borrowing categories from the Marxist world. We are not a class, since all individuals of a class have a specific relationship to the means of production, and we vary greatly in this respect. We are not a caste, as a caste is an endogamous (self-reproducing) group, often also characterized by a specific economic niche, and there is no way—as yet—that women can be endogamous. Even if we use sperm banks or other forms of mechanized reproduction, the sperm will come from the outside. Some of us may be doing work that has use value but that does not have exchange value, and many of us, including those who receive exchange value for our labor power, may be suffering from an ideology which still attributes to women the power and status of a second sex. The essential thing to remember is that we are a SEX. That is really the only word as yet developed to describe our commonalities. But what do the differences in our daily lives mean for theory and for practice? What does being female actually mean; what, if any, specific qualities necessarily and for all time adhere to that characteristic? I believe that if, as revolutionary feminists, we want to be clear about where we are going, we must also be clear about the terms we borrow from the Marxist analysis. It is a quick way to legitimate ourselves on the left, but it is not a long-range strategy. What we may, in fact, have to do is to devise our own new terms. We may have to decide that housework is neither production nor consumption. We may have to be hazy in our visions. After all, a total reordering of sex and sexual roles and relationships is not easy to describe.



# THE SCIENTIST AS WORKER: SPEED-UP AT THE THINK-TANK

by André Gorz

In the back of our minds, we still find it quite hard to believe—or even outright shocking—that a person with a degree in science should be considered a worker just like a person with a “degree” in plumbing, drafting, toolmaking or nursing.

To most of us, whatever the political convictions we profess, there is still an essential difference between a scientific worker and, for instance, a metal worker: the adjective “scientific” does not, in our subconscious, refer to a *skill*, a *craft* or an *expertise* like any other; it refers to a *status*, to a position in society.

Most scientific workers had expected their training in science to earn them an interesting, well-paid, safe and *respected* position. They felt entitled to it. And they felt entitled to it because most of them were brought up in the traditional belief that knowledge is the privilege of the ruling class and that the holders of knowledge are entitled to exercise some sort of power. If we are honest with ourselves, we have to admit that most of us had, or still have, an inherently elitist view of science: a view according to which *those in possession of knowledge* are and must remain a small minority. Why must they? Because science *as we know it* is accessible only to an elite: everyone can't be a scientist or have a scientific training. *This is what we have learned at school*. Our whole education has been devoted to teaching us that science cannot be within the reach of everyone, and that those who are able to learn are superior to the others. Our reluctance to consider ourselves just another type of worker rests upon this basic postulate: science is a superior kind of expertise, accessible only to a few.

This is precisely the postulate which we must try to challenge. Indeed we must ask: why has science—or systematized knowledge generally—so far been the preserve of a minority? I suggest the following answer: because science has been shaped and developed by the ruling class in such a way as to be compatible with its domination—i.e., in a way that permits the reproduction and the strengthening of its domination. In other words, our science bears the imprint of bourgeois ideology and we have a bourgeois idea of science. I do not mean by this that science itself is something bourgeois or that we have to discard all the special knowledge and expertise we may possess, considering it an undue privilege and a result of bourgeois education. Rather, when I say that our idea of science and our way of practicing it are

bourgeois, I have in mind the following three aspects of its class character:

- (1) the definition of the realm and nature of science;
- (2) the language and object of science;
- (3) the implicit ideological content of science.

\* \* \*

(1) Our society has quite a peculiar view of what is and what is not scientific: it calls “scientific” the knowledge and skill that can be systematized and incorporated into the *academic* culture of the ruling class, and it calls “unscientific” the knowledge and skill that belong to a popular culture which, by the way, is dying out rapidly. Take a few striking examples:

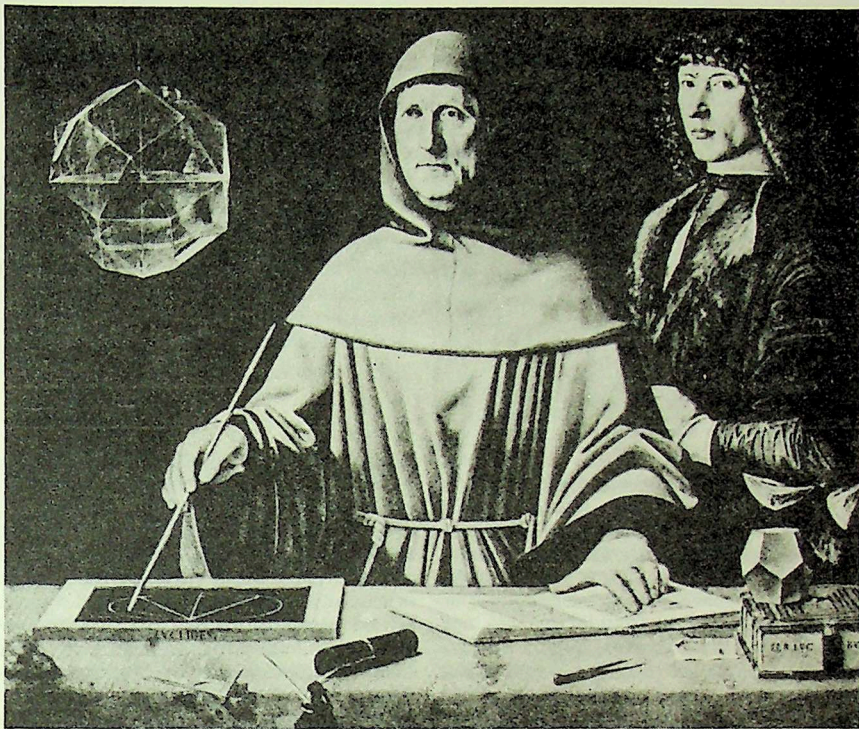
- In medicine, in France (among other bourgeois countries), reliance on synthetic drugs is considered scientific, whereas acupuncture and plant medicine, which spring from ancient popular culture, are considered unscientific and are condemned by the medical profession.
- When the research department of a large automobile firm puts a new engine on the market, this engine, of course, is the product of scientific expertise. But when a group of amateurs or craftsmen who have never been to a university build an even better engine, using hand-made parts, this, of course, is something unscientific.
- When experts in industrial psychology organize the work process so as to divide the workers and to make them work to the limits of their physical capabilities, this is something scientific. But when workers find a way of uniting, of striking the plant and of reorganizing the work process so as to make it as pleasant as possible, this, of course, is something unscientific.

What are the criteria behind these distinctions? Why is acupuncture considered a “skill,” but use of synthetic drugs “scientific”? Why do we call an invention by a mechanic or a toolmaker the product of her or his “craftmanship,” and the same invention, when it is presented by an engineering firm, the product of “science and technology”? Why is the management psychologist a “scientific expert” and the shop steward or the militant nothing of the kind when (s)he

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*This article is the text of an address given by Andre Gorz to the Dutch Union of Scientific Workers (BWA): “On the Class Characteristics of Science and Scientific Workers.”*





Science for the People

expertly turns the tables on the expert? Why does one speak of "the scientist as worker" and never of "the worker as scientist"?

The answer, I suggest, is this: our society denies the labels of "science" and "scientific" to those skills, crafts and types of knowledge which are not integrated into the capitalist relations of production, are of no value and use to capitalism and therefore are not formally taught within the institutional system of education. Therefore, these skills and this knowledge, though they may rest on extensive study, have no status within the dominant culture. They are not institutionally recognized "professions" and they often have little or no market value: they can be learned by anyone who cares to from anyone who cares to teach them. Our society, however, calls "scientific" only those notions and skills that are transmitted through a formal process of schooling and carry the sanction of a diploma conferred by an institution. Skills that are self-taught or acquired through apprenticeship are labeled "unscientific" even when, for all practical purposes, they embody as much efficiency and learning as institutionally taught skills. And the only explanation for this situation is a social one: self-acquired knowledge, however effective, does not fit into the pattern of the dominant culture; and it doesn't fit into it *because it does not fit into the hierarchical division of labor* that is characteristic of capitalism.

Just suppose for a moment that a boilermaker or a toolmaker in a factory were credited with as much expertise as a university-trained engineer: the latter's authority and thereby the hierarchical structure would be placed in

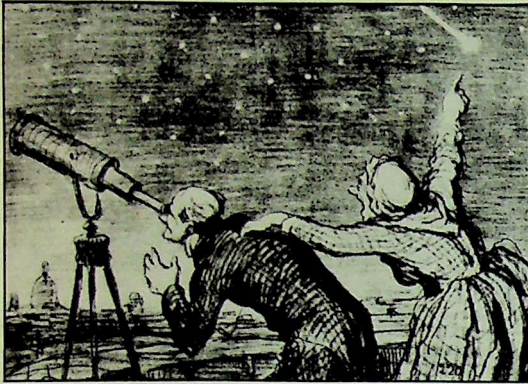
jeopardy. Hierarchy in production and in society in general can be preserved only if "expertise" is made the preserve, the privilege, the monopoly, of those who are *socially selected* to hold both knowledge *and* authority. This social selection is performed through the schooling system: the main—though hidden—function of school has been to restrict access to knowledge to those who are socially qualified to exercise authority. If you are unwilling or unable to hold authority, either you will be denied access to knowledge or else your knowledge will not be rewarded by an existing institution.

To sum up: in our society, the relationship between authority and knowledge is the inverse of what it is supposed to be: authority does not depend on expertise; on the contrary, expertise is made to depend upon authority: "the boss can't be wrong."\*

(2) This social selection of the knowledgeable and the expert is performed principally through the way in which scientific knowledge and expertise are taught. Teaching methods and curricula are designed to make science inaccessible to all but a privileged minority. And this inaccessibility is not due to some intrinsic difficulty of scientific thinking but rather to the fact that in science—as in the rest of the dominant culture—the development of theory has been divorced from practice and from ordinary people's lives, needs and occupations. We may even say that science was *defined* socially as being *only* the kind of systematized

\*On this point, see Herbert Gintis, "Education, Technology and the Characteristics of Worker Productivity" in *The American Economic Review*, vol. LXI, May 1971.





Science for the People

knowledge that has no relevance to the daily needs, feelings and activities of people.

Modern science was initially conceived of as being impermeable and indifferent to human concerns, and concerned only with dominating nature. It was not intended to serve the mass of the people in their daily struggle; it was meant primarily to serve the ascending bourgeoisie in its effort at domination and accumulation. The ethics and ideology of a Puritan ruling class clearly shaped the ideology of science, generating the notion that the scientist must be as self-denying, insensitive and inhuman as the capitalist entrepreneur.

In this sense, there has never been anything like "free" or "independent" science. Modern science was born within the framework of bourgeois culture; it never had a chance to become popular science or science for the people. It was confiscated and monopolized by the bourgeoisie; and scientists, like artists, could only be a dominated fraction of the ruling class. They could enter into conflict with the rest of their class but they could not break out of bourgeois culture. Nor could they go over to the working class: they were—and still are—separated from the working class by a cultural gulf.

This gulf is reflected in the semantic divorce of the experts from everyday language. The semantic barrier between scientists and ordinary people must be seen as a class barrier. It points to the fact that the modern development of science—like that of modern art—has, since the beginning, been cut off from the overall culture of the people. Capitalism has sharpened the division between practice and theory, between manual and intellectual labor; it has created an unprecedented gulf between professional expertise and popular culture.

In recent decades, it has achieved something even more astounding: as a result of its need for increasingly huge amounts of scientific and technical expertise, it has cut this expertise into such minute fragments and so many narrow specializations that they are of little if any use to the "experts" in their daily life. In other words, to the traditional bourgeois scientific culture has now been added a new type of technical and scientific subculture that can be used *only* when combined with other subcultures in large industrialized institutions. The possessors of this specialized

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In science . . . the development of theory has been divorced from practice and from ordinary people's lives, needs and occupations.

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expertise are professionally as helpless and dependent as unskilled or semi-skilled workers. The kind of scientific expertise which most people are taught nowadays is not only divorced from popular culture, but impossible to integrate into any culture: it is culturally sterile or even destructive.

Here we come to the central aspect of the class nature of modern science: whether theoretical or technical, comprehensive or specialized, so-called scientific knowledge and training are irrelevant to people's lives. There has been a tremendous increase in the quantity of knowledge and information available to us; individually and collectively, we know a great deal more than in previous times. Yet this enormously increased quantity of knowledge does not give us a greater autonomy, independence, freedom or effectiveness in solving the problems we meet. On the contrary: our expanded knowledge is of no use to us if we want to take our collective and individual lives into our own hands. The type of knowledge we have is of no help to us in controlling and managing the life of our communities, cities, regions, or even households.

Rather, the expansion of knowledge has gone hand-in-hand with a diminution of the power and autonomy of communities and individuals. In this respect, we may speak of the schizophrenic character of our culture: the more we learn, the more we become helpless, estranged from ourselves and the surrounding world. Society controls us by the knowledge it teaches us, since it does not teach us what we'd need to know in order to control and shape society.

(3) This brings us to the third aspect of the class character of modern science: the ideology that underlies the solutions it offers. Science is not only functional to capitalist society and domination through the division of labor which is reflected in the language, definition and division of its disciplines, but also in its way of asking certain questions rather than others, of *not* raising issues to which the system has no solutions. This is particularly true in the field of the so-called sciences of man, including medicine: they devote much effort to finding ways of treating the symptoms of illness and dissatisfaction; they devote much less effort to finding ways of preventing illness and dissatisfaction; and they devote no effort at all to finding ways of dispensing with all the "health and welfare" experts, although the only



sound solution would be precisely this: to enable all of us—or at least all those who wish to—to cure the common diseases, to shape housing, living and working conditions according to our needs and desires, to divide labor in a way we find self-fulfilling and to produce things we feel are useful and pretty.

Western science, as it presently exists, is inadequate to all these tasks. It does not offer us the intellectual and material tools to exercise self-determination, self-administration, self-rule, in any field. It is an expert science, monopolized by the professionals and estranged from the people. And this situation after all is not surprising: Western science was never intended for the people. Its main relevance, from the beginning, was to machinery that was meant to dominate workers, not to make them free.

\* \* \*

What makes the situation so complicated is the fact that intellectual workers are both the beneficiaries and the victims of the class nature of Western science and of the social division of labor that is built into it.

Whether we like it or not, we are beneficiaries of the system since we still hold significant, though dwindling, privileges over the rest of the working class. Manual, technical and service workers rightly feel that scientific workers belong to the ruling class. As carriers of bourgeois culture, scientific workers are bourgeois at least culturally. Scientific workers in the manufacturing and mining industries may be considered bourgeois socially as well. In France, for example, the engineers of the state-owned coal mines are one of the most reactionary and oppressive groups in the French bourgeoisie. In most factories, production engineers as well as management experts are distrusted and hated by the workers and regarded as their most immediate enemies: not only are these technical and scientific experts relatively privileged as regards income, housing and working conditions, but they are also the ones who engineer the oppressive order of the factory and the hierarchical regimentation of the labor force.

It must be recognized that the class character of the capitalist division of labor and the class conflict between production workers and scientific and technical personnel will not disappear from the factory floor through mere public ownership of industries. Public ownership will not destroy class barriers and antagonisms, even if it were accompanied by extensive wage equalization and change of attitudes. Class distinctions in the factories will disappear only with the disappearance of the hierarchical capitalist division of labor itself, a division which robs the worker of all control over the process of production and concentrates control in the hands of a small number of employees. The fact that these employees—whom Marx called the officers and petty officers of production—are themselves part of the “total worker” (*Gesamtarbeiter*), is quite irrelevant as regards their class position: they are in fact paid to perform the capitalist's function, which can no longer be performed by one boss and owner. And the job they perform for a salary is in fact perceived by the workers as being instrumental to their exploitation and oppression.

This oppression will persist, regardless of who owns the factory, as long as the technical, scientific and administrative skills required by the process of production are monopolized by a minority of professionals who leave all the manual tasks and dirty jobs to the workers. Whatever the political views of these professionals, they, in their roles, embody the dichotomy between intellectual and manual work, conception and execution; they are the pillars of a system which robs the mass of the workers of their control over the production process, and embodies the function of control in a small number of technicians who become the instruments of the manual workers' domestication.

Of course, the technical staff in factories are themselves oppressed; they too are victims and not only instruments of the capitalist division of labor. But being oppressed is not an excuse for oppressing others, and oppressed oppressors are in no way less oppressive. Moreover, while engineering and supervisory personnel doubtless are oppressed or exploited, they are not oppressed *by the workers whom they are dominating* and cannot expect sympathy from that quarter.

I insist on this point because there can be no unity and no common struggle of the various sectors of the working class as long as those workers who possess the scientific and technical knowledge and skills do not recognize that they in fact have an oppressive role vis-a-vis the manual workers. There is a significant proportion of highly skilled personnel who believe they are anti-capitalist and socialist because they are in favor of self-management, i.e., in favor of running the plants themselves without being controlled by the owners. In truth, there is nothing socialist in this technocratic attitude: doing away with the owners and their control would not abolish the hierarchical structure of the plant, laboratory or administration; it might serve only to alleviate the oppression suffered by employees in responsible positions, without diminishing the oppression these employees inflict on production workers.

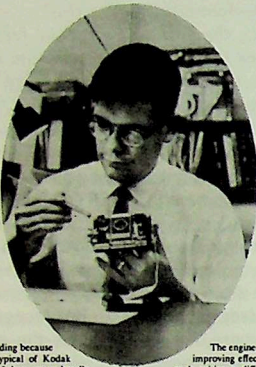
Those who ignore the class nature of the present division of labor, and the class division between intellectual and manual workers, are in fact incapable of envisioning a classless society and of fighting for it. All they can envision is a technocratic society—that may be branded “state-capitalist” or “state-socialist,” as you wish—in which essentially capitalist relations of production will prevail (as indeed they do prevail in Eastern Europe and the USSR).

When I say that intellectual workers are in fact privileged and are objectively in an oppressive role, I do not mean to imply that in order to be socialists, they must renounce any specific demands and serve the working class' interests with guilty selflessness. On the contrary, I am convinced that the abolition of the capitalist division of labor is in the intellectual workers' own interest, because they are as victimized and oppressed by it as the rest of the working class.

The scientific workers' “proletarianization” began in Germany some 90 years ago, when Carl Duisberg, who was research director at Bayer, first organized research work according to the same division of labor as production work. This industrialization of research has since become universal. As industry discovered that science could be a force of



### This is the image of a Kodak mechanical engineer



Correct, literally. But misleading because Larry Wood's job is not typical of Kodak engineers in general. Most of them get to handle a camera—sembled or disassembled—only at home or on vacation. Unless they happen to be personally hipped on cameras (which Larry once told us he is). Diversification has been going on here for a long, long time. That's why we can give an engineer plenty of solid ground for choice—at the outset and later. If his personal feelings incline him away from devoting his talents to fun things like cameras, he gets just as good a chance to demonstrate his capacity for higher responsibility through work in the 72% of our business that has nothing to do with fun cameras. He may be solving problems in the packaging of bulk vitamins for dairy cattle or designing spinners for polyolefin hay bales twice or making x-ray processing machines run faster so that society can get more use out of its short supply of doctors. Kodak itself really serves as a magnificently effective machine through which M.E.'s and other engineers can apply their talents against society's demands. There can be no more valid excuse for Kodak's continued existence.

The engineer's duty consists of constantly improving effectiveness. Here are five ways—each suiting a different personality makeup—to fit in:

1. Designing new products and better performance into the established ones.
  2. Figuring out the best possible ways to manufacture the products.
  3. Applying pure reason through mathematical tools to make the lives of physics serve human needs, not oppose them.
  4. Creating the right physical tools, the right plants to house them, and the right services to keep them functioning.
  5. Getting out to where the products are being used, showing the users how to get their money's worth, and bringing back word on how to do even better in the future.
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production, the production of scientific knowledge was subjected to the same hierarchical division and fragmentation of tasks as the production of any other commodity. The subordination of the laboratory technician or anonymous researcher to his or her boss, and of the latter to the head of the research department, is not very different, in most cases, from the subordination of the assembly-line worker to her or his foreman and of the foreman to the production engineer, etc. The industrialization of research has been responsible for the extreme specialization and fragmentation of scientific work. The process and the scope of research have thereby become as opaque as the process of production, and the scientist has in most cases become a mere technician performing routine and repetitive work. This situation has opened the way for the increasing use of scientific work for military purposes, and these military applications, in turn, have led to a further hierarchizing and specialization of research jobs. Not only is science militarized as regards its uses and orientations, but military discipline has invaded the research centers themselves as it has the factories and administrations.

In short, since the early nineteenth century, scientific work has undergone much the same process as production

work: in order to control and discipline production workers, the early capitalist bosses fragmented the work process in such a way as to make each worker's work useless and valueless unless combined with the work of all others. The boss' function was to combine the labor (s)he had first fragmented, and the monopoly of this function was the base of his/her power; it was the precondition for separating the workers from the means of production and from the product. In the production of science, control and domination of the scientific labor force are even more vital than in other commodity production: should the production of knowledge escape the control of the ruling class, the holders and producers of knowledge might take power into their own hands and establish a more or less benevolent or tyrannical type of technocracy. The bourgeoisie has been persistently haunted by this danger during the second half of the nineteenth century. To make their power safe, capitalists had to make sure that knowledge could not wield autonomous power and would be channelled into uses compatible with, or profitable for, capital.

There were of course two obvious ways to bring science—and knowledge generally—under the power of the capital-owning class:

(1) The first way, which is widely practiced in the universities, is the socio-political selection—and promotion—of scientists. Scientists in responsible positions must belong to the bourgeoisie and share its ideology. During and after their schooling process, appropriate steps are taken to persuade the ambitious that their interest lies in playing the establishment's game. In other words, scientists tend to be bought off, to be co-opted into the system. They will be given positions of power and privilege provided they identify with the established institutions. And their power, which is both administrative and intellectual, has a definitely feudal aspect: the big bosses of medicine or science departments in the universities hold the discretionary powers of a feudal landlord in earlier times. The hierarchy in the production of science is as oppressive as that in factory production. The big bosses of science must be seen as watchdogs of the bourgeoisie, whose particular function it is to keep the teaching, the nature and the orientation of science within the bounds of the system.

The domination of these bourgeois scientists over science would be impossible, of course, without the consent of those whom they rule. As usual, two instruments are used to manipulate young scientists into submission to the bosses: (a) ideology and (b) competition.

(a) There is not much point in going into great detail on the current ideology of science, with its claim that science is value-free, its pretense that science has no purpose other than to accumulate knowledge—the result being that it accumulates any kind of knowledge, i.e., 90 per cent useless knowledge and 10 per cent that is useful only to the system. What I want to stress here, however, is that unless (s)he accepts this ideology, a young scientist won't get far; (s)he won't make a career but will be eliminated by the institution.

(b) Such elimination is made possible by the vast abundance of candidates seeking to do research work. The bosses of science, and through them the system, are basing their domination on the tremendous surplus of students that



can be found in all industrialized societies. This surplus of students enables the bosses to organize the rat race. In other words, the potential surplus of scientific labor has the same effect as the reserve army of the unemployed in industrial labor: it strengthens the boss vis-a-vis the workers and enables him/her to play them off against each other.

But competition between researchers has an even more important consequence: it leads to the most extreme forms of specialization. The reason for this is obvious: to make a career, a research scientist must produce something original. This can best be done by pushing research into the most hairsplitting details of an otherwise trivial field, the aim of academic research being not to produce some knowledge relevant to a concrete problem, but only to prove the researcher's capability: a "value-free" and "neutral" capability.

(2) The extreme specialization of competing scientists is precisely what capital needed to make its own domination safe. Competing, over-specialized and hairsplitting scientific workers are not likely to unite and translate knowledge into power. Furthermore, the overabundance of scientific talent enables the capitalist class to pick those people who seem best suited to serve the interests of the system. This situation also enables the bourgeoisie to stiffen the division of labor in

scientific work, so as to keep control over the production of science and to prevent scientific communities from pooling their knowledge and becoming a major force in their own right.

All the modernistic talk about the scientific workers being destined to win power within society because, so the story goes, knowledge and power can't indefinitely be separated—all this talk is pure rubbish. The scientific workers are in no position to claim or to conquer power because so far they have been incapable of uniting on a class basis, of evolving a unity of purpose and of vision encompassing the whole of society. And this inability is not accidental: it merely shows that the type of knowledge held by scientific workers, individually and collectively, is a *subordinate* knowledge, i.e., a type of knowledge that cannot be turned against the bourgeoisie because it inherently bears the imprint of the social division of labor, of the capitalist relations of production and of capitalist power politics.

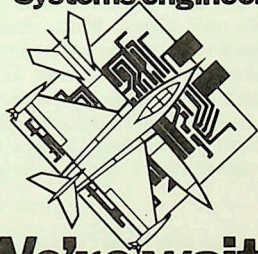
The *immediate* interests of scientific workers therefore are no more revolutionary or antagonistic to the system than the *immediate* interests of any other privileged segment of the working class. Quite the contrary: the present specializations of a majority of scientific and technical workers would be totally useless in a socialist society. The fact that large numbers of scientific and technical workers are unemployed or underemployed, as of now, under capitalism, does *not* mean that a socialist society would have to or would be able to employ them in their present specializations. People with scientific or technical training are *not* victims of capitalism because they can't find creative *jobs*—or any kind of a job—in their capacity; *they are victims of capitalism because they have been trained in the first place in specializations that (1) make them incapable of earning their living, and (2) are useless in this and in any other type of society.* And they have been so trained for three reasons:

- (1) to hide the fact that their labor is not needed by the system, i.e., that they are structurally unemployed and unemployable;
- (2) because it would be dangerous not to let them hope that through studying they can win a skilled and rewarding job;
- (3) because a reserve army of intellectual labor performs a useful function under capitalism.

Therefore, the first step toward the political radicalization of intellectual labor is *not* to ask for more and for better jobs, mainly in research, development and teaching, so as to fully employ everyone in his or her capacity. No; the first step toward political radicalization is to question the nature, the significance and the relevance of *science itself as it is practiced now*, and to question thereby the role of scientific workers.

The scientific worker is both the product and the victim of the capitalist division of labor. (S)he can cease being the victim only if (s)he refuses to be its product: to perform the role (s)he is given and to practice this kind of esoteric and compartmentalized science. How can (s)he do this? As a matter of principle, by refusing to hold a professional monopoly of expertise and by struggling for the reconquest and reappropriation of science by the people. The

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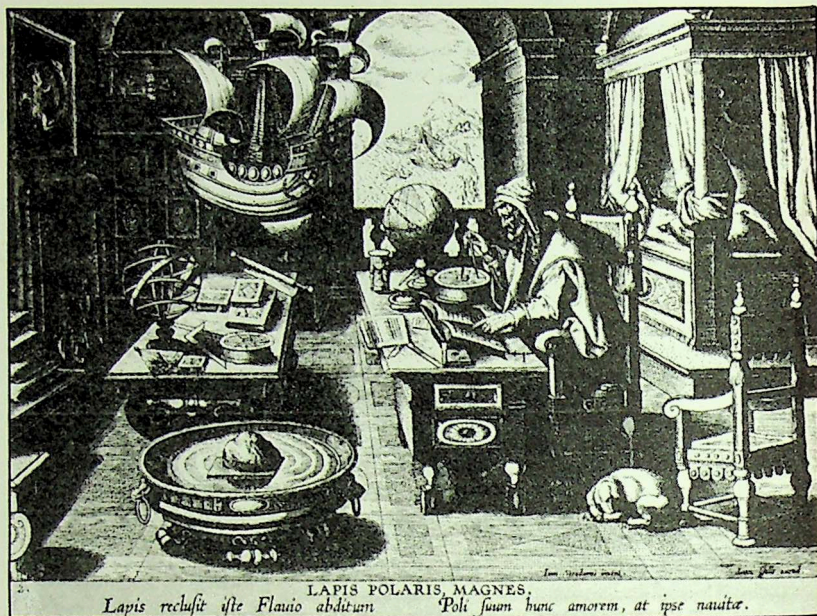
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The scientist has in most cases become a mere technician performing routine and repetitive work.



LAPIS POLARIS, MAGNES.  
Lapis reclusit iste Flauio additum Poli suum hunc amorem, at ipse nauitæ.

few Western examples of a successful implementation of this line of action have usually drawn their inspiration from the Vietnamese and Chinese experience. The most important aspect of this experience is the following moral and political option: the goal is not for a few specialists to achieve the highest possible professional standards; the goal is the general progress and diffusion of knowledge within the community and the working class as a whole. *Any progress in knowledge, technology and power that produces a lasting divorce between the experts and the non-experts must be considered bad. Knowledge, like all the rest, is of value only if it can be shared.* Therefore, the best possible ways of sharing new knowledge must be the permanent concern of all research scientists. This concern will profoundly transform the orientation of research and of science itself, as well as the methods and objects of scientific research. It will call for research to be carried out in constant cooperation and interchange between experts and non-experts.

These basic principles must be seen as radical negations of the basic values of capitalist society. They imply that what is best is what is accessible to all. Our society, on the contrary, is based on the principle that what is best is whatever enables one individual to prevail over all others. Our whole culture—i.e., science as well as patterns of consumption and behavior—is based on the myth that everyone must prevail somehow over everyone else, and therefore that what is good enough for all is no good for anyone. A communist culture, on the contrary, is based on the principle that what is good for all of us is best for each and every one of us.

There can be no classless society unless this principle is applied in all fields, including the field of science and knowledge. Conversely, if science is to cease to be bourgeois

culture it must not only be put at the service of the people, but become the people's own science. Which means that science will be transformed in the process of its appropriation by the people. Indeed, science, in its present form, can never become the people's own science or science for the people: you can't make a compartmentalized and professionalized elite culture into the people's own. Science for the people means the subversion of science as it is. As Steven and Hilary Rose put it,

this transformation carries with it the breaking down of the barrier between expert and non-expert; socialist forms of work within the laboratory, making a genuine community instead of the existing degraded myth, must be matched by the opening of the laboratories to the community. The Chinese attempts to obliterate the distinction of expertise, to make every man his own scientist [*sic-eds.*], must remain the aim . . .\*

All the talk about the "proletarianization" of scientific workers just demonstrates one fact: most scientific workers still do not feel they are part of the working class. If they did feel part of it they would not discuss their proletarianization. Do we discuss the proletarianization of the chemical workers, or the engineering workers, or the electricians, the printers, the service workers? We do not.

Why then do we discuss the proletarianization of scientific workers? For a quite simple reason: our minds still are not quite reconciled with the fact that the words *scientific* and *proletarian* fit together. ★

\*"The Radicalisation of Science," by S. and H. Rose, in *The Socialist Register* 1972, pp. 105-132.



# POETRY by mary vann finley & gabrielle edgcomb

## A CONFESSION

*I am not quite sure yet  
but I suspect  
that I am insane.  
I am the only one  
on this street who  
runs through dew-wet grass  
in a blue nightgown.*

*How incomprehensible it is  
to this wild eye:  
the way they strap themselves  
every morning  
into their restraints,  
the way they articulate  
so carefully  
their learned proprieties,  
the way they exchange  
so ritually  
their little loves.*

*I have heard the ecstasy  
of birds all week,  
and this morning  
as soon as I finish  
writing this,  
I am going to climb  
to the top of the maple  
outside my bedroom window*

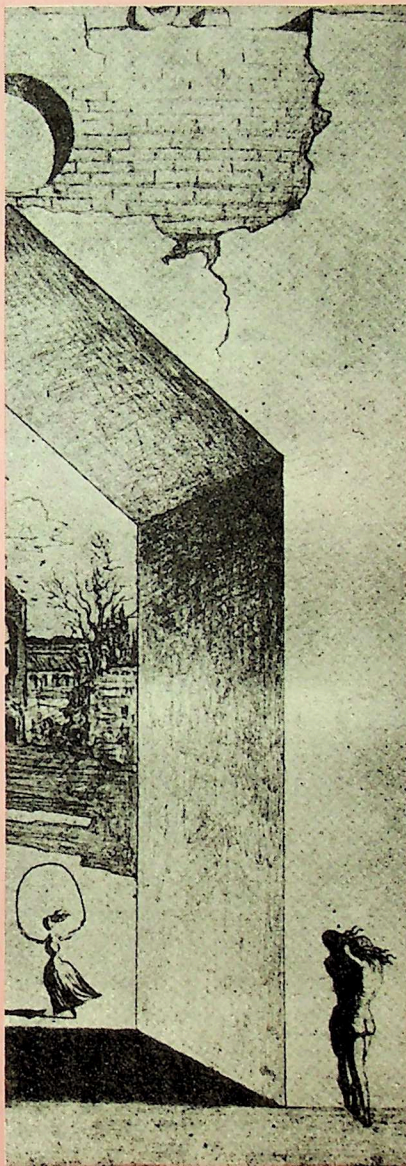
*and flapping hard  
my blue nightgown  
become the heaven's  
newest fledgling.*

*The only hazard:*

*that some landbound  
with his fiercest weapon  
will look down his nose  
with squinted eye*

*and bag  
the morning's strangest jay.*

—Mary Vann Finley



*She's been the best of woman  
laid for her spouse  
good kids  
good food  
good house*

*no mink  
no gin  
spurned others' husbands  
saw a shrink.*

*The rules were changed  
her virtues traps  
vices*

*and you  
new arbiters  
deadly like the old:  
see her in the shop  
fingering scarves on sale  
offered by one like her  
or you?*

*let her tears' salt  
season your fury  
listen to housewife  
whore  
co-ed  
blonde  
divorcee  
widow  
bitch  
woman  
soothe her sore nipples.*

—Gabrielle Edgcomb

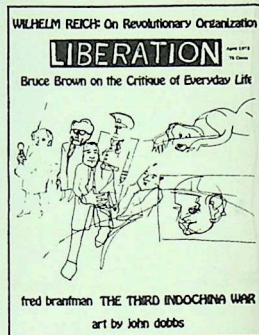
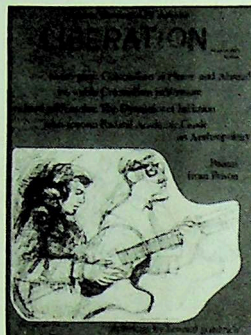
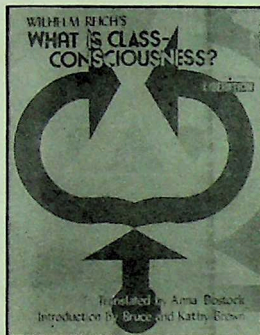
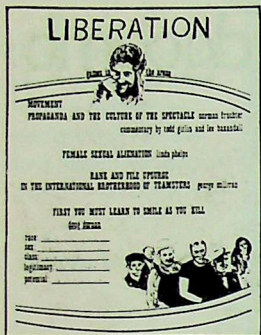


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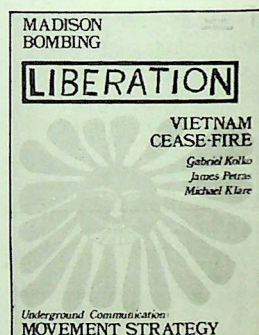
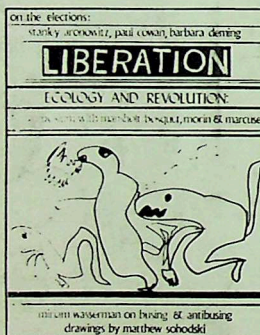
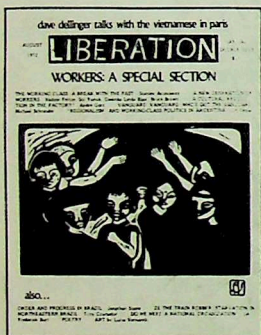
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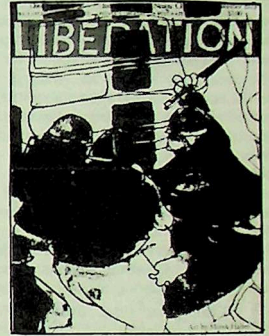
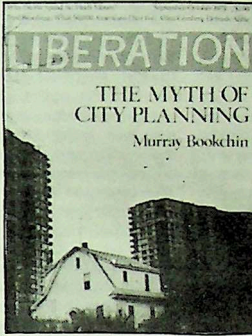
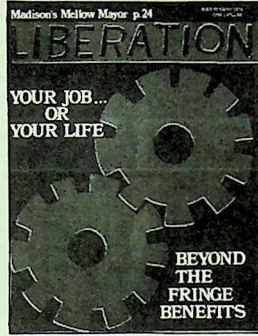
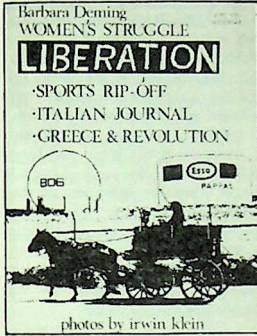


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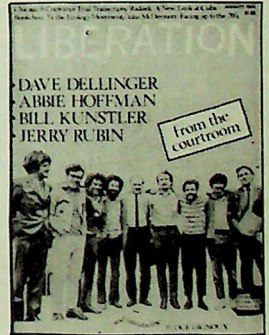
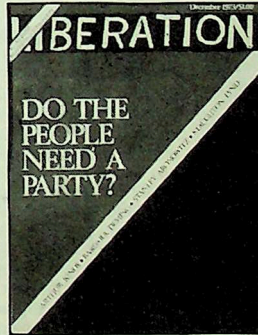
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In his attempt to expose the ways some Jews have utilized the holocaust to evade criticism of socio-political conditions in both Israel and the U.S., Berrigan has unconsciously inverted the holocaust mentality. To quote Berrigan: "On the scale of the spirit, as the nations are finally judged, it is a tragedy beyond calculating that the State of Israel should become the repository, and finally the tomb, of the Jewish soul." Many such appeals to "the Jewish soul," or Jewish "symbols and history," or "her sacred books" are made. By resorting to such slogans, Berrigan is employing the bait of all traditional apologists—but with a twist. Their usual appeal for a double standard with regard to Israel is based on world acceptance of universal guilt for Jewish suffering; such suffering obligates history to special treatment and consideration for the Jews. Berrigan accepts this double standard, but turns it on its head. Now suffering becomes the sign of redemption of a chosen people, and for such redemption history demands more sacrifice, ever greater suffering. Berrigan expects Israel to be different, to be *better* than all other nations, precisely because of the suffering of Jewish people.

That Jews have suffered throughout history is a *delicious* fact! "Delicious" in the sense that, as a fact, it can serve *any* end to which it is applied. (That Berrigan's use of the fact is for a "just" end only makes its employment that much more insidious.) We know that throughout history—as with today—Jews have suffered not only at the hands of gentiles, but at the hands of Jews themselves. From Job to the usury of Shylock, from the "wanderer" to the "settler," history is bathed in the blood of the powerless.

But this is not the place for a detailed examination of Jewish history; nor of how a religion of self-righteous resentment was culled out of the scars of that history. What must be stated is that Berrigan's appeal to Jewish history and tradition, as the basis for his *moral* condemnation of Israel, is a mystification of that tradition. The Jews remain for him a chosen people, the "judge of nations." Their history is distorted to serve as a basis for an ideological contention that they *should* be moral. That Jewish history is rich in a humanistic and rational tradition is not to be denied. Rather, for Berrigan, this element of a very complex tradition becomes solely the legacy of survival through suffering, and is held over the present like a sword over the head of a person condemned to eternal judgment. The transition from "wanderer" to "settler," which is a bloody moment of capitalism in the form of national states, is understood only as guilt-ridden condemnation.

It is, perhaps, only because Berrigan is at root always a Catholic that there is such an insidious element to his position. For Berrigan, as with all messianic worshippers, the basis of ethical conduct is rooted in martyrdom, sacrifice, renunciation, and suffering. These qualities must be distinguished from moral outrage and feelings of responsibility as elements of political consciousness. Berrigan undertook his criticism of Arab and Israeli conditions armed with the moral righteousness of these qualities. They are the same

qualities he utilized as a moral witness in his opposition to the Vietnam war.

In a world without God, religion becomes the guilty conscience for the sins of the real world. What must be understood is that, although I support and wholeheartedly agree with Berrigan's specific insights and criticisms, what I am absolutely opposed to is political and ethical standards based upon guilt. Berrigan is not alone in resorting to the use of guilt to enforce political judgments and personal actions, as the spectrum of Left organizations will attest. But more important, the Judeo-Christian tradition has strangled humanity with guilt. Material and social conditions of the past may have necessitated—though never justified—the utilization of guilt. (As well as sexual repression, authority fixations, class, sex, and racial hierarchy—in other words, domination and exploitation.) But these *conditions* are becoming historically superseded. The *ideologies* which accompany, intensify, and perpetuate these conditions must similarly be superseded. . . .

David M. Rosen  
New York, NY

Dear friends,

I was extremely bothered by the February issue of *Liberation* which contained commentaries on Dan Berrigan's Mideast Speech. First, there is the question of who wrote the articles. With the possible exception of Chomsky, none of the writers is an expert on the Mideast. More important is that to the best of my knowledge none of the writers is active in the left circles of the Jewish community. Would it not have been better to have Arthur Waskow present his views?

Second is the question of content, and I will just sketch the bare outline of what was missing. There was no analysis of the relationship of U.S. Jewry to Zionism. Such an article would have had to discuss the different historical generations of U.S. Jewry and their changing position in U.S. society. Only through such analysis could we begin to understand the close identification that has developed between American Judaism and Zionism and the tensions involved in that identity. Particularly missing was any discussion of American Jewish youth and the role "Zionism" plays in their alienation (self-denial?) from Jewish culture. There are openings in the minds and hearts of these youth and in many seemingly ambiguous ways they are searching for a new meaning of "American Judaism" and "Zionism."

As regards the analysis of the Middle East in the issue, there were marked weaknesses especially as regards the historical meaning of the dilemma and the nature of a just peace. There is both a need to understand that Political Zionism was by no means the only or best response of world Jewry to the problems they faced in the twentieth century and to realize that, even given what was just said, Zionism is no simple colonial settler state. This brings us to the question of the rights of the major parties—the Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews. We must come to grips with what are the legitimate and absolute rights of the Israeli Jews and to what extent these rights are secondary to the fulfillment of Palestinian national rights. Obviously

everyone does not have "equal rights" to Palestine.

So we must ask, what are the requisites for a just peace? It is somewhat ironic that Berrigan got in so much hot water for suggesting that Israel give back the 1967 territories "with some justice for the Palestinian people." Not exactly the Fatah line! And from the sounds of it not sufficient for peace. Chomsky mentions a binational state but gives very little idea of what it means and how it comes about. No doubt this is because Chomsky for the last number of years has been vacillating with this proposed solution. Some form of binational state is undoubtedly the "solution," but before it can even be talked about, the questions of geography, economics, politics, etc. must be dealt with. Furthermore, such a state will not simply come about through conciliation or long periods of adjustments. Nor will it come about in isolation from the direction of the larger Middle East region. Only a thorough social transformation of the whole Middle East will lay the basis for a just peace in Palestine. We must have some idea of what all of that means and what transitions will be involved in the process. . . .

In struggle,  
Simon Rosenblum  
Johnson City, NY

#### A LETTER TO MY SON, ALLEN GINSBERG Dear Allen:

I read, with commingled disappointment and distress, your article on the Arab-Israeli Conflict in the February, 1974 issue of *Liberation*.

You falsely accuse Israel of "military and nationalistic chauvinism."

What would you? Would you have the Israeli waving aloft prayer-shawls and Bibles to meet the oncharing cannon and tanks that surged forth to annihilate the country of Israel?

When, in 1949, the U.N. sanctioned the country of Israel, its Arab enemies, surrounding, bayed about its imprecations and fell upon Israel to wipe it out.

Israel was forced by abominable events to set up a state for survivors who crawled away from Hitler's unspeakable butchery of Jews and others. When the smoke of Jewish bodies burning in Nazi crematoriums rose in question-marks to Heaven, hardly a nation heeded. So, as I say, the Jews were forced to flee to their own hospitable nation.

Israel is the legitimate expression of the historic aspiration of the Jewish people for their national liberation.

Who helped Israel to defend herself from being destroyed or wiped out? All nations sat on their hands. Only America aided Israel with arms. Did you want Israel to accept graciously the Arab invitations to suicide? Thus, as I maintain, it was "Victory or Buchenwald."

Allen, you (and your New Left cronies) are ready to help liberate all oppressed groups—except your own.

Your single example of mistreatment of an Arab is in violent contradiction of the general benevolent treatment of Arabs by Israel. The Arabs who chose to stay in Israel (after being urged by Arab nations to flee and



then return after Arab victory)—these Arabs are well treated. Their lives are enhanced by better housing, sanitation, jobs and education.

Contrast this with the brutalization of such Jews as lived in Arab countries. These Jews were harried out cruelly, expelled with only the clothes on their backs (that is, if they were not imprisoned).

Israel, contrary to what you aver, does not wish to humiliate anyone. As Golda Meir said, "We victors are suing for peace, while the vanquished are threatening war to wipe us out."

It pains me that you, a Jew, bend so far back while you think you are standing straight.

Another thing: I suggest that, instead of panting after strange gods, you should search more for the long roots of your very being—roots that reach down to immemorial ancient times and are fed by the rich heritage of the illustrious history of the Jewish race with Justice for all—a history that harvests a resonant and luminous glory.

Allen, your lofty and aloof disdain has been bruised by the facts.

Your unrealistic, above-the-clouds viewpoint has been ransacked by events.

With love,  
Your father,  
Louis Ginsberg

John McDermott's "LETTER" (January 1974)

Dear Liberation—

I don't know if I was more infuriated by the John McDermott article ("Letter to an Old Comrade," January 1974) or the Liberation collective's irresponsibility in printing it. He shows, only, some fluency with the English language, the capacity to make an occasional but accidental point or two and the truly sad—but false and failing—attempt at public, personal vendetta masquerading as off-the-wall historical analysis. He winds up eight pages of self-righteous tight fannyism with empty romanticism and a new twist rhetoric. If, as he suggests, "people are open to analysis," let's all hope they don't happen on his.

And where are the revelations about his own stance during the years for which he criticizes his old comrade? I may not have been on the right distribution circuit, but I recall no McDermott-originated mass document on, about or for the American working class in 1965, *Viet Report*, for all it was, was not. And what of his parents, his class background, his education, the psychology of his entering the Movement?

The identifying biographical blurb reads like that of anyone's on the Left who has been or has begun teaching in the higher educational system around New York. Big goddamn deal, John!

Prue Glass Greenblatt  
Brooklyn, NY

To the Editors of *Liberation*:

I have just had a chance to read John McDermott's article from the January issue and I want to congratulate you on publishing it, although it is rather at variance with the main drift of your usual contents. I suspect that many of your readers eagerly await articles like his that pinpoint where we have

gone wrong without a lot of handwringing, and point where to go from here.

I have but one disagreement, with one sentence in the final paragraph. McDermott's Call to Duty. He asserts, without any supporting evidence, that we are now at the beginning of a class-wide movement rather than of a new and inexperienced class fragment. . . .

It appears to me that the incipient and partly formed movements of the Seventies are clearly a number of class fragments. No great social cataclysm has occurred that would homogenize the tremendously varied American people into a single crucible of opposition. Socialists of course should try their best to lead toward united opposition—in McDermott's terms this is a concrete task. But just as the Sixties saw a student movement and a black movement, the Seventies see a women's movement, populist citizens organizations, labor upsurge of different kinds—Chicanos fighting for elementary rights of organization in the Southwest, rebelliousness among industrial workers, movements of professionals and public employees, etc., etc. Plus the continuation in some form of what began in the Sixties. This diversity will be with us for a long time, and you would make an important contribution if you started to run articles that analyze the implications of the diversity.

Paul Booth  
Chicago, Illinois

#### MORE ON CUBA (January 1974)

The Cuban report by Ron Radosh confirms again the need to continue a principled criticism and reporting of all the world's revolutions. For my own part I confess to having fallen for the line of editing out critical comments in the interest of "withholding ammunition from the capitalists." Back in the Sixties a Che Guevara press interview in which he was critical of the behavior and role of the Cuban Communist Party during the revolution was left out of an edition of the *Cuban Press Survey*. (This Press Survey was at that time the only thing being published with direct translations from Cuban periodicals which were unavailable in the U.S.)

Were the Fair Play for Cuba Committee alive today I would publish the interview and provide North American revolutionaries with a more accurate picture of the Cuban revolution than they have been receiving the last few years. Obviously, Che is a safe, very dead revolutionary.

V.T. Lee  
Past national director F.P.C.C.  
High Falls, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

To fully answer Ron Radosh's "Cuba: A Personal Report" (*Liberation*, January 1974) would require space equal to that occupied by his article. But I must comment on his observation: "As I spend more time in Cuba, I keep coming back to the conclusion that socialism simply cannot be built in one island, particularly one that is also subject to underdevelopment and an economy of scarcity. Facing great odds, Cuba has been forced to turn for an economic lifeline to the Soviet Union." Ah, there's the rub! Socialism built

with the aid of the Soviet Union, and the other Socialist countries—the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria, etc.—is simply not "Socialism." The fact that American imperialism fears the development in Cuba as Socialism and as presenting a real threat to its hegemony in Latin America cuts no ice with Radosh. After all, he has established the standard of what is or is not Socialism, and it matters little how the Cubans or the imperialists view it.

Radosh knows enough of Cuban history correctly to refer to the so-called Spanish-American War as the Spanish-Cuban-American War. But his historical sense leaves him the moment he comes to deal with Cuba since the victory over Batista in 1959. He certainly should be aware that Socialism could not have been built in Cuba at any other period in its history. American imperialism would successfully have destroyed such attempts. . . . But it was unable to do this in the 1960's because of the existence of the Soviet Union and the Socialist camp which offered Cuba the breathing space and the aid necessary to stand up and overcome every vicious effort of American imperialism to destroy the Cuban move to achieve true independence. . . . The Cuban people learned quickly the difference between imperialism and Socialist fraternalism, and this education made it possible for them to shed the ingrained influence of anti-Communism and move swiftly to build Socialism.

But Radosh laments the trend toward "material incentive" in Cuba, and attributes this to the influence of the Soviet Union, implying that this is one of the prices Cuba must pay for its economic dependence on the Soviets. It might have occurred to Radosh that the development grew out of the Cuban experience since 1959 and may have been the result of input on the part of the Cuban workers themselves. After all, he praises the construction work of *microbrigades*, and he should know that this development emerged from suggestions on the part of the Cuban workers themselves. He might have learned that the laws that were being discussed while he was in Cuba in preparation for the November 1973 Thirteenth Congress of the Cuban Federation of Labor emerged from the most careful analysis in the shops and factories, as I had the opportunity to witness when I was in Cuba. Let Radosh ask these workers if they are fooling themselves in believing they are building Socialism? . . .

I have been in Cuba six times since the beginning of the Revolution, and each time I have visited the island, I have been more impressed with how effectively the Cubans are proceeding in building Socialism and how capable they are in applying lessons learned from their own mistakes.

Cuban Socialism will survive the pinpricks of Ron Radosh. In years to come, his article will be of value only as demonstrating how a narrow prejudice against any form of Socialism which does not adhere to rituals of men like Radosh blind such people to the realities of historical, revolutionary developments.

Philip S. Foner  
Professor of History  
Lincoln University, Pa.  
(continued on p. 39)



# SOME OF US HAD A DIFFERENT TRIP

A COLLECTIVE RESPONSE  
COMPILED BY FIVE TRAVELERS TO CUBA

Toni Cade • Robert Cole • Hattie Gossett • Suzanne Ross • Barbara Webb

*The following article was written collectively by five of the eight people who went to Cuba last summer with Ron Radosh, whose essay on the trip was published in the January 1974 issue of Liberation. Because much of Ron's article dealt with the attitudes of the other members of the group, and because it was controversial, we feel it is in our readers' interests to see an alternative interpretation of some of the group's experiences.*

*There is still a need for deeper analysis of the direction of the Cuban experience and its relevance to our own than that offered by either Ron or his traveling companions. In addition, we hope to have articles by people who have traveled to China and other socialist countries that will take up similar questions to those raised below. Although we have already been in touch with some writers who have said that they will attempt to do this, we are eager to hear from others who would like to contribute to these discussions.* -Eds.

The article on Cuba by Ron Radosh in the January issue of *Liberation* raises some important questions for a Leftist in the U.S. trying to communicate about a revolutionary society. How does one look at the Revolution without idealizing it, and yet at the same time without feeding the anti-communism that is so profoundly entrenched in North American thinking, particularly in common images of socialist society? In whose interest does the criticism operate? To what extent does it clarify our understanding of the Cuban Revolution, and deepen our involvement with our own revolutionary work here in the U.S.? In what way does it enable us to halt the U.S. Government's undermining of the Cuban Revolution as well as of other liberation struggles throughout the world? The *Liberation* article on Cuba does not confront these questions and, instead, seems propelled by a conviction that an individual has an *absolute* right to project *his* sense of truth and *his* criticisms, and that *that* right and *that* truth supersede any other considerations—such as the obligation to verify information before dispensing it, or such as the fact that what is presented may constitute collaboration with the forces of imperialism.

Numerous visitors to Cuba bristle, for example, over minimal picture-taking restrictions—within some factories, of any beaches, of military installations, of ration lines—arguing that the image they select to photograph is more significant than certain facts—such as that photos have continually been used not in the interest of Cuba, but that photographers cannot

maintain absolute control over how these pictures will be used by publications, friends or colleagues. In like manner, it is lamentably typical of many of us to arrogantly assert our individual right to pursue our sense of truth, convinced, as we so frequently are, that our individual worth and goodness is not only immediately discernible and trustworthy, but in fact can be measured against a whole people's safety. With all this in mind, one can only characterize as naive Radosh's statement—"Clearly no *norteamericano* CIA agent would be walking around Old Havana with expensive camera equipment"—in response to his having been picked up by the police for photographing Cubans queuing up at a store.

One's frame of reference also determines one's method of gathering information. Thus, Radosh claims he heard an administrator of the Havana Psychiatric Hospital state that "15 per cent of the patients have had lobotomies performed" on them. As indicated in the letter in the March-April issue of *Liberation* by Dr. Willy-Barrientos, National Director of the Cuban Mental Health Group, the administrator was summing up the before/after statistics, remarking that after 1959 there was a determined effort to move away from surgery as therapy. The 15 per cent refers to pre-Revolutionary Cuba, as Radosh was informed on at least one occasion; and as the letter states, there has not been a single lobotomy in Cuba since 1962!

Interestingly, while our group is described as very uncritical of Cuban society, there is no mention of the long discussions we had among ourselves and with Cubans throughout the trip about the role of racism in their society and ours. Partly because three members of our group are Black, the question of racism played a central role in our exploration of Cuban society. How were personal forms of racism affected by the abolition of institutional racism? In other words, did serious governmental policy aimed at doing away with racism transform personal attitudes? What were the personal and institutional vestiges of pre-Revolutionary racism? We often pressed these and other related questions for hours, determined to learn from the Cubans' continued struggle with racism, determined to break through what

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*Toni Cade is a writer and teaches at Livingston College; Robert Cole teaches economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; Hattie Gossett teaches English at Livingston College; Suzanne Ross teaches clinical psychology in the education department at Lehman College; and Barbara Webb teaches Spanish in the SEEK program at Queens College.*

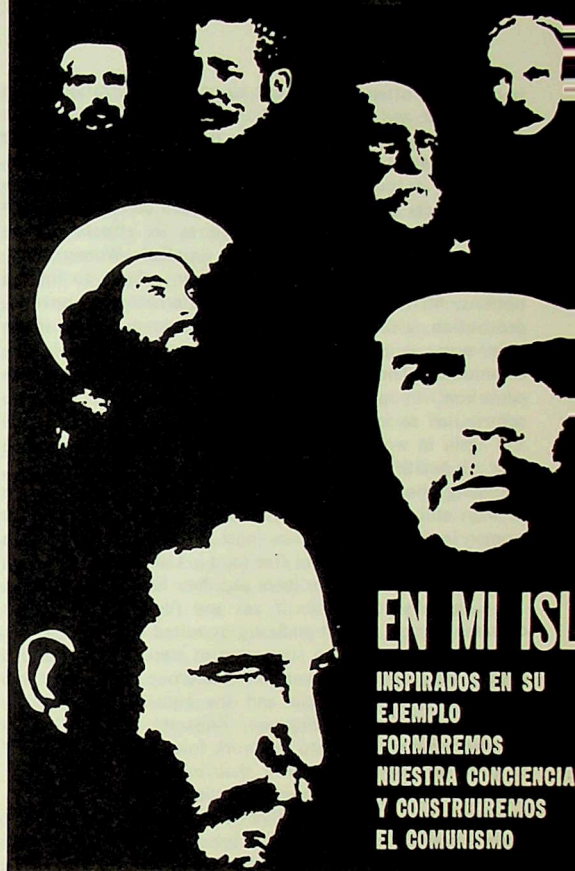


**To work on a Cuban assembly line performing dull, repetitive tasks produces necessary goods for your fellow workers. To work on a U.S. assembly line performing dull and repetitive tasks produces wealth for a small number of very rich men.**

sometimes seemed to us to be too glib a response, or what we sometimes were skeptical about, based on our experience in the U.S. Certainly racism has not been wiped off the Cuban map. And yet certainly, too, racism is being dealt with actively. We learned a great deal from the Cubans' real accomplishments, and tentatively concluded that without the institutionalization of racism the underpinnings and support for racist behavior are severely curtailed. The direction seems clear. We consider the omission of this issue from discussion significant for a Leftist living in a profoundly racist society.

A question of perspective, of selectivity. What you notice and what you do not says a lot about what you consider important. What you criticize (a very progressive psychiatric program) and what you choose to praise (the furniture at Alemar, "exquisite, perfectly crafted in modern Danish style") reveal a great deal. The eyes of the observer, where do they focus; for example, describing the initial impression of Havana in terms of its shabbiness. One can't condemn an observer for what he "sees" but one can certainly point to a particular mind-set that selects certain aspects over others to focus on. We all noticed the worn-out buildings in some sections, the effects of the house-paint shortage in all sections, though we also noticed the many signs of new construction. But what struck most of us upon arrival was primarily the warmth of the people, their attentiveness, their eagerness to engage and be engaged, the quick definition of a comradely spirit—all at 3 in the morning, which is when we arrived—and the beautiful revolutionary billboards, posters, and montages on the walls of buildings celebrating liberation struggles around the world, as well as the Cuban Revolution.

Then there is the question of how to think about revolutionary society or development. U.S. Leftists sometimes start out with an idealized view of revolution and then expect reality to conform to that abstract plan for social revolution, a plan which exists exclusively in the *head*, that is, totally independent of practice in struggling for revolution. Also, socialism and revolution can be seen as end products, static results, not dynamic processes. From such a vantage point it follows that if working conditions in Cuban factories are not altogether safe, or if there is still "boring" work to be done, no revolution really occurred. In describing a visit to a refrigerator factory, for example, it is possible to point to difficult working conditions and to present a picture that ignores the fact that the Cubans were concerned about this situation, that they raised the problem of safety, as well as their difficulty in convincing workers to wear the protective masks which, while uncomfortable, serve an important health function. Reporting that the workers in the refrigerator plant are engaged in "boring and meaningless" jobs much like an American assembly line reflects the same



error of misunderstanding process and context. The goal of this plant is to provide, as the article mentioned, a refrigerator for every Cuban family. Meaningless work? Meaningless because it is boring? Meaningless and boring work because it looks like an American assembly line? Aren't the differences in context obvious? To work on a Cuban assembly line performing dull, repetitive tasks produces necessary goods for your fellow workers. To work on a U.S. assembly line performing dull and repetitive tasks produces wealth for a small number of very rich men. So what does one select to notice, to be open to? The workers' proud and cogent expression of their role in the struggle against generations of systematic underdevelopment, the enthusiasm with which they discuss what it used to be like and how it is now, the sense of collective concern and responsibility about the nation's level of production—or that factory conditions are still not altogether safe, and that not all work in Cuba is in itself interesting?

The same thinking permeates the discussion of Cuba's struggle against women's oppression—the notion that if ultimate goals have not been reached no revolution of merit has taken place. Radosh maintains that women's liberation has been equated in Cuba solely with entry into the work force without any concomitant attack on the total nature of the oppression of women. As Vilma Espin [President of the Cuban Federation of Women] has frequently pointed



out, as was often pointed out to us in conversations with Cuban men and women, and as Solas depicts in his film *Lucia*, the entrance of women into the work force, the major accomplishment to this point for the women of Cuba, represents a radical attack on women's oppression. The actual effects of this liberation have been considerable, and the denial of that impact as well as its effects on the consciousness of women and men is simplistic. Women, then, are freer to *choose* a life rather than submit to limited options. Marriage is not the main alternative to poverty, deprivation, prostitution or underemployment. Nor is it the main way, at this point, to gain social definition in the community. The outlawing of barriers against women in education, in occupations, and in professions has also contributed to important material changes in women's lives and again in women's consciousness as well. Progress in the area of health (prenatal care, childbirth and child care), schooling, shopping and laundry pick-up services free women in ways still unknown to hosts of painfully oppressed poor women in capitalist countries (note the thousands of women forced to stand on line for free food in California because so little food is available for them and their families otherwise).

The absence of sexist ads and films creates a new climate. Women are not endlessly assaulted by insults, visual or spoken, nor are men supported in stereotypical attitudes about women. The four women in our group appreciated this difference. As both *Lucia* and the equally popular film *Memories of Underdevelopment* illustrate, in addition to incorporating women into the work force, serious attention is given to wiping out male chauvinism, to doing battle against the feudal hangover of Latin heritage, largely encouraged by U.S. imperialism—the main perpetrator of sexism around the world, with its imposition of sexist culture on millions of people, from the U.S.-financed houses of prostitution in Saigon, to the Miss World Pageants in Africa (recall Tanzania's Nyerere's rejection of the counterfeit benefits of the contests: "Our women are not cattle"), to the vulgar ads and films promoted by various governmental agencies as well as corporate interests across the globe. Again, not a finished task, but a process well underway, a process too little appreciated by many North Americans operating on the naive and arrogant assumption that it is conceivable that in the U.S., bastion of racism and sexism, it would be possible for a women's movement to be more advanced than in a revolutionary society. The intensity and level of *struggle* is what creates consciousness and since that struggle includes so many aspects of living, in revolutionary society, the resulting women's consciousness is likely to be a more broadly developed one. Questions of class, for example, so often omitted from the "middle-class" women's movement here could not conceivably be omitted in a revolutionary society.

As *Lucia* shows, and as everyone readily admits, the Cuban Revolution has not done away with sexism. What is clear, however, is that it is not in the interest of the sexist to be a sexist in Cuba. Your neighbors will struggle with you, your fellow workers will, your fellow students will. Sexist behavior is condemned. According to officials of both the Party and of the Federation of Cuban Women, one cannot become a member of the Communist Party if sexist behavior

or attitudes characterize one's dealings. Does that mean you will find no sexists in Cuba, in the Party, in the high command? Hell, no! It does mean that you will find a highly critical and vigilant populace. Our guide encouraged us to repel as forcefully as we would at home any disrespectful approach by Cuban men. One young man who got rather over-zealous with several women in our group was severely criticized by other Cubans. So, do we deny the changes that have occurred simply because the process has not been completed or can we acknowledge the significance of what has been accomplished thus far?

A related error often leads people to rather dire conclusions about what is implied by the introduction of material incentives into the Cuban economy. Material and moral incentives are seen as absolute polarities: one to be exclusively relied upon, the other to be totally rejected. Che, quoted to support this position, never argued this. Ultimately, in a communist society, the goal is, "From each according to his means, to each according to his needs." But socialism is not communism, it is a stage toward communism, where the reliance on material incentives may be needed to supplement or complement the reliance on moral incentives. Socialist woman or man will not emerge in one day. And if production is not keeping pace with the needs of the people, that can become a primary problem. Workers we spoke with at several work centers neither cheered about the institution of material incentives nor bemoaned the necessity for it. They simply spoke frankly about the problems they had encountered with absenteeism, with granting equal rewards to all, at a time of scarcity.

We do not share the common cynicism about human nature which assumes that any reliance on material incentives will inevitably lead to total regression, to capitalistic competition, to wide disparities in income, to basic undermining of socialist/communist ideals. The Cubans don't seem to feel that way, not because they are more naive or blind than U.S. Leftists, but because they recognize the realities of building a revolution, of struggling to find the right balance between economic and material necessity. Their cooperative spirit, their dedication as they work voluntarily and joyously (as we were privileged and surprised to discover on two of our Sundays in Havana, when we participated in the Sunday voluntary work brigades), and their continued involvement in discussion and struggle, militate against the competitiveness which U.S. citizens see as inevitable once material incentives are introduced. For the Cubans, as for Marxist revolutionaries in general, human nature is not a fixed entity, but one which can and must be transformed to serve the collective interests of humanity. That the Soviet Union may have introduced material incentives in an unsuccessful way does not mean that Cuba *must* repeat those errors. The ultimate vision of human life on this earth must be kept in mind, but not at the expense of giving up significant revolutionary gains by not producing enough to meet the needs of the society. The Cubans' understanding of Marxism has led them to the conclusion that they had moved too fast, that the transition from capitalism to communism must go through socialism. They do not speak of this added reliance on material incentives as representing the final stage of their revolution,



for to them revolution is an ongoing process. To set up Che as the only real revolutionary, intent on relying on moral incentives alone, and therefore being betrayed by Cuba today, not only distorts Che's understanding of the importance of analyzing concrete conditions rather than having a pre-determined solution and conclusion, but also falls into the bourgeois predilection for idealizing dead heroes and deprecating live ones.

The same lack of dialectical thinking, of understanding struggle, of process and of stages, can distort the significance of the Tropicana nightclub, especially of the floor show. Does one regard the continued existence of the Tropicana as evidence of revolutionary backsliding, perversion, as proof positive that no revolution in fact has occurred? Or does one stay alert to the fact that Cubans do not promote the Tropicana as an example of their revolutionary culture? They point instead to the films produced by ICAIC, to the posters produced by OSPAL, to the theatre groups such as the Escambray Theatre which travels around the countryside, to innovations in broadcasting—such as the critical debates that follow runs of old films on TV, or the TV program "The Silent Commandos" that dramatizes the activities of the Tupamaros—to the new music, to the collective art show at Casa de las Americas—in short, they point to everything but the Tropicana. The continued existence of the nightclub, Cubans explain, is to demystify the "glamour" to those Cubans who were formerly excluded from the haunts of local and foreign capitalists. In time, the Tropicana will no doubt change to reflect more closely the new, revolutionary culture of Cuba, or disappear altogether. But at present, what constitutes a more accurate view of the place and its role—paying attention to the atmosphere, the warmth, noting the pleasure of the workers who can now afford the place, or focusing on shimmying behinds? Is revolution a process or an event?

Defining what the central task is for revolutionaries in the U.S. at this stage of world history determines what the main focus or orientation will be. For example, understanding the present relationship of the Soviet Union to China, to the U.S., in particular with regard to detente, and to national liberation struggles, is certainly important for any serious analysis of the current world situation. The Brezhnev-Fidel talks must be included in such an evaluation. Regardless of the resulting analysis, however, it would seem that for Leftists or progressive people living in the U.S. the most important political task remains the defeat of U.S. imperialism. It is, after all, the U.S. which we are in a position to influence/attack/change. For many Leftists, continual focusing on the limitations and contradictions within the Soviet Union can turn into an intellectual exercise which primarily serves to detract from the fight against U.S. imperialism. It is important for us to recognize and defend the right of liberation struggles to accept aid from whatever source they choose. Those engaged in the struggle are best able to determine what is in their interest.

Another example of a false definition of the current political reality (which appears in Radosh's article) is the objection to a "Third World" perspective in analyzing the world situation, or the labelling of Black people concerned with national liberation as "nationalist." While we want to


point out that being Black is not synonymous with being a "nationalist," we also want to say that supporting national liberation movements around the world does not mean that one is a nationalist. Nor does support of Third World people's struggles for liberation, both in the U.S. and across the globe, imply contempt for the "American working class." To begin with, Third World people are a significant part of the "American working class." But in addition we certainly applaud the capacity for struggle shown by the white working class of the U.S. at various points in history. White workers have, nonetheless, often been kept from developing a proletarian consciousness through both racism and *relative* privilege. But the aftermath of Vietnam, Watergate, the energy "crisis," and food shortages have begun to have their impact, and we certainly expect these workers to join the struggle for justice and equality.

Furthermore, we see the defeat of U.S. imperialism, the aim of national liberation struggles in most parts of the world, as necessary and therefore integrally related to the ultimate building of socialism in the U.S. Our support, then, for the anti-imperialist struggles which are being carried out, significantly by Third World people in Indochina, in Latin America, in Africa, and in the U.S., is in no sense in contradiction to our commitment to the struggle within the U.S. It has been a failing of the Left to dismiss this Third World perspective. Just as it is racism which often divides workers from each other in the U.S., it is also racism which blinds many Left intellectuals to the powerful reality of Third World struggles.

To summarize, in thinking about revolution, we must understand that not only is a socialist revolution something that needs to be fought for in order for it to start, but that most important, it consists of an ongoing struggle, whether in Cuba or elsewhere. Whether or not the Cuban Revolution has achieved the *ultimate* goals of socialism cannot determine our judgment as to whether or not a revolution has occurred at all. The crucial point, in discussing Cuba, any other socialist country, or struggle in general, is that revolution must be viewed as a continuously evolving, dynamic process, and not a static, already-finished event; as a concrete series of events based on real conditions, not in terms of an abstract prescription for how it is supposed to happen. And although it is a part of our national heritage to reject the idea that a non-European, non-"great" country can provide us with some significant lessons and examples, it is necessary, nonetheless, to rise above our training in the interest of adding to our understanding of the revolutionary process.

Finally, especially after the U.S.-sponsored counter-revolution in Chile, Cuba remains once more the only socialist government in Latin America, continuing its challenge in concrete terms to the notion of U.S. hegemony in Latin America, not only through its own revolution but also through the material support it offers to other liberation struggles. Any anti-imperialist analysis should recognize the significance of the survival of the Cuban Revolution. Our job is to break the information blockade, to offer political support, and to build another front of resistance to U.S. imperialism right here in the U.S., in as many areas as seems possible and useful. ★





# DRAGNET: The Perfect Crime?

by Pete Knutson

*From the mail I get, I think it gives people a feeling of security. It gives them a sanity, some kind of return to the basic principles and values. And I think it's what the country and the viewers turn to because of the strange decisions the courts are handing down. The pendulum is way too far over. So it gives us an escapism because we always get the bad guy.*

—Jack Webb, producer of *Dragnet*

Louisville, Ky. *Courier-Journal and Times*, Aug. 4, 1971

When *Dragnet* first appeared on American television screens it was during what we now think of as the relatively quiescent years of the Fifties. Even then, however, it was apparently a source of considerable reassurance to know that cops like Sergeants Gannon and Friday were keeping watch over decent people's interests by tracking down lawless elements in society—the series became a virtual institution in households across the United States. The show went off the air for a while, but then was revived as the “new” *Dragnet* in the later Sixties—and obviously the timing was no coincidence—providing a counterpoint to the social and political turmoil of that period. In both its old and new incarnations, *Dragnet* appeared as a readily identifiable model of hard-headed, official morality. In its rigid format, content and structure it comprised the most developed representation of a totalitarian world-view yet disseminated through the TV medium. A consistently popular show (still being rerun today on local TV stations), *Dragnet* resonated with a need in the American public for security, order and a stable context of meaning; it foreshadowed the proliferation

of police-oriented TV shows and films in the Seventies and directly influenced their structure.

The effectiveness of *Dragnet* as a paradigm of the reactionary world-view depends on its total inflexibility of form and content, its lack of any spontaneity or contradiction. *Dragnet*—the name itself implies an all-encompassing web of domination, dragging the bottom of society, inexorably searching out all those uncaptured and unintegrated, and bringing them up to the cold light of justice. In a totalitarian society there can be no hint of chance or escape: the guilty are always punished. All cogs must march in lockstep to the same unquestioned definition of reality.

Week after week, *Dragnet* offers predictable repetition. “It was hot in Los Angeles. We were working the day shift out of Homicide.” Sitting in the downtown Los Angeles police headquarters, Gannon and Friday receive their orders: a malfunction has occurred and they function as antibodies dispatched by the central nervous system to combat the disease. The lawbreaker (whose identity is rarely in doubt) is routinely tracked down, apprehended, and convicted—usually incriminating her/himself by damaging statements. After the commercial break the guilty, head bowed and eyes to the floor (although occasionally pictured in an insolent stance—“I dare you to punish me!”), is sentenced. The disposition of the case is revealed by a written summary superimposed over the image of the guilty,

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thus symbolizing the triumph of state classification over the deviant individual. Then the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) badge and the invincible theme music lower the boom. The structure never varies.

We never see the crime which stimulates the action, for Jack Webb like Alfred Hitchcock, allows us to particularize it with details from our own fearful fantasies. Webb, unlike the producers of *The Untouchables*, *Hawaii Five-0* and the majority of TV crime shows, denies the audience a cathartic shot of the actual violence at the core of the plot: he refuses to defuse the repressed aggression produced in our daily life. Constantly understating, he places *Dragnet's* reality in a context of ever-threatening subversion and violence—but because this violence is not portrayed explicitly, as a concrete image, it is intuited as all-pervasive. Webb agitates our fears of the bizarre and irrational, clearly implying that these incomprehensible manifestations of perversity can only be dissected and arrested by the protective mediation of the state. *Dragnet* stimulates our latent aggressions against the irrational—against the threatening Other outside our experience—and transfers the irrationality of our everyday life onto symbols such as acidfreak Blueboy who dares paint his taunting face blue and yellow. In our minds we punch Blueboy; Webb's characters don't do it for us. We hate Webb's deviants because they represent the other side of our own repressed, mutilated Selves—they're irrational, they do things for kicks and they're disrespectful. We're provoked by them because we identify with them subconsciously. Webb lets us wipe the smile off their faces: he turns our repressed aggression outward.

The clockwork world of *Dragnet* is inhabited by a cast of clockwork characters who exhibit no contradictions or ambiguities: they're either good or bad, criminal, victim, or cop. *Dragnet* Man is Hobbesian\*: if left to his own devices, he would self-destruct in an orgy of brutality. It follows that *Dragnet's* criminals require regimentation by the state for their own good. But it also follows that Gannon and Friday are qualified to act as the executors of the state's will only by virtue of their own domination over themselves: they must function as plug-in components, cogs. They don't ask questions about morality but uphold all aspects of the law, even those distasteful technicalities which guarantee rights to sarcastic suspects. "Yeah, even *you* got your rights!" Occasionally these machine parts are allowed to show some evidence of feeling—but only for the victims of the criminal. Example: After apprehending the "dope-crazed" (marijuana) mother and father who blissfully forget their baby in his bathtub and naturally allow him to drown, Bill Gannon retches, "Joe, I think I'm going to be sick." For the most part, however, Friday and Gannon are epitomes of chilly realism and blind dedication, working tirelessly to preserve the fabric of society from the creeping rot which threatens to

undermine the foundations of decency upon which civilization rests.

Existing solely within their work role as policemen, Gannon and Friday contrast to most mass media characters who are portrayed strictly in their leisure life. Archie Bunker, for example, is shown only in his role as familial dictator. For the most part, TV shows respond to our desire for an escape, an illusory realm, free of self-denial and meaningless work, in which we can realize our desires for autonomy. To deal seriously or "realistically" with the drudgery of typical work life would force us out of this dreamworld of leisure, back to the unpleasant facts of our own dominated existences. Yet to show only a world of "fun" and leisure, to exclude the values of hard work and renunciation entirely, might tend to destroy our capacity to put up with bullshit jobs. So there are the "professionals" shows that veer to the other extreme, portraying individuals engaged in socially meaningful tasks—doctors, lawyers, police—who identify almost exclusively with their work. In *Dragnet*, the police, as the glue of society, must embody those moral values upon which a system of self-renunciation is premised. They're lifers and they're the living embodiment of the Protestant Ethic. We never see them get loose in a bar or engage in non-purposive activity—play and childhood seem to have been expunged from their memory banks. Sex is literally out of the question for these rationalized instruments of state. Their terse speech patterns limit their only form of self-expression to the purely functional.

Significantly, Gannon and Friday are portrayed as low-ranking functionaries in a bureaucratic hierarchy—they must kiss ass as well as kick ass. According to Webb, the Fifties *Dragnet* series ran aground when Friday was promoted from Sergeant to Lieutenant and his new position as administrator made it harder for people to identify with him. As the experienced Sergeant, Friday was closer to the social position of most people in modern-day society and hence became a more accessible symbol onto which to transfer unfulfilled needs. When *Dragnet* resumed in 1967 Friday was no longer Lieutenant, but Sergeant again (with a distinctly unreal amount of operating latitude).

Webb's stereotypical characters are stripped of depth and inner life. They illustrate modern mass society's development toward a one-dimensionality in which image becomes reality and the appearance of guilt is the truth of guilt. Emotional reactions become snapcategorized within a stereotype which is contingent upon repetition and blind faith for its legitimacy. The long-haired, sandaled demonstrators depicted protesting at the LAPD in *Dragnet* shout "Clip the Fuzz!" and "Gestapo Muscle!" at Gannon and Friday, flaunting their irrational, unreasonable and juvenile character and reinforcing the notion that protest implies insanity. The flatness of such mass-media images reflects contemporary capitalism's centralization of control over the reproduction and transmission of images: one overarching definition of reality emerges which encompasses the whole of social and private life. Although the mass media and the society pay lipservice to the rhetoric of choice in elections, work and consumption, competing claims to the truth are not given credence. If Gannon, Friday and their deviant opposites appear ludicrous to some, the very fact of

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\*"Man is a wolf to man," argued seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his political work *Leviathan*. In his view, a strong state is vital to check the purely self-seeking, avaricious nature of private persons from splintering society into a permanent war of "all against all." This conception of state and citizen, based upon the supposedly immutable character of human nature, underlies most justifications for the existence of authority.



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their continual intrusion into American households gives evidence of the system's power to enforce an arbitrary definition of reality and achieve its internalization and reproduction among millions.

Time, quantified and appropriated by the lords of domination, is one of the central mechanisms by which the compulsions of life are made to appear objective—existing independently of individuals. In *Dragnet*, Webb constantly superimposes consciousness of time over the plot line through Friday's monotonous interjections which pay obeisance to the externalized compulsion which drives alienated labor ("It was 9:05. We were working out of Homicide."). Rather than being integrated into a unified conception of life as process, time is separated from the social process and becomes coercion. It's imposed upon us and we struggle mightily against it. Time is measured in pacified units rather than being lived as a process of development which is unbounded. Historically, the use of objectified time as a club began with the rise of industry and the forced separation of the peasantry from the natural cycles of the land. As human life was transformed into universally exchangeable labor power, an objective standard of measurement became necessary. Behind the apparent impartiality of the alarm clock lies the appropriation of life by capitalism.

As Gannon and Friday race against the clock to apprehend the criminal, the fast-paced images and sound permit our minds little space to wander, preventing us from dredging up contradictory associations and marshalling our critical abilities. Relentlessly grinding toward the inevitable

conviction of the guilty, TV crime shows such as *Dragnet* replicate and accentuate the unrelenting pressure, the constant friction, which mass society employs to destroy individual resistance and convince citizens of their essential powerlessness. The "chase scene" epitomizes the unremitting drive of state power to destroy or integrate all dissonant elements. No rationale is provided, other than the necessity to uphold the law. The immediacy of the chase is its own justification—we are taught to recognize that "this is a chase" and attune our senses accordingly. We do not question the justification of the chase, only its tactics. We must act against the clock before it is too late.

Embedded in the structure of virtually all TV shows, including *Dragnet*, is the implicit destruction of the notion of history and progress. By presenting each weekly series as a self-contained slice of reality which possesses no relationship to preceding or succeeding shows and maintains a static point in time, TV programming furthers that destruction of memory which is characteristic of all mass media forms. Pandering to the needs of the here and now to gain the greatest audience, each news event, each TV segment, presents itself as a totality which subsumes all previous totalities through destruction of continuity. We as viewers are left mercilessly exposed to whatever turn events may take, thus reinforcing our powerlessness even to interpret reality, much less alter it through conscious action. Even the segmentation imposed by the commercial breaks within the individual show reinforces this fragmented consciousness and hinders the conscious perception of continuities.

None of the mass media, of course, really allow any "audience participation"—in all of them, messages go only one way: from the top down. But *Dragnet* takes this to an extreme. Its closed structure—highlighting the identity of the criminal from the outset—does not permit even the limited viewer participation that was possible in the earlier, "open" mystery form. This form, from Sherlock Holmes through Perry Mason, allowed the audience to speculate about the identity of the guilty party—to share, in a sense, in determining who the *real* criminal was. Appearance often belied essence; only after thorough investigation was the mystery explained and the criminal revealed. But as Sherlock Holmes timewarps into Joe Friday, things change: *Dragnet's* felons are selected *for* us; they are the typical, prefabricated images of our monopolistic era. They accustom us to taking orders, to receiving all relevant information at once, in a single neat package; no thought is required, but only a knee-jerk response.

Tyrannical form is the essential content of *Dragnet*. As the liberal values of an earlier stage of capitalist development, with its ideas of progress and laissez-faire, become eroded, society loses its structure of meaning and the maintenance of a cynical form becomes primary. The world-view of *Dragnet* denies the possibility of basic societal change: the best we can hope for is a more "rational," more "efficient," but essentially unchanged status quo. Lacking a conception of freedom, society chooses self-preservation. *Dragnet's* closed structure provides a reference point in a period of instability and a unified world-view which may not be pretty or utopian but is eminently "realistic" and adjusted to the "facts."

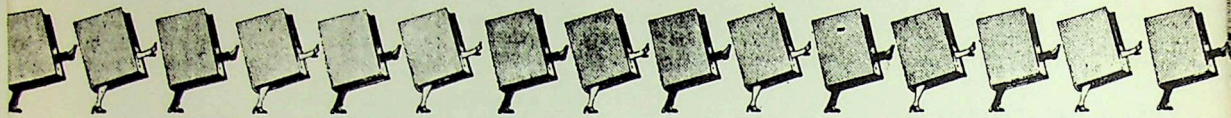
"Just the facts, Ma'am."

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Ira Shor

# COMMUNITY COLLEGES:

*... the American Dream turned belly up, bobbed to the scummy surface of cupidity unlimited, went bang in the noonday sun.*

—Kurt Vonnegut

A new piece of the American Dream is being served to the working class: workers in large numbers are finally getting a crack at college as two-year campuses sprout up as fast as McDonald Burger bins. Who is served by these institutions? Is the community college a rip-off of the students for someone else's benefit, just like those starchy fluorescent food hypes?

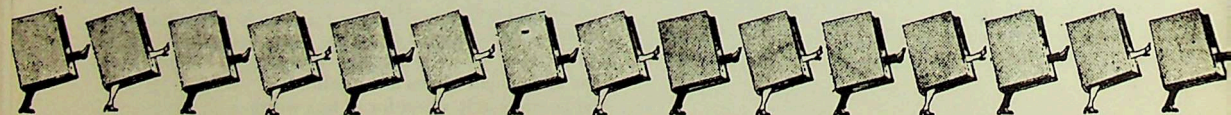
Community colleges didn't always exist. In the past ten years especially, there has been a great increase in the number and size of two-year colleges, which now enroll millions of students. Today, college for the working class is both necessary and possible; in fact, it has become integral to the expansion of our consumer/military economy. Postwar affluence has been floated domestically on credit and waste production, and internationally on capital export and the continued domination of resources by multinational corporations. This kind of advanced capitalism has an advancing problem with the absorption of surplus labor and commodities. Large parts of both these surpluses can be absorbed by taking workers into higher education and by building colleges which produce nothing material. The new junior colleges, a new form of waste consumption, swallow up many unemployables and consume vast quantities of goods (paper, furniture, brick, plumbing, cement, glass, office machinery, athletic supplies, etc.) and services (computer grading and registration, banking, laundry, food delivery, gas, electricity, phone, etc.). The new technology means that less and less labor can produce more; for capitalism to survive, however, more and more labor has to produce less, and so the junior college must be functionally non-productive in the economy. It wins the trophy in doing its job. It employs people who produce nothing. It detains people who produce nothing. It

graduates people who produce nothing. From this new college process, the system surely gets something from nothing. Only welfare and the military challenge the campus in non-productive consumption.

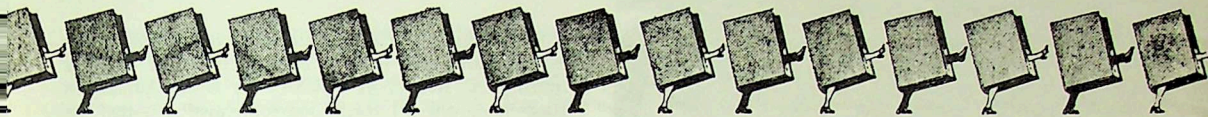
Like the military, the junior college serves to extend by two to three years the high-school regimentation of young adult workers. Part of the college discipline takes place off-campus, as the junior college serves to keep available to business and government a large, poorly paid under-class of temporary and part-time labor. At the working-class college where I teach, about three-quarters of the students have low-paying part-time jobs. They work crazily staggered hours, often far from home and school. The national chains of supermarkets, discount stores and hamburger joints depend heavily on this manipulable, unprotected labor. The young worker-student floats from Korvette's to Burger King to the A&P, always expendable, always paid the lowest wage, always looking for some kind of job. Junior-college education helps keep students dependent on employers because the students can't accept full-time work even if they could find it. They are able to work only before, after, or in between classes.

On the face of it, then, college for the working class seems to help solve at least two problems for the state—monitoring the unemployed and getting tons of excess goods used up.\* For the postwar economy and the new technology, a community college for workers also serves a third big need—technical training. Business needs trained workers, but refuses to pay the cost of educating its own employees. So by building public community colleges with tax money, the state has socialized business' cost of training labor. First workers are taxed so that the state can build its training centers; then they are asked to pay fees and/or tuition to

\**The Political Economy of Youth*, by the Rowntrees, a wife-husband Canadian sociology team, is an excellent study of how the state uses the defense-education complex to absorb surplus.







# Slightly Higher Education

receive a state-controlled, business-oriented education. Education itself has responded to the U.S. economy's needs by becoming a big business. It is structured hierarchically, like the big corporations, and like them, spends billions, gets organized by unions, sends out bids for purchases, designs grant proposals the way fashion houses design lingerie, and is run by privileged white men like a club.

Not only do the hard economic needs of the system find solution in the two-year college, but ideological needs are serviced there as well. The American Dream needed to be updated as a culturally integrating force, as a viable bourgeois remedy to worker alienation. In the midst of runaway inflation, poverty next to affluence, and disintegrating social services, an ideological offensive was necessary to rationalize the system.

For white European colonialists the American Dream meant political liberty and free land; in the nineteenth century, its legendary emblem became "Go West, young man"; with the closing of the frontier in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Dream changed into an urban petit-bourgeois process, and until just after the Depression, its characteristic form remained the small family business. But with monopoly capital rationalizing all corners of economic life, the family business disappeared, as did the family farm. Instead of the illusion of "working for yourself," a new ideal of the *career* is now fostered by the state. The new road upward through a career begins with school. While in the later Forties and in the Fifties it was customary to begin a career right out of high school, in the Sixties and Seventies college has become almost mandatory. Higher education has now emerged as the most used service area on the highway to the Dream.

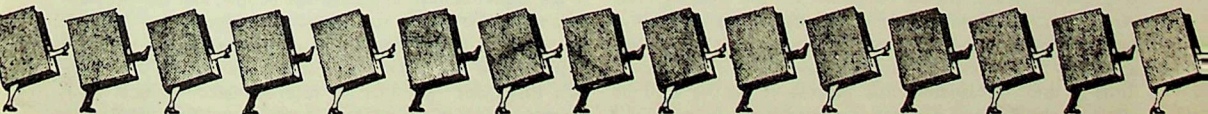
To make possible the mass entry of workers into college, a national infrastructure of community colleges had to be built and the new Dream of the career had to be marketed with them. After having been kept out of higher education for nearly two centuries, the working class now had to be sold the idea that big things were waiting for it in

college. A massive national media campaign was launched, telling workers how much more college grads earn than do high-school people. But even if workers picked up this idea enthusiastically, they could go to school only if a new system of colleges were built especially for them, because the old network of elite colleges had costs and academic requirements beyond their resources. Hence, a whole system of non-residential, low-tuition community colleges were built near worker homes. By the mid-Sixties, the bourgeois higher education strategy had established beachheads in worker consciousness and neighborhoods. And because these were *working-class* colleges, they emerged physically and operationally not like quietly elegant Harvard, but more on the model of factory mass production: giant parking lots filled with jalopies and souped-up specials, dull functional buildings, computer registration, large classes, courses jammed into a tight schedule to maximize the use of time and space, teaching machines, and the inevitable fluorescent-formica cafeteria with its gray tuna fish and greasy fries.

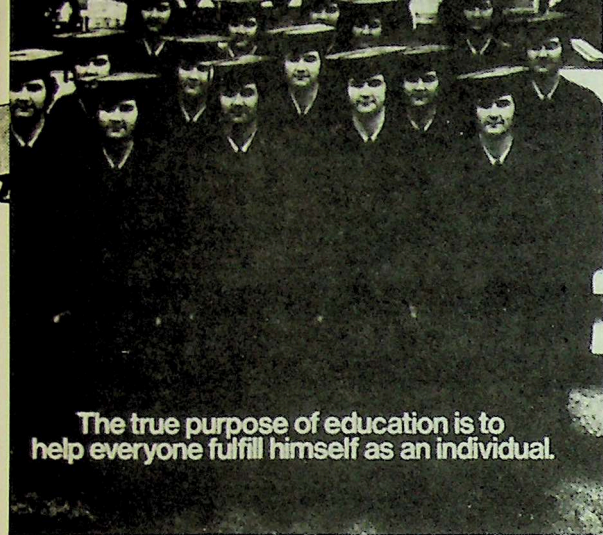
The junior college often opened its doors first in the local high school before being gradually capitalized into its own plant-like campus. The workers' old high schools began giving day and evening classes close enough to home for workers to commute before or after work. The prescribed curricula were heavily vocational and regionally oriented, designed to meet the needs of local government and business. Financed by worker taxes, the national bourgeois higher education strategy used career curricula to adapt to local conditions. Whatever skill was needed by local industries or government services became a new certificate or A.A. (Associate of Arts, the standard two-year junior-college degree) program at the nearest junior college.

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*Ira Shor was in the anti-war movement and helped to organize several groups, including a new union of graduate teaching assistants. He now teaches in The City University of New York's Open Admissions Program.*







**The true purpose of education is to help everyone fulfill himself as an individual.**

Courtesy Xerox Education Group/Psychosources

Having been burned out of the family business and the family farm, the phoenix of the American Dream is rising from its ashes to legitimize the American system once again. Workers who can no longer be asked to believe in "moving to the country" or in "working for yourself" are now presented with a credible alternative: higher education. The challenge is personal and immediate: improve yourself to get ahead. The opportunity is real and close at hand: your junior college is nearby, you can live cheaply at home, fees and tuition are low, your friends go there. The curriculum is legible, even refreshing, a break from the old routine: you can become an orthopedic assistant, medical technologist, X-ray technician, dental hygienist, child-care assistant, or legal secretary; you can study media electronics, mechanical, civil and electrical engineering, environmental science, automotive dynamics, computer technology, or nursing. Vocations suddenly become "professions" and "para-professions" with certificate programs and degree-bearing curricula, a linguistic mumbo-jumbo appropriate to the marketing of the new careers.

**T**he American system announced that reports of its death were premature. Higher education, like military spending, advanced to center stage as one critical pivot of the postwar bourgeois renaissance. The state was tapping its most durable integrating mythology by posing college as the new route to wealth. And if you didn't make it the new way, the system protected its flank by convincing you that it was your own damn fault. On the farm or in a business, it was your own poor management that ruined your chance for success. In the junior college, computerized transcripts and apologetic counselors serve notice: It is your own "dullness," your thick stupidity with book knowledge, that caused your failure. The system could take credit for being generous, blameless, even progressive. Hence, higher education for the working class offers a supple strategy for rationalizing bourgeois society. Because the workers themselves demanded it—and open access to college is a legitimate demand, even if the system turns it into an undemocratic process—it can be used to reinforce the image of America as a democratic society.

This community college strategy has a lot of punch, but it cannot avoid its own contradictions. At the City University of New York (CUNY)—an Open Admissions battleground, where I teach—one contradiction is that the division of labor which ordinarily separates faculty from students is partially eroded by their mutual need to keep free tuition and Open Admissions. The teachers' need for jobs demands large enrollments, and the students' need for college education demands open enrollment. Hence, there is a material need for an alliance, and the state's moves against its own working-class colleges are forcing together two historically antagonistic constituencies.

Teachers are workers socialized into an authoritarian profession, a level of middle management needed badly by the state. Students do not have a say in curriculum, school governance, or teaching methods. Students are objects manipulated by the credentialed personnel called "teachers." The technique of manipulation comes to a teacher from her or his professional training. Teachers always attempt to rule students, but they only accidentally educate them. Although some students do come through literate and critical, a cultural/political revolution in the elitist style of teaching and in the form and content of school will be needed to overcome the present alienation of students from teachers.

The state's strategy for the community colleges is itself a manipulation of higher education's elitist form. The state has been rationalizing higher education to enlist it as an ally in serving the economy's new needs. Junior colleges have been created which are credible, legible and tangible to the workers, but which are not designed to make them more sophisticated. The old bunch of Ivy League and large state universities remains as an elitist preserve, to insure the minimal state needs for high-level researchers and managers. Below these sanctuaries is a new boiling pot. In the boil-over, some previously elite institutions, like CUNY, get burned.

Prior to the mass arrival of workers at CUNY and other colleges, the elite preserve of academe had articulated comfortable standards, canons, methods, and language. The tracking of workers into college has precipitated a pedagogical crisis. Publishers turn out book after book and journals churn out paper after paper on how to do the "new" education. Few things help. Working-class language, culture and experience are antagonistic to the traditional ambience of academe, and at a place like CUNY, a real struggle between bourgeois pedagogy and proletarian students is underway. The questions of "relevance" and class point of view which disrupted elite campuses during the antiwar movement take on new energy from the clash of elite pedagogy with non-elite students. The new left's criticism of the universities takes on a new character and a new constituency in the working-class college. The conflict of values is stark here, disrupting institutional decorum and providing a real chance to develop a working-class pedagogy.

This new college struggle—between the state's attempt to use higher education against the people, and the people's attempt to use college for themselves—suggests that the first two years of community college are being risked by the state in preference to another, more dangerous form of class war. (It's easier for the state to face alienated workers in a classroom than in the streets.) In taking that risk, the state is



causing dislocations throughout academe, as the community college, the new arena of struggle, takes the lead in posing political questions to the entire teaching profession. It seems more urgent for the state to absorb surplus labor and commodities and to regiment/instruct unemployed workers than to maintain the class repose and coherence of academe. In the junior college, the first and second years now have to do a job which the academy rarely performed before: weeding out, delaying and tracking proletarian people. The process goes on clumsily, indecorously and often incoherently; first, because the teachers in the working-class college were trained by elite schools to teach in an elite way, and they rarely know what's effective from any point of view in their new environment; and second, because the worker-students themselves resist the repressive character of "their" colleges. Teaching CUNY's Open Admissions students, I have witnessed for three years how my students carry over from high school an attitude of hostility and suspicion to education. Their forms of resistance are both passive and active. Non-attendance and non-performance are the limits of their pacifism. Vandalism, fights, con games on the teacher, drug-taking, theft, and legitimate intellectual challenges in class comprise their active sabotage.

The contradiction between workers and working-class colleges seems to have evolved like this: in bourgeois society, education has been lengthening for everybody. But while the upper classes in the United States have always expected and received whatever duration of schooling was necessary for them to rule, for the working class, the legal requirement and economic need for education have made school compulsory—and a battleground. Formerly, the only level of school separate from class war—and hence separate from the emotional, disciplinary, and pedagogical problems which make most of school either a joke or a jail—was the level just beyond the mass participation of workers. Now higher education is no longer immune, and wherever surplus labor arrives as freshmen and freshwomen, the solidity of college life and teaching methods is disrupted.

Personally, I can trace this societal development in my own family. As immigrants, my grandparents had little or no education. My grandfather got a job in a family business that started in the early part of this century while my grandmother stayed at home and toyed with her dreams of wealth. No wealth came, but the Depression did, and it threw my grandfather out of business and into pumping gas all night at a Manhattan station. My mother was lucky enough to have both her parents so she was able to finish high school in the Thirties. My father left school in 1929, at 15, after completing the ninth grade. He was deserted by his own father, who went chasing the American Dream in a business out West and was never heard of again. My father's younger brother and sister didn't finish high school either. All three went to work as teenagers, and my father was trained on the job to become a metal worker. Because she was able to finish high school, my mother took a business course and was graduated at 18 with competent bookkeeping skills. She longed to go to college and examine Shakespeare for a while, but her family couldn't afford that. The high-school education she got was far more serious than the kind given for the past twenty years in New York's secondary schools. In the

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Vocations suddenly become "professions" and "para-professions" with certificate programs and degree-bearing curricula, a linguistic mumbo-jumbo appropriate to the marketing of the new careers.

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Thirties, the working class was not in high school *en masse*; for the past twenty years and more it has been legally and economically required to be there. Hence, high school became the new detention/processing center.

In the Fifties, students in my neighborhood working-class high school responded to their processing by tossing garbage cans off the school roof, among other things. I dreaded going to that school because of the war in progress there. My ambitions led me to avoid that kind of conflict. My brother and I were picked to go to special high schools run by the city, and after that we entered elite colleges before the mass arrival of workers at college.

My first two years of college were rigorous and coherent. I did not initially struggle against the class socialization I was getting. Currently, it seems that years three and four in CUNY's senior colleges retain some of the former repose of academe. However, their days may be numbered. The general shortage of jobs will keep more non-working-class students in college, working for B.A.'s and M.A.'s, while the higher qualifications required for all jobs nationwide will track working-class students, too, into the upper levels.

Another contradiction in the bourgeois strategy for higher education is that the two-year college indirectly aids the rising women's movement. The new two-year schools have made it easier for many more women to enter college than before. For working-class women, who previously would have been tied to the home, the local junior college may ultimately prove more liberating than for the men. All of CUNY, and other college systems as well, feel the effect of the new women's movement through affirmative action battles. Unlike the new left struggles of the Sixties, this new movement has a base in working-class colleges as well as elite ones. At my college, it is apparent that the new women students are generally more motivated and successful than their working-class male counterparts. One reason for this may be that high-achievement working-class men are pushed to enroll in more elite places than a two-year college. Women, pushed on to babies and kitchens, are less encouraged and less likely to struggle to make it beyond a two-year college.

Perhaps the most basic contradiction inherent in the form of the community college is the humanities-vocational split. Before community colleges arrived, the range of higher education available for the vast majority of the working class was confined to vocational high schools, post-secondary technical schools, union apprentice schools, and much on-the-job training. The bottom of the working class drifted into the



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**They have a hard time taking college seriously  
... because they correctly observe the Big Lie  
in the Great Dream, the non-connection  
between hard work now and a good job later.**

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army, into crime, into the police, fire and sanitation departments, or wandered from job to job. The "cream" of the working class had special classes set aside for it in the lower grades and special high schools at the secondary level. Following high school, this homogenized junior elite joined the children of the upper classes at "good" colleges, where it was processed and bottled into a literary/scientific aristocracy, the highest-level manager/thinkers in any institution.

With the new system of two-year schools for the working class, the community college emerges as a fragile marriage of vocational training to liberal arts. The working class as a whole is still trained to do lower-level technical and managerial work, not to become part of the high-level intelligentsia. But to sell the new system to the working class as a positive advance, the two-year schools had to be real colleges, that is, one pedagogical step above the old technical training. The community college had to offer the working class what vocational education didn't: a liberal arts component. Otherwise, there would be no formal sense of professional progress, of something *new* for the workers of America. Without the luxury of liberal arts, something the elite alone had before 1960, the two-year college could not be effectively merchandised as a *college*, as the new form of the American Dream. Hence, the community college had to make a concession to the working class by offering potentially dangerous courses in literature, sociology, history, psychology, political science, philosophy and art. It *required* competence in the repressively taught basic skills: composition, reading and arithmetic.

Taught traditionally, humanities have been just another weapon against the working class. Humanities are not necessarily liberating. If a history course emphasizes that great changes depend on great men, not on social movements, it is a course reinforcing social stasis and sexism. If a literature course only teaches you to compare Yeats' use of imagery with Eliot's, what does it matter, politically? Radical teachers in the humanities who teach democratically and entertainingly have a serious role to play in ending the hegemony of authoritarian education. This role means presenting working people with the submerged history of working-class social movements and providing students with school experiences that unify work with pleasure. The traditionally structured courses will offer professors who lecture, students who continue to receive history, art and philosophy as unconnected objects and distorted facts, learning which is grim work, and an atmosphere which reinforces a student's anti-intellectual passivity. Radical courses are those which re-connect students to their history, to their mental and emotional powers, and which detoxify

socialized sexism, racism and authoritarianism in the students' minds. Such courses have been appearing in the humanities sections of working-class colleges, and are attracting students away from the traditionally taught humanities and the tech curricula. The movement of working-class students into radically oriented liberal arts serves the short-run interests of the state, but the long-range interests of workers. With the economy running out of jobs, increased humanities education will increase the number of years young workers are kept in school and off the job market. However, the longer workers are kept out of jobs and in school, the farther away they may travel from unquestioning acceptance of the lower-strata, skilled-technician slots reserved for them. By delaying the arrival of young workers into fixed adult jobhood, the state solves some of its surplus labor problems, but it sows the seeds of a long-range problem—the development of a people's intelligentsia. College as a detention center is more fluid than high school, and the worker-students are given a chance, as adults, to think over their lives and get their heads together.

If such an intelligentsia develops, it will be the most important contribution community colleges can make to American history. Certainly, the two-year college won't make its mark in vocational training, because what goes down on campus as technical education has to be more abstract than the real thing people do on the job. Before I went to work in a hospital, I was given two weeks of classroom training, and I remember how badly prepared I was for the nitty-gritty of my job as an orderly. I learned what to do on the job, not before it. The most that a community college can do in any field is give a student a basic education, almost an introduction, through books, lectures, and laboratories. This suggests that technical training is a less important function of the two-year college, vis à vis the needs of the economy, than, say, the absorption of surplus labor and commodities. Our students still need training after they leave us, but in their two-to-three-year sojourn here, they are peaceably unemployed, or underemployed part-time, or quietly consuming without producing.

Originally, many community colleges not only began by holding classes in old high schools, but often employed former high-school teachers. In this sense, lower education served the state as a primitively accumulated source of labor and material for a new political offensive. The old high-school teachers began by moonlighting for extra income at the new junior colleges. Many worked evenings and summers to get the M.A. or Ph.D. they needed to win the higher pay and prestige of being full-time college teachers. Community-college teaching may be the shitwork of academe, but in terms of style of daily labor, pay, and ambience of classes, it is definitely a step up from both high school and vocational education. The new American Dream quickly went into action: for the new teachers as for the new students, the two-year college represented social mobility. Needless to say, these traditional teachers brought with them most of their high-school pedagogy, so the community college humanities program was launched as a slightly intensified version of secondary-school mickey mouse.



If some people know Shakespeare so well, how come he doesn't help them get a job?



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With the vast closing down of job openings in elite academe, and with over 20,000 doctors of everything but medicine being rolled out of grad schools each year, young teachers are eagerly seeking any college job. Many wind up in the expanding community colleges. Their impact is practically invisible nationally because they provoke no mass movements or confrontations similar to the politics of the Sixties. Most of these new teachers are still affected by their elitist training, and those who show a radical political perspective will often be fired before they can sink roots. So it is impossible to predict now the ultimate effect of the new young teachers joining the older faculties in the community colleges. They have a difficult double job, to change with their students and to change their colleagues.

Many of the students with whom they have to change are young workers who commute to school and to work, living lives harassed enough to make serious study difficult. Most often they live at home, but are looking for the money to move out. In their nuclear families, they are sexual adults in an anti-sexual environment, students in homes where intellectual encouragement is frequently low.

In the face of these problems, they are tough; they do not whine. They protect their independence, don't want pity, and are reluctant to ask for help, even when they should. A variety of socializing agencies—the family, the church, the school, the job—have been sitting on their heads and ripping off their energies. Yet they are not passive. When something becomes important to them, like getting a car, or going to a concert, or buying a camera they want, they find a way to get it. They are as used to violence as they are unused to philosophy. Even after being nursed on the American Dream, and now being enrolled in the latest form of the Dream, worker/students still don't believe in their future. They have a hard time taking college seriously, first because

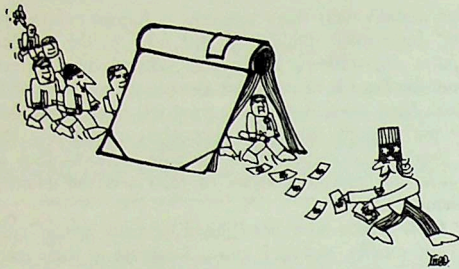
college doesn't treat them seriously as human beings (large classes, impersonal counseling, shit food in the cafeteria, computer registration), and second because they correctly observe the Big Lie in the Great Dream, the non-connection between hard work now and a good job later. They don't easily see a happy future for themselves in America. Even after years of indoctrination in the state's schools, they will still listen to radical analyses of their and the country's problems.

Their minds have been raised on mass media: radio, television, movies, and rock music. Language in these media reinforces passivity and sexism as well as raising fantasies of unlikely pleasure and liberation. The "news" arrives as a ten-second flash sounding like an auctioneer's final hysterical appeal. Saturated by noise and language, the audience becomes habituated not to think at length or deeply and not to listen carefully, and to latch onto tangible, immediate visceral things as "fun": buying things, "screwing a chick," "getting wrecked Saturday night," etc. Their language is colorful but their linguistic references are predictably socialized by the media: "cool like Joe Namath," for example. Commercial media methodically flood, pacify and exhaust the mind, producing a mass of spectators whose minds work at speeds too fast and too restricted to the surface for close reading and analysis.

Community college students usually hate to read or have trouble reading, and in addition to attributing this to their legitimate resistance to bad lower education, we have to consider the mental habits encouraged in them by commercial media. Traditional educators respond to student reading difficulties only as a professional problem. They design new workbooks, methods and teaching machines to solve the problem. Actually, it is a political problem as much as a pedagogical one when we consider how dangerous a truly literate and analytic population could be to the state. Is it an accident that the eighteen-year-old worker's mind brims over with the ideology of bubblegum rock, Sunday mass and high school civics classes?

Our students are predictably hostile to school, teachers, intellectuals and mental work, all of the forms of their repression via education. Their great dislike for and suspicion of authority is very healthy and self-protective. However, this self-protection is not yet collective, because class solidarity is low. They openly distrust each other, and have trouble believing that people who are not close friends or relatives will take risks for each other. Life in America has taught them that you have to make it on your own. They are smarter than we, or they themselves, can imagine; when they want to, they do stunningly good work in school. However, they aren't yet aware that the things they have learned outside of school are Knowledge too. They have had a wealth of experience, have seen a great many things every day, know how to fix houses, cars, appliances, machines, and countless other objects. But to them, daily life, street life, is just not Knowledge. Knowledge has been sold to them as books, teachers talking, and libraries, or else as a gambit you pull to make a mint. Lastly, these students are weak in conceptualizing the pieces of life into wholes. They constantly criticize their bosses, the cops, their tyrannical parents and teachers,





but they start out ideologically defending America as democratic.

Because students and teachers are the joint targets for the state's higher education strategy, there must be a joint effort to make "our" colleges really our own, to make education serve the people, instead of making the people serve the state.

### Some Strategic Notes for Teachers

Teachers who decide to teach working-class students have a big re-education of their own to begin. My students are the ones who lead me in this re-education, letting me know what kind of teacher I have to be in order to serve their needs. My education at two elite universities is only marginally useful here in a working-class college. Most of the great Body of Knowledge poured into me was abstract, even precious; the virtues of that education were my learning to read things closely, to write clearly, to philosophize without feeling terrified, and to be verbal. After being lifted out of the working class, I entered an elite environment where I was not only fattened on culture, but where I could study history and get a feel for ideology. Thanks to a contradiction in the bourgeois strategy for higher education, that chance and those virtues are now more available at a wider variety of colleges than when I became a freshman twelve years ago.

The most predictable things I have read and heard about teaching are that we teach skills (reading, writing, arithmetic) or methods (as in the social and natural sciences) or that we "elevate" our students to an appreciation of practical things (auto dynamics and accounting) or aesthetic phenomena (literature and the fine arts). These mechanical forms for the process of teaching have the knowledge going one way through a predictable classroom method. In criticizing this kind of work, we have to re-examine the idea that our techniques, skills, facts, disciplines, Bodies of Knowledge and cultures are superior to those of our students. What is good is what liberates us with our students, liberates us from fragmentary joys and from being objects in the state's economic chess game. It's fine to be able to read poetry and to have memorized the parties who made and then debased the French Revolution of 1789, but what does it matter if we're polluted to death, kept off jobs for being black or female, kept on jobs we don't want and get paid too little for, or kept out of school because tax loop-holes and the Pentagon starve out scholarship aid?

The idea is to put an educational counter-strategy in motion. The following points may be helpful:

1. Through unions and through joint faculty-student organizations we should have a political program based on maintaining or winning open admissions for all students, free tuition, small classes and work-study grants for all worker-students at a rate sufficient to live on. Until our classes are smaller and until our students' economic problems lessen, the education we make happen will be hampered.
2. We should design our course material to liberate ourselves and our students from the racism, sexism and anti-communism into which most of us have been socialized. This course material should probe the effects and manifestations of prejudice and chauvinism in the students' daily lives. Basing our teaching on concrete student experiences will make philosophy real and accessible to our students and will combat the teacher's conditioned urge to intellectualize problems.
3. We should develop interdisciplinary courses. Barriers between disciplines are our inheritances from bourgeois society and are alienations we can fight against. The insights from many disciplines should be operating in our courses, and the consideration of technical questions should become commonplace in a humanities course. Example: Class project: Design the form and operation of a student-run, cooperative cafeteria. Is this English, sociology, political science, architecture, civil technology or ecological science?
4. We should develop community internships which put classroom theory and knowledge into practical use. Community projects, from home renovation to day-care centers to alternate media to tenants' unions, would be in order in a wide variety of interdisciplinary courses. They would operate as field work for students in the course.
5. We should initiate projects on and off campus which build an independent, on-going political base that doesn't rise and fall with the start and end of classes. Cooperative services like legal and medical aid, auto and appliance repair, food-buying, an exchange for reclaimed furniture, clothing, books, records and household goods, would be useful here.
6. In class, we should maintain a democratic atmosphere, and should design studies which are intensely autobiographical and existential. We should study ourselves, our friends as well as our enemies, and our daily life circumstances. Family life, sexuality, commuting, housing, the job market, the basketball court, the supermarket, the corner hang-out, abortion and drugs are likely to become chief topics, along with the psychology of public officials, patterns of property, operation of the school bookstore and cafeteria, and the school's curricula. These kinds of studies will arm us intellectually to deal with our real-life situations.

Things are always changing, sometimes slowly, sometimes in a leap, but there really isn't a predictable or triumphant pace to the making of our own history. Our great advantage can lie in being conscious of who is doing what to us and why. Knowing this, we can begin designing a counter-strategy which outmaneuvers the state and finally serves our own articulated needs. ★



## LETTERS (continued from p. 23)

I have been athletic director and chairman of the Department of Physical Education at Oberlin College for the past two years. In order to combat the rampant conservatism of the USA physical education profession, I subscribed to *Liberation* and a few other Left publications and made them available in our student-worker lounge. I also made available other magazines such as *Sports Illustrated*, *Sport*, and the *Christian Athlete*.

This past December I visited Cuba for three weeks at the invitation of their Ministry of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation. Not too surprisingly, upon my return from Cuba I eagerly read with great interest Ron Radosh's article on his visit to Cuba. Though I went primarily to learn about the Cuban sports system, our visits were very similar. . . .

I must admit that I immediately became somewhat suspicious of Mr. Radosh's intentions when he strained just a bit too much in his introductory paragraph in an effort to claim his identification and solidarity with the Cuban revolution from its very first moments. . . .

After attempting to set himself up as a staunch supporter of the Cuban revolution, Radosh then quickly states: "My first impression of Havana, particularly Old Havana, is its shabbiness." Given the fact that Mr. Radosh lives in New York City, or at least works there, I find it simply incredible that this could be his first impression of Havana. I have visited nearly every city the size of Havana or larger in the USA, Canada and Mexico, and my first impression of Havana was how different it was from any other big city I had ever seen.

It was 10 p.m. by the time we checked into the Hotel Nacional the day we flew into Havana from Mexico City. Immediately after registering, my wife and I—we are in our early thirties—changed into our running shoes, shorts and T-shirts, and proceeded to take an hour run through the streets of Havana, including Old Havana. Can you imagine two foreigners, especially a woman, attempting the same thing at 10 p.m. in New York City? . . . I have never been outside the USA, Canada or Mexico, but to me Havana is unquestionably the most beautifully sane large city I have ever seen. . . .

In fairness to Mr. Radosh, there are sections of Havana that have crowded living conditions and the constant sea winds and tropical weather do take their toll on the outside painting of buildings, especially those facing the ocean. What Mr. Radosh neglected to do was visit with the inhabitants of the dwellings he described as shabby. If he had done so, he would have seen the pride the Cuban people take in maintaining their homes.

Mr. Radosh does not mention once in his entire article the progress that has been made in the fifteen years since the revolution in attempting to eliminate racism throughout Cuban society. Being familiar with the patterns of racial discrimination in sport in the

USA, I was constantly surprised to see black athletes participating in sports such as chess, water polo, swimming, sailing and gymnastics. Black coaches and administrators were also a common sight.

It cannot be forgotten that only fifteen years ago people with "kinky" hair—that's how one's race was determined—did not have access to most important areas of Cuban society. Until after the revolution, about the only way a black could make a decent living was through some form of entertaining white folks—professional baseball or boxing, prostitution, and singing and dancing. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

While not even mentioning in passing the incredible progress made in race relations, Mr. Radosh dwells for pages on Cuban machismo. . . . Cuban society obviously has room for progress in the role accorded women. To be even remotely fair, however, contemporary Cuba must be judged in comparison to other Latin societies and in relation to pre-revolutionary conditions. Before the revolution, prostitution and other forms of entertainment along with domestic work were the only employment opportunities available to most Cuban women. Given the pre-revolutionary social conditions under which women lived, the elimination of prostitution and the opening of dignified employment opportunities to women cannot be glossed over as of little or no consequence. . . .

In my opinion as a white male raised in the USA and heavily influenced by the women's movement, I saw what to me appeared to be sexism in Cuba. I visited four nightclubs and thought two of the clubs had shows that were at times sexist. Speaking of one of the nightclub shows, Mr. Radosh goes so far as to claim that, ". . . by and large, the show brings me back to New York night-club culture or to Havana of the early 1950's." The most polite I can be is to say that he most certainly has never talked to those who frequented the Batista-regime nightclubs; and he certainly has not been to very many New York nightclubs, for if he has, then this statement is a conscious effort to discredit contemporary Cuba. To equate present Cuban nightclubs with those before the revolution would be roughly comparable to saying there is no real difference between Richard Nixon and Ron Dellums simply because they both happen to be elected USA politicians.

It was in the schools of Cuba, not in the one or two big-name nightclubs, where I chose to look to see what the future holds in store for Cuban women. Throughout the entire educational system—including athletics—Cuban girls appear to have the same opportunity to develop themselves that boys have. . . . At every school I visited, chess was a popular game, and it was just as common to see girls and young women playing chess as it was to see boys and young men. I also learned that the women's national basketball team regularly practices against male teams in order to improve their skills. And it is not unusual for the women to win. (Oberlin College was severely reprimanded this past fall by the Ohio Athletic Conference for our allowing two women simply to run exhibition status in

a men's cross-country meet.) I only wish the young girls attending school in the USA had the same opportunities available to them that Cuban girls have. . . .

Mr. Radosh would have us believe he is a tough-minded academic who calls the shots as he sees them. . . . he will not mouth the party line for anyone. However, when saying he had some questions about the Cuban attitude toward homosexuality he casually mentions, "But the atmosphere pervading our group makes it impossible to raise such questions publicly with our Cuban hosts." This tough-minded, hard-nosed academic "leftist" admits he never really raised his criticisms with the Cubans!

During our stay in Cuba we had two to three meetings a day with various officials and groups, and invariably every session would end with the Cubans almost pleading with us to offer any criticism or suggestions we might have of what we had just seen or heard. Sure, we met one or two pompous fools that probably hid in their basements during the liberation of Cuba, but nearly everyone we met encouraged us to offer criticism and suggestions. It was not easy to tell one of the highest-ranking officials in the Ministry of Sport, Physical Education and Recreation that his bulging waistline did not set a good example of the integration of theory and practice, but a 22-year-old woman in our delegation had the courage to offer this valid criticism to him. We also constantly raised questions about the role of women and other matters such as how food rationing worked for star athletes in training for international competition—did they get preferential treatment, etc. One student in our group even got into a trip of asking at least one person a day if they thought Fidel was a good speaker. Every day we offered criticism, or at least asked many questions, and we learned much from the responses we received. . . .

I know nothing of Mr. Radosh's background, and I hope I have not been unduly harsh. . . . for all I know he is normally a courageous comrade, and his article might have been an aberration brought on by infighting among his delegation or some other unfortunate personal situation. But whatever his reasons were, I do know that he wrote an article that presented a distorted view of contemporary Cuban society. I'm sure Cuba could profit from constructive criticism, but Mr. Radosh telling Cuba how to conduct its affairs is about the equivalent of Howard Cosell telling O.J. Simpson how to run with a football. . . .

If you are ever fortunate enough to be invited back to Cuba, Mr. Radosh, try to find it within yourself to ask tough questions and offer criticisms. It's the least you can do before offering public criticisms in the USA of the Cuban people who are struggling so courageously to build a rational, sane society. I am sorry for your sake that you missed so much of what the Cuban revolution is all about during your visit.

Jack Scott  
Oberlin, Ohio




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