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MINI EDITORIALS

WORTHWHILE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Ontario Open Screenings, a coalition of artists, art organizations, feminists, writers, producers, gays, lesbians and community organizers is calling for a week of resistance to Ontario film censorship by showing films and videotapes of a documentary, experimental, narrative and educational nature that have been banned by or not submitted to the Ontario film censors. This form of civil disobedience is superior to most of the actions instigated by the peace movement, since instead of protesting or attempting to change government policy it is taking matters into its own hands by finding an alternative to obeying the state. The state must now either allow the films to be shown or launch a police raid on the screenings which will clarify the repressive nature of state censorship (which commercial film distributors avoid doing by acquiescing to censorship.) Information 172 John St. Toronto M5T 1X5 (fourth floor.)

WHERE WERE CIVIL LIBERTARIANS AT ZUNDEL TRIAL?

The failure of any of the prominent civil liberties groups to protest the trial, conviction and jailing of Ernst Zundel creates a strong suspicion that they are only really concerned with freedom to express opinions that a large percentage of their members would agree with anyway. Once any limitations at all are accepted on free speech, free speech no longer exists and the question only remains of how far from the middle of the political spectrum the state will allow unpopular opinions to be expressed. What ever happened to Voltaire's oft-quoted spirit of being willing to defend to the death anyone's ability to state opinions one disagrees with?

Network is a newsletter of information and opinion about radical social change. It is published nearly every month at 442 Cambridge St. Ottawa K1S 4H7. It may be picked up free of charge at various distribution points or subscribed to at \$10 for 12 issues. Readers are welcome to send in information or ideas they would like to share.

ADD TO CONTENTS: 14-A Modest Utopia. Received just at press time, this article by Don Alexander complements the preceding Free School article by suggesting one route by which a networking group might evolve an alternative community. Comments by readers on these proposals would be welcome.

NEWS BRIEFS

Toronto Gentrifies

TORONTO-3/4 of all low-income housing in Ward 6 (Sherbourne-Bloor-Palmerston) has been destroyed so high-rent adult-only units can be put up. Under Ontario law municipalities cannot deny demolition permits to owners if zoning by-laws are obeyed. Tenants can evade eviction only by buying the building themselves or getting the city to do so. (Canadian Tribune 18-2-85 p.2)

Black Discrimination Still Rampant

USA-1984 reports show blacks make up 48% of the prison population and have three times the unemployment rate of whites; 124 of every 100,000 black males are homicide victims, compared to 16 whites. Fathers are absent from homes of 51% of all black children. (Detroit Free Press 4-2-85 p8A.)

Canada Backs Star Wars

TORONTO-Critics of the Canadian government's deal with the USA to modernize NORAD say it will mean U.S. nuclear weapons in Canada and Canadian involvement in the Strategic Defence Initiatives (Star Wars.) The NORAD agreement of 1958 claimed Canadian commanders were to have charge of Canadian air space, but this was disproven when a malfunctioning U.S. computer sent up six jet fighters from Comox B.C. which were recalled only minutes before missiles would have been deployed. Canada plans to spend \$100 million upgrading existing NORAD bases and installing coastal raiders, \$650 million to modernize the DEW line (including basing anti-ballistic missiles in Canada), \$600 million for a low-level air defence system and another \$600 million for a destroyer upgrade program, while \$660 million will be spent on 20 F-18 fighters. (Canadian Tribune 18-2-85 pl.)

Another Mass Murderer Free

ITALY-The government has released Nazi war criminal Walter Reder, who had been sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering 1830 Italian villagers, despite a referendum vote in the village of the massacre which showed only one person agreeing to the release. (Canadian Tribune 4-2-85 p9.)

Israel Planned Sabra and Shatila Massacres

ISRAEL-A "top secret" document shows that Israel's Minister of Defence had planned actions against "terrorists" in the West Beirut camps some time before Bashir Gemayel's murder led to the Sabra and Shatila massacres. This document states that "Harm inflicted on civilian population in the course of a purge of a dense urban area such as the refugee camps was predicted and taken into consideration when the action was approved." (Nation 26-1-85 p7.)

100 New Monuments to Public Stupidity

USA-The incarceration rate (people in jail per 100,000 population) jumped 96-179 in the years 1973-83, with nearly 100 new prisons costing \$3.5 billion planned or under construction. There is no evidence that increased imprisonment slows down crime; North Carolina's rate of imprisonment is five times that of Minnesota but the two states have a roughly equivalent rate of serious crime. Although corrections architects advocate "campus" facilities with "normalized" surroundings as the only practical and humane design for prisons, the public is demanding harsher conditions. (Washington Post 3-3-85 pA1.)

Poverty Kills Children

USA-The 13 million poor children in this country face a death rate three times that of other children. More American children die from poverty than traffic fatalities and suicide combined. Meanwhile chief executives of many large corporations are paid over \$1 million each per year. (Washington Post 3-3-85 pA1.)

Handgun Slaughter in USA

USA-In 1979 handguns killed 48 people in Japan, 8 in Great Britain, 34 in Switzerland, 52 in Canada, 58 in Israel, 21 in Sweden, 42 in West Germany and 10,728 in the United States. (Utne Reader #7, back cover.)

SOUTH AFRICA-White civil servants are starting to feel effects of the economic recession the country has been under since 1982, with yearly bonus cheques cut 30% and further civil service hiring suspended. This may increase support for the ultra-right-wing Conservative Party. Blacks meanwhile experience an unemployment rate of over 20%, and those who are laid off are shipped to "tribal homelands" where drought makes subsistence agriculture impossible; their survival is in jeopardy. (Christian Science Monitor 8-3-85).

South Africa Entertainers Blacklisted

SOUTH AFRICA-The United Nations has listed 388 performers who have entertained in South Africa and are consequently blacklisted from UN activities; it includes Linda Ronstadt (remember her at the 1982 peace demo in New York?), Ray Charles, Julio Iglesias, Cher, Johnny Mathias, Rita Coolidge, the Beach Boys, America, Barry Manilow, David Hasselhof, Andy Gibb, Helen Reddy, Shelly Berman, Dolly Parton, Shirley Bassey, Janis Ian, Lisa Minelli, Neil Sedaka, Sha Na Na, Milos Forman (who promoted Amadeus there), Pia Zadora, Rod Stewart and Liberace. Others including Goldie Hawn are trying to get off the list by promising not to return. Bill Cosby turned down \$1 million to appear but promotes Coca Cola, which has a South African bottling plant. One black entertainer who went to South Africa is now a paraplegic because he was denied treatment after a car accident. (Los Angeles Times 24-2-85 calendar p11.)

South Africa Protests Called

TORONTO-Canadians Concerned About South Africa has called for protests against the most recent arrests of top leaders of the United Democratic Front on treason charges, which combined with massive police violence prove that apartheid "reforms" are a sham. The CCSA also urges pressure be brought on Ottawa to make "vigorous representations" to Pretoria. Good Luck, CCSA. (Canadian Tribune 11-3-85)

USA Props Ethiopia Famine

ETHIOPIA-The U.S. government is taking credit for providing \$19 million in food aid to Ethiopia, but this should be contrasted to the \$775 million military aid Reagan requested in the same year for the repressive Turkish government. The USA refused Ethiopia aid two years ago when the potential destructiveness of the drought was first realized, and also opposed loans from the African Development Bank and the World Bank. (Canadian Tribune 4-2-85 p5.) The USA is also supporting the Ethiopian government's policy of denying food relief to areas in which there is strong guerilla activity, as it hopes to win the government from its alliances with Russia.

Canada Supplies U.S. Uranium

KEY LAKE SASKATCHEWAN-While the number of U.S. uranium mines has shrunk from 367 to 15 since 1979, uranium mining here is proceeding smoothly at 1/3 USA's production costs. Cigar Lake appears to have the greatest concentration of uranium ever found, and Saskatchewan may be the source of most U.S. uranium needs in the near future. (NY Times 3-3-85.)

Plan Survival Gathering

WOLLASTON LAKE SASKATCHEWAN-A survival gathering will be held here June 9-13 with workshops, blockades etc. Information John Graham, Saskatoon, 306-955-3159.

Manitobans Fear Waste Dump

FINAWA MANITOBA-Opposition to possible nuclear waste entombment here is growing despite refusal of both Conservative and NDP governments to hold public hearings. Manitoba has also blocked requests for an area referendum. The first stage, a nuclear storage test station, is already in place and residents fear wastes from Canada and the USA will wind up here. Two U.S. agencies helped develop the site. Some Atomic Energy of Canada officials have suggested that both U.S. and European waste be accepted. Information: Lac du Bonnet Citizens' Group, Box 1234, Lac Du Bonnet Manitoba R0E 1A0. (In These Times 1-23-85)

LETTERS AND REPORTS

Peterborough Activists Start Storefront

The mission statement of the 219 Hunter Street collective in Peterborough reads as follows: "Our collective is a non-aligned, self-organized group of people who want to use their collective resources to support the work of social change and political education projects. To provide such projects with an affordable, community base which is independent, visible and easily accessible to the public, we have rented the store-front space at 219 Hunter Street in downtown Peterborough:

"219 HUNTER ST."

PROJECTS FOR CHANGE:

Social Justice and Community Self-reliance

Our members are committed to developing a collective process which maximizes individual participation and cooperative skills in democratic practice and decision-making. Projects accepted by the 219 Hunter Street Collective are obliged to accept our basic agreements and to abide by the decisions and policies related to the use and management of "219 Hunter St." A representative from each project is a full participant in our collective process.

APRIL 29 A DAY OF "NO BUSINESS AS USUAL"

An April 29 organizer has asked us to print the following statement: "While the Earth is headed for self-destruction, everything else continues as if nothing unusual is happening..." Well, you're not too late. Open your eyes and look around you. It may not seem unusual, but there are a lot of things heading us in the direction of disaster. Already energy producing agencies have polluted the atmosphere. Too many people have been killed. Womyn are being raped, animals tortured, minorities "killed off" legally. It's time to take action and put an end to the patrons of racism, sexism, militarism, specieism, ageism, authoritarianism, fascism and those who try to impose their will on others, those who oppress, kill, torture and destroy. It's all around us in our community; the pornography shops and theatres, the fur stores, the banks, the businesses and companies who hold contracts with the mass murdering military and those that rape the earth. Take a look at the oppression of womyn, minorities and youth. Take a look at yourself. Here they are killing you slowly (and they are!) Join in and throw a brick through the window of your local sleazy sex studio. We won't take any more shit. April 29 is a day of no business as usual. International stop the city day!

OPEN LETTER TO ANVA RE ANVA'S POSITION ON CENSORSHIP

This letter to the editor from Kim-Man Chan and Jack Kern of Peterborough refers to Kim-Man Chan's earlier critique of Pornography Rape War, published by one of the Alliance for Non-Violent Action's three major task groups during 1984. She accused the publication of advocating state censorship of pornography and argued against this position.

What is ANVA's position on censorship? Is the position articulated on page 12, Pornography Rape War (October 13, 1984) to be taken as ANVA's statement on censorship and pornography? There has been no response to Kim-Man Chan's criticism of the handbook. It is rumoured that the authors of the handbook feel there is little reason to reply: they agree with many positions of the critique and stand unjustly accused of holding opposing views. The rumour also has it that the criticism would have been stronger if it referred to specific pages in the handbook.

Page 12 advocates censorship as a way of controlling pornography and as a means of reducing the immediate abuse of women and children. Is it or is it not ANVA's position? (According to the rumour Women's Action for Peace opposes censorship, although page 12 clearly indicates the opposite. Those people actually interested in investigating this issue should get a copy of the newly published book, Women Against Censorship, edited by Varda Burstyn (Toronto, Douglas and McIntyre, 1985.)

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CANADIAN PEACE MOVEMENT

editor's note: this letter was distributed in March over the signatures of Howard Breen, Deb Ellis, Ken Hancock, Scott Marsden and Andrew VanVelzen. Network is in general agreement with the views expressed, though it has questions about the continued emphasis on civil disobedience as expressed in past issues.

It is now clear that the peace movement has reached a point when some historically important decisions have to be made. One example of this are the plans for a Canada wide coalition of peace groups. We believe that the manner in which these decisions are being made will have a great bearing on the kind of peace movement that emerges in the years ahead. As peace activists who are committed to the building of a democratic, locally controlled movement, we have serious concerns about the state of that movement and the centralism and careerism that are beginning to take shape. More specifically, there are three broader areas under which these concerns take place.

The first area of concern is the way decisions are made within the movement. This has been made more acute by recent discussions on the coalition. It is becoming increasingly apparent that a small group of activists have a clear concept how this coalition should operate. These activists tend to have positions of power in the decision making process because they represent large urban coalitions, are predominantly men, and are committed to a conservative movement with close relationships to the Canadian government. In a nutshell, they represent the traditional stance of the peace movement. On very fundamental decisions, such as government funding of the movement, they will attempt to push for decisions before there is an opportunity for a long term, grassroots discussion. They will employ the use of voting to marginalize and undermine what they perceive to be minority positions of opposition within the movement. They will clearly count on the traditional conservatism of the peace movement to isolate more radical positions. However, it is decisions such as government funding which will determine the character and politics of any coalition. Fundamental moral and tactical questions are involved in this process. The inevitable legitimization of a government committed to nuclear and conventional escalation, and the dangerous dependency upon the political and fiscal interests of the state are realities which require the most serious debate and discussion. We want to ensure that this debate actually takes place within the movement.

Our second area of concern relates to the task, essential in the future of the peace movement, of exposing the facade of "democratic" politics which exist in the dominant culture in which we organize. The simple fact, made more obvious by the recent petition caravan, is that issues of foreign policy and of peace and war are not open to broad based popular control. Many have come to this realization, but do not know how to express this consciousness in concrete political action. The population is obviously marginal to the actual decisions of policy made in corporate boardrooms, state bureaucracies, and military institutions. The continual petitioning of the state to be a means of disarmament only perpetuates its ability to hide behind its elite, secretive and military nature. If we are truly working for a society which uses democratic input as the means of policy making, then it is our responsibility to expose institutions that are not democratic. To continue the illusions is to invite defeat in a way that places the blame back upon us and creates in the long run apathy and cynicism, and gives credence to institutions that have lost their moral authority to receive our cooperation.

Lastly, we call upon the peace movement to begin a serious campaign of strategies and tactics which require and encourage self reliance and moral responsibility in the Canadian people. Peace is something for which we must struggle. It is not something that someone else is going to give to us. The dependency upon the state to be what it cannot be only perpetuates in all of us a default of personal and political responsibility. Gandhi understood that the Indian people would continue to be conquered by the British to the extent that they allowed themselves to be colonized and dominated. When people begin to take direct

responsibility for their lives, and the world in which they live, they develop a moral autonomy that does not require outside and authoritarian blessing for their work. They pass from being a dependent child to a fully responsible adult. We believe that as a movement we must begin to throw away dependency upon authority and power. This will mean, by its very nature, that the peace movement will not be allowed to be run by a small group of people whose claim to power rests primarily upon their access to the very state apparatus which fuels the arms race.

Future actions must challenge all of us to change our lives (the products we buy, the taxes we pay) and it can take root in the various public events we organize. For example, civil disobedience actions at various corporate, military and government centres. These actions will reflect the fact that we have stopped asking and pleading to a government which demeans our lives by refusing to act. We have begun to demand of them and of ourselves a willingness not to cooperate with policies we know to be evil, and whose continuation undermines our moral integrity as a nation and as human beings. The lack of an alternative follow-up to the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign indicates how people become politically and morally lost when they do not have a vision or a form of actions which originates within themselves and does not depend on how established authority will or will not act. We are still waiting for the government to act for us. Yet it still continues to test the cruise, support Reagan around the world, and call for military contracts in Canada. The responsibility for action and resistance is clearly in our hands. How we handle that responsibility and what it means for a truly democratic peace movement is really the fundamental question that faces all of us at this time in history. We invite your response.

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CAN THE PEACE MOVEMENT REACH THE WORKERS?
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by Gary Moffatt

Robert Coles, a psychiatrist who has studied working class children, writes in the Boston Observer (reprinted Utne Reader #7) that the nuclear freeze movement is largely confined to the white, upper-middle class because its leaders talk down to the working class; he is particularly upset by Caldicott's assertion that the public has accepted "psychic numbing." But is there really a "working class?" With unionized workers enjoying bourgeois salaries, lifestyles and social attitudes, ununionized workers hovering around the poverty line and unemployed workers below this line it would be very hard to define a common working class interest. If we do for the sake of convenience lump everyone who does physical work for wages as "the working class," is it fair to say that it is proportionately underrepresented in the peace movement? Certainly labour groups are quite visible in peace demonstrations and coalitions. Nonetheless Coles is probably right in observing that the peace movement has been dominated by an economically well-off intelligensia. So how do we secure more "working class" participation? Coles apparently thinks we should talk to them in a different way to get them to join the nuclear freeze movement.

There may, however, be a more fundamental reason than poor communications for the workers' lack of interest in the nuclear freeze movement. The nice affluent people who launched the nuclear freeze movement are much more concerned about what a nuclear war would do to their own comfort and survival than they are about the exploitation of workers, both domestically and in the Third World, that is the real motivation for escalating the arms race. An all-out nuclear war would not be in the interests of the corporate state which controls the weapons, and whereas such a war could start by accident or alliance entanglements we may be sure they will do all possible to keep this from happening. We may be equally sure they will use the weapons to suppress Third World liberation movements, and a nuclear freeze would in no way diminish their ability to do so. Only workers can create for themselves a strong presence in the peace movement; nobody else can clean up the AFL-CIO (which has consistently supported U.S. imperialism) or demand conversion of nuclear industries (CMCP, God knows, has tried.) If the peace movement really wants to connect with the workers, it might try drawing links between the closing of North American plants and their relocation in the Third World with its cheap labour supply enforced by the arms being built.

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CAN FREE SCHOOLS WORK?
by Gary Moffatt

Most of the material on Rochdale College is from an article I prepared for Alternate Society in 1971, which took material from previous articles by Brian Johnson, Steve Grant, Eric LeBourdais and Dennis Westley. Most of the U.S. material is from Kirkpatrick Sale's book on the SDS.

A free school movement usually emerges when a protest movement finds itself unable to change the policies of the state by such state-sanctioned procedures as protesting and lobbying. There was one in the mid-to-late sixties when we found ourselves unable to halt the war in Vietnam (or Canadian complicity therein)--attempts were made to get some sort of free school off the ground in virtually every major North American city and many smaller ones as well. I would estimate that those which got off the ground at all had an average lifespan of three years. Now that we are unable to stop Reagan's arms race escalation there seems to be another round of interest in free schools; I know of groups starting up a free school in Ottawa and a free university in Toronto (the distinction seems to be that a "free school" is run for and hopefully by young people still in the school system while a "free university" involves people of all ages and is not seen primarily as an alternative or supplement to attendance at a traditional school.) Before starting on another round of alternative education projects, it might be helpful to try to understand why few of the last round's projects achieved longterm success.

The concept of universities managed by the students and/or teachers therein is by no means novel; in the middle ages universities were run by guilds of masters or students (the students could fine a teacher for such offences as lecturing overtime, as well as deciding who would teach, if their guild was in control.) Such a system was suited to the needs of the only employer of university graduates, the Church, whose needs were met if the graduates could discourse learnedly about how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. Neither the humanities nor the sciences encompassed a large body of information, and as late as the 17th century it was possible for one individual, such as Francis Bacon, to possess a reasonably good understanding of every field of human knowledge. However, the needs of the industrial revolution called for a more highly disciplined population; just as workers were herded from their cottage industries to work in factories, so were universities redesigned to service the needs of an elitist ruling class with the money and leisure to consume an education. It was this education which gave a relatively small number of people the necessary arrogance and sense of superiority to rule not only their own countries but colonial empires as well. Since experiencing discipline was considered a prerequisite to acquiring the credentials to mete it out to others, schools and universities had to be made into unpleasant places where students would learn to obey. Control was taken from the hands of the teachers and students and placed in that of administrators chosen by directors, most of whom owed their directorships to success in the business world.

By the 20th century automation was reducing the necessary amount of human toil, and allowing those who rebelled against exploitation of labour to leave the system came to be seen as a less expensive alternative to coercing them into participation. So a handful of free school experiments came to be tolerated; these schools removed some of the more disruptive and rebellious students from the system and made it easier to control the rest. The most famous of these experiments was Britain's Summerhill, whose headmaster A.S. Neill wrote books and articles popularizing the revolutionary concept that students should have the option of attending or not attending classes; most would eventually start attending when they got bored doing nothing, and in any case producing well-adjusted young people is more important than cramming knowledge into them. Students also voted on living conditions at Summerhill, though they do not seem to have had much direct control over the content of the courses taught. Both primary and secondary level education was offered. Soon Neill's writings were widely discussed among those dissatisfied with the school system,

and a variety of similar experiments were launched. But Summerhill collapsed shortly after Neill's departure for the big open classroom in the sky, and most of the experiments modelled after it proved even more short-lived. In Canada, for instance, we had Everdale Place, which evolved from a free school to a university with its own industries, and a free school run by the Society of Friends as part of their alternative community in Argenta BC. Argenta's free school lasted about twenty years before succumbing to a failure to reach consensus between the students and the older community members over alcohol, drugs and premarital sex policies, compounded by tension between idealistic (and underpaid) teachers and students from upper middle class backgrounds who wished to retain many privileges they had enjoyed at home that were incompatible with the Argenta environment. Everdale lasted about half this time, and in its heyday provided copy for an excellent progressive education quarterly entitled This Magazine Is About Schools (when the Marxist viewpoint became dominant it changed its title to This Magazine and became just another leftist periodical.)

The free university movement was inspired more by events in the USA than in Europe. Students for a Democratic Society was founded in 1962, growing out of the perception that fundamental social changes is needed before such ideals as peace and black civil rights can be fulfilled. Discussion groups quickly formed on the major campuses; in the spring of 1964 a number of Berkeleyites created a New School, with courses such as "American History and the Growth of Empire," "Dream Politics and the Cold War," and "Problems of the City in Contemporary America." The Free Speech Movement combined a successful sit-in with spontaneous seminars on a variety of topics, and by 1965 the idea of alternative, rather than merely reformed, universities began to be taken seriously. SDSers hammered out a concept of a "free educational atmosphere" whose features would include open admission, "relevant" courses, unrestricted curricula, community service and radical development. Local chapters were to set up their own universities and establish a communications net. Some of the schools offered only a handful of courses, others dozens; topics included Marx and Freud, a Radical Approach to Science, Ethics and Revolution, Life in Mainland China Today and Neighbourhood Organization and Nonviolence. Most schools asked no or token fees; almost anyone could teach and there were no restrictions on subject matter (a minority of places did discourage rightwing or pro-Establishment courses.) Film making, contemporary literature and "street poetry," body movement and karate, hippie culture and the student revolt, Zen Basketball, Paper Airplanes and People were among the courses advertised. The free universities encouraged students to take responsibility for their own needs and education, and stimulated potential radical organizers. By 1970 some 500 were estimated to be functioning, some already co-opted by existing universities or special interest groups although the majority retained the idea of resisting established institutions to the end.

Typical was the one organized by SDSers at the University of Pennsylvania on a \$300 budget in 1966; starting out with a handful of courses on social change, within months it had dozens of courses and over a thousand members including college students, dropouts, community people and Leary disciples. Under the impetus of the free school, students began organizing projects in Philadelphia neighbourhoods, putting pressure on the university itself for educational reform, and researching the university's complicity in the governmental war machine through its chemical and biological warfare research centre on the campus. Within a year, however, the university had lost its focus on political change as the original SDSers graduated, increasing influence fell to unradical university faculty members, the number of courses increased and the SDS connection was severed to be replaced by a broad-spectrum steering committee with disparate political views. By 1968 only 15% of the courses were political and the university promised to run courses of its own along similar lines if the student government took over. With the original radicalism gone there was little resistance to this liberal swallow-up. Other free universities suffered similar fates, with liberal administrators using their rhetoric, analysis and sometimes manpower to co-opt their programs and establish elitist forms of "experimental"

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colleges inside of, although quarantined from, the existing educational system. Liberal student organizations saw depoliticized free universities as agents of reform within the university system, and in 1968 the Ford Foundation gave a \$305,000 grant for this purpose. The SDS began to sour on the free universities in early 1967 because they were taking activists away from the existing campuses, and the organization's ultimate adoption of violent revolutionary rhetoric terminated its empathy with this form of social reform. Nonetheless, the free universities helped inspire such alternative institutions as the underground papers, Liberation News Service, Newsreel and the Movement Speakers Bureau; research organizations like the African Research Group, North American Congress on Latin America and the Pacific Research Institute; various theatre groups like the Bread and Puppet Theatre and the San Francisco Mime Troupe; local community-organizing groups in various cities; new political groupings like the National Conference for New Politics, the Peace and Freedom Party, and the early Black Panther group in Lowndes County; professional organizations such as the Medical Committee for Human Rights, Healthpax, and the New University Conference.

A variation in the standard cycle of the rise and fall of free universities occurred in Toronto, where an 18-storey highrise was built to house that city's experiment. In 1936, four theology students at the University of Toronto had begun the Campus Co-operative Residence Inc., designed to offer cheap alternatives to the university's residences. Owned by its members, the Co-op had by 1959 acquired four houses and rented a fifth. At this point, it hired as its general manager 19-year-old Howard Adelman, who by skillful manipulation of money bought up several houses in the university area and began seeking backing to build a high-rise residence. By the mid-sixties the co-op houses were sponsoring seminars and guest speakers on a number of free university oriented topics. To many of the members, building a highrise where large numbers of people who shared an interest in free universities could live and work together seemed a logical extension of the principle of student-controlled residences and curricula. Some members of the Student Union for Peace Action (Canada's version of the SDS) weren't so sure; they feared that potential student radicals would be diverted into a struggle to maintain the community as an end in itself. Doubtless some of the liberal politicians who initially supported Rochdale hoped this would happen; for instance, Ontario's Housing Minister helped the project get a loan from the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and became a director for one of the subsidiaries of the company that developed the highrise, Revenue Properties. It was decided to name the college Rochdale, after the Lancashire town where 28 weavers had in 1844 opened the co-operative grocery store that formed the basis of the now world-wide co-operative movement. This carried an implication that Rochdale would be self-governing, and in 1969 Co-op College gave Rochdale self-governing powers, along with the responsibility of meeting mortgage payments for which Co-op, as Rochdale's legal owners, was theoretically responsible.

To get the money to build Rochdale Co-op College had to deal with the state, and the state never gave it a fair deal. The CMHC loan covered only 90% of the cost of building Rochdale; to cover the other 10% Co-op was forced to artificially inflate the value of the land it had assembled on the busy midtown corner of Bloor and Huron in order to inflate the CMHC mortgage. By refusing to grant Rochdale the status of an educational institution, the federal government cheated it not only of the 10% grant which such institutions normally receive to cover the part of the construction cost not included in CMHC loans but also of important tax rebates; the municipal government also refused Rochdale tax exemption as an educational institution. These set-backs, coupled with an unexpected increase in the capital costs due to a five-month construction delay (the fault of Alscott Construction Co., then a partly-held subsidiary of Revenue Properties) broke the project's shoestring budget. The regular payments on the CMHC mortgage were set at an unrealistically high level which assumed that rooms too small for more than a single person would be rented as doubles and failed to take into account heavy maintenance costs. In 1970 CMHC discovered through a study that even with full occupancy (unlikely in a building inhabited largely by young people) the mortgage payment could not be met; it then issued an eviction notice.

These financial problems were largely responsible for the other difficulties that plagued Rochdale. For instance, the need for rent income forced it to open in the fall of 1968 while construction was still going on, and university students busy with the busy work their degree courses entailed could not cope with the dirt, noise and disorganization. Many of them left after the first month, and their abandoned space was quickly filled by crashers and freeloaders attracted by the building's wide open access. This discouraged many of the original enthusiasts whom Rochdale had hoped to use as resource people such as poet-publisher Dennis Lee, novelist Matt Cohen, Science Fiction writer-anthologist Judy Merrill, members of the short-lived School for Social Theory and Mel Watkins, who was president of the Rochdale governing council before Ottawa invited him to join a task force on foreign ownership. Their departure reduced Rochdale's ability to function as a free university. At about this time Toronto police drove the youthful hippie-bohemian population from Yorkville Avenue, which the city had decided to convert to expensive stores, and many decided Rochdale would be a good place to resume hanging around. Resentment over being asked to pay large amounts of rent for inferior housing (the four elevators frequently broke down) led a growing number of tenants to resist rent payment. Many of those who came to Rochdale did not know how to handle the freedom, and responsibility, to provide their own tidy environment and co-operation. Bikers and drug dealers soon came.

There were still a number of people at Rochdale seriously determined to uphold its original mandate of providing a free university; in the spring of 1969 they established a strong-arm security force to evict undesirable tenants and crashers, and also acknowledged the need to meet the problems of the youth culture Rochdale had attracted, rather than the student culture it had hoped to attract, by opening Flo's Parlour and Health Clinic, which dispensed quick care to both residents and on-residents with health problems. It helped many young and poor people who were reluctant to attend regular clinics because of the condescending or insulting attitude of their staffs. Volunteer physicians were to be in attendance several nights a week, with the rest of the staffing done by volunteers whose qualifications as advertised in the Rochdale Daily were to include such things as "a cool head in a crisis, some medical knowledge and experience; knowledge of drugs and freaking; not too straight in thinking" and so forth. Since these two measures were somewhat contradictory--nonresidents with health problems had trouble getting by the security force at the entrance to attend the clinic--another free clinic for non-residents was established (and staffed to some extent by Rochdalers) on nearby Dupont Street. The security force was known to attack outside drug dealers with fists and massive dogs while tolerating dealing by residents; this led to numerous police raids which might have found a total of about 20 pounds of marijuana, and similarly unimpressive figures for other drugs. Although it was never proved that more drugs were used at Rochdale than in administration-controlled student highrises, Rochdale's image as a "hippie haven" and "shoppers drug mart" persisted, fanned by all three Toronto daily papers which saw in Rochdale a gold mine for finding or inventing sensationalist news copy.

When Rochdale was first started, it was envisaged that there would be a number of structured seminars differing from those of a regular university only in that the students would do the structuring and be motivated by a desire for knowledge rather than a degree. Although some such courses were always available (during one month in 1971, for instance, courses were advertised in judo, offset printing and contemporary Marxism) there was a greater tendency for the residents to acquire their knowledge by informal meetings with those interested in sharing their ideas than in regular seminars. Rochdalers started such projects as attracted their own interests and made them available to anyone who wished to come to learn, with the college supplying the facilities through which residents could structure their own learning program--community lounges on each floor, a library and space for various projects. These included the afore-mentioned Free Youth Clinic (Rochdale guaranteed its rent when it moved to Dupont Street and added a free store on the initiative of the 14th floor commune), Coach House Press which was supported by the college while

establishing a high-quality book and art printing business, Theatre Fasse Muraille, ceramics and writers workshops, the Nishnawbe Institute for Indian Studies, a library, film-makers co-op, hydroponics project, vegetarian restaurant, classic film cinema, pottery kiln, photography facilities, leathercrafts, woodworking, a loom and musical instrument maker etc. Some of these projects moved out of Rochdale after using the college to bring together enough people to function independently, others remained until the eviction. There were a number of special events including a visit by poet Allen Ginsberg and a three-week Festival of Underground Theatre. It should also be mentioned that residents of certain floors, discouraged by problems creating a real sense of identity or community among 850 people, turned their own floor wings into separate co-operatives with a shared entrance and (after initial opposition by Rochdale college) block rental fees. Some of these communes maintained a conspicuous identity; for instance the 14th floor operated the Dupong St. free store, helped organize a food co-op and initiated or supported several other social projects and concerts; the sixteenth floor housed a music commune with instruction in piano and guitar available. Many of these projects survived the mass eviction of Rochdale's tenants in 1973-4 (the building became a senior citizens home) to function independently, at least for a time.

Several other highrise student residences were built in Canada at about the same time, some of them by the same company Revenue Properties, but the only other one that was controlled by its members rather than an outside administration was Pestalozzi College in Ottawa. It avoided many of the disruptions that had plagued Rochdale and remained a self-managed student residence with resources for a variety of courses to share skills and ideas. However, it collapsed at about the same time as Rochdale for the same basic reason, inability to meet unreasonably high mortgage payments, and became just another administration-controlled highrise primarily for students. All education facilities were removed, since more money could be made from renting their space to extra residents.

The free schools and universities which waxed and waned in the sixties were largely a by-product of that decade's protest movement, which went through four stages: (1) a liberal phase which sought to make society workable by reforming particular problems such as the arms race and absence of black civil rights (a majority of people in the movement never got beyond this stage, and many still participate in single-issue protest movements) (2) a radical stage when such groups as SDS and SUPA came to see that only basic social change can make specific reforms possible (3) a feminist phase when some of the radicals challenged the male hierarchy of their own movements and formulated new ethics for interpersonal relationships (4) a disintegrative phase when divisions between those in each of the first three phases were compounded by successful Establishment attempts to buy off the liberals. (For instance, in Canada the Company of Young Canadians was formed to separate those who merely wanted to be in socially relevant projects from the radicals in SUPA who saw the need for basic social change; when SUPA collapsed the CYC was disbanded.) To buy off the student movement which had spawned alternative education projects the power structure did not need to halt its war in Vietnam or make more than token concessions to the blacks; all it needed to do was to appear willing to remedy some of the more popular criticism levelled at the school system. At the elementary level, "open classrooms" where each student could progress at his or her individual learning speed were discussed and in a few cases implemented. Secondary school students were given more choice of courses, less onerous disciplinary regulations and more freedom to choose their physical appearance. The universities, as we have seen, fiddled with various concepts of self-directed study courses borrowed from the free universities but modified to maintain control by the administration. Once the protest movement subsided and the free universities were disbanded or co-opted, most of these reforms were rescinded.

The free universities lasted only as long as their founders, mainly students and/or refugees from the universities, saw themselves as university students and remained within the age group when one generally goes to university. They largely failed to transmit

their concerns outside their own age group (though they did reach non-university students of similar age) and when they "outgrew" university there was no one to whom the torch could be passed, other than administrative liberals who were only too happy to take control and purge the universities of their radical content. Attempts by secondary school students to establish free schools generally had even shorter lifespans, partly because they were also very much a peer group activity and partly because they lacked the organizing skills of their university counterparts. What did survive were some of the primary level private schools whose sponsoring parents have some degree of sympathy with the ideals of free schools so long as it is the parents rather than the children themselves who do the major share of curriculum planning. Limited to a handful of children from affluent families, these schools are tolerated because they cannot change the direction of the System.

So here we are in the mid-80s with basically the same situation we had in the early 60s, when George Grant (then of MacMaster) complained that "the progressive hope in American education was gradually emptied of all content except means to technological regulation and expansion," while C.W. Gonick of the University of Manitoba suggested that boards of governors consisting of prominent businessmen are not the basic problem; replacing them with faculty members would be to little avail so long as the main purpose of the university is "to train people to serve the economy rather than to foster learning, creativity and scholarship." The schools continue to instill virtues associated with holding a salaried job--tidiness, punctuality, obedience etc.--rather than the self-reliance and creativity that will be needed by the increasing proportion of graduates who can't find or won't want such jobs. The schools also ignore the new needs automation and cybernation have created; since the nature of one's work can be expected to change every few years anyway, what is most needed is the ability to think creatively and innovatively. This cannot be instilled into one person by another; it can only be developed by providing an environment for learning which encourages free thought and expression. Free schools are much more capable of providing such an environment than the tradition-enmeshed, bureaucracy-ridden school system. So the need is still present and the time may be ripe for another attempt to fill this need.

However, new approaches must be considered if the alternative education experiments of the 80s are to avoid repeating the mistakes and early demise of their 60s predecessors. Most of the 60s projects were designed to meet the needs of one particular peer or interest group; for longterm survival (assuming that this is a goal) the project must transcend the needs of individual segments of society; particularly when, as is especially true in the case of high school or college students, this segment is likely to be a short-lived one. The oppression faced by children, students, sweatshop workers, battered housewives, prisoners, the unemployed etc. may wear different masks, but it is all part of the same exploitive system. We must therefore work to create a sense of community among the various social elements working for a better society. It is doubtful that we can do this using such words as "school" and "university," which to many of the people we are trying to reach have negative connotations implying structures that have been set up to thwart rather than encourage the learning experiences we are trying to facilitate.

Once it abandoned its preconception that it would be primarily serving university students by providing them with structured seminars, Rochdale was able to start serving the community it actually had attracted by creating health clinics, craft facilities etc. to meet their needs. Rochdale was moving towards the creation and servicing of an alternative community when CMHC pulled its plug, though its identification in public consciousness with drugs and "hippie" lifestyles limited its appeal largely to young adults. This unfortunate public image was a result of trying to concentrate everything in one physical space; besides creating unsolvable financial problems, this concentration gave the enemies of self-managed lifestyles an all-too-visible target to destroy. In many

ways Detroit Open City, which operated for a shorter period at about the same time,¹³ was a more attractive model; here a variety of co-operative and self-managed businesses, services and study groups was spread over an urban area and linked by a community switchboard. The basic problem that killed this project was over-centralized control in the hands of one charismatic leader and its accompanying resentment. Many of the projects started by Open City survived the demise of the central switchboard, but eventually withered because they were deprived of the support Open City had provided.

I would therefore propose that those of us concerned with creating an alternative society begin by networking the various cities or rural areas we live in through a community switchboard (ie a regularly staffed telephone where people can call to get information about services they need, special events etc.) This would ideally be re-enforced by a periodical and/or people's yellow pages, but in an ideal situation new activities would be generated so quickly that no printed publication could cover them all. This switchboard (or whatever other networking mechanism is adopted) must itself be a community project, run by people representing a broad spectrum of the alternative enterprises happening in that area who can extend the networking through and beyond their own projects. Besides networking existing services, social change groups, study groups and so on, the switchboard could create additional ones by plugging people with similar interests into one another. Anyone wishing to start a group or project could use the switchboard to find out who else is interested, and switchboard members could use the network to try to start groups to fill whatever needs they perceive the alternative community to be lacking. All that is needed is enough money to acquire a business telephone, a space to house it and enough serious commitment to keep the line open during regular hours (if a larger space is available, the switchboard could be combined with some other needed facility such as a reading room or a free store.) I believe that this model would require little more energy than setting up a more narrowly defined free school or university, and yield far greater returns.

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UTNE ACCESSES LEFTIST ARTICLES

There has always been a need for a leftist Readers Digest which would carry excerpts and summaries of articles in various progressive journals, whose total volume is far too great for any individual to sift through. Much of this need is filled by a relatively new publication called the Utne Reader, now in its 7th issue. It is the work of a collective which meets regularly to discuss the members' reading and link information in various related articles; sometimes clusters of articles around a central theme are excerpted or summarized. With bimonthly publication and 128 pages it has room to present a number of articles in either their entirety or a condensation long enough to include the major points, as well as shorter excerpts and summaries of an even greater number of articles. The material is presented in an attractive physical format and the cost (\$4/issue) is large but not exorbitant. Although it is impossible for a person not in the collective to judge the basis for selecting material, the choice in the 7th issue seems to be a good one. Only U.S. material is included, but since Connexions includes only Canadian material the two publications can complement each other.

The problem of Utne, and of the left in general, is lack of a clearly defined social analysis and a resulting vacillation between liberal and radical material, with the liberal clearly predominating. For instance, a Tom Wolfe article brilliantly explains why the corporations prefer to display modern art which most people find meaningless (so do government offices) but fails to recommend any form of counter action (vandalize the art? hold peoples' art festivals?) A cluster of articles about the U.S. election criticizes Mondale and Jackson for their mistakes but fails to suggest that it may be impossible for the Democrats or anyone else to reform from within an electoral system in which largescale corporate funding is]the prerequisite to success. Another cluster of anti-television articles fails to face face the fact that if television bolsters Authority those who wield Authority aren't going to reform television. Only when we face the impossibility of reform from within, as most reformers aren't yet prepared to do, can we confront the real situation facing us.

A MODEST UTOPIA
by Don Alexander

The year is 1990, the place is Toronto. The city is a hotbed of political activity, and possesses a thriving counter-culture. At the centre of much of this ~~kafuffle~~ is an organization called Mutual Aid (A People's Action Network.) Founded in 1986, the organization has as its aim the creation of a society in miniature within the belly of the old. Mutual Aid grew out of a Community Hotline (and later Drop-In Centre) which let people know about community resources and provided a meeting ground for people with common interests and ideas.

The structure of Mutual Aid seems rather sectarian from the outside. Only Mutual Aid members can avail themselves of its services. This seemingly heartless policy was adopted because its founders wanted to impress on people that in a free society there will be no free ride. Everyone can and ought to contribute to the whole and benefits spiritually from doing so. Even prisoners and the elderly help out by writing letters, doing translation work and performing childcare--taking on tasks adapted to their situation. The structure of Mutual Aid is as follows. There are 12 committees. Each member contributes four hours a month to one of these committees (or an equivalent amount of money.) Organizations and community businesses are eligible to join if they meet certain political and ecological criteria, pay regular dues and are in turn patronized by Mutual Aid members. Here's a basic rundown of the committees and what they do:

- Food Committee--networks with organic growers, provides labour in exchange for produce, and operates an organic farmers' market in the heart of the city; it also produces a monthly Consumer Alert newsletter promoting conscientious consumer choices.
- Housing Committee--maintains a data bank on informal housing co-ops seeking members and matches them up with people in need of housing; maintains crash pads for emergency situations; works with Financial Committee to acquire houses as community property and sets them up as co-ops.
- Health Care Committee--operates a free medical clinic with volunteer labour and a half-way house for ex-psychiatric inmates.
- Legal Committee--operates free legal clinic, emergency legal aid for Mutual Aid members.
- Culture and Education Committee--operates the Free University (the one service open to the public), publishes books and pamphlets, provides stipends and encouragement for local artists (the Drop-In Centre doubles as a venue for Mutual Aid performers and artists.)
- Women's Committee--organizes people to fight sexual violence in the community, networks with other women's groups, works for women's special interests and concern within Mutual Aid (including taking on inevitable sexism.)
- Hotline/Drop-In Centre Committee--operates Centre (reference desk, performance space, books)
- Political Action Committee--raises hell on the municipal level; runs for office, exposes etc
- Financial Committee--maintains the Mutual Aid Fund, invests it in Mutual Aid projects (ie housing co-ops) and extends aid to artists and persons in need within the community.
- Outreach Committee--networks with other communities of resistance.
- Transportation and Visitation Committee--Provides delivery and taxi service for shut-ins, arranges visits to Mutual Aid members in hospitals and prisons.
- Coordinating Committee--a rotating committee entrusted with administrative chores.

Major decision-making power rests in the Community Assembly which meets monthly and in yearly conventions where goals and directions are set; all members may attend meetings.

FOOTSCRIPT: Bookchin may be right that the 80's and 90's may represent the last chance to turn technocratic society around. If we're fortunate, a major crisis of public disaffection (somewhat like the 60's) may strike around the end of this decade. If we're to have any hope of having an effect, our structures must already be in place--structures which represent both the ends and means of our struggle. Means in that they represent communities of resistance, organization vehicles for fighting the system; ends in that they typify, in miniature, the society we would like to build.