

# KICK IT OVER®

The North, South and Meso-American conference participants declare before the world the following:

We Indians of America have never abandoned our constant struggle against the conditions of oppression, discrimination and exploitation which were imposed upon us as a result of the European invasion of our ancestral territories.

Our struggle is not a mere conjectural reflection of the memory of 500 years of oppression which the invaders, in complicity with the "democratic" governments of our countries, want to turn into events of jubilation and celebration. Our struggle as Indian People, Nations and Nationalities is based on our identity, which shall lead us to true liberation. We are responding aggressively, and commit ourselves to reject this "celebration."

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quality in recent times. This struggle is less isolated and more organized. We are now completely conscious that our total liberation can only be expressed through the complete exercise of our self-determination. Our unity is based on this fundamental right. Our self-determination is not just a simple declaration.

We must guarantee the necessary conditions that permit complete exercise of our self-determination; and this in turn, must be expressed as complete autonomy for our Peoples. Without Indian self-government and without control of our territories, there can be no autonomy.

see THE QUITO DECLARATION pg 4

**INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CONFERENCE**  
**MALE VIOLENCE**  
**THE POPULATION MYTH**  
**PRISONS**  
**READING THE COMICS**

## *we need your help...*

**Kick It Over** is a mostly self-financed magazine. It costs us approximately \$1600 to put out each issue; currently, about \$500 of that comes from subscriptions and the rest from our pockets. And our pockets are not that deep. If **Kick It Over** is to continue beyond a few more issues, we need your help. If you're buying the magazine in a store, please subscribe. If you already subscribe, a donation would be appreciated. Let your friends know about us, convince a library or bookstore to stock KIO. And, if you're in the Toronto area, come to our rummage sale at **TRINITY-ST. PAULS CHURCH, 427 BLOOR ST. WEST on SAT. APRIL 11, 10:30 - 4:00.**

We're doing what we can to keep our expenses down; although we hated to do it, we dropped our free subscriptions to prisoners. But it costs money to put out a quality publication. The alternative press relies on its readership for its financing. Never has an alternative press been needed more than now.

One of the benefits of financial security is long-range planning. We'd like to solicit articles for 2-3 issues ahead, look towards the occasional theme issue, maybe expand our size. And here's another kind of help you can give us. Do you write? Do you draw? Take photographs? We're only as good as our content, and most of that comes in the mail, from our readers.

While our interests are fairly broad, right now we're specifically looking to run a series on Visions of an Anarchist World. Most of us hold some sort of idea of the world we hope to create; sharing our visions can help us to further define our own politics, and also to reach out and inspire people new to these ideas. Oppositional politics can only go so far; it will be visionary politics that sustain the struggle.

Another theme we'd like to explore is strategies for change, how can we popularize the anarchist vision, how can we most effectively resist the authoritarian nightmare? Our Paths to Social Change feature is a forum for brief summaries of specific activities, and we encourage contributions, but it is important to construct a more general framework within which to work. To situate our work within a strategic context helps us assess its long-term usefulness, and to apply our limited resources where they'll do the most good.

It should go without saying that in neither case

are we seeking the creation of an anarchist "party line." We want only to provide a forum for an exchange of ideas among freethinking people about how best we can encourage the spread of anarchist ideas in theory and in practice.

Finally, we want feedback: (1) responses to the articles (2) ideas for future issues (3) comments about the magazine (4) suggestions for improvement. Let us know what you think. It matters, to us.

Our editorial collective is always looking for more members to help us achieve our goals. If you live in the Toronto area and would like to consider joining, please contact us. We'd also like to hear from people in other areas who would be interested in promoting **Kick It Over** in their area.

Thanks for their help to Steve and Derek. Someday, Karl, we'll be able to do it without you! Thanks and good luck to Mike and Cathy.

### **Prisoner subscriptions:**

It was once our policy to give prisoners free subscriptions on request; unfortunately, we can no longer afford to do so. We will send one free issue to prisoners who so request.

### **Corrections**

There were a couple of serious omissions in issue 27. Nina Silver's article "Coming Out as a Heterosexual" is copyrighted; apologies for not noting that. And we forgot to say where you could get the full text of *The Citizenship Papers*: send \$5.00 to Clark Hanjian, PO Box 1115, Vineyard Haven MA USA 02568.

- For **Kick It Over**: Regina Cochrane, Maria Lester, bob melcombe, Gary Moffatt, Wolfgang Vachon.

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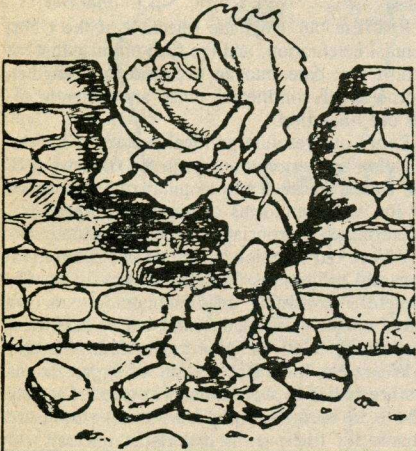
\$9 (Canadian) for four issues; \$9 U.S. for USA, the equivalent for overseas.

All correspondence to:

**Kick It Over**  
PO Box 5811, Stn A,  
Toronto Ontario,  
Canada M5W 1P2.

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QUAKER CTEE ON JAILS AND JUSTICE

## Kick It Over

April 1992

Edited and published by the Kick It Over Collective.  
All correspondence to Kick It Over, PO Box 5811,  
Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1P2

Subscriptions: Canada(\$9.00/4 issues), USA  
(\$9.00/4 issues-US currency), Australia (\$9.00/6 is-  
sues-Australian cash only), UK (4 pounds/4 issues-  
personal cheques OK, no postal money orders.)

Published four times a year.2nd class registration  
#5907. ISSN 0823-6526. Indexed in the Alternative  
Press Index

# DECLARATION OF QUITO

## INDIGENOUS ALLIANCE OF THE AMERICAS ON 500 YEARS OF RESISTANCE, JULY 1990.

*editors' note: On July 17-20, 1990, representatives of 120 Indian nations and solidarity organizations convened in Quito, Ecuador. The following manifesto was issued:*

**The North, South and Meso-American conference participants declare before the world the following:**

We Indians of America have never abandoned our constant struggle against the conditions of oppression, discrimination and exploitation which were imposed upon us as a result of the European invasion of our ancestral territories.

Our struggle is not a mere conjectural reflection of the memory of 500 years of oppression which the invaders, in complicity with the "democratic" governments of our countries, want to turn into events of jubilation and celebration. Our struggle as Indian People, Nations and Nationalities is based on our identity, which shall lead us to true liberation. We are responding aggressively, and commit ourselves to reject this "celebration."

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We must guarantee the necessary conditions that permit complete exercise of our self-determination; and this, in turn, must be expressed as complete autonomy for our Peoples. Without Indian self-government and without control of our territories, there can be no autonomy.

The achievement of this objective is a principal task for Indian Peoples. However, through our struggles we have learned that our problems are not different, in many respects, from those of other popular sectors. We are convinced that we must march alongside the peasants, the workers, the marginalized sectors, together with intellectuals committed to our cause, in order to destroy the

dominant system of oppression and construct a new society, pluralistic, democratic and humane, in which peace is guaranteed.

The existing nation states of the Americas, their constitutions and fundamental laws are judicial/political expressions that negate our socioeconomic, cultural and political rights.

At this point in our struggle, one of our priorities is to demand a complete structural change which allows for the recognition of Indian people's rights to self-determination, and the control of our territories through our own governments.

Our problems will not be resolved through the self-serving politics of government entities which seek integration and ethno-development. It is necessary to have an integral transformation at the level of the state and national society; that is to say, the creation of a new nation.

In this Gathering, it has been clear that territorial rights are a fundamental demand of the Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. Based on these aforementioned reflections, the organizations united in the First Continental Gathering of Indigenous Peoples:

Reaffirm our emphatic rejection of the Quincentennial celebration, and the firm promise that we will turn that date into an occasion to strengthen our process of continental unity and struggle towards our liberation.

Ratify our resolute political project of self-determination and our autonomy, in the framework of nation states, under a new popular order, with respect for whatever forms of organization each Nation determines appropriate for their situation.

Affirm our decision to defend our culture, education and religion as fundamental to our identity as Peoples, reclaiming and maintaining our own forms of spiritual life and communal co-existence, in an intimate relationship with our Mother Earth.

We reject the manipulation of organizations which are linked to the dominant sectors of society and have no indigenous representation, who usurp our name for (their own) imperialist interests. At

the same time, we affirm our choice to strengthen our own organizations, without excluding or isolating ourselves from other popular struggles.

We recognize the important role that indigenous women play in the struggles of our Peoples. We understand the necessity to expand women's participation in our organizations and we affirm that it is one struggle, men and women together, in our liberation process, and a key question in our political practices.

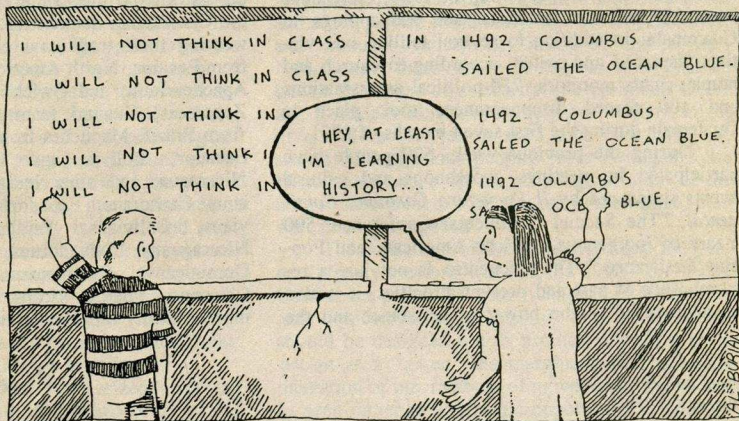
We Indian Peoples consider it vital to defend and conserve our natural resources, which right now are being attacked by transnational corporations. We are convinced that this defense will be realized if it is Indian People who administer and control the territories where we live, according to our own principles of organization and communal life.

We oppose national judicial structures which

by Jon Reed

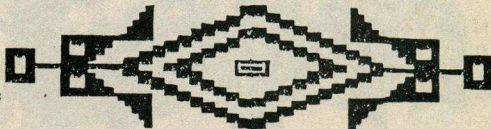
October 12, 1991. So-called "Columbus Day" in the States, "Thanksgiving Day" in Canada. In Guatemala City, a motley assortment of right-wing businessmen, politicians and military officials have laid a wreath of flowers at the statue of Cristobal Colon (Christopher Columbus). But here in Xela, in the Mayan highlands, 120 miles west of Guatemala City, *El Dia de la Raza*, (The Day of the Race or The People) is being celebrated quite differently. Rather than cheering for the European "discovery" of the New World, or saluting the epochal "encounter of

are the result of the process of colonization and neo-colonization. We seek a New Social Order that embraces our traditional exercise of Common Law, an expression of our culture and forms of organization. We demand that we be recognized as Peoples under International Law, and that this recognition be incorporated into the respective Nation States. We denounce the victimization of Indian People through violence and persecution, which constitutes a flagrant violation of human rights. We demand respect for our right to life, to land, to free organization and expression of our culture. At the same time, we demand the release of our leaders who are held as political prisoners, an end to repression, and restitution for the harms caused us.



AL BURIAN - PORTLAND ALLIANCE

## DEATH LURKS BEHIND FIESTA



two cultures," an enormous crowd of *indigenas* (indigenous people) and *campesinos* (rural farmworkers) have massed for a street protest and rally.

As many as 30-50,000 Mayans and Ladinos (*mestizos*), according to estimates in the daily newspapers, accompanied by hundreds of visiting *internationalistas*, are holding banners aloft, chanting, and preparing to march through downtown Xela, culminating a weeklong series of meetings, workshops and cultural events. From the size, composition (the majority are women, indigenous, and rural-based) and militant enthusiasm of the crowd, October 12 looks like it will indeed be a day of self-discovery and re-empowerment for the Guatemalan grassroots, traumatized by three decades of military and rightwing terror. Since the US-orchestrated military coup of 1954, there have been 150,000 assassinations and kidnappings in Guatemala, in addition to several million war victims displaced and exiled, according to church and human-rights monitors. 750 political assassinations and 100 forced disappearances took place in Guatemala during the first seven months of 1991.

During the previous week, 599 people have participated in meetings, workshops and cultural events sponsored by *El Encuentro Campana Continental*, "The Second Continental Conference: 500 Years of Indigenous, African-American, and Popular Resistance." The Encuentro is not just a remembrance of past and present atrocities, it is also an affirmation of the power of resistance and the

enormous potential of the underclass of the Americas, who represent close to 70% of the hemisphere's 700 million people. As Alberto Muenala puts it (separately) "we are a bunch of twigs, but together we make a huge fire." Needless to say, there are no wreaths of flowers in Xela lying at the feet of Cristobal Colon, but rather a mound of lilies and palm fronds at the base of the monument to Tecún Uman, the Mayan warrior who led the fight against the Spanish *Conquistadores*.

## The Continental Rainbow

As the march winds through the streets of Quetzaltenango, there are contingents of foreign delegates from the Conference interspersed among the Guatemalan demonstrators, many of whom are wearing their traditional clothing or traje: Cuna from Panama, North American Iroquois, Papagayo, Apache, Inuit, and Gwich'in; Mexican Yaqui and Zapotecas, Guaymi from Costa Rica, Guaranies from Brazil, Mapuches from Chile, Quechuas from Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru, Miskitos from Nicaragua, and other indigenous and non-indigenous Canadians, Ecuadorians, Brazilians, Peruvians, Bolivians, Paraguayanians, Colombians, Nicaraguans, Salvadorans, Hondurans, Cubans, Dominicans, Panamanians, African-Americans, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Euro-Americans and more—literally representatives from the entire rainbow of native and grassroots organizations of the hemisphere.

Along narrow avenues lined with thousands of spectators, trailed by 300 members of the international press, the demonstrators deliver their commentary on the quincentennial, loud and clear: "Long Live the Resistance," "Indigenous, Black, and Popular Movement United," "The People United Will Never Be Defeated," and "A People Who Are Hungry Are A People Without Peace." Colourful banners identify the grassroots organizations:



MEDIA WORKSHOP

widows, refugees, communities of resistance, students, trade unions, cooperatives, church-based groups, etc. Literally thousands of indigenous women and children, dressed in traditional clothing, march behind the banners of Conuwigua and Condeg, Guatemala's mass organizations of widows and war-displaced refugees. In what is an unusual development for Guatemala, there are very few uniformed soldiers and police along the demonstration route.

## A New Internationale?

A central theme, echoed throughout the Conference, is that, as bad as things are now, the future—at least for the indigenous and the underclasses—looks even worse. The destruction of the rainforests and the ozone layer; the pollution of the soil, air and water; the steady impoverishment of workers, rural farmers and the poor; the overall decline in economic opportunity and social welfare; the assault on trade unions and campesino organizations and the further "maquiladorization" of regional economies; the cholera epidemic; the wars in the Andes and Central America; the persistence of death squads, bloated military budgets, and standard military-civilian impunity; the drug epidemic and related street violence, not only in Colombia and in North America, but now spreading throughout the hemisphere—these and other trends discussed at the Conference are but some of the frightening harbingers of what is yet to come.

As *Encuentro* speakers emphasized, over and over again, the dominant "Conquistadores" of our times are not just Spaniards, or Europeans or Gringos, but rather an "international army of multina-

tional corporations and financial elites," backed up by the military might of the USA. This "New World Oligarchy" can only be tamed, brought under control, and eventually defeated, by trans-continental organizing, solidarity, and international resistance.

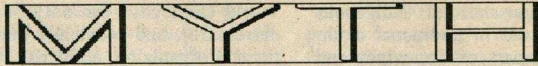
Participatory movement-building takes a long time, especially when you're trying to organize across artificial, but stubborn, national and cultural boundaries. The 40% of the Conference delegates who were indigenous, and the 60% non-indigenous, were not in perfect unity. The Conference was as notable for who was not there, as it was for who was there. Jesse Jackson, Noam Chomsky, and a number of other North American notables were invited, but were unable to come; nor did I notice very many rank-and-file organizers from the peace and social justice community, the Greens, minority, and women's movements north of the border. Nonetheless, there was a contagious unity and an undeniable sense of solidarity and optimism in the air. If 50,000 Mayans can defy the military might of a US-backed terror state and take over the streets, if indigenous peoples from throughout the Hemisphere can keep on resisting, in spite of the almost unbelievable odds stacked against them, then we can all get together.

The consensus of the workshops and the general plenary sessions was that the 1992 Continental Conference planned for next October in Nicaragua, and quincentennial events in various countries, should be designed not to promote nostalgia or to accept as a "given" the marginalization and fragmentation of our rainbow of movements, but should be seen rather as a strategic opportunity to consolidate our forces.



DALE ATKINSON-KAI VISIONWORKS

# THE POPULATION



## by Murray Bookchin

The "population problem" has a Phoenix-like existence: it rises from the ashes at least every generation and sometimes every decade or so. The prophecies are usually the same--namely, that human beings are populating the earth in "unprecedented" numbers and "devouring" its resources like a locust plague.

In the days of the Industrial Revolution, Thomas Malthus, a craven English parson, formulated his notorious "law of population," which asserts that, while food supplies expand only arithmetically, population soars geometrically. Only by wars, famines, and disease (Malthus essentially argued) can a "balance" be struck between population and food supplies. Malthus did not mean this to be an argument to foster human welfare; it was an unfeeling justification for the inhuman miseries inflicted on the mass of English people by landgrabbing aristocrats and exploitative "industrialists." True to the mean-spirited atmosphere of the times, Malthus opposed attempts to alleviate poverty because they would remove the limits imposed on "population growth" by prolonging the lives of the poor.

Malthus' "law" entered into Darwin's explanation of evolution and re-emerged from biology as "social Darwinism." Propounded vigorously in the USA and England a generation later, this theory reduced society to a "jungle," in effect, in which a "law of survival of the fittest" justified the wanton plundering of the world by the wealthy or the "fittest," while the labouring classes, dispossessed farmers, and Third World "savages" were reduced to penury, presumably because they were "unfit" to survive. The arrogance of bankers, industrialists and colonialists in the "Gilded Age" at the turn of the century, who dined on lavish dishes while starved bodies were collected regularly in the city streets of the Western world, all testified to a harsh class system that invoked "natural law" to justify the opulence enjoyed by the ruling few and the hunger suffered by the ruled many.

Barely a generation later, Malthusianism acquired an explicitly racist character. During the early twenties, when "Anglo-Saxon" racism peaked in the U.S. against "darker" peoples like Italians,

Jews, and so-called "Eastern Europeans," the notion of "biological inferiority" led to explicitly exclusionary immigration laws that favoured "Northern Europeans" over other, presumably "subhuman" peoples. Malthusianism, now prefixed with a "neo" to render it more contemporary, thoroughly permeated this legislation. Population in the USA had to be "controlled," and American "cultural" (read racial) purity had to be rescued, be it from the "Yellow Peril" of Asia or the "Dark Peril" of the Latin and Semitic worlds.

Nazism did not have to invent its racial imagery of sturdy "Aryans" who are beleaguered by "inhuman" dark people, particularly Jews. Hitler saw himself as the protector of a "Northern European culture" from "Hebraic superstitions," to use the juicy language of a contemporary well-known Arizona writer--a "cultural" issue that was riddled by fascist sociobiology. From Hitler's "Northern European" viewpoint, Europe was "overpopulated" and the continent's ethnic groups had to be sifted out according to their racial background. Hence the gas chambers and crematoriums of Auschwitz, the execution squads that followed the German army into Russia in the summer of 1941, and the systematic slaughter of millions in a span of three or four years.

## The Phoenix Rises Again

One would have thought that the Second World War, and the ugly traditions that fed into it, might have created a deeper sense of humanity and a more sensitive regard for life, non-human as well as human.

Judging from the way the "population problem" has surfaced again, however, we seem even more brutalized than ever. By the late 1940s, before the wartime dead had fully decayed, the "neo-Malthusians" were back at work--this time over the use of newly developed pesticides for eradicating malaria and antibiotics to control killing infections in the Third World. Even eminent biologists like William Vogt entered the fray with books and articles, directing their attacks at modern medicine for preserving human life and predicting famines in



Britain between 1948 and 1978 and imminent famine in Germany and Japan. The debate, which often took an ugly turn, was overshadowed by the Korean War and the blandly optimistic Eisenhower era, followed by the stormy sixties period with its message of idealism, public service, and, if you please, "humanism." But the decade barely came to a close when neo-Malthusianism surfaced again--this time with grim books that warned of a "population bomb" and advocated an "ethics" of "triage" in which the nations that were recommended for U.S. aid seemed uncannily to fall on the American side of the "Cold War," irrespective of their population growth-rates.

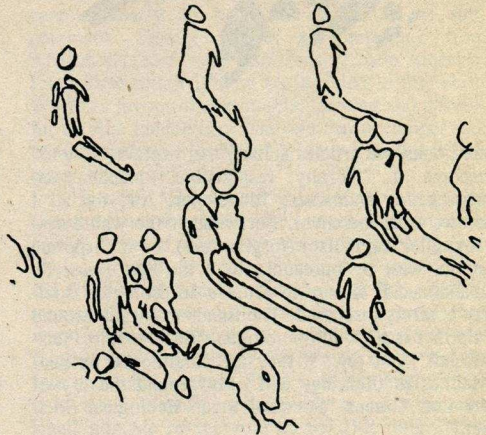
Viewed from a distance of two decades later, the predictions made by many neo-Malthusians seem almost insanely ridiculous. We were warned, often in the mass media, that by the 1980s, for example, artificial islands in the oceans would be needed to accommodate the growing population densities on the continents. Our oil supplies, we were told with supreme certainty, would be completely depleted by the end of the century. Wars between starving peoples would ravage the planet, each nation seeking to plunder the hidden food stores of the others. By the late seventies, this "debate" took a welcome breather--but it has returned again in full bloom in the biological verbiage of ecology. Given the hysteria and the exaggerated "predictions" of earlier such "debates," the tone today is a little calmer. But in some respects it is even more sinister. We have not been forced to turn our oceans into real estate, nor have we run out of oil, food, material resources--or neo-Malthusian prophets. But we are acquiring certain bad intellectual habits, and we are being rendered more gullible by a new kind of religiosity that goes under the name of "spirituality," with a new-styled paganism and primitivism.

### Some Current Fallacies

First of all, we are thinking more *quantitatively* than qualitatively--all talk about "wholeness," "oneness," and "inter-connectedness" to the contrary notwithstanding. For example, when we are told that the "population issue" is merely a "matter of numbers," as one Zero Population Growth writer puts it, then the vast complexity of population growth and diminution is reduced to a mere numbers game, like the fluctuations of Dow stock-market averages.

Human beings, turned into digits, can thus be equated to fruitflies, and their numbers narrowly correlated with food supply. This is "following the Dow" with a vengeance. Social research, as distinguished from the Voodoo ecology that passes under the name of "deep ecology" these days, reveals that human beings are highly *social* beings, not simply a species of mammals. Their behaviour is profoundly conditioned by their social status, as people who belong to a particular gender, hierarchy, class group, ethnic tradition, community, historical era, or adhere to a variety of ideologies. They also have at their disposal powerful technologies, material resources, science, and a *naturally* endowed capacity for conceptual thought that provides them with a flexibility that few, if any, nonhuman beings possess, not to speak of evolving institutions and capacities for systematic group cooperation. Nothing, here, is more illusory than to "follow the Dow." The bad intellectual habit of thinking out demographic--or even "resource"--issues in a linear, asocial, and ahistorical manner tends to enter into all ecological problems, thanks very much to a "biocentrism" that equates people to nonhuman life-forms.

Secondly, by reducing us to studies of line



graphs, bar graphs, and statistical tables, the neo-Malthusians literally freeze reality as it is. Their numerical extrapolations do not construct any reality that is new; they merely extend, statistic by statistic, what is basically old and given. They are

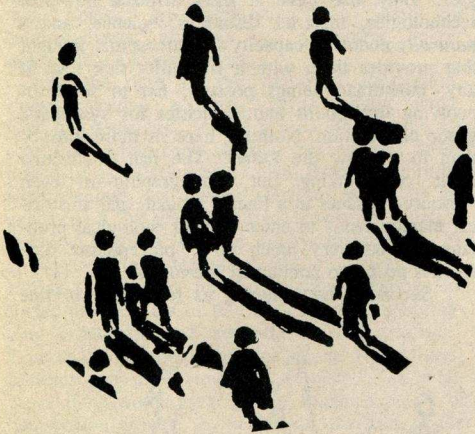
"futurists" in the most shallow sense of the word, not "utopians" in the best sense. We are taught to accept society, behaviour and values as they *are*, not as they *should* be or even *could* be. This procedure places us under the tyranny of the status quo, and divests us of any ability to think about radically changing the world. I have encountered very few books or articles written by neo-Malthusians that question whether we should live under any kind of money economy at all, any statist system of society, or be guided by profit-oriented behaviour. There

consequences would follow from increasing the state's power over reproduction. Indeed, what areas of personal life would not be invaded by slowly enlarging the state's authority over our most intimate kinds of human relations? Yet such demands in one form or another have been raised by neo-Malthusians on grounds that hardly require the mental level to examine the Statistical Abstract of the United States.

### The Social Roots of Hunger

The arithmetic mentality which disregards the social context of demographics is incredibly short-sighted. Once we accept, without any reflection or criticism, that we live in a "grow-or-die" capitalistic society in which accumulation is literally a law of economic survival and competition is the motor of "progress," anything we have to say about population is basically meaningless. The biosphere will eventually be destroyed whether five billion or fifty million live on the planet. Competing firms in a "dog-eat-dog" market must outproduce each other if they are to remain in existence. They must plunder the soil, remove the earth's forests, kill off its wildlife, pollute its air and waterways, not because their intentions are necessarily bad, although they usually are (hence the absurdity of the spiritualist pablum in which Americans are currently immersed) but because they must simply survive. Only a radical restructuring of society as a whole, including its anti-intellectual sensibilities, can remove this all-commanding social compulsion—not rituals, yoga or encounter groups, valuable as some of these practices may be (including "improving" our hearing capacity and "power" to command.)

But the most sinister feature about neo-Malthusianism is the extent to which it actively deflects us from dealing with the social origins of our ecological problems—indeed, the extent to which it places the blame for them on the victims of hunger rather than those who victimize them. Presumably, if there is a "population problem" and famine in Africa, it is the ordinary people who are to blame for having too many children or insisting on living too long—an argument advanced by Malthus nearly two centuries ago with respect to England's poor. The viewpoint not only justifies privilege; it fosters brutalization and degrades the neo-Malthusians



are books and articles aplenty that explain "how to" become a "morally responsible" banker, entrepreneur, landowner, "developer," or, for all I know, arms merchant. But whether the whole system called capitalism (forgive me!), be it corporate in the west or bureaucratic in the east, *must* be abandoned if we are to achieve an ecological society is rarely discussed. Thousands may rally around "Earth First!"'s idiotic slogan "Back to the Pleistocene!", but few, if they are conditioned by neo-Malthusian thinking, will rally around the cry of the Left Greens "Forward to an Ecological Society."

Lastly, neo-Malthusian thinking is the most backward in thinking out the implications of its demands. If we are concerned, today, and rightly so, about registering AIDS victims, what are the totalitarian consequences of creating a Bureau of Population Control, as some Zero Population Growth wits suggested in the early 1970s? Imagine what

even more than it degrades the victims of privilege.

And frankly--they often lie. Consider the issue of population and food supply in terms of mere numbers and we step on a wild merry-go-round that does not support neo-Malthusian predictions of a decade ago, much less a generation ago. Such typically neo-Malthusian stunts as determining the "per capita consumption" of steel, oil, paper, chemicals, and the like of a nation by dividing the total tonnage of the latter by the national population, such that every man, woman and child is said to "consume" a resultant quantity, gives us a picture that is blatantly false and functions as a sheer apologia for the upper classes. The steel that goes into a battleship, the oil that is used to fuel a tank, and the paper that is covered by ads hardly depicts the human consumption of materials. Rather, it is stuff consumed by all the Pentagons of the world that help keep a "grow-or-die" economy in operation--goods, I may add, whose function is to destroy and whose destiny is to be destroyed. The shower of such "data" that descends upon us by neo-Malthusian writers is worse than obscurantist; it is vicious. The same goes for the shopping malls, that are constructed to dump their toxic "consumer goods" on us, and for the costly highways that converge upon them. To ignore the fact that we are the victims of a vast, completely *entrapping* social order which only a few can either escape from or control, is to literally deaden the political insight of ordinary people--whose "wants," of course, are always blamed for every dislocation in our ecological dislocations.

On the demographic merry-go-round, the actual facts advanced by many neo-Malthusians are no less misleading. In the West, particularly in countries like Germany which the neo-Malthusian prophets of the late 1940s warned would soar in population well beyond food supplies, birth rates have fallen beyond the national replacement rate. This is true of Denmark, Austria, Hungary, indeed, much of Europe generally, including Catholic Italy and Ireland, where traditions that foster the emergence of large, predominantly male families by which the high birth rates of India and China were explained are not frozen in stone. The USA, which the more hysterical neo-Malthusians of some two decades ago predicted would be obliged to live on oceanic rafts, is approaching zero population growth and, by now, may have reached a lower rate.

Nor is food supply lagging behind overall population growth. Cereal production rose by 12 per cent since 1975, making it possible recently for

even Bangladesh to drastically reduce its grain imports. The markets of western Asia are being flooded by Chinese corn. Even barren Saudi Arabia is selling off its accumulations of wheat, and, in Finland, farmers are so overloaded with surplus wheat that they are turning it into mink fodder and glue. India, the so-called "worst case example," tripled its production of grain between 1950 and 1984. Its greatest problem at present is not population growth but transportation from grain-surplus areas to grain-shortage ones--a major source of many Indian famines in the past.

Although Lester R. Brown of Worldwatch Institute divides the world "into countries where population growth is slow or nonexistent and where living conditions are improving, and those where population growth is rapid and living conditions are deteriorating or in imminent danger of doing so," one might easily conclude by the mere juxtaposition of Brown's phrases that declining living conditions are due solely to increasing population. Not so--if one closely looks at even Brown's data as well as other sources. How much of the disparity between population growth and bad living conditions is due in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan, for example, largely to patterns of land ownership? In southern Asia, some 30 million rural households own no land or very little, a figure that represents 40 per cent of nearly all rural households in the sub-continent. Similar figures are emerging from African data and, very disastrously, Latin America. Land distribution is now so lopsided in the Third World in favour of commercial farming and a handful of elite landowners that one can no longer talk of a "population problem" without relating it to a class and social problem.

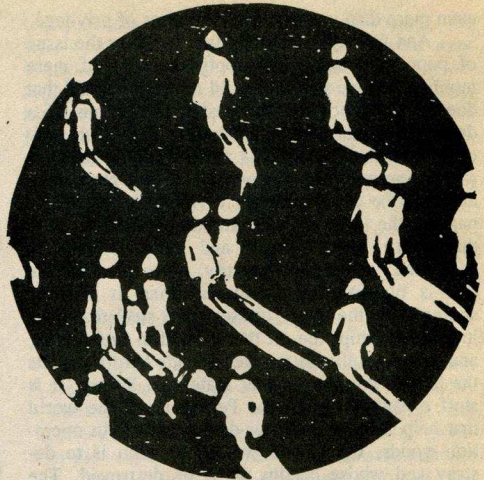
It would take several volumes to untangle the mixed threads that intertwine hunger with landownership, material improvements with declining population growth, technology with food production, the fragility of familial customs with the needs of women to achieve full personhood, internal civil wars (often financed by western imperialists) with famines--and the role of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund with patterns of food cultivation. Westerners have only recently gained a small glimpse of the role of the IMF and World Bank in producing a terrible famine in the Sudan by obliging the country to shift from the cultivation of food in areas of rich soil to the cultivation of cotton.

This much must be emphasized: if the "population issue" is indeed the "litmus test" of one's ecological outlook, as the top honcho of

"Earth First!", David Foreman, has declared, then it is a widely scrambled bundle of social threads, not a Voodoo ecology talisman. Greens, ecologically oriented people, and radicals of all kinds will have to unravel this bundle with an acute sense of the social, not by playing a numbers game with human life and clouding up that social sense with thoroughly unreliable statistical extrapolations and apologies for corporate interests.

Nor can human beings be reduced to mere digits by neo-Malthusian advocates without reducing the world of life to digits—at least without replacing a decent regard for life, including human life, with a new inhuman form of eco-brutalism.

*editors' note: the foregoing originally appeared in Green Perspectives #8. This publication can be ordered from: POB 111, Burlington VT 05402.*



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## ***Paths to Social Change***

### **Homeless Camp-In**

PORTLAND OREGON—Homeless people here began their third annual round-the-clock protest at city hall, commencing Christmas Eve and lasting several weeks. Their protest centered on intolerable conditions at the shelters, which are infested with rats and silly regulations, and on laws preventing them from sleeping outdoors as an alternative. The politicians refused to remedy any of these grievances, instead increasing the hours shelters and drop-in centres will be open, and agreeing that more low-cost housing is needed. One of the activists, Bridget Reilly, summed up the results thusly:

The City Hall protest has been a faltering step in the *direction* of empowerment, despite the characterization of its star players in the news as a bunch of naive, stupid, bratty kids who don't really know what they're doing and who should simply go back to their mothers. They have gotten some good practice in exercising their First Amendment rights and in voicing their actual needs to city officials. The city is still too paranoid to answer their more "radical" demand of being allowed to use their own campsites as an alternative to the shelter system while they're waiting for permanent housing, which

means there is still a long way to go.

"But hopefully the point has been driven home, at least to some people, that the homeless are entitled to the same right as every other citizen to voice their own needs to the government and be heard, rather than being expected to passively accept whatever the government decides to hand to them while they're waiting to become 'real' citizens."

**Portland Alliance v.12 #2**  
2807 S.E. Stark  
Portland Oregon 97214.

### **Auto Workers Meet In Mexico**

OAXTEPEC—"The idea of the North American Free Trade Agreement is to clear the field for the free flow of capital by extending deregulation to the entire continent," Kim Moody of *Labour Notes* told a gathering of sixty autoworkers from the USA, Mexico, Canada and Brazil here last November. In the case of the transnational auto corporations, this will enable them to set up an integrated management-by-stress production system, spanning the entire continent, in which autoworkers will face unending pressure to produce more for less wages. Once a "level playing field" is established across

the industry, it will constantly be eroded downwards.

At the conference, sponsored by the Amsterdam-based Transnationals Information Exchange (TIE) network, autoworkers from different countries with the same employer met in workshops to share notes and begin a process of networking. For instance, when three women workers from a GM plant in Milwaukee reported that, under the "synchronous manufacturing" system their plant has copied from Toyota, management can shut down any of the "quality circles" that question its practices, union leaders from two Mexican plants where GM is trying to introduce the Toyota system vowed to fight this.

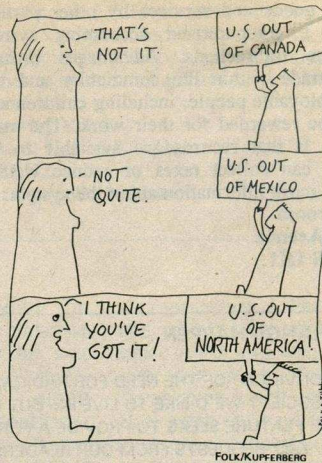
The latter part of the conference adopted proposals for coordinated information sharing, establishing a directory of contacts, establishing an international day of autoworkers' solidarity (on January 8, the anniversary of the 1990 massacre of striking Mexican Ford workers), drafting an international autoworkers' declaration of rights and holding a larger follow-up conference in the Maquiladora Zone in late 1992.

Bruce Allen, an activist in CAW local 199 and in TIE who sent us this report, states: "In retrospect, the mere fact that the TIE network managed to bring autoworkers from the three countries together at this historic juncture made the conference a success. The fact that the event also raised the delegates' determination to close ranks in the face of continental free trade and the automakers' drive to implement the Toyota system simply added to the inherent value of the event. The conference also led to the forging of a multiplicity of contacts and personal bonds between Mexican, Canadian and U.S. autoworkers. These are certain to add momentum to the Broader efforts underway to unite workers from all three countries in opposition to the global corporate agenda."

from a report by Bruce Allen

## Mexican Anarchists Meet

MEXICO-The first national gathering of Mexican anarchists occurred September 14-16 on a beautiful farm near Mexico City. Approximately sixty people of various ages and background representing various anarchist groups listened to papers, discussed the incompatibility of Marxism's centralist tendencies with anarchism, and held workshops on culture, national/local organization and autogestion (self-management). A three-month central



committee was formed to spread information about the October 2, 1968 Mexico City student massacre by government troops. Leftover funds were donated to the growing Mexico City anarchist bookstore. The next gathering was scheduled for 14 months later.

About twenty Mexican anarchist groups refused to send representatives, reportedly because of the open invitation to non-Mexicans which resulted in several people from Spain and the southern USA attending; there was fear of being dominated by foreigners. From:

Anarchy #31, winter 1992  
C.A.L. POB 1446  
Columbia MO 65205-1446.  
subs \$12, cheques to CAL

## Barter Fair Successful

TORONTO-Organizers of the LETS barter system organized the city's first barter fair in January. Participants were invited to bring stuff to sell or to put on a display of their skills, while volunteers handled such matters as childcare, coat checking, membership applications, discussion group leading and running the VCR's.

Started in smalltown British Columbia, the LETS system has spread to a number of North American cities, and there are twenty systems either running or being set up in Great Britain. Participants earn "green dollars" which can be ex-

changed for goods and services by other participants, with a computerized accounting system recording the transactions. Advantages include stimulating trade within the community and enabling unemployable people, including children and retirees, to be rewarded for their work. The main disadvantage is that records are available to the state, which can collect taxes or reduce welfare benefits. For more information about the system:

**LETS in Toronto**  
28 Verbena Avenue  
Toronto M6S 1K1.

state will have to be found to do this. Coalitions of local church, labour, unemployed, food bank and health organizations should be forming to consider means of so doing, as an alternative to the existing food bank system—they might even issue entitlement cards as the Kneens suggest.

Sometimes the state can work effectively at a local level, as is indicated by a report in the same newsletter on food programs run by the municipal government in Sao Paulo, Brazil, population 18 million. The city is a contrast in wealth and poverty, with parts of it functioning as well as, or

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## MAKING CHANGE HAPPEN

WE'RE ALL CONVINCED OF THE NEED FOR RADICAL SOCIAL CHANGE. MOST OF US HAVE SOME SORT OF VISION OF THE SOCIETY WE'D LIKE TO LIVE IN. BUT HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO THERE?

THIS REGULAR FEATURE SEEKS TO PROVIDE A FORUM IN WHICH ACTIVISTS CAN SHARE THEIR IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES. KIO REQUESTS FROM OUR READERS REPORTS ON WHAT THEY'VE DONE, HOW IT WORKED, LESSONS LEARNED, ETC. THESE REPORTS CAN RUN ANYWHERE FROM A FEW SENTENCES TO A PAGE OR MORE (WE MAY EDIT FOR LENGTH).

## WHAT WORKS? WHAT DOESN'T? WHY?

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### State Distributed Food?

The state should issue residents a plastic card to give them free access to the basic food staples required for a healthy diet, similar to the plastic medicare cards issued by many provincial governments, suggest Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, publishers of a monthly newsletter of food system analysis. They point out that access to a nutritious diet would prevent many of the health problems for which medicare now provides free treatment in Canada, and that by limiting the accessed food to nutritious and locally-grown food such a system would encourage both healthier diets and a greater degree of food self-sufficiency, as opposed to importing food. They point out that Ontario's food deficit—its greater amount of food imported than exported—doubled between 1981 and 1990, and is now over \$2 billion per year.

Aside from the unlikelihood of the corporate-run state concerning itself with the welfare of those in poverty, this proposal presents the problem that the state would dictate what foods low-income people would eat, a practice many of us would find repugnant even if it's for our own good. Desirable though it is to give people more access to nutritious, locally-produced food, avenues other than the

better than, any city in Canada, although only 60% of it has sewage systems and 25% has sewage treatment. Since 1989, Sao Paulo has had a leftist government committed to providing the basic prerequisites of health, including an adequate diet. The Secretary of Supply supplies food to schools, day-cares, hospitals and community kitchens and bakeries, providing 1.1 million meals a day. Predominantly Brazilian products are bought in large volumes, usually through brokers; about 2% of the total municipal budget is spent on food purchasing. The Secretary also runs a lowcost market cooperative. A forum of civil leaders is developing partnership projects to address social problems.

**The Ram's Horn**  
125 Highfield Road  
Toronto Canada M4L 2V4.  
\$15 for 11 issues.

### Let Them Eat Leaves

GREAT BRITAIN—An environmental organization called Find Your Feet is working on promotion of leaf concentrate as a source of protein in developing countries. A leaf crop yields more protein per acre than any other. Leaf protein is in the

form of a leaf concentrate of curd, extracted from the raw material. By pulping and squeezing the leaves, a juice is extracted which can be curdled by heating. The resulting curd is strained and pressed to produce a highly nutritious food. There is little waste in the process, since the fibre from pulping can be used for compost and even animal feed, while the whey (juice) is a good, natural liquid fertilizer. Almost all edible leaves can be used. High

in protein, leaf curd contains vitamins A and E, iron and calcium. Since ten pounds of leaves produce only half a pound of leaf concentrate, the process has to be done on a fairly large scale.

**Green Line**  
**14 Cowley Road**  
**Oxford, United Kingdom**  
**OXA 1HZ**  
subs: 8 pounds/10 issues.

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## A PRESS BOOKS PROJECT

DEAR FRIENDS!

WE ARE AN ANARCHIST GROUP FROM THE CAPITAL OF POLAND, WARSAW. UNTIL NOW OUR SOCIAL ACTIVITY WAS LIMITED TO THE PARTICIPATION IN ACTIONS/MANIFESTATIONS, PICKETS AND SO ON, ORGANIZED BY THE LOCAL ALTERNATIVE SOCIETY MOVEMENT. WE HAVE EDITED THE PAPER ANARCHOLL SINCE AUGUST 1989, WHOSE MAIN AIM IS CREATING A PLATFORM BETWEEN ANARCHIST-LIBERTARIAN IDEAS AND THEIR PRACTICAL ASPECTS. UNTIL NOW OUR PAPER WAS PUBLISHED IRREGULARLY, BUT SINCE THE FIFTH ISSUE IT HAS BECOME A QUARTERLY. WE TRY TO KEEP UP A CIRCULATION OF 1200 COPIES. IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT IN POLISH CONDITIONS IT'S QUITE A GOOD CIRCULATION. BESIDES THE PAPER REWOLTA IT HAS THE LARGEST CIRCULATION OF THE ANARCHIST PAPERS IN POLAND.

IN CONSEQUENCE OF 60 YEARS OF TOTALITARIAN RULE (FIRST, SINCE 1926, PILSUDSKI'S SOCIALIST PARTY DICTATORSHIP, AND AFTER THE WAR COMMUNIST TOTALITARIANISM) THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY "MARKET" OF LIBERTARIAN IDEAS IN OUR COUNTRY. ALL BELONGED TO THE STATE, WHICH LIMITED SOCIAL THOUGHT TO THE UNIFORM MAXIST POLICY. BEFORE THE WAR, PACIFISM AS A LIBERTARIAN TREND WAS CONSIDERED AS

FASCISM OR EVEN MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN FASCISM. THEREFORE IT CAN'T BE SAID THAT THE PRESENT POLISH ANARCHIST/LIBERTARIAN MOVEMENTHAD ANY THEORETICAL GROUND FOR PROGRESS. ON THE OTHER HAND, STREET ACTIVITIES OF THE ANARCHISTS AXTEAD FROM DAY TO DAY. ON ACCOUNT OF THIS SITUATION, WE (THE EDITORS OF ANARCHOLL) HAVE DECIDED TO FOUND THE FIRST POLISH ANARCHIST PUBLISHING PROJECT, AND PERHAPS EVEN THE FIRST IN THE EASTERN BLOC, A PRESS BOOKS. WE ARE GOING TO PUBLISH WHAT IS MOST INTERESTING ON THE ANARCHIST "MARKET", BOTH HISTORICAL ESSAYS AND IDEOLOGICAL BOOKS. WE'D LIKE TO APPROACH THE READER WITH THE WORKS OF THE FIRST ANARCHIST IDEOLOGISTS, BECAUSE APART FROM THE CRITICAL ESSAYS ON BAKUNIN AND KROPOTKIN, NOTHING ELSE HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN POLAND.

IN CONNECTION WITH OUR PROJECT WE HAVE A REQUEST TO MAKE. WE NEED ANARCHIST AND LIBERTARIAN BOOKS IN ENGLISH THAT WE CAN TRANSLATE AND EDIT. WE CAN'T BUY THESE BOOKS, BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO EXPENSIVE FOR US. WE PREFER TO DESIGNATE THE MONEY FOR PRINTING AND WE HOPE THAT WE GET YOUR UNDERSTANDING. WE FEEL SURE THAT TOGETHER WITH DE-

VELOPMENT OF A PRESS BOOKS, THE YOUNG ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN POLAND WILL DEVELOP, AND FOR SURE WOULD GAIN EXPERIENCE. SINCE WHAT IS SOCIAL ACTIVITY WITHOUT A THEORETICAL GROUNDING? ALSO, WE ESPECIALLY WELCOME EVERY DONATION FROM YOUR SIDE, BECAUSE WE NEED MONEY TO INVEST IN THIS PROJECT. THE SUPPORTERS LIST WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN ANARCHOLL. YOU CAN SEND MONEY IN THREE WAYS: (A) BY LETTER WITH A CHEQUE, WHICH TAKES THREE MONTHS TO CASH IN POLAND, (B) BY LETTER WITH CAREFULLY CONCEALED CASH - OUR POST OFFICE OFTEN STEALS, SO ONLY INCLUDE A LITTLE AT A TIME, OR (C) BY TRANSFER ON ACCOUNT, WHICH TAKES ONLY ABOUT A MONTH.

WE WELCOME ALL SUPPORT. MAYBE IN THE FUTURE WE CAN RETURN YOUR SERVICE. WE OBLIGE OURSELVES TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF OUR PUBLISHING ACTIVITY TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

ADDRESS: DAREK MISIUNA,  
GULIWERA 29, 03-610  
WARSAWA, POLAND

ACCOUNT: BANK PKO SA 3  
ODDZ.                                  WARSAWA,  
TRAUGUTTA 7/9, A-13208464

by Ulli Diemer

Recently, I attended a meeting in which a group of about twenty men were discussing violence against women and what men could do to prevent it.

The discussion was personal, yet practically oriented. Two men related how they had discovered that male friends of theirs were physically abusing their partners, how they had tried to confront them about it, how difficult and scary it had been to do so, how the abuser had responded when confronted, etc. A couple of other men talked about how they tried to make it clear to men who told racist or

cathartic wallowing in guilt: "Aren't we all horrible?". Any thought of planning an action was forgotten.

The motivation behind the shift of focus in the meeting was commendable enough: to get us to look at our own sexist attitudes and behaviour. What really happened, however, was that the discussion of what we might concretely do to lessen violence against women came to a dead stop as man after man leapt onto the guilt bandwagon. In the process, our previously focused meeting succumbed to hopeless emotional and analytical confusion. Nothing was accomplished except likely a heightening

of the guilt which these men will then pour out again at the next men's caucus they attend.

## DANCES WITH GUILT:

### Looking at men looking at violence

sexist jokes that such jokes are inappropriate. Someone suggested a male solidarity march along the lines of "Take Back The Night". Another man picked up the idea, recounting how he had participated in an action to leaflet men in bars about violence against women. Perhaps we could take a similar action in conjunction with the "Take Back the Night" march scheduled to take place a week later?

Then one man spoke up to say, to sounds of approval from others, that we were "avoiding the real issue" by talking about "what other men do" and how to prevent it. He said that violence isn't something that "other men" do: it's something in which all men are complicit. We're "just as guilty", so we should be looking at how we perpetuate violence in our own relationships with women.

Agreeing with him, another participant jumped in with an example: he had once called his wife a "dummy", something he said he now realized was wife abuse. Someone else said that reading about rapes and murders in the newspaper made him wonder what was the matter with men that we do these things. Are we violent because of biology ("something to do with testosterone?") or because of socialization? Is there any hope for the male of the species?

Others offered similar thoughts. The remaining minutes of the meeting were devoted to a

This was by no means an isolated instance. The substitution of indiscriminate guilt and simple-minded slogans (a sort of internalized travesty of feminism) for clearheaded analysis is something which one encounters repeatedly in the men's movement -- and by no means only in the men's movement. I believe it undermines efforts to build a movement which is effective in reaching out to men in society at large: a movement which is more than the converted talking to themselves.

In the discussion which I described above, I don't believe that we were "avoiding the real issue" by talking about the violence of some men and what we could do about it. The fact is that -- for me and for a majority of men -- violence against women is a thing which "other men" do. I have never been violent towards a woman, and as far as I know most of the other men in that men's group haven't either.

This is not to deny that most men, including myself, participate, to varying degrees, in behaviours, attitudes, and structures which are sexist and which need to be challenged. But nothing is gained by blurring the line between violence and behaviours which, though wrong, are not violence.

The whole point of trying to change men who are prone to violence against women is to make it absolutely clear to them that **this is a line**

(cont'd page 20)



by Violet Black

It is very heartening for me, as a feminist and as a woman with some personal involvement in the issue, to hear about men's groups which are discussing the problem of violence against women and what men can do to prevent it. Therefore, it was with considerable interest that I read Ulli Diemer's article "Dances With Guilt: Looking At Men Looking At Violence." However, while I think that Diemer makes some very important points in this piece, I have strong reservations about certain of the conclusions that he reaches.

I agree with Diemer that theories and stereotypes which portray men as inherently violent (in addition to being highly questionable on the scientific level) can actually encourage men to evade responsibility for their violence. Such approaches do "give an easy

out to violent men, who can say 'I can't help it. I'm a man. All men are violent. Men are violent by nature.'" Any men's group that accepts such a view is likely to spend all its time in a "cathartic wallowing in guilt," which ultimately undermines any attempts they might make to work against violence themselves and to reach out to men in society at large. In criticizing his group for getting bogged down in this biologically determinist line of thinking, I feel that Diemer makes a real contribution.

However, Diemer then goes on to state that "most men, including (him)self, participate, to varying degrees, in behaviours, attitudes, and structures which are sexist and which need to be challenged. But nothing is gained by blurring the line between violence and behaviours which, though wrong, are not violent." He continues: "(It) is completely counterproductive to then say that a man who makes a belittling comment is "just as guilty" of perpetuating violence against women as a wife-beater or rapist...We can't simultaneously maintain that violence against women is a serious crime, behaviour that is totally out of bounds, while also maintaining that it's on the same level as making an ignorant remark."

In the course of this argument, Diemer makes two implications which I find to be very disturbing.

First, he insinuates that violence is necessarily something physical--for example, beating or rape. Second, he suggests that it is possible to draw some sort of line between physical violence against women and "sexist" behaviours.

"Belittling comments" and "ignorant remarks" of a sexist nature can sometimes prove to be more harmful than actual physical violence. Let me give some examples. My sister, who was involved in a battering relationship with her boyfriend, was severely beaten on a number of occasions, including the time when she was pregnant with their child. On account of this behaviour, her boyfriend was imprisoned for several months. However, the

## DANCING AROUND THE ISSUES:

### A reply to Ulli Diemer

emotional and verbal abuse she suffered in that relationship had far more devastating effects than physical violence.

My sister was told by her boyfriend that she was "no good" and that no man could ever be seriously interested in her. Given the context in which these "belittling" comments were made--my sister was a victim of childhood sexual abuse and had, because of the psychological trauma associated with that abuse, attempted suicide on a number of occasions--uttering them constituted, in my opinion, an overt act of violence. Even more violent was his "ignorant remark" that she was directly responsible for the death of this earlier abuser, whom she had charged and who had committed suicide on the eve of that trial.

Sexist attitudes and sexist remarks, such as those mentioned above, perpetrate violence against women. The direct violence that they perpetrate is, however, not physical but psychological in nature. To label sexually abused women as "damaged goods" (and, indeed, women as "goods" in the first place) and to suggest that women who charge their abusers are somehow exaggerating the seriousness of the problem, is to imply that women exist only for others, that women in and of themselves don't count. Such attitudes are psychologically violent, because they destroy women's self-esteem.

Attitudes of this type can even lead ultimately to physical violence. In such cases, though, the physical violence is inflicted by the victim on herself in the form of suicide attempts and/or what amounts to a slow form of suicide, eating disorders such as bulimia and anorexia. (My sister is a bulimic—something we have since learned is very typical of victims of childhood sexual abuse.) Even a decision by a battered woman to remain in a battering relationship can, in certain circumstances, be viewed in the same light. (After her boyfriend was released from prison, my sister went back to live with him again, only to have the whole cycle repeat itself once more.) Just because the violence involved in such situations is psychological and indirect does not mean that it is any less harmful than direct physical violence.

Admittedly, the examples of sexist behaviour and remarks that I gave above are extreme. However, even for cases which are considerably less serious—one example which Diemer mentioned is a man calling his wife a "dummy"—I still would argue that it is never possible to draw a line between physical violence against women and even relatively minor forms of sexism. This is because, although people act violently for many reasons (and Diemer has listed some of these,) the victims of violence are not just the most physically vulnerable members of society. More often, they are the most socially vulnerable members of society—the ones which society tends to regard as "second-rate" or even "defective." In a racist and homophobic society, for example, racial minorities and homosexuals, people who are socially rather than physically marginalized, suffer disproportionately from (to cite but two specific examples) police and "gang" brutality.

Sexist behaviours and remarks imply that women are somehow less important and less valuable than men. The consequence of this is that, in a sexist society, violence against women tends to be ignored, underrated or even condoned. All of this is not to imply that a man who calls his wife a "dummy" is "just as guilty" of violence against women as a rapist or a batterer. Nor does it imply that men can never criticize women or engage in arguments with them. It does imply, however, that behaviour which contributes in a small (or, depending on the exact context of the situation, a more significant) way to the maintenance of a system which devalues women allows violence against women to continue.

Diemer does not state categorically that violence must be physical and direct. However, the

way he words his arguments strongly suggests this. Even if he intended only to draw a line between violence and sexist remarks or behaviours which are of a relatively minor nature in comparison to the examples which I have given above, I would still strongly criticize him for not making this absolutely clear. This is particularly important in light of recent research findings on therapy groups for batterers.

In an article in the July 5, 1991 edition of the *Toronto Star*, Michele Landsberg cites a report done by the federal justice department which reveals that, of the very small number of violent men who actually attend therapy programs, "two-thirds continue to be psychologically abusive." According to Landsberg, some groups even go so far as "teaching men better, more sophisticated domination techniques;" they are, in other words, teaching men how to control women psychologically so that they won't "have" to resort to physical violence.

The aim of stopping violence against women is not only so that men might not have to worry about the possibility, to quote Diemer, that "their wives will leave them, they will lose their children, their friends will shun them, they will be thrown in prison." Isn't it also, and even more importantly, that women should be able to live their lives in peace and freedom? True freedom involves not only freedom from physical violence, but also freedom from psychological control and freedom to make our own decisions.

In his article, Diemer endeavours to draw a parallel between attempts to link violence to males with attempts to link violence with members of certain minority groups. It is his view that "in Canada more violent crimes are committed by members of certain minorities than would be expected, given the percentage of the population they comprise." Diemer points out that this discrepancy remains even after allowing for the effect of racism on patterns of arrest and conviction. Strongly condemning efforts to link race and crime as "racist and reactionary," he explains that situation as follows:

"(T)he likelihood of someone committing a crime has nothing whatever to do with the characteristics they are born with...Instead, we would say, crime breeds in conditions of economic, social, and educational deprivation and hopelessness, conditions such as those caused by the institutionalized racism of capitalist society. We would consider the existence of high levels of crime to be evidence of the need to change the conditions that cause crime."

Just as he opposes efforts to link race and

crime, Diemer urges that efforts to link gender and crime likewise be abandoned. However, while explaining higher crime rates among certain minority groups in terms of racism, he fails to investigate the parallel connection between the higher rates of violence among men and sexism. In fact, Diemer insists on drawing a line between violence and sexism. Maybe the problem here is not just his lack of consistency, though; possibly the real issue is that it is at this point that Diemer's analogy breaks down. While racial oppression may produce higher rates of violence among some of those who are subjected to it, the oppression of women seems to have led (in general) to the opposite effect.

Diemer's analogy between the linking of race to violence and gender to violence doesn't stand up, indeed, precisely because of his refusal to investigate the connection between higher rates of violence among men and sexism. Probing this connection further reveals that the higher crime rates among racially oppressed minority groups actually represents a higher crime rate among the male members of such communities. Pointing this out does mean that one is compelled, as a consequence, to adopt a biologically determinist line of thinking, however. It seems clear to me that the gender-violence connection, rather than being rooted in biology, is a product of socialization.

In his article, Diemer does point out that (direct physical) violence is not just something which some men do to women. Many victims of violence are male, and some perpetrators of violence are female. This is an important point, one which serves as an effective counter to simplistic theories of biological determinism.

In my sister's case, the man who sexually abused her was himself sexually abused as a child, first by a neighbour and then later by (at least one) priest. As an adult, my sister herself took out a lot of the intense anger she felt about what had happened to her on my mother, who knew nothing about any of this until it all finally came out, and who was trying her best to help all concerned. This anger manifested itself

in the form of extreme verbal and psychological abuse ("it's all your fault," "I hope your car blows up and you are killed," and "The cause of my problems is six feet under and I'm glad he is,") and some relatively minor incidents of physical abuse (throwing objects at her.) Interestingly enough, my father was not subjected to any of this behaviour.

In sexist societies, masculinity tends to be linked with exerting power over others, particularly (but not exclusively) women. Since in such societies power and control are highly valued, men, who generally possess more power than women, are regarded as more important and "better." Because masculinity is defined in relation to power, men who are threatened with a loss of power face a concurrent loss of "masculinity." This loss of power can arise out of any of the myriad of oppressions and frustrations which characterize our daily life. Violence, in such circumstances, represents an attempt by men to re-establish power over others and, in the process of so doing, to secure "masculine" identity.

I feel very strongly that this definition of masculinity in terms of power over others, particularly women, explains much about why my sister's abuser, himself the victim of abuse, acted as he did. The concurrent valuing of men and devaluing of women connected with this definition also explains, to a large extent, why my sister herself chose her mother as the target of her anger. Sexist attitudes toward women hold mothers responsible for everything bad which happens to their children, and everything bad which their children do. They are blamed for these things not only by most men, but also by many women. In my mother's case, she was doubly blamed--blamed as mother of the victim of abuse and blamed as mother of the abuser.

For members of a men's group such as the one Diemer is involved in, I would hope that direct physical violence against women is "a thing which 'other men' do." (I use the word "hope" based on my experiences in a "peace" group where one male member of the executive, while working for in-



MARK MORRIS- INSTEAD OF PRISONS

ternational "peace," actually battered and raped his female partner.) However, violence can also be psychological and indirect. Sexist attitudes, behaviour and remarks, instead of being separable from violence, ultimately serve both as a possible mechanism for violence and as a justification or excuse of its occurrence.

Therefore, in addition to working to eliminate direct physical violence against women, members of Diemer's group, if they are truly concerned about the problem of "male violence," must also

work to eliminate sexism. The key step in beginning this struggle is to challenge attitudes and behaviours which are rooted in the assumption that masculinity must be necessarily defined in terms of exerting power over others. Such attitudes and behaviours lead directly to the devaluing of those over whom that power is exercised. No line can be drawn between behaviours, attitudes, and structures which are sexist and violence against women.

*Violet Black is a woman living in Toronto.*

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(cont'd from page 16)

**which must not be crossed.** Whether you feel "provoked" or not, whether or not you believe "she started it", no matter how angry you feel: you must **never** resort to violence. Men who are prone to violence must come to understand that violence is utterly taboo, that **if they violate that taboo**, their wives will leave them, they will lose their children, their friends will shun them, they will be thrown in prison.

If this is the message we are trying to communicate, it is completely counterproductive to then say that a man who makes a belittling comment is "just as guilty" of perpetuating violence against women as a wife-beater or rapist. This trivializes and downplays violence and undermines the whole message. We can't simultaneously maintain that violence against women is a serious crime, behaviour that is totally out of bounds, while also maintaining it's on the same moral level as making an ignorant remark.

This line of thinking -- "All men are violent and everything we do is violence" -- actually encourages men who really are violent to evade responsibility for their violence. When we throw around indiscriminate terms like "male violence" and give credence to theories that men are inherently violent, we are slandering men who are not violent and, unthinkingly, we are actually perpetuating the stereotype that to be a man is to be violent. We give an easy out to violent men, who can say "I can't help it. I'm a man. All men are violent. Men are violent by nature."

This is pernicious nonsense, and we aren't doing men or women any favours by allowing it to be spread about.

Even a very quick look at the realities of vio-

lence shows us that it's not as simple as the sexist slogan: "Violence is a male thing". First, because many males are not violent (indeed many are the victims of violence), and secondly, because women too can be violent. For example, in Canada, mothers murder children as often as fathers do. Women do twice as much child battering as men do. Elder abuse is committed more often by women than men. Battering occurs in lesbian relationships. Women are increasingly joining the military and demanding the right to go into combat. Women in power (e.g. Margaret Thatcher, Indira Ghandi) have shown that they are as likely to resort to force as male rulers.

Pointing this out is not meant to suggest that men and women are equally responsible for violence or equally affected by it. Most serious acts of violence are committed by males, and while men are also commonly the victims, it remains true that all too often the victims are those who are most vulnerable: women, children, and the old. When I worry about violence befalling my partner, or my mother, or my woman friends, it is the danger posed by violent males that I worry about. On those occasions when I myself have been afraid of the possibility of violence, it has been males I felt threatened by. There is no question that the fear of violent crime -- both on the streets and in the home -- is predominantly a fear of violent men.

But to deal with the problem of violence, we first have to analyze it rationally, without succumbing to guilt, myths, or ideological slogans. If we fail to understand the nature of the problem, we aren't going to contribute to solving it. Simplistic theories which relate violence to one factor and one factor only -- maleness -- actually serve to **discourage** a serious examination of what it is that leads some men and also some women to become violent. Instead of thinking seriously about causes and solutions, we assume we already have the key:

the problem is maleness. This reductionist view (people with penises are prone to violence, people without penises aren't) is as wrong as ideologies which claim that propensity to crime is somehow linked to skin colour.

If, for example, we look at instances of "domestic" violence and ask ourselves why some people (male and female) resort to violence towards someone they are close to (their spouse, their child, their parent), we will frequently find complex situations in which one or more of the following factors are at work:

1. They feel angry, frustrated, etc., and when angry they become violent. They have never learned how to deal with anger non-violently.

2. They don't know how to control or cope with the behaviour of a child or an old person whom they are caring for.

3. They have learned, often as children, that violence is a way of dealing with problems. As children, they witnessed violence in their families and/or were themselves subject to violence.

4. They think they will get away with it because (a) they are stronger than the individual they are beating up on, and (b) they don't think they'll be subject to sanctions (e.g. social ostracism, criminal charges) for doing it.

When we consider these factors, we can see that to break the cycle of violence, we

have to do something to change the conditions and experiences, especially in childhood, which breed violence. A very high proportion of violent adults started off as children who were victims of violence. To break the cycle, we have to above all find ways of stopping violence against children, that committed by women as well as that committed by men, and we can't do that if we focus on "male violence" alone.

In saying these things, I do not mean to absolve non-violent men from the responsibility of taking action against violence. Quite the contrary. However, I believe that men will do a better job of it if they understand that **taking responsi-**

**bility for doing something about it** is different from accepting **blame** for what a violent minority of men do. To take effective action, it is necessary to be clear about whose problem it is and what the nature of our responsibility is.

To get perspective on how we look at the responsibility for "male violence" differently from how we view the responsibility for other problems, it may be useful to consider the analogy of race and crime.

Statistically, in Canada more violent crimes are committed by members of certain minorities than would be expected given the percentage of the population they comprise. Even when allowance is made for the effect of racist influences on arrest and conviction patterns, discrepancies remain.

Yet progressive people strongly -- and rightly -- condemn any effort to link crime to race as racist and reactionary. We would never tolerate anyone in the progressive movement who used terms like "Native criminals" or "Vietnamese violence" or who stated that "Violence is a Black thing". We would justifiably view such statements as vicious racist smears against a whole group, most of whose members are more likely to be victims of crime

than perpetrator s. In this instance, we recognize that blaming all members of a group for the actions of a minority is the very

Tips for men #27:

**Stay indoors after 6 p.m.**

SisterSerpents



SISTER SERPENTS

essence of racism. Yet if the word "male" is substituted instead, the above phrases are considered perfectly acceptable, even though most men are not violent criminals.

To put it another way, if a male member of a particular minority commits a crime, it is considered repugnant to suggest that his actions are typical of his race, but quite proper to suggest that they are typical of his sex.

In rejecting any attempt to link race to violent crime, we would argue that the likelihood of someone committing a crime has nothing whatever to do with the characteristics they are born with, such as their skin colour, as is easily demonstrated by the

fact that in any race, the vast majority are not violent criminals. Instead, we would say, crime breeds in conditions of economic, social, and educational deprivation and hopelessness, conditions such as those caused by the institutionalized racism of capitalist society. We would consider the existence of high levels of crime to be evidence of the need to change the conditions that cause crime, rather than evidence of inborn criminal tendencies in the group.

I believe that a similar approach will take us further in dealing with violence than the approach of blaming all men for the violent actions of a minority, actions most men find repugnant.

As I said previously, I believe nevertheless that we men have a particular responsibility to act against violence.

There are several reasons for this.

The first is simple human solidarity. Violence is a horrendous violation of a human being. Any person who cares about justice has to care about the appalling continuing injustice of violence. Stopping it is an urgent priority, and each of us has a duty to do whatever we can to help stop it.

A second reason is self-interest. Even though we are much freer of the fear of violence than women are, men's lives too are under a shadow as long as we have to fear for the safety of those we love and care for. If someone we care for is assaulted, it falls to us to help heal the damage. And, albeit to a lesser extent, males too have to fear violence in this society, especially as children and as we grow old.

Men also have a special responsibility to act against violence precisely because there are men who are violent, and because we as men may be able to get through to them to make them understand that other men consider violence unacceptable. In this as in anything else, I believe that whenever the group we belong to, or some people in it, do something to wrong others, then those of us who belong to that group have the best opportunity, and therefore a particular duty, to oppose that wrong, to correct it, and to prevent it from happening again.

Because of this, I, and many other people who like me were born in post-war Germany (and who therefore share no blame for Nazism), nevertheless feel that we have a particular historical obligation to stand up against fascism and anti-Semitism. Similarly, even though I feel in no way responsible for "my" government, which I oppose and despise, I believed I had a responsibility, as a citizen of this country, to oppose the violence it helped to inflict on the people of Iraq while claiming to speak in the name of this country.

And so it is with "male violence". As long as there are men who are violent, it is the responsibility of non-violent men to oppose that violence, to show through our words and our actions that violence is not a male thing, but an anti-woman, anti-man, and anti-human thing.

*Ulli Diemer is a man living in Toronto*



PEGGY DIGGS, "THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT"; ONE MILLION CARTONS OF MILK, CREATIVE TIME AND TUSCAN DAIRY FARMS, NEW YORK AND FIVE STATE AREA.

# an anarchist reads the

# comics

by Gary Moffatt

These introductory comments to a study of *The Comics In Anarchist Perspective* are prompted by a widespread misperception by social change activists of the role of the press and other mass media. It is not enough for social change activists to dismiss what is said or written in the mass media as a pack of lies. Sometimes the media do tell it like it is, and Noam Chomsky's devastating critique of U.S. foreign policy is based mostly on information he obtains from the very newspapers which he shows to be presenting readers with a distorted image of what is happening. Unlike Chomsky, most media consumers reject or overlook individual news reports unless their message is constantly repeated, and the attitudes behind these messages constantly reiterated. The billionaire owners of the mass media, seeking to impart their own rightwing ideals to their audience, know that they can allow the occasional report about what's really happening in East Timor or Iraq to appear, provided that it is countered by daily reinforcement of an image of a kindly and benevolent U.S. foreign policy.

We need to be aware of how each component of the media is used to further such distorted images, as well as how a small minority of creative people manage to turn out messages about what's really happening despite their bosses' censorship. I've chosen the comic strips as the part of the newspaper which has always most interested me, and the part whose writers have the most scope in filtering current events and trends through their own creativity (though they must do this in such a

way as to gain a widespread following, as the strip that doesn't help publishers sell their newspapers will soon disappear.) This article will discuss a few of the ways in which strips reflect what's happening in society, and by so doing shed new light on it. Space limitations will permit us to barely scratch the surface of this topic, which is okay because readers can take up their interpretation of the comics (or, for that matter, of any other aspect of the media) where we leave off.

## A Mirror Of Social Trends

In the 19th century, society was divided into a rigid class system which offered individuals little or no chance to escape the class into which they were born. Growing standards of literacy increased class mobility, and eventually broke down the class system; there are still intolerable differences in living standards between rich and poor, but individuals are much more likely to attain a higher—or lower—living standard than the one they were born into than was the case when literacy was monopolized by the upper classes.

By the late 19th century, a new type of newspaper had risen to capture the newly literate work-



King Features killed SAM'S STRIP, Mort Walker's satire on the comic strip, after one year; duller Walker strips such as *Beetle Bailey*, *Hi and Lois* have lasted forty.

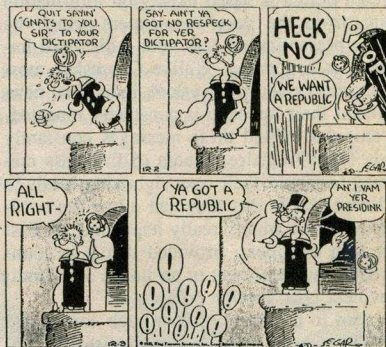
ing class market. Instead of long columns of closely-packed type, they offered larger type, simpler wording and blaring, often misleading headlines ("WAR may be DECLARED.") The upper classes of course despised this "yellow journalism" - some say the term rose from the cheap, quickly-yelling newsprint on which they were printed, others that it stems from the first comics page, *The Yellow Kid*. But such journals were helpful to workers and immigrants slowly learning the reading skills which the next generation would assume as its natural right. Their appeal to the newly-literate and semi-literate (an increasing group as education standards deteriorate) is carried on by the modern-day tabloid press.

Deprived of their hegemony over literacy and money, the upper classes determined that they would at least continue to control culture by making it incomprehensible to the average person. While such people as Joyce and Picasso made writing and painting inaccessible to anyone lacking, or unable to fake, an advanced education, grand opera--a highly proletarian art form in Italy--was taken over by the elite and housed in such costly mausoleums as New York's Metropolitan Opera House, to which such nouveau riche as Maggie and Jiggs flocked to demonstrate their belonging to a new social station (conspicuous consumption, as Veblen called it.) This need to be part of an elite is doubtless rooted in the Calvinist tradition that the acquisition and display of large amounts of wealth demonstrates their owners' place among the elite chosen for salvation.

Denied access to the mainstream of art, music and literature as surely as when they had lacked the money, leisure and literacy to pursue them, the general public proceeded to create their own art forms--cinema, radio, best sellers, popular music and journalism, later television--which the aristocracy regarded with a carefully cultivated contempt. The comic strip was created more or less accidentally as a byproduct of yellow press competition for readers. When Joseph Pulitzer brought the first full-colour rotary press from France and adapted it to turn out colour, full-sized newspaper pages, it was only a matter of time before the first full-page colour cartoon would appear (*The Yellow Kid*, February 16 1896,) and then that cartoonists would begin dividing their page into panels or frames to tell a continuing story. Actually, the practise of telling such stories with ongoing characters first emerged in Germany with *Max und Moritz*, two bratty children who clearly inspired Rudolf Dirks to create *The Katzenjammer Kids* in America. The

first daily strip, *Augustus Mutt* (later *Mutt and Jeff*) began in 1906.

The decline of the class system is fully documented in *Bringing Up Father*, a strip started by George McManus in 1913. Its protagonists are a nouveau riche Irish couple; the Irish were second-class citizens in 19th century America, but had come by the 20th to wield considerable political influence, as the success of the Curley political machine in Boston testified. Jiggs, who runs some sort of business and deals with a wide variety of people, is aware that class lines are crumbling but Maggie, isolated in her luxury apartment, still believes that a rigid line must be drawn between upper class culture, symbolized by the opera, and lower, symbolized by Dinty Moore's tavern and corned beef and cabbage. Jiggs tries to combine an upper class income bracket with proletarian culture, and could do so quite nicely if it weren't for Maggie. Their daughter Nora is prepared to take the best and reject the worst of each milieu; she accompanies her mother to the opera but rejects the effete suitors whom Maggie brings home. Maggie is frequently



Many newspaper readers were displeased in the mid-30s to find that cussing, violent POPEYE was as popular as cute Mickey Mouse. After creator Segar died in 1938, King Features toned the strip down to a bland version which survives to this day.

horrified to find that those who have been in society longer and feel secure in it prefer the tavern to the opera, and her violent reactions disclose the shallowness of the society veneer she affects. The strip should have been dropped in the thirties when its social point had become obsolete, but continues today in the hands of hacks who don't understand the social commentary McManus was making and relate only to Maggie's violence.



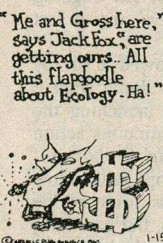
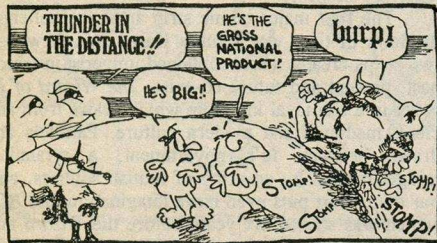
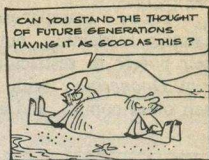
The successful New York newspapers set up syndicates to distribute their comics and other features to papers in other cities. Like the major movie studios, each syndicate developed an identifiable product reflecting its own perceptions and areas of speciality. Emulating the movie moguls, such syndicate tycoons as Hearst and Patterson usually combined a sadistic need to dominate and bully the creative people under them with an accurate instinct of what the public wanted, and occasionally elevated public taste (the best example here being Hearst forcing his newspapers to print *Krazy Kat*.) Today, the moguls have been replaced by corporate boards which usually understand the public far less and, like their film and television counterparts, generally aim at the lowest common denominator in public taste.

It is not only the handful of imaginative strips that help us understand who we are. Corporate boards love artists like Mort Walker, who can dash off four strips at the same time with the same basic situation, individuals locked into a hierarchical pecking order where roles and relationships are so carefully delineated that there is little room for spontaneity or individual freedom; the family in *Hi and Lois*, the army in *Beetle Bailey*, a ship in *Boners Ark*, a municipal office in *Sam and Silo*. The gags are tossed out with machine-like precision, 24 a week plus the Sunday pages, and could easily be interchanged from one strip to another (sometimes they are.) The fundamental rightness of having some people control others is never questioned; Beetle or Ditto may occasionally rebel against domination, but are easily crushed as they have no alternative to authority, and are clearly incapable of running their own lives. (In fairness to Walker, it should be added that he did create a very clever satire on comic strips, *Sam's Strip*, until the syndicate terminated it after little more than a year.) Al-

though this is an extreme example, the tendency of syndicates to factory-produce comic strips is great, and the public seems to accept such products; *Beetle Bailey* is among the most popular strips, and the others--*Blondie*, *Hagar*, *Peanuts*--aren't much better.

### Escaping Time

Comic strips do exert considerable influence; a strip placed in numerous papers will reach more people in a day than were ever reached by the novels of Melville or Tolstoy. But it is Melville and Tolstoy who exert the greater influence over a period of time. It was Harold Innis who taught us to distinguish between forms of communication which control space (ie reach and influence large numbers of people over a wide area for a short period of time) and those which control time (ie influence only a few when they first appear, but remain as the record of an age which determines how it will be judged by future ages.) The mass media clearly belong in the former category, as do comics as a prisoner of the media. Viet Nam taught the establishment that its wars must be ended quickly, before more longterm forms of communication can catch up with the initial public support whipped up by the



ODDS BODKINS, Dennis O'Neill's strip of the 1960s, brought many values of the underground press to the handful of large

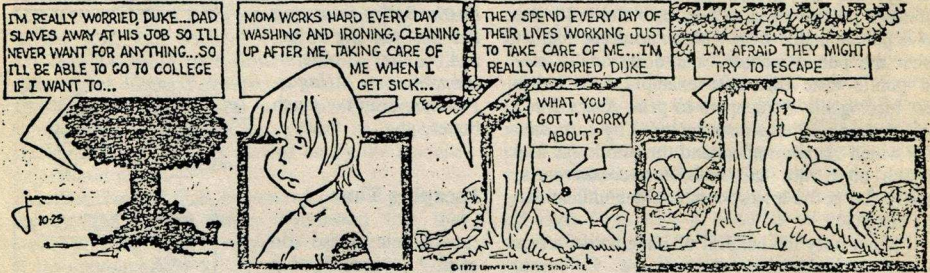
city newspapers willing to run it. When satirized by O'Neill, the Disney corporation sued his pants off.

media.

Today's newspapers need the comic strips to maintain readership, but have done everything in their power to restrict their social impact. Many print *Doodles* with their editorials instead of their other comics, and continuous action strips are

ern life, the total powerlessness of the individual in the fact of corporate policy. The same thing happens when a beloved television series is cancelled.

Why do the mass media encourage us to cultivate the attention span of hummingbirds? It is probably no accident that the press is moving to weaken



KELLY, a nice 8-year-old with a not-so-nice dog, challenged bourgeois values and only lasted a few years in the 1970s.

being dropped in favour of those with a self-contained gag every day. Episodic narratives may be remembered by readers over a period of time (nobody who read comics in the forties has forgotten some of *Dick Tracy's* most celebrated opponents,) and in the case of humorous strips it is probably those which combine a continuous story narrative with a laugh (or at least a chuckle) every day that stand up best. Once we remember that *Barney Google* ran *Spark Plug* in a trans-USA race or that *Popeye* tried to found the utopian community of Spinachovia, many of the amusing situations which resulted come to mind. By contrast, an unrelated gag, however funny, quickly fades from memory, even if the strip is preserved in a book and re-read. Today only a handful of strips, such as *Doodles* or *For Better Or Worse*, tell ongoing stories and the non-humorous narrative strip is fast disappearing.

The Toronto Star recently followed a survey of its readers' comics preferences by doing what it had doubtless decided to do before launching the survey, ie dropping the only two continuous action strips it carried, *Spiderman* and *Little Orphan Annie*, both in mid-episode. The two strips ranked low on the survey (though not as low as some of the gag-a-day ones that were maintained), but had many followers, some of whom wrote anguished pleas to the Star for their restoration. By ignoring these pleas, the Star reminded us of another fact of mod-

any form of influence over time that a particularly good comic strip might establish. The media represent a social elite which seeks to control time by dividing it into measured units; historically, this enabled them to enslave the working class to the rhythms of factory production. Now that factory work is being relegated to the third world, ex factory workers are either self-employed or starving, and in either case are no longer so dependent on measured time units. Society is more free to play with the concept that there are ways other than linear to examine time. Writers caught on to this some time ago; Jean-Paul Sartre observes: "Most of the great contemporary authors, Proust, Joyce, Dos Passos, Faulkner, Gide and Virginia Woolf, have tried, each in this own way, to distort time." (Literary Essays.)

The first major comic strip artist to challenge the laws of time was Johnny Hart, each of whose two strips creates a self-contained universe in which past, present and future co-exist. *The Wizard of Id* is set in a medieval kingdom which draws from ancient, medieval and modern culture. Parallels are drawn between Id's government, a tyrannical midget backed by an army of loutish soldiers, and our own. Hart puts even more imagination into *BC*, which was started six years before the *Wizard* and was considerably better before he began dividing his better gag material between two strips (his humour is often crude and sexist, but brilliant at its

best.)

At first glance the ten cavepersons in *BC* seem to represent the human race's past, though they could as easily be in a post-apocalyptic future age which has been forced to adopt the "small is beautiful" ethos. Even the title is ambiguous, since one of the characters is named BC. If the past is represented by the atavistic Grog and the dinosaur who rejoices that he will "go down in history as the first to go down in history," and the present by ants whose 20th century society includes television and marital infidelity in the suburbs, the cave dwellers represent a possible future based on organic lifestyles (even the currency, clams, is organic.) They lack modern technology not for the lack of trying to achieve it--a great deal of time is spent in observing and speculating upon the laws of the universe--but because in their universe, unlike ours, the natural laws which enable scientists to make discoveries by observation have been suspended. Changes in the shape of rocks, time of day, size of the moon etc., which were peripheral to the action of *Krazy Kat*, are central to that of *BC*. Perhaps this forecasts a time in which our natural laws will be knocked askew by our assault on the environment.

In many aspects the cast of *BC* enjoy the tribalized, organic lifestyle with lots of leisure for which many anarchists yearn, although the absence

of children raises doubts about their survivability. Perhaps the future lies with the ants (if they can avoid decimation by the anteater, who personifies another anarchist dream, that of devouring the bourgeoisie,) or with the clams who suffer enslavement as the medium of exchange while secretly developing limbs. No other comics artist has dealt with time as creatively, though there are elements of time distortion in *Overboard* and *Hagar*.

If *Bringing Up Father* documents the decline of a hierarchy whose power is based on the monopolization of knowledge, and *BC* the early stages of the decline of a hierarchy whose power is based on control over time and space, *Krazy Kat* depicts our potential to liberate ourselves from the tyranny of conventional social relationships. As a closet negro who would have been relegated to second-class citizenship had his African ancestry been known, George Herriman had every reason to reject existing social norms by creating a true counter-culture in which love, dance and music replace America's materialistic society. Just as the jazz music often alluded to in the strip represents an attempt by musicians to liberate themselves from standardized forms of musical composition, so does the unique relationship of *Krazy Kat*, Ignatz and Offissa Pup represent liberation from standard social relationships in which cats and mice are mortal enemies. One wonders whether it was coincidence that Herriman made his protagonist a black cat at a time when the IWW was using the black cat as the symbol of its advocacy of industrial sabotage (he also drew another famous black cat in his illustrations for Don Marquis's poems about Mehitable, the feline reincarnation of Cleopatra, and Archie the anarchistic cockroach.)

## Children In The Comics

Since children are innately anarchists, it is important to understand the processes by which society converts them into respectable citizens. We should note that the concept of children as separate beings requiring separate education and entertainment is peculiar to industrial society, and began with the breaking down of a rigid class system under which children learned, and then followed, their parents' jobs. In the 19th century, the upper and middle classes were chiefly concerned with their children's ability to belong in these classes, and to distinguish themselves from working class children who went to the mines and factories as soon as they were able to walk. The emphasis was on turning



TARZAN, the most appealing of 20th century heroes because he makes it back to nature, fights for survival in a jungle whose every leaf gleams razor-sharp as if it has cut its way to the surface by decimating his rivals. Pity he never read Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*.

out restrained, genteel miniature adults, overdressed in tight clothes and beaten into conformity. Many of the early comic strips presented dull miniature adults the most popular of whom, *Buster Brown*, played mildly mischievous pranks from which he drew long-winded morals which he recited in the last panel to his dog, nobody else being interested.

The strips of the interwar period reflect the decline of a hereditary class system; children are no longer conditioned to maintain their social station, but rather to improve it by embracing the work ethics. This is best seen in the strips of the rightwing New York News-Chicago Tribune syndicate. *Skeezix*, *Smitty* and *Orphan Annie* embrace the work ethic and get ahead; *Kayo Mullins* won't and doesn't.

Postwar children have been expected to display neither *Buster Brown's* docile acceptance of a class-determined role nor *Orphan Annie's* aggressive struggle to improve her socio-economic standing, but rather to be seen consuming the culture of childhood that adults have created for them. Instead of being discouraged from fantasizing, they are supplied with elaborate toys and video games to help(?) them do so, and to channel their fantasies into directions which will reinforce social norms (and, incidentally, make a pile of money for the manufacturers.) In recent years, comics and SF fandom have shifted from social and scientific consciousness to escapism whose only aim is to numb the mind with dungeons and dragons.

The basic value taught is acceptance of middle-class lifestyles and prejudice. *Chip Flagston* may rebel against some of *Hi and Lois'* external values by dressing sloppily, but he is too comfortable sharing their suburban lifestyle to question any of its basic values. *Barnaby* gives up his bumbling fairy godfather and talking dog on reaching his sixth birthday, whereupon the strip ends as there's no basis for continued interest. *Donald Duck's* nephews don't reject their materialistic culture; it's usually a desire to partake of more of it that triggers their revolts. *Dennis The Menace* resists his parents' efforts to civilize him, but not to the point of jeopardizing his enjoyment of the joys of civilization, while the *Peanuts* kids don't let their endless philosophizing inhibit their enjoyment of the material goodies either. Perhaps the widespread appeal of the more recent *Calvin and Hobbes* strip lies in Calvin's resistance of the civilized world's attempt to force him to abandon his fantasizing,

or at least reduce it to a level compatible with functioning in society.

There are also the timeless strips whose appeal extends beyond the years in which they happen to have appeared. *The Katzenjammer Kids* address the same fundamental question as did Dostoevsky when he proclaimed that if God is dead everything is permitted. Like many Dostoevskian characters, Hans and Fritz seek to prove the corollary; if anti-social behaviour brings punishment perhaps everything is not permitted and there is a God (and an afterlife, which few seem able to conceive of in non-theistic terms.) By overfeeding the kids to the point of obesity and turning a blind eye to their behaviour problems, Mama indicates an incapacity to meet their basic needs, to help them understand the limits of unbridled individuality. Nor do the indolent natives of their tropical island show any interest in this task, so Hans and Fritz direct their pranks at the only two people on the island who are prepared to punish them, the Captain and the Inspector. Since the resulting spankings are devoid of love (authority will not dialogue with rebellion) the kids' emotional needs remain unsatisfied and they quickly revert to escalating their pranks. Nobody has explained anarchy to them, and they are too immature to create it themselves, so they are left with chaos.

*Little Nemo*, or at any rate his subconscious,

YOU HAVE WRITTEN TRUTH, YOU FRIENDS  
OF THE 'SHADOWS', YET BEHOLD  
HARSH WITH 'KRAZY'  
HE IS BUT A SHADOW HIMSELF  
CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF  
THIS MORTAL STEAM.  
WE CALL HIM 'CAT'  
WE CALL HIM 'KRAZY'  
YET IS HE NEITHER.  
AT SOME TIME WILL HE RIDE AWAY  
TO YOU, PEOPLE OF THE TWILIGHT,  
HIS PASSWORD WILL BE THE ECHOES OF  
A VESPER BELL, HIS COACH A  
ZEPHYR FROM THE WEST  
FORGIVE HIM FOR YOU WILL  
UNDERSTAND HIM NO BETTER THAN WE  
WHO LINGER ON THIS SIDE OF  
THE DALE.



The humans in *Doonesbury* struggle to develop the capacity for loving, caring relationships which KRAZY KAT has already attained. Ignatz thinks he hates Krazy Kat, but love and hatred are closer to each other than to indifference. Like Krazy Kat, anarchists must combine love with imagination to create a new social order.

chooses a more socially acceptable form of revolt by confining his escapes from daily routine to his dreams. He feels guilty about these escapes, so he covers his ass by having others entice him into the situation and punishes himself by having the initially pleasant experience turn ugly halfway through, a not-infrequent experience in dreams (perhaps most of us feel guilty about having them; why?) Nemo thereby insures that he will incur no further punishment, other than displeasure, from his family upon awakening. Nonetheless, his ability to imagine so detailed an alternative world shows that his imagination is greater than the repressive power of the society he lives in. His internalized, adult-tolerated rebellion is more of a challenge to the social order than is the externalized, adult-punished rebellion of Hans and Fritz; anyone can wave

a red flag at Authority, but to devise the possible shape of an alternative society requires imagination and skill. If Nemo acquires some self-confidence as he grows older, he could help devise some workable alternative system.

### End Of Introduction

This concludes my introduction to the article on The Comics In Anarchist Perspective. Unfortunately there isn't room to write the article, so you'll have to take it from here. What do the comics (or for that matter other elements of our culture) tell us about ourselves and our society? Your guess is likely as good as mine.

## THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

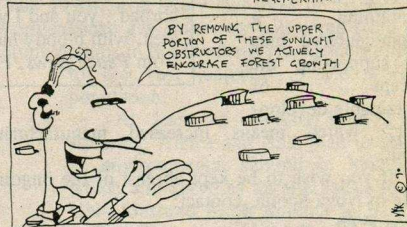
### BC Logging Continues

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**-Environmentalists are planning a two-week protest march through various logging communities, down to the legislative buildings in Victoria. They feel betrayed by the new NDP (social democratic) government, which is permitting clearcuts and road building to continue in various contentious areas. (*Earth First* 2-2-92 p12.)

Media environmentalist David Suzuki is somewhat less critical of the Harcourt government, pointing out that it has decreed an 18-month reduction or moratorium on logging in several contentious watersheds on Vancouver Island and created a new commission of resources and environment to focus on the island. However, it allows cutting in other areas to maintain employment. Suzuki finds it ominous that the head of the new commission speaks only of considering the conflicting human demands (logging, tourism, fishing, native land claims etc.) while saying nothing about the needs of animals, plants and micro-organisms. (*Toronto Star* 1-2-92 pD6.)

Wisely enough, many BC environmentalists are not pinning all their hopes on the politicians. The current issue of *New Catalyst*, a bioregional quarterly from Gabriola BC, reports on progress by the Tin Wis Coalition of native peoples, workers and environmentalists trying to develop a common

WARREN EXPLAINS 'OPEN SUN REGENERATION'



SIMPLY LIVING

approach to sustainability, community control and social solidarity. One writer suggests that, besides being a coalition, Tin Wis is "a process which permits groups to outline their common objectives and work together towards them." A major initiative has been to produce a draft participation in decisions concerning BC's primary resources. The draft act proposes 43 community resource boards, one for each of the present forest districts.

**New Catalyst**  
**PO Box 189**  
**Gabriola BC VOR 1X0.**  
**(by donation)**

## While at Canada's Other End...

NOVA SCOTIA-The Nova Scotia Wildlife Advisory Council recently held all-day workshops in Truro, Sydney and Yarmouth, followed by a private session for government agencies whose areas of responsibility concern wildlife, for input into government wildlife policy. NS is the second province, after Ontario, to respond to a federal initiative of two years ago entitled "A Wildlife Policy for Canada."

The Council's chairperson published for consideration at these workshops a position paper which has drawn considerable criticism from environmentalist groups in the province. Green Web, a Saltsprings group, criticized the report for upholding status quo logging and spraying, maintaining a human-centered bias and supporting the concept of "sustainable development," which means increased manufacturing output.

If you wish to be kept abreast of the ongoing battle in Nova Scotia, contact:

**Green Web**  
**RR3 Saltsprings**  
**Nova Scotia BOK IPO.**

## Bruce Natives Ripped Off

On October 13, 1854, Upper Canada forced the Saugeen Ojibway to sign over to the Crown the entire Bruce Peninsula, by threatening to allow settlers to take the land away from them if they didn't sign. The natives were told that the Crown would sell these lands to settlers, and put the proceeds from these sales into a trust for native benefit. Although some funds were raised for this by private auction, the Crown declined to sell 50,000 acres of the land including all shore and road allowances, lake and river beds, and some lots. The natives

have received no compensation for these lands.

More recently, Ontario agreed that no transfers of disputed lands would take place until the Saugeen Ojibway claims to them had been satisfied, then ignored the agreement by continuing to develop and transfer land, some of which has gone to Parks Canada for developing a National Park. Now, the Ontario government has agreed to give the natives acreage of equal value to the unsold lands where they can live and/or develop a viable economy, but Ontario continues to transfer land to Parks Canada and the federal government refuses to provide compensation for this land. The natives are asking those who support their just claims to write to Tom Siddon, Minister of Indian Affairs or to Jean Charest, Minister of the Environment. (From a press release issued by the Chiefs and Councils of the Saugeen Ojibway Nations Territories, October 1 1991.)

Anti-war leaflets in Serbian and Albanian were dropped from a plane on New Years Eve over an area extending from Titograd to Novi Sad. This airspace is controlled by the JNA and witnesses reported that the plane involved was a JNA plane. A section of the leaflet said:  
"Let's free ourselves from the lunatics who have made a quarrel between us, who have divided us the easier to rule us, the easier to loot us, the easier to make their fortunes on our misery. This is a war for making the rich richer. Should we go to war for them? Their children are in summer houses abroad...you and I will stay here, alienated, with bloody hands.  
from *Peace News*, Feb/92

## Recycling Questioned

TORONTO-While urban environmentalists urge residents to sort recyclable garbage into blue bins, one of Canada's business rags, the *Financial Times of Canada*, has printed a front-page article (3-2-92) which contends that the blue box program cannot pay for itself and that its real purpose is to enable soft drink manufacturers to sell their beverages in cans instead of refillable bottles. The Toronto works commissioner is quoted as saying that the program in 1991 (its third year of operation here) cost \$15 million more than if the municipality had continued its previous dumping of unsorted garbage, while revenues for recycled glass and newsprint are dropping. The big beneficiaries are Coke and Pepsi, which paid \$20 million to launch the practice and now save \$60 to \$80 million a year by using cans instead of refillable bottles. This profit is being subsidized by the taxpayers.

It seems strange to see a major financial paper attacking two corporate giants for ripping off the taxpayers; apparently the *Times* saw this as an acceptable price for another club with which to flail the provincial NDP government (which business

detests although it does most of the things business wants it to.) The article castigates the government for expanding the recycling program.

## The Other Israel

While the first meeting of the Madrid Peace Conference for the Middle East was greeted with hope by both Palestinians and Israelis, it didn't take long for the usual malaise to set in, as reported in the Jan/Feb 1992 issue of *The Other Israel*. A most telling example of Israeli government attitudes is that the "olive branch demonstrations" (in which Palestinian youths gave olive branches to Israeli soldiers in a gesture of goodwill) were soon branded "propaganda gimmicks of the terrorists" and ordered broken up. The paper continues with reports of further settlements and detentions, and a report on the negative psychological effects on Israeli conscripts of service in the occupied territories.

**The Other Israel**  
POB 956  
Tel-Aviv  
Israel 61008.

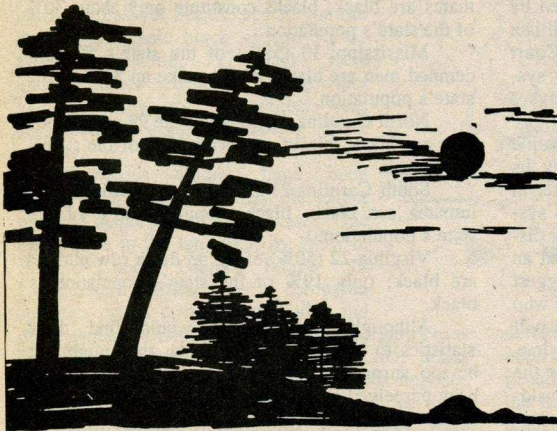
## USA Vs. The Environment

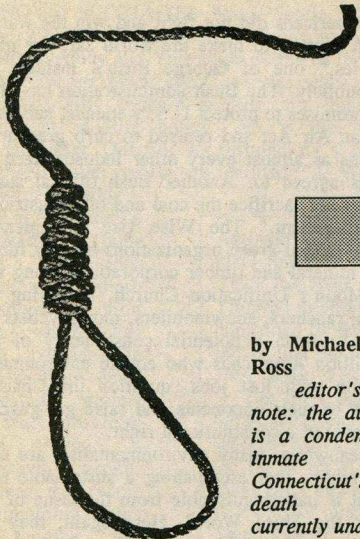
"Americans did not fight and win the wars of the 20th century to make the world safe for green vegetables," one of George Bush's insiders has stated publicly. The Bush administration has abandoned promises to protect U.S. wetlands, sabotaged the Clean Air Act and refused to curb greenhouse emissions as almost every other industrialized nation has agreed to. Another Bush official stated: "We will not sacrifice the coal and oil industries to the environment." The Wise Use movement, a coalition of anti-green organizations heavily funded by oil, mineral and timber corporations along with Rev. Moon's Unification Church, is allying with farmers, ranchers, snowmobilers, motorcyclists and hunters to form a potential constituency of over fifty million Americans who equate environmental protection with lost jobs, question the Christian morality of their opponents and raise gas-guzzling to the level of a constitutional right.

Meanwhile, many environmentalists are coming to realize that establishing a sustainable environment is indistinguishable from the issue of justice for the Third World. Here again, they will come into conflict with U.S. policy. Beginning in the late 1990s, it is likely that most of the world's new greenhouse gas emissions will come from developing nations in the Southern Hemisphere, home to the vast majority of the world's population.

At least 41 nations from Latin America, Africa and Asia plan to attend an environmental summit in Malaysia, which will serve as an alternative to the UN-sponsored Earth Summit to be held in Brazil in June 1992. Doubtless they will be more receptive than the Brazil gathering to environmentalists' proposals that a global quota for emission of gases causing the greenhouse effect be established, and each human being on the planet be allocated an equal share. This would allow Third World countries to increase their emissions, while those of industrial countries would be curtailed. U.S. reaction is predictable. (*editor's note: see also Murray Bookchin's comment in his article this issue.*)

Utne Reader #50  
1624 Harmon Place  
Minneapolis MN 55493





# THE DEATH PENALTY

## IN BLACK & WHITE

by Michael B. Ross  
*editor's note: the author is a condemned inmate on Connecticut's death row, currently under a stay of execution while the*

throughout our country.

### Who's On Death Row

*Connecticut Supreme Court conducts a mandatory review of his conviction.*

"(The) evidence shows that there is a better than even chance in Georgia that race will influence the decision to impose the death penalty: a majority of defendants in white-victim crimes would not have been sentenced to die if their victims had been black." Surprisingly, those words were written by now retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Brennan in 1987, when he was criticizing the Court for continuing to uphold a "capital-sentencing system in which race more likely than not plays a role..."

Racism: it's a nasty word, and many people would prefer to look the other way and deny its very existence. Not only does it exist, it exists in one of the most sensitive areas of our judicial system: capital punishment. The question of racial discrimination in capital punishment has prompted an on-going debate. There is much evidence to suggest that race IS an important factor in determining who will be sentenced to death for a crime and who will receive a lesser punishment for the same crime. Extensive research on sentencing patterns over the last 15 years has repeatedly found that race considerations, whether conscious or subconscious, permeate decisions of life and death in state courts

One simple way to see this is to examine the make-up of the death row population. As of April 24, 1991, 966 (39%) of prisoners under sentence of death in the USA were black, despite the fact that blacks comprise only 12% of the population nationally. In some states, blacks condemned to death outnumber whites condemned to death. Consider the following death row statistics, which are correct as of April 24, 1991:

Alabama-51 (47%) of the 109 death row inmates are black; blacks comprise only 26% of the state's population.

Louisiana-17 (50%) of the 34 death row inmates are black; blacks constitute only about 30% of the state's population.

Mississippi-30 (58%) of the state's 52 condemned men are black; blacks make up 36% of the state's population.

North Carolina-42 (42%) of the 99 condemned men are black; blacks comprise 23% of the state's population.

South Carolina-21 (50%) of the 43 death row inmates are black; blacks comprise 30% of the state's population.

Virginia-22 (50%) of the 45 death row inmates are black; only 19% of the state's population is black.

Although many people would find these statistics to be somewhat shocking, they might not be too surprised. After all, the south has always been perceived as being more racist than the rest of the country. So consider a few statistics from some other, non-southern state:



Illinois-86 (63%) of the 136 condemned men are black; blacks make up only 15% of the state's population.

Maryland-14 (87%) of the 16 men sentenced to death are black; blacks comprise about 25% of the state's population.

New Jersey-8 (62%) of the 13 men condemned to death are black; blacks make up only 15% of the state's population.

Ohio-53 (53%) of the 99 condemned men are black; blacks make up only 10% of the state's population.

Pennsylvania-78 (60%) of the 132 inmates on death row are black; blacks comprise only 10% of the state's population.

## Victim Disparities

As shocking as some of these figures may be, statistics on the race of the offender alone do not necessarily indicate bias, given that roughly 50% of those arrested for murder are black. Far more significant are the racial disparities revealed by an examination of the race of the murder *victim* in cases where the death penalty is imposed. The 145 prisoners executed between 1976, when the death penalty was reinstated by the courts, and April 24 1991, had been convicted of killing 147 victims. Of these victims 125 (84% were white and 22 were black or of another minority group. While 43 black or ethnic-minority prisoners have been executed for murdering white victims, no white murderer has yet been executed for the murder of a sole black victim. As of mid-August 1988, 727 blacks were under sentence of death for killing white victims, while only 43 whites were sentenced to death for killing black victims.

Numerous studies have been conducted to try to quantify the extent of racial disparities in capital cases. One study done in the late 70's, by William Bowers and Glenn Pierce of Northeastern Universities, compared statistics on all criminal homicides and death sentences imposed in Florida, Georgia, Texas and Ohio. Death sentences in these four states accounted for 70% of all death sentences imposed nationally at that time. They found that far more killers of whites than killers of blacks were sentenced to death. They also found that, although

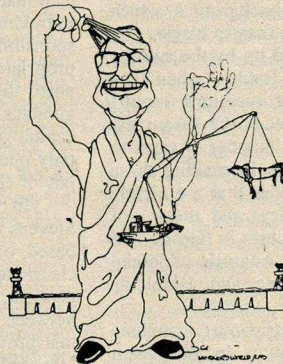
most killers of whites were white, blacks who killed whites were proportionally more likely to receive a death sentence than any other group.

In Florida and Texas, for example, blacks who killed whites were, respectively, five or six times more likely to be sentenced to death than were whites who killed whites. Among black offenders in Florida, those who killed whites were forty times more likely to get the death penalty than those who killed blacks. No white offender has ever been sentenced to death for killing a black person during the period studied (a white man sentenced to death in Florida in 1980 for killing a black woman was the first white person in that state's history to be sentenced to death for killing a black victim only.)

Several other studies, conducted in a variety of capital punishment states, have arrived at the same conclusion: killers of whites are much more likely to be sentenced to death than are killers of blacks. An exhaustive study conducted in the early 1980s by Professor David Baldus sought to discover *why* killers of white victims in Georgia had received the death penalty approximately eleven times more often than killers of black victims. He found that the two most significant points affecting the likelihood of an eventual death sentence were the prosecutor's decisions on (1) whether or not to plea bargain and (2) whether or not to seek a death sentence after a murder conviction.

Black-victim cases were far more likely to result in pleas to manslaughter or life sentences on conviction of murder, than cases with white victims. Black defendants with white victims were both less likely than others to have their charges reduced and more likely than others, on conviction of murder, to receive the death penalty. Professor Baldus noted that Georgia prosecutors had sought the death penalty in only 40% of the cases where

defendants were convicted of a capital crime: the others received automatic life sentences without a penalty hearing. But perhaps most disturbing was the finding that, although cases with white victims tended to be more aggravated in general, the levels of aggravation in crimes involving black victims



WORKERS WORLD/LNS

had to be substantially higher before the prosecutors would seek the death penalty. Thus, overall disparities in death sentencing were due more to prosecutor's charging and sentencing recommendations than to jury sentencing decisions.

Several other studies have also found significant racial disparities in prosecutors' decisions on charging. The Bowers study found that the victim's race had a significant "extra-legal" influence on whether or not a capital charge would be filed. And a study done by Michael Radelet and Glenn Pierce, "Race and Prosecutorial Discretion in Homicide Cases," found a tendency by some prosecutors to "upgrade" cases with white victims and "downgrade" those with black victims.

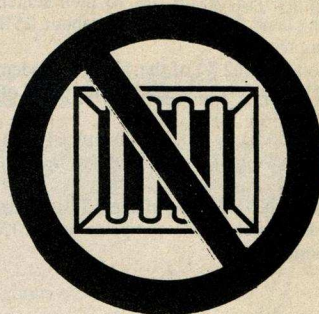
### Popular Bias Against Blacks

However, these findings and others like them do not necessarily imply that prosecutors deliberately discriminate in their charging and sentencing recommendations. It has been suggested that, in areas with a large white majority population strongly supporting capital punishment, there is inevitably more pressure on prosecutors to seek the death penalty in cases with white victims than in those with black victims or victims from other minorities. Also, in general, there is more community outrage, publicity and public pressure when the murder victim comes from a middle-class background, which is more likely to apply to whites than to blacks.

The issue was well summed up by the authors of a study similar to Professor Baldus' when they wrote: "Since death penalty prosecutions require large allocations of scarce prosecutorial resources, prosecutors must choose a small number of cases to receive this expensive treatment. In making these choices they may favour homicides that are visible and disturbing to the community, and these will tend to be white-victim homicides." (Gross and Mauro, "Patterns of Death: An Analysis of Racial Disparities in Capital Sentencing and Homicide Victimization.")

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court examined the issue of racial discrimination in the death penalty, in the case of *McCleskey V. Kemp*, to determine whether Georgia's capital punishment system violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Court demanded a seemingly impossible level of proof for the defendant, who had to prove either (1) that the decision-makers in his particular case had acted with discriminatory intent or purpose, or (2) that the Geor-

gia Legislature enacted or maintained the death penalty statute because of an anticipated racially discriminatory effect.



The Court by a narrow five to four majority, concluded that statistics do not *prove* that race entered into any capital sentencing decision in any one particular case. The court further noted that: "any mode for determining guilt or punishment has its weaknesses and potential for misuse. Despite such imperfections, constitutional guarantees are met when the mode for determining guilt or punishment has been surrounded with safeguards to make it as fair as possible." However, the majority did indicate that the arguments should be presented to the individual state legislative bodies, for it is their responsibility, not the Court's, to determine the appropriate punishment for particular crimes. They noted that: "Despite McCleskey's wide ranging arguments that basically challenge the validity of capital punishment in our multi-racial society, the only question before us is whether in his case...the law of Georgia was properly applied."

In a dissenting opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens noted: "The Court's decision appears to be based on a fear that acceptance of McCleskey's claim would sound the death knell for capital punishment...If society were indeed forced to choose between a racially discriminatory death penalty (one that provides heightened protection against murder "for whites only") and no death penalty at all, the choice mandated by the Constitution would be plain." Following the *McCleskey* ruling, a Congressional bill entitled The Racial Justice Act was drafted. The Bill would forbid "racially disproportionate capital sentencing" and would outlaw death sentences found to be imposed in a racially discriminatory manner. It was debated and defeated in

the U.S. Senate by a vote of 52 to 35 on October 13, 1988.

We cannot simply continue to live with the illusion that capital punishment works in the perfect unbiased manner that we desire. While we may wish otherwise, racism is an integral part of the death penalty. The evidence is not speculative or theoretical, but rather is empirical. One of the most telling statistics from the Baldus study was that six of every eleven defendants convicted of killing a white person would not have received the death penalty if their victims had been black. These figures may vary from state to state, but the underly-

ing conclusion remains the same: the taking of a white life is worth greater punishment than the taking of a black life.

**Justice Brennan once wrote: "We have demanded a uniquely high degree of rationality in imposing the death penalty. A capital-sentencing system in which race more likely than not plays a role does not meet this standard " For this reason, it is time to abolish the death penalty. Race will undoubtedly still be a factor in sentencing decisions, but at least it will no longer influence the decision of who lives and who dies.**



by Jim Campbell

*Jim Campbell is a long-time prison activist and a founding member of the Prison News Service.*

## learning about PRISONS

Prisons depend on ignorance and indifference in order to function "smoothly"--with the prisoners passively accepting their fate, and those on the outside being indifferent to the atrocities being inflicted upon the captives within. Great effort is exerted by the guards and administrators to keep prisoners isolated from each other and from family and friends. Efforts at self-education, both individually and collectively, are looked upon with great suspicion. Such education, whether formal or not, has shown itself to be the most effective way of breaking the cycle of prison-release-crime-prison. Yet it is a constant struggle for prisoners to get access to books and magazines or people (such as native spiritual leaders) from which they can learn.

It is not just prisoners who need "education." Few radicals or progressive people give much thought to prisons. Too many share the common conceptions of prisoners as being violent social misfits who probably deserve what they're getting. This indifference to prisons and prisoners continues to exist, even though prisons are intimately connected to so many of the other issues around which people do work: racism, sexism, social violence, poverty, drug and alcohol use, hopelessness and the dismantling of the welfare state.

A network of magazines and newsletters has been developed over the past few years to meet this

need for education, both within prisons and about prisons for those in "the world." Regular readers of these magazines will not only learn much

about prison life, but will gain new perspectives on other issues. The following ones are listed for anyone who wants to learn more about what goes on behind the walls. Some of these are written and produced behind the walls, others are written or edited inside with production and distribution being handled on the outside. All of these have produced at least one issue in the last six months. Most of them are free to prisoners, but non-prisoners should send a donation:

**Antigone** -Newsletter of the national Committee on US Corrections, \$2.00/year for prisoners, \$7.00 for free world residents. Write to POB 308, Farmington, MI 48332.

**Bayou La Rose** -one of the pioneer papers covering prisons and prisoners. It has both articles and artwork by prisoners. The Bayou also covers native, environment and workplace issues. \$7.50/4 issues. It is worthwhile getting regardless of your interest. Write: Bayou La Rose, Box 5464, Tacoma WA 98405-0464.

**Coalition for Prisoners' Rights Newsletter** - one of the oldest publications directed at prisoners. Includes short articles, as well as excerpts from prisoners' letters concerning legal matters and other issues. Write to: CPR, POB 1911, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

**Gay Community News** -among the best

sources of information on what is happening in the U.S. from a radical perspective, also an important source of support for gay and lesbian prisoners. Write to: GCN, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

**Joint Venture** -a brand new newsletter focusing on issues of relevance to prisoners who have received life sentences in Canada. It is put out by Infinity Lifers' Liaison Group, a community group which works with the Lifers' Group in Collins Bay. Send a donation and write to: Infinity Lifers' Liaison Group, Box 772, Stn B, Ottawa Ont. K2P 5P9.

**Journal of Prisoners on Prisons** -more academically oriented, but, as it says, it is written primarily by prisoners. Write to: Journal of Prisoners on Prisons, POB 60779, University Outlet, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2S9.

**Love and Rage** -an anarchist news monthly with regular coverage of prisons. Write to: Love and Rage, Box 3, Prince St. Stn. New York NY 10012.

**Nuclear Resister** -covers those in prison for opposing nuclear weapons and nuclear power. Lots of info on prisoners, events, resources, etc. Write to: Nuclear Resistor, POB 43383, Tucson, AZ 85733.

**Out Of Time** -a newsletter produced by Out of Control, a women's collective in San Francisco. The newsletter is only a small part of the work done by Out of Control. Write to: Out of Control, POB 30, 3543 18th St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

**Prison News Service** - probably the widest-ranging prison paper. Though it is edited in Toronto, its writers come from prisons across the continent, from various racial and national groups and many different political tendencies. Regular coverage includes political prisoners and prisoners of war in North America, ongoing struggles within prisons and the nature of prisons and imprisonment. The January/February 1992 issue had a women's supplement. Bimonthly, \$10/yr. Institutions, \$25/lyr. Write to: Prison News Service, PO Box 5052, Stn A, Toronto Ontario

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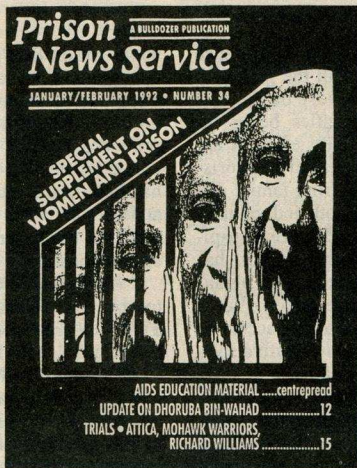
**Prisoners Legal News** -Written and edited on a monthly basis by Washington state prisoners Ed Mead and Paul Wright, PLN is produced and distributed by outside supporters. It covers legal news of special interest to Washington State, but their interests are wider in terms of topics and region. This paper gets better all the time. Donations of money and stamps are needed to keep this going. Donations and subs for the U.S. should be sent to PLN, POB 1684, Lake Worth, FL 33460; in Canada write to ABC, POB 6326, Stn A, Toronto Ontario M5W 1P7. Letters and articles should be sent to: Paul Wright, #930783, POB 5000, HC63, Clallum Bay, WA 98326.

**PWA-Rag** -a rather miraculous publication edited by James Magner, a prisoner with AIDS, who is able to continue with his work in spite of near constant harassment from the prison authorities. If you are interested in AIDS at all, check this out. Write to PWA-RAG, P.O. Box 2161, Jonesboro, GA 30237. Send them a donation if at all possible.

**Tightwire** -a long-time publication coming out of the Kingston Prison For Women (P4W). It has poetry and fiction, as well as informative articles. The continued existence of Tightwire, considering the level of struggle and repression in P4W, is impressive. Subs are \$10/yr. Write to: Tightwire, POB 515, Kingston Ont. K7L 4W7.

**Walkin' Steel** -edited by the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML.) This group began with its specific focus being a continuing lockdown at the infamous Marion prison in Illinois, which has become a prototype for the new model "Control Unit" prisons that are expanding rapidly across

the continent. CEML has also expanded its work to include the issue of prisons in general. This newsletter is part of the campaign against Control Units which is being spearheaded by CEML. Send a donation to: CEML, PO Box 578172, Chicago IL 60657-8172.



## - IN BRIEF -

### Institute For Social Ecology

The *Institute For Social Ecology*, having entered its eighteenth year of operation, is pioneering educational programs in the areas of ecological design and technology, bioregional agriculture, community health, eco-philosophy, social theory, ecology and spirituality, and feminism and ecology. The Institute's educational approach is a blend of scholarship and experiential learning with an emphasis on praxis, the interaction of theory and practice. Over the years, the Institute has provided training and technical assistance to the Akwesasne Mohawks of upstate New York, Hispanic community development groups on Manhattan's Lower East Side, a small farmer's union in Puerto Rico, low-income Vermonters, and Mayan Indians in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico.

Each year the Institute offers a summer semester for which college credit is available. This year, it will offer the following programs on the campus of Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont: Design for Sustainable Communities, which focuses on ecological land use planning, architecture, co-housing, and ecological design and technology; the Social Ecology and Higher Education symposium, which will explore ways in which educators can bring the concepts of social ecology to their curricula and institutions; the Ecology and Community program, which features a comprehensive curricula in the full range of studies encompassed by social ecology; and Women and Ecology, which explores the relationship of women to the natural world, with an emphasis on women's role in the community development process from an ecological perspective. The summer semester will also serve as the starting point for the innovative Social Ecology Masters Program, which is offered in affiliation with Goddard College. For details:

**Institute for Social Ecology**  
PO Box 89  
Plainfield, Vermont  
USA 05667.

### Rural Social Ecology

A new apprenticeship program in rural Saskatchewan is designed to teach people the skills they need to work for the creation of a socially and ecologically sustainable society. 12-month program costs \$4-800 for tuition, plus approximately four hours' work per week for room and board.

**Betty Ternier Daniels,**  
**Rural Apprenticeship Program in Social Ecology,**  
**Box 136,**  
**Cohcin, Saskatchewan S0M 0L0.**

### Social Ecology Conference

The second annual continental conference on social ecology, entitled *Social Ecology and Community Action*, will take place May 28-31 in Townsend, Tennessee. For information, contact the co-sponsoring Institute for Social Ecology (address in previous item.)



OPEN ROAD

### Berkman Symposium Planned

July 23 is the 100th anniversary of the shooting of the brutal industrialist Henry Clay Frick by anarchist Alexander Berkman (Frick survived and Berkman did 14 years). A one-day symposium is to be held in Pittsburg, and the organizer is looking for organizations and individuals to co-sponsor

and/or actively participate in the event, as well as for Berkman scholars and historians, musicians, poets and films, slide-shows, plays or other audiovisuals about Berkman. The plan is to keep admission costs low and donate any profit to a prisoners' rights group. For more details:

**Gary L. Loebler**  
PO Box 22412  
Pittsburg PA 15223.

## Women and Recovery

*Women and Recovery* is a new magazine updating news and access information for women recovering from one or more of: divorce, loss of a loved one, sexual or physical abuse, a chronic or debilitating disease, problems with substance abuse, anorexia, bulimia or obesity as a result of a compulsive eating behavior, depression. Sample issues are \$1, annual subscriptions \$22 (U.S.)

**Women and Recovery,**  
**Women to Women Communications**  
P.O. Box 161775  
Cupertino CA  
USA 95016.

## Fight The Right

*The Canadian Centre on Racism and Prejudice* is a clearinghouse for information about neo-Nazi activity, and what is being done to get fascist elements out of our communities. Their paper, CCRP Bulletin, is available for \$25/year from: CCRP, Box 505, Station Desjardins, Montreal, Quebec H5B 1B6.

**Rites, Jan-Feb 1992**  
Box 65, Stn F,  
Toronto M4Y 2L4

<b>FREE FOR GIS</b>	
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An additional \$1 pays for half of a prisoner's subscription	
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City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Send to: Fifth Estate, 4632 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48201	

## International Anarchists Meet

The French Anarchist Federation is arranging an international meeting (debates, lectures, exhibitions, entertainment etc.) within the framework of the International Anarchist Federation in Paris, May 1-3. Topics include workers movements, rural and urban ecology, antimilitarism, black and native resistance, the European union, the rise of nationalism and fascism in western Europe, the fall of Marxist ideology and the USSR, education, North Africa and anarcha-feminism. Written materials on these topics are sought. There will be an international anarchist demonstration May 1st. For information:

**Federation Anarchiste**  
145 rue Amelot  
75011, Paris France.

## Progressive Radio

*Earth On The Air* produces magazine format radio programs on environmental and social justice issues. This volunteer-based co-operative helps grassroots activists create their own programs; they also accept work from experienced producers. For information and submission guidelines, contact: Susan Gleason, Earth On The Air, PO Box 45883, Seattle WA 98145-0883.

**Artpaper January 1992**  
2402 University Ave. W. #206  
St. Paul MN 55114.

## Anarchy Fund Raising Appeal

*Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* is a well-produced voice of post-situationist, anti-civilization anarchist ideas. The publication has launched its first-ever fundraising drive to update some of its equipment; the goal is \$2,000 by June 1/92. Cheques payable to CAL.

**CAL**  
POB 1446  
Columbia Mo 65205-1446.

## Mumia Abu-Jamal

A former Black Panther, journalist and activist, Mumia Abu-Jamal, was framed on a murder charge and is currently on death row awaiting execution. Known to the black community of Philadel-

phia as "the Voice of the Voiceless," Mumia has exhausted all his legal appeals. Write the Pennsylvania governor to demand he commute Mumia's death sentence: Gov. Robert Casey, Main Capitol Building, #225, Harrisburg PA 17120.

### Don't Make Trouble

From Tuli Kupferberg, a collection of cartoons and commentary.

"What's the difference between religion and patriotism?" "I'll bite." "Close. When a dog howls at the moon, that's religion. And when a dark barks at a stranger, that's patriotism!" \$1.00 from:

Vanity Press  
160 6th Avenue  
NY NY 10013.

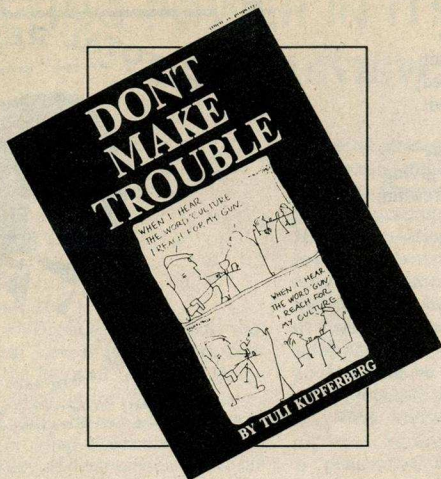
### Black Liberation Radio

Under attack from the FCC and rightwing vigilantes, *Black Liberation Radio* continues to broadcast, illegally, 24 hours every day, bringing news, views and music to the black residents of Springfield Illinois. To help them out, or for further information, write:

Black Liberation Radio  
333 N. 12th Street  
Springfield, IL  
USA 62702.

### Grape Boycott Continues

In case you were wondering, the United Farm Workers are still calling for a boycott of table grapes until agribusiness agrees to the use of non-toxic alternatives to pesticides and to the guarantee



of basic rights for farmworkers.

### Book Catalogues Received

-International Listing of Women's Periodicals: over 400 women's magazines, newspapers etc. \$5 from Women To Women Communications, PO Box 161775, Cupertino CA 95016.

-Black Classic Press: "obscure and significant works by and about people of African descent." PO Box 13414, Baltimore MD 21203.

-Left Bank Distribution: "one of the largest selections of anti-authoritarian books in the world." 4142 Brooklyn Ave. NE, Seattle WA 98105.

-Black Rose Books: large selection of anarchist-relevant material. Spring 1992. CP

1258, Succ. Place du Parc, Montreal Quebec, Canada H2W 2R3.

### Tree Climbers Wanted

The Earth First! Eco-Climber Action Network is a newly-formed network of tree-climbers and -sitters throughout North America. As well as publishing a newsletter discussing techniques they issue action alerts whenever tree-climbers are needed. Contact Earth First! Eco-Climber Action Network, Box 6491, Depot 1, Victoria BC Canada V8R 5M4.

Earth First!  
Box 5176  
Missoula MT  
USA 59806

### Leonard Peltier

The Leonard Peltier Support Group of Seattle has released an updated edition of *In Total Resistance*, a pamphlet of information about and statements by Leonard Peltier. Also included are poetry and artwork by Peltier, Standing Deer and Bobby Garcia.

(Readers are reminded that Peter Matthiessen's book *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* is

## FOR FREEDOM

Great Spirit, I chant for your help  
once again  
The strength of the four winds braced,  
my mind.  
My song set me free for I have  
dared to dream  
before of life-giving  
freedom.

I'm free as an Eagle flying over  
spacious prairies  
that stilled the soul.

Unconstrained,  
life-giving freedom  
soaring under the  
aspect of eternity.

Mountains and seas are no match  
for my wings.


What matters if I fly alone?  
Where freedom lies  
there I find  
home.

**Bobby Garcia**  
from *In Total Resistance*

again in print, with new material added. The book  
was kept out of print by legal actions for 8 years.)

*In Total Resistance* is available for \$4.00 (US)  
from:

**IN TOTAL RESISTANCE**  
Abridged & Revised



PROTECT THE EARTH, FREE LEONARD PELTIER

Statements and Poetry from Leonard Peltier,  
Standing Deer, Bobby Gene Garcia and others

Published By:  
The Seattle Leonard Peltier Support Group  
P.O. Box 2104  
Seattle, WA 98101      \$4.00

Seattle LPSG,  
PO Box 2104,  
Seattle WA  
USA 98101.

### HOW CAN WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

If ever there was a need for alternatives, it is *now*. Government and corporate policies are giving us a deteriorating environment, eroding communities, free trade, the possible dismantling of Canada itself.

But groups and individuals are working for a world that is peaceful, ecologically sane, truly democratic.

The Connexions Digest brings together writings, ideas, events, resources, groups, and strategies for change. The *Connexions Annual*, a special issue of the Digest, is a sourcebook with information about thousands of groups and resources. A sample issue of the Digest is \$1; Subscriptions are \$25/year + \$1.75 Tory GST. Order from

Connexions, 427 Bloor St. W, Toronto M5S 1X7  
(416) 960-3903



**5th ANNUAL  
FLORIDA GREENS  
CONFERENCE**

## Making the Connections

**May 29-31, 1992**  
Camp Ithiel  
(near Orlando)

Help continue the state-wide and local work of the **GREENS**, an international organization that has brought new life to personal and global responsibility. Help bring about true democracy, justice, nonviolence, and ecological sustainability.

For information, an agenda and a registration packet, contact **The GREENS Conference Working Group** at 813-535-3115 or at 813-447-3426.



# PUTTING POWER IN ITS PLACE

## A BOOK REVIEW

**Putting Power In Its Place**  
edited by Judith and Christopher Plant.  
published by New Society Publishers,  
PO Box 189,  
Gabriola Island, BC V0R 1K0  
\$12.45 U.S. by mail

Reviewed by Gary Moffatt

GABRIOLA ISLAND, BC-*New Catalyst*, the northwestern bioregional journal published on one of the Gulf Islands in the Strait of Georgia, has issued a book of essays edited by Judith and Christopher Plant entitled "Putting Power In Its Place," which approaches the problem of creating community control from a variety of perspectives. Since all the articles and extracts are short, a large number of people are heard from in the book's 137 pages.

Many of the writers are well-known environmentalists and decentralists putting forward the theories with which they are associated, the common peg being a commitment to bioregionalism. Kirkpatrick Sale sees the bioregion as a network of decentralized communities; Leopold Kohr urges replacement of the modern nation state with small autonomous units akin to the Swiss cantons; John Papworth goes a step further by advocating that no local area of government exceed 5,000 people; Murray Bookchin reminds us that smallscale social units can be used to support despotic regimes if they are not organized in such a way that power flows from the bottom to the top and confederated in a manner conducive to authentic mutualism based on shared resources, produce and policy-making.

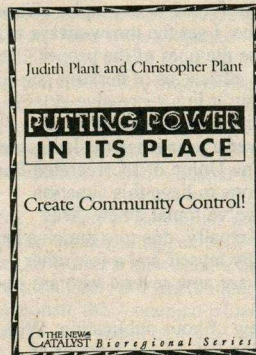
Other writers give us visions of a decentralized, bioregional society in action. There are articles on the Iroquois Confederacy, the Temagami Stewardship Council (which provides for joint management of 40,000 hectares of land and water by natives and the Ontario government), community in Vermont, the concept of watershed management and efforts by the community of Hazelton BC to institute this, community forest boards and local currencies. There are descriptions of conflict with centralized government at Hazelton and Oka.

While insufficiently addressed, the question of how we're going to get from here to there is not entirely overlooked. Carol Moore offers seven de-

centralist strategies: achieving consensus on common goals; emphasizing strategies to raise individual consciousness and improve interrelationships; public education; local organization and community building; creating alternative institutions; preparing for nonviolent resistance leading eventually to community succession from the state; and seizing the opportunities that various crises present. Each of these requires much more discussion than the short paragraph Moore gives it, and indeed another book should be put together going into these and other proposals at greater length.

Don Alexander speaks of an alliance of indigenous, agrarian and alternative cultures to form a "planetariat" which will oppose the technocracy, and eventually ally itself with the workers, provided that it can propose new ways of making a living to replace those which are breaking down. He suggests a strategy that is in part defensive (local citizens groups resisting development and trying to influence state policy), in part transitional (fighting for long-range reforms) and in part radical (public education about a new way of life). He also suggests that we rebuild the community networks whose role the state has usurped, but goes into no detail about how this is to be done.

Most of the book's material is much more relevant to small populations, native bands or inhabitants of threatened small towns or rural areas, who more or less already share a perception of what's wrong and what needs to be done, than to the urbanites who make up the large majority of Canada's population. In the one essay devoted to urban problems, Peter Berg has numer-



ous suggestions for revamping cities to enable them to decentralize power and to cope with the problems they now face, but says nothing about how these suggestions can be implemented in the face of bureaucratic opposition and public ignorance. Similarly, Eric Mann speaks of the need to develop strategies to build effective and democratic trade unions, but fails to indicate what these strategies might be.

For those of us concerned with basic social change, *Putting Power In Its Place* is essential reading because it explains why the present social order isn't working and the nature of the social system which must replace it if any of us are to survive. It does not, however, offer us most of us a direction in which to begin working for this sort of change that is necessary. For those living in an area

threatened by developers, it states the obvious-- unite the community, do the research, propose a plan for local stewardship of resources in the region and fight the corporations and politicians to get this control. As the Plants point out, some of these battles will succeed, some will fail and the successful ones will merely transfer the power someplace else. But what of the communities not immediately threatened, or the cities where there is no community? Is there any way community can be created in the cities? Is there any way to get the general populace away from their TV sets long enough to educate them about the need for community, or should the aware minority abandon the populace, at least long enough to get its own communities functioning? The book really raises more questions than it answers.



## Letters

Dear Friends:

Peace be with you. Greetings from the Gulag. I'm in receipt of the current Kick It Over, sent to me via Gunderloy. Thank you very much. I hope you'll see fit to keep me on your mailing list.

Please pardon the rough appearance of this letter. Due to the fact that they don't sell ribbons in the commissary here, I'm forced to use re-inked ribbons. The problem with that is that the typefaces get gummed up. So I'm forced to use myler ribbons to clean up the typeface. I get the throw-aways from various offices that use the ones of the proper width. Talk about the intricacies of desktop publishing; ever tried doing it in a repressive gulag?

That's exactly what I'm attempting to do. Though it has been over a year since the last issue of the newsletter of The Union of Incarcerated But Innocent Citizens. I hope to have this situation remedied as soon as we've found a new "free world" coordinator. Actually, due to a massive letter writing campaign by myself and a few other Union activists, there are now several who are enthused by this project.

I will run a review of your publication. Will keep you on my mailing list, in one form or another, as mailing lists are also hard to keep in the gulag. I must congratulate you on a fine publica-

tion. Yours is the first progressive publication I've seen in a long time that didn't have a spew about the "poor Palestinian-Arabs." I've seen nothing worthy about them that they should take space in progressive publications.

On this note I'll let you go. Until next time, I remain with a blessing for a more peaceful and just world.

In solidarity,  
Jacob Feuerwerker  
PO Box 56-A187402  
Lebanon OH 45036-0056.

Editors, Kick It Over:

History is the record of human and natural events, as experienced within a given context, by a given culture and generation, and within a set of predictable choices about what is desirable. If you have an anarchist orientation, a historian can generally predict the history that you will choose to see and not see, find desirable and not desirable. If you came of age around the 1940s, are from the American Midwest and never left, and are an American Republicrat by political choice-making, your choices and views of history are similarly predictable, though variations must be sought from

nongeneralizable sources.

The end of history as a concept, like the "end of ideology" heralded in the 1950s, is usually a wrong-headed idea of how to simplify an understanding of human experience by overgeneralizing what is happening. The end of ideology could be seen out of a New York City upper West Side window in 1961 after fifteen years of red scare by anti-Communist liberals and conservatives whose major orientation to life was through the filters of academia, fear of war, and submission to government. The end of history could be seen by 18th century philosophically inclined pre-Master race Germans, by post-World War II European industrial technocrats whose early psychological/emotional lives were dominated by the heartbreaks of being a child in a devastated Europe, and by American computer/cybernetic technocrats (female and male) whose psychohistorical lives revolved around being uncomfortable or left out of the sexual revolution of the 1960s and afterward.

A useful corrective was tried in the form of a radio program by an American anarchist collective, called "*The End of PreHistory*," about fifteen years ago. The program attempted to link the end of human *pre-history*, which was defined as the end of the need to recreate the "individual minimum" (amount of goods) by solely industrial means, with the beginning of the truly social ability to allow human creative products and choices to flow and to be known internationally, which presumably represented the beginning of history. It was an interesting idea, but like the rest of interesting ideas put forward in a vacuum--as are all of the ideas of small groups in mass society--it ironically fell on no ears, particularly tragic for a radio program. I believe that Pacifica Radio in San Francisco may have aired the program twice, and that was the rule of its exposure.

In this context, Gary Moffatt's "*The End of History*" contains some suspect history and dangerous conclusions. Without attempting a critique, here are a few points which question his discussion and conclusions.

The end of women's role as central decision-maker in societies doesn't come with the beginning



IN CONTEXT

of recorded history. Women seem to lose power and authority more with the advent of monotheistic religion, when the representations of deities becomes rather exclusively male (and so does the priest-caste,) and further with the advent of the industrial mode of production, which depended on muscle and on regimenting human senses of time. The idea that women lose power from prehistoric times with the advent of writing is just not true. Women led societies in the Balkans in the years 500-1000; women led English, Russian, Scottish and other societies in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Women as healers, whether called "witches" or not, led medicine in folk societies and even in urban societies far into modernity. I haven't enough knowledge of nonWestern societies, but my suspicion is that women at least shared authority and decision-making in some nonWestern societies that were both organized by tribal modes of politics and not organized by tribal modes. Woman-led states did not prove themselves to be significantly more communal, open or creative in the preindustrial past than did man-made states. Nor did "the next five centuries" (after the "dark ages," which would be approximately the years 1200-1700) appear to be "a period of relative stability in Europe" if you were a non-ruling tribal minority. During this time, strangers were considered unwelcome, often were scapegoated for economic or medical calamities. Blacks were sold into slavery, first by Arab traders, later by Europeans, including those in women-led political states. Jews were subjected to all manner of terrors, culminating in the Inquisition and the greatest event of the year 1492, their expulsion from their previous 500 years of "golden age" on the Iberian Peninsula: Conquered peoples, white, black, and brown were worked and taxed for the profit of the conquerors. Might equaled right.

But the ultimate wrong-headed problem with Mr. Moffatt's "thumbnail sketch" is his conclusion about "retribalizing society." In the news each day in the Western Hemisphere are the results of initial re-tribalisms: the Azerbaijani tribe is seeking to exterminate the Armenian tribe of Nogorno-Karabat in the Azerbaijan of 1992, and there is no Red Army to turn to for protection, whatever else the Red Army meant for historical oppression or hope. The Croatian tribe continues to be warred on by the

Serbian tribe of Yugoslavia. The Palestinian tribe still seeks a homeland from the Israeli tribe, having found no satisfaction coming from the Hashemite tribe or the Shi'ite tribes or the Bedouin tribes.

Writ small, the exiled Korean community of small shop-keepers is warred upon by a disorganized tribe of New York City African Americans, as New York City appears more and more to be a third world city increasingly polarized by neighbourhood tribalisms and white flight. Tribalism, a solution? Get real, Moffatt! Xenophobia is in the saddle, not enlightenment. The former Soviet Union becomes unrecognizable to the likes of Tatyana Tolstoya, the novelist (and Leo Tolstoy's great-grandniece), temporarily teaching at Creighton University in the USA, because, as she put it during an interview on National Public Radio's program "Fresh Air" in late January, 1992, its breakup has led to increased polarization and xenophobia among the national minorities of the former USSR.

It is precisely the tribalism you hail (and which KIO, by printing this nonsense, is complicit with), that is the most fearful wherever, e.g. nuclear weapons come into the hands of tribes, social policy for minorities within their borders comes into the hands of tribes. Anarchist collectives will have more of a role to play in the social organization of many societies (and I do not expect that to be any "quick fix" anywhere soon) than tribes. Dystopia, not utopia, results from tribalism! Charles Fourier, the prime social theorist of the collective as a viable and desirable social unit, would not have been able to support the creation of the 792-member ideal community, a so-called *phalanstery*, from or into a "tribe."

Tribes may provide an identity and a means of survival for some colonized people. As a means of cultural survival, fine. Once in power, I think you'd like living under the dominion of one, as much as you'd like the dominion of a theocracy, a plutocracy, or a technology.

**Fred Friedman**

30 Rice St.

Newton MA 02159.

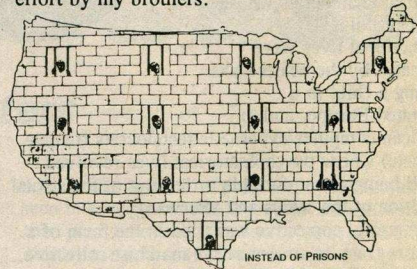
*comment by GM: Mr. Friedman's overview of history and mine do clash at certain points; for instance, I would put the medieval period at 1000-1500 and submit that, whereas social injustice was very real during this period, people were generally a lot safer than during the previous "dark ages" 500-1000, when chaos followed the Roman Empire's collapse. However, much of our difference*

*revolves around different concepts of "tribes," which I see as being at most a few hundred people apiece, united by some common interest or goal rather than by blood or racial origin. By replacing the state with federations of tribes whose function is limited to regulating matters of mutual concern, we could create not utopia but a society which—unlike our present one—is workable. I agree that anarchist collectives have a major role to play in getting us from here to there; pity there aren't more of them.*

### Greetings KIO,

As a black person currently doing a life term in a PA prison, the article in #27 about black prisoners wanting out of the country especially caught my interest.

This letter is intended to share my personal misgivings and doubts about the well-intentioned effort by our brothers.



First, we blacks in America, through our special hardships and struggles, are now a hybrid, neither African nor American, but a wondrous new combination birthed by our blood and pain. Our ruler-imposed cultural matrix would terribly clash with the matrix of any African country we were sent to, our very "specialness" would be our undoing.

Secondly, Africa has its own problems, the countries other than SA, or the ones undergoing birth struggles (civil war) of their own, have no need for additional mouths to feed. The use of Castro's cleaning out his prisons was, in my opinion, not the best example to use. Since he clearly rid himself of those he had no use for, the negative connotations that have followed his action will give pause to any country that would even consider letting us come.

Along these same lines, what can we offer our adopted African country? Most of us, through one circumstance or another, will find ourselves with no useable skills to aid our adopted country; we

would, for the most part, be a further drain and strain on already insufficient resources.

I also question the restriction on countries engaged in civil war. If we are, or were to be, adopted by an African country, we should, as new citizens, be willing to defend it, to die for it if necessary. If we are to be citizens of this African country, it mustn't be seen to be a half-way thing. If nothing else, this country has taught its blacks to fight.

Another thought, who says that Africa wants us? I'm sure many out there will remember Mr. Garvey's attempts in this, and the distinct possibility that Africa may still not want us, and for good reasons. One reason is our lack of support to Africa, when the whites owned, or at least mastered, most of Africa.

One other point, in most prisons it is the hardened, long-term felon that is doing the work, working in the shops and camps, that enables the prison system to show a decent profit. Keep in mind, prisons are a business, a way to prop up sagging economies; without the legions of long-term incarcerated workers, the system will fail, and the true taxpayer expense of prisons will be felt by the taxpayer. For example, those of you in states where the licence plates and/or tags are made by prison

industry, imagine the cost if manufactured by free world people! Or if your state has road gangs, imagine the cost to maintain highways if the workers are from the free world. These people know to the penny how valuable we are, how much our loss would cost them. It is my opinion that, stipulating that they know our worth, they will never let us go.

Having said all this, one would be correct in asking me what I feel we should do. My answer is this: We are born and bred on these shores, our blood nourishes every inch of it, our labour, our sweat helped build it. We belong here, have a better moral claim to being citizens of this country than anyone else imported to its shores. We, in my honest opinion, will need to fight for what we've earned in this country, what our ancestors fought, suffered every indignity, and died for. This country is our birthright and home, I feel that we won't successfully prosper anywhere else, so we must fight our battle here, and die if necessary, for what is ours.

Thanks for listening,  
Vernon Maulsby #AY-4429  
S.C.I. Graterford,  
Box 244,  
Graterford, PA  
USA 19426.

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## ***WHAT WE BELIEVE***

The Kick It Over collective is opposed to all forms of hierarchy and domination, whether right or left.

For us, revolution is more a process than an event -- a process rooted in the radicalization of individuals and in the transformation of everyday life.

Rather than make a principle out of violence or nonviolence, we believe in judging actions on their own merits.

We support acts of

challenge and resistance to authority, and we encourage all efforts to develop models for a new way of living.

We are not a mouth-piece for an "official" anarchist movement. We prefer to go beyond the stock issues which make up the "left agenda."

Since we are interested in the creation of a politics of everyday life, we attempt to draw out and popularize those implicitly radical values and lifestyles which we be-

lieve are pointing in the direction of freedom.

We do not identify with the "official left," which seeks to establish itself as a new ruling group. We identify with, and seek to give voice to, the largely unarticulated anti-authoritarian tendencies within society.

We are committed to spontaneity, by which we mean the triumph of life over dogma. Hence, we believe that freedom is in need of constant redefinition.

# GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

We need your articles and letters. Only through a constant exchange of news and ideas among its readers can **Kick It Over** achieve its goals.

Articles should be between 150 and 2500 words, though we'll print longer ones if the material so warrants. Very long articles may be printed over two issues.

Submissions intended for one of our regular features (i.e. letters to the editor, paths to social change) should be so indicated.

Payment: Fame and Glory. Five copies of the issue in which you appear.

Simultaneous Submissions: Please let us know to what other publications your submission has been sent. If there is significant overlap, we will not print.

We occasionally (not all that often) print poetry and fiction, provided it deals with the themes of the magazine.

We always need good graphics, so art submissions are welcome. We suggest that you not send originals without a written request for them. Photographs are wanted too.

Our primary concerns are anti-authoritarianism, feminism, radical ecology and methods of social change. We sometimes print articles in related areas.

While we are committed to good writing, we wish to encourage new or less-skilled writers to

contribute. Not everyone who has good ideas can write well. Our primary commitment is to ideas.

We reserve the right to edit for style, length, grammar and offensive language. When editing, we will do our best to maintain the integrity of the ideas.

We prefer submissions to be typed, double-spaced. IBM compatible disks are fine if you happen to have access.

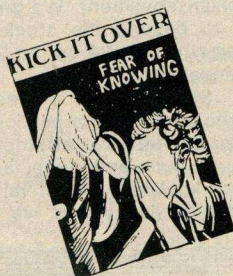
We return material if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed. (If you live outside Canada, please do not use stamps; instead, remit cash equal to the cost of mailing it to us.)

The following guidelines and preferences are not commandments engraved in stone. If the article has something worthwhile to say, we will consider printing it:

-we encourage contributors to avoid sexist language and attitudes. We prefer "s/he" or other gender-neutral terms to the generic "he."

-likewise, we discourage writing that discriminates according to youth/age, sexual preference, race, class, education or ability.

-please try to avoid rhetoric and jargon.-we dislike gratuitous personal attacks; it is not necessary to impugn a person's character to criticize her/his ideas.



# KICK IT OVER BACK ISSUES

Copies of many earlier issues of *Kick It Over* are available. Some are in limited supply. Cost is \$1.00/copy + postage of \$1.00 for the first copy and \$ .50 for each additional copy.

Not only do we not have copies to sell of our earlier issues, none of us has copies for our personal collections. If any readers have extra copies of issues #1-7, we'd be more than happy to buy them. Contact us.

#8: Rhetoric of the Right; Pot Politics; Welfare Warfare; Porn Debate; Vancouver 5.

#9: (limited supply) Whither the Peace Movement; The Politics of Health; Women and Therapy; The Art of War.

#10: (limited supply) Prostitutes Speak Out; Critique of Civil Disobedience; When Your Friends Freak Out; Civilian Insecurity.

#11: (limited supply) Animal Liberation; Anarcha-Feminism; The Politics of Ego; Electro-Shock; Prison Abolition.

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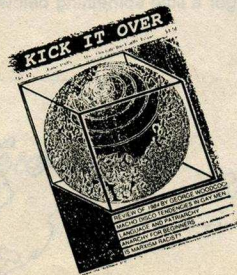
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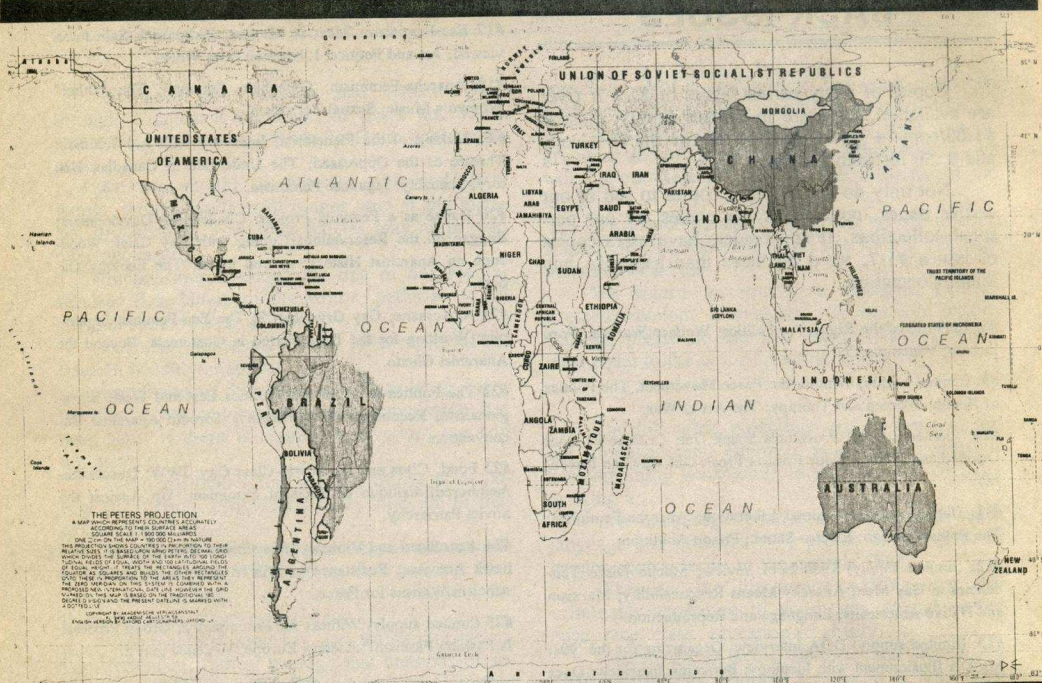
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## what's different about this map?



This is a Peters Projection map. Most maps, the Mercator being the most common example, were designed during the era of European expansionism. They show the world as if Europe were the centre of everything. The northern hemisphere is disproportionately large; the southern continents are far too small. The Peters map is centered on the Equator, and all areas are shown according to their actual size. Europe, usually seen as larger than South America, is really less than half its size; Africa now is pictured larger than the USSR, which it is; South America is no longer a little something below North America, but its equal.



NEW INTERNATIONALIST

OXFORD TORONTO MELBOURNE CHRISTCHURCH

The New Internationalist Publications Ltd, 55, Rectory Road, Oxford, OX4 1BW United Kingdom.

