

# NEW AMERICAN MOVEMENT

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BOSTON, MASS.  
PERMIT NO. 57429

VOLUME V

NUMBER 8

April 1976

35 cents



## Taxes and Welfare

On the fifteenth of this month, you'll have your annual opportunity to help pay for the federal government. It's no small contribution that you're making: the average family pays one-eighth of its income in federal income tax, and one-fourth in taxes of all kinds. And the amount keeps rising year after year.

Most people view taxes as an inevitable, eternal plague, a natural disaster beyond our control. "Nothing is certain except death and taxes." Almost every politician, whatever his real intentions, runs on a promise to cut taxes, or at least prevent increases. The fact that taxes still keep going up, no matter who's elected, just adds to the general cynicism.

Yet today there's something different involved in the debates about taxes. New capitalist plans for restoring profits call for drastic government budget-cutting, and widespread resentment over the level of taxes can easily end up providing support for these strategies.

### Cutting Budgets

Currently, businessmen are desperately seeking ways to end their ten-year profit slump. (Profits as a percent of invested capital peaked in 1965-66, and have been down sharply since then.) They are resisting wage increases even harder than in the past; they are lobbying for new loopholes to cut their taxes, and for government help in pushing U.S. export sales abroad. And, for at least three reasons, business wants to slash government spending.

First, the rising level of government spending in recent years threatens to cut into profits. Government borrowing competes with business borrowing for the available loan money, and

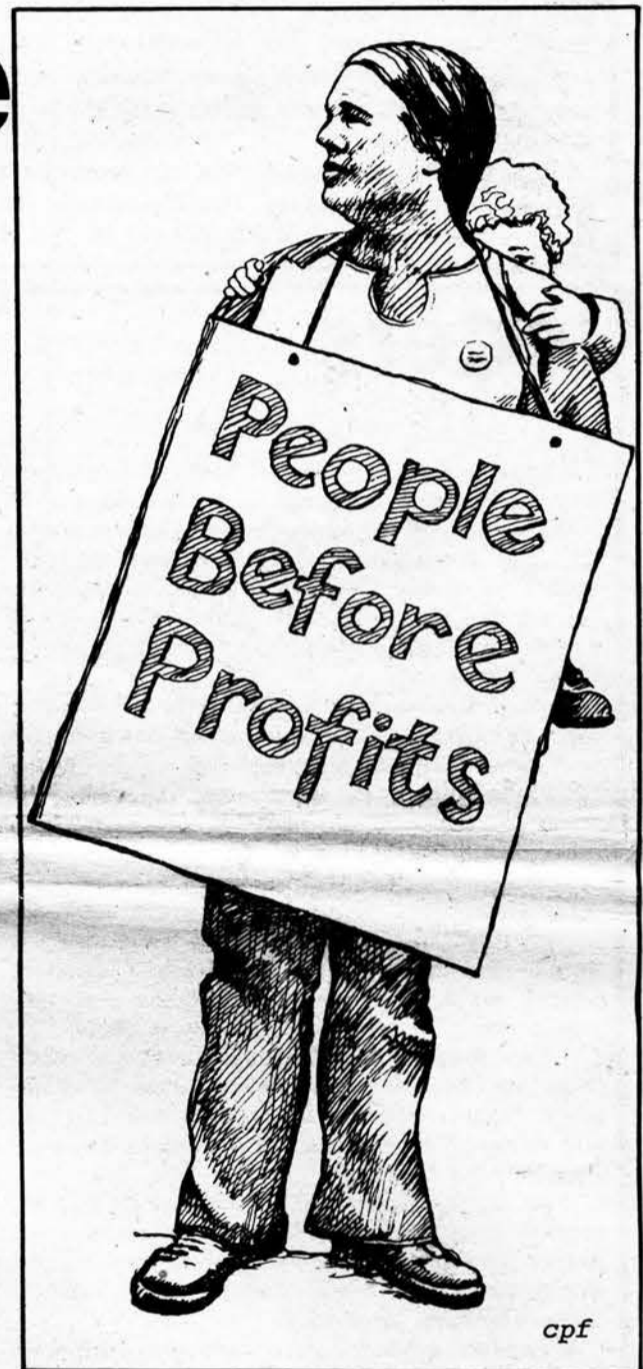
drives up interest rates. Tax increases, too, reduce profits unless capitalists can make workers absorb the whole increase.

Second, government spending provides a lot of jobs. Government employees have been a leading group involved in new union organizing lately. Their general militance, and the specific contract gains they have won, inspire workers in private industry. And the higher level of employment provided by high government spending increases the bargaining power of all workers. With fewer people unemployed it is harder, for instance, for a business to replace striking workers. Less government employment would dampen both the public employee unions and the bargaining power of workers as a whole.

Third, many government services also add to the power of workers against their employers. Any program that provides income independent of work -- for example, unemployment compensation, food stamps, welfare, Medicaid -- makes workers less dependent purely on wages, and therefore more able to resist arbitrary demands from the boss. Not surprisingly, these are the programs that business would most like to see cut back.

It's hard to make friends and get elected by advocating higher profits, fewer teachers, and no food stamps. Instead, the budget-cutting strategy rests on two main props: resentment of higher taxes, and scapegoating of welfare recipients (mostly black and Spanish-speaking, according to the myth) as the reason for the high cost of government. Why should we be taxed, the argument goes, to pay for "them" to live at public expense?

It is important to point out that the vast  
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## Cuba's Victories Make U.S. See Red

by Shepard Bliss

Once again U.S. officials seem to be preparing the public for possible action against the small but revolutionary island of Cuba. Cuba has scored impressive victories on the international front in the past year, made possible by important advances in domestic organization. But while Cuba's recent international activities have included important diplomatic victories, her successes have met with angry responses from U.S. officials.

On February 15, the people of Cuba approved a new Constitution, guaranteeing the rights of Cubans to work, social security, health, education, housing, and equality. According to the news service *Prensa Latina*, "Six million citizens debated it and made suggestions for changes before approving it."

The constitution is just one of many recent events in Cuba which demonstrate that the revolution is increasingly secure in its hold on the island and is moving toward greater demo-

cracy, a democracy unknown in prerevolutionary Cuba. When this writer was last in Cuba, in the summer of 1974, Cuba was experimenting with popular elections in the province of Matanzas. These elections were considered successful in expanding political democracy in a nation which has concentrated on developing economic democracy. In 1975, a new family code providing significant protections for women was finalized.

### International Struggles

Increasingly confident in the direction of socialist development within Cuba, the small island of nine million inhabitants has been increasingly active in international struggles. In addition to its long-standing support for the MPLA in Angola, Cuba has expressed increasing support for popular struggles elsewhere in Southern Africa, Panama, and Puerto Rico. At the same time, Premier Fidel Castro has

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### Inside:

- Communities on the move
- Women and science fiction
- UAW vs. hospital strikers
- Chilean junta falters
- Dylan review
- and more . . .



# Welfare for the Rich

by Dollars and Sense

It's April again, and here comes the taxman. There's been some doubt that major league baseball would start on schedule, but no doubt at all about that other sign of spring. By mid-month, 80 million families and individuals will be paying their income taxes -- or figuring out how much money various levels of government have already taken out of their paycheck.

When all the figuring is done, personal income tax payments will have provided about 40% of all the money taken in by local, state, and federal government (not counting social security and other forms of social insurance, which are taxed and budgeted separately). In 1950, by way of contrast, that figure was only 31%.

While the share of government funds coming out of individual taxpayers' pockets has been rising, the share coming from income taxes on corporations has been falling -- from 23% in 1950 to 14% in 1974.

Individuals pay more and more, while corporations pay less and less. Why? Do we detect the thumb of Congressional taxman Wilbur Mills of Arkansas on the scale all these years? Will the ascent of an Oregon liberal to chairmanship of the House Ways and Means Committee after Mills' late-night plunge into the Tidal Basin last year signify a turnabout in tax policy?

Not very likely. Business's ability to avoid taxes depends, it's true, on an impressive array of loopholes, escape routes, and wide-open doors written into the tax laws. But this lawful tax-dodging machinery wasn't constructed according to the particular politics of particular Congressmen. Far more important is the political strength of private corporations in a society that places decisions about production, employment, and investment in corporate hands.

## On Sale, Cheap

Business's power over tax decisions is easiest to see in operation at the local level. Take New York, a city so starved for tax money that it has to borrow all the time just to pay its bills. New York likes to call itself the financial capital of

the world. It's the home of the world's tallest buildings. Doesn't all that wealth generate some tax revenue?

Not so much, it turns out, because in its desperate attempts to get companies to create jobs in the city, New York has to offer them one tax break after another. Between 1973 and 1975, for instance, New York granted \$6 million in property tax assessment abatements to one of the world's richest men in order to provide some construction jobs. Aristotle Onassis (and his local partners who finished the job after his death) got this windfall for building the Olympic Tower, a 52-story retail-office-apartment building where one-bedroom condominiums sell for \$185,000 plus \$400 a month maintenance charges.

The twin World Trade Center towers, the world's tallest, are entirely tax-free. And what's happening in New York is happening all over, as cities and states compete with each other to encourage companies to choose them as sites for new plants and offices.

Currently, four cities are vying for a new assembly plant Volkswagon plans to set up in the U.S. Baltimore, one of the contenders, placed an ad in the *Wall Street Journal*, addressed to Volkswagon. It stated: "Your three site candidates are good, but don't come close to matching Baltimore City. Baltimore wants you. So much so that we'll let you write your own terms."

Business's ability to move where the climate is best is reflected in corporate income tax rates as well as property taxes. Between 1950 and 1974, corporate income tax payments in states and localities grew less than half as fast as personal income taxes.

## Whose Marbles?

On the national level, the corporations lose some of their ability to play one area off against another, though they still can threaten to move abroad. The crux of the business approach to federal taxes is to say: If taxes are too high, we don't have sufficient incentive to invest; play by our rules, or we'll stop providing the marbles.

## Black Assembly Meets, Finds No Presidential Nominee

by Mark Mericle, Dayton NAM

CINCINNATI -- The National Black Political Assembly still wants "to take it to the hoop," but no one will play ball. The NBPA's Campaign '76 strategy calls for an independent Presidential campaign. The plan was overwhelmingly adopted by 464 delegates at the group's National Black Political Convention in Cincinnati March 18-21, but two potential candidates, Julian Bond and Ronald Dellums, turned down efforts to draft them to run.

Founded four years ago at a convention of several thousand in Gary, Indiana, The NBPA believes that both the Republican and Democratic Parties have betrayed the interests of the national black community. The group's new statement of principles states, "The American system does not work for the masses of our people, and it cannot be made to work without radical fundamental change. Indeed this system does not really work in favor of humanity or anyone in America." The system, says the NBPA, is beset by the twin evils of "white racism and white capitalism."

The NBPA hopes to bring the idea of social change to the American people with an independent, issue-oriented Presidential campaign, a proposal endorsed by the New American Movement and several other groups. Their platform includes a guaranteed annual income of \$9000 for a family of four, an "urban Marshall plan" to rebuild the inner cities, full employment,

public ownership of the nation's utilities, a national health care system, and a prisoners' bill of rights.

But in an emotional speech late Saturday night, California Congressman Ronald Dellums declined the NBPA's nomination for President. He cited personal reasons and his role as a leader of progressive forces in the Democratic Party, a role he said would conflict with the NBPA's plan for a break with the Democrats.

Both Dellums and Georgia state senator Julian Bond, who had earlier declined to run, endorsed the strategy of Campaign '76. Dellums said that not only black people, but people of all colors "are being ground up like glass in the insanity of this society." "Assassination is taking place in this country," he said, "an assassination of hope, belief, and dreams." Dellums said that regardless of the success of the NBPA's search for a candidate this year, the organization's hope for an alternative to the two present parties and its dream for a new America must not be allowed to die.

The NBPA also used the Cincinnati convention to further develop its own organization, adopting a new statement of political principles and drafting a new constitution. It agreed to mount a campaign against Senate Bill One and to make superior quality education for black children a priority for action. The NBPA supports busing where necessary to achieve such education, and opposes any anti-busing amendment to the U.S. Constitution.



As a result of the militant mass movements of the 1930's and the war costs of the '40's and early '50's, the federal tax rate on corporations rose from 13.5% in 1928 to 52% in 1954. Since then, business has been fighting to get it back down.

In each recession, however minor, business has insisted that it needs tax breaks to encourage investment and employment. The result is that while the official corporate tax rate has not gone lower than today's 48%, the actual rate corporations pay has dropped from 38% of profits in 1950 to 29% in 1970. A Congressional study of 1974 taxes showed that 142 leading corporations paid at an average rate of 22%.

This change has come about through any number of tax breaks. According to General Budget Estimates, for instance, the federal government will give companies tax breaks in 1976 equivalent to the following subsidies: a billion dollars to encourage exports; another billion to compensate them for depleting "their" natural resources; seven billion for making new investments; one billion for constructing new buildings; six hundred million for developing new products; and the list goes on and on.

What it boils down to is that the corporations have managed to get tax breaks in return for doing much of what they have to do anyway to stay in business. Perhaps it won't be too long before we're told that the higher a company's profits are, the less taxes they should pay, as a reward!

Whether any specific measure really creates the benefits it's supposed to bring is doubtful. All during the latest recession, for instance, companies have gotten a special "investment tax credit" for making new investments. Meanwhile, over 20% of the existing plant and equipment has been standing idle.

Former Assistant Treasury Secretary Edwin F. Cohen, challenged to defend a particular pro-corporate tax wrinkle in the early '70's, admitted, "We think this will have a substantial impact on investment in plant and equipment, but I wouldn't make an effort to quantify it."

## The Tax Struggle

The point is, phony as depletion allowances and investment credits are, business can get away with them because of an underlying truth. When profits are in trouble, companies do hold back on production, employment, and expansion -- and the rest of us suffer.

Of course, there's no absolute level of profits that must be maintained -- no natural rate that business must get in order to keep going. Business simply tries to get as much as it can; and taxes are one area of the struggle over who gets what. If business incurs severe losses in this struggle, all of us can get hit over the head with a recession. That's the implicit blackmail behind the declining corporate tax rate.

# Revolution

by Roger Gottlieb, Newspaper Collective

What is life like for most people in this society? For those lucky enough to find a job, long hours, low pay, job-related health hazards, and lack of opportunity for women and minorities are the rule. For the 10% who are unemployed, things are worse: inadequate welfare and unemployment payments, inflated prices for essentials like housing, health care, food, and clothing, the ever-present threat of reduced government services. In the last fifteen years we've all come to know much more about the realities of poverty, racism, useless wars for profit (like Vietnam), pollution, and government dishonesty and corruption.

Despite the claims of this year's crop of Presidential hopefuls, it is pretty doubtful that the elections will change much. When things get better, it happens only because the mass of people have organized and made militant demands: for unions, social services, fair treatment for women and blacks, etc.

But these gains, short of making a fundamental change in the system, can always be taken away. Notice how the energy "crisis" led to a relaxation of environmental protection laws; or how college programs for minority students, which came from the active days of the '60's, are being phased out with the present fiscal crunch.

## The Answer?

As we've argued before, only socialism -- a transfer of power from the rich and their government servants to the people -- will begin to solve the problems we face in capitalist society.

But how to we get there from here? How do we make a socialist revolution? Can society be changed without violence? Won't we end up with simply a new set of rulers, called by different names, perhaps, but not much better than the old ones? When we talk about a socialist revolution, these are some of the questions that people raise. They deserve answers.

First, it is important to see that "the revolution" does not take place in one hour, day, or week. It is a slow, painful process, made up of years of organizing, strikes, and community struggles. Side by side with these "public" or "institutional" struggles are the "personal" ones, the struggle of revolutionaries to over-

# what we mean

come the oppressive personal qualities and habits which this society has instilled in us: sexism, racism, competitiveness, and elitism.

Hopefully, these struggles become united in a nationwide or world-wide organization: a group which enables us to see things from more than a personal or local point of view, and which can organize the struggle against a national and world-wide ruling class. As this organization grows in numbers, power, and confidence, struggles get more intense. From local strikes we move to mass or general strikes; from isolated small demonstrations over particular issues to massive nationwide movements which challenge the system as a whole.

The moment of actually challenging the physical power of the state is only the climax of this long process, the point at which the slow river becomes a roaring waterfall. But even after the capitalist class has been smashed, the revolution continues: an almost endless struggle against the old ways of action and thought.

What happens in a socialist revolution is that "ordinary" people gain control of the institutions and social relations which make up their daily lives. Workers control factories and offices; health care and food production are reorganized to meet people's needs rather than to make a profit. In all areas of our society we end the separation between those who give orders and those who carry them out, between those who own the corporations and those who work to produce the wealth. And we also struggle against the institutional and personal ways in which whites are separated from and given greater power and prestige over blacks, men from women, the "talented" from the "ordinary."

Revolution is not a new elite leading a passive mass of angry but still powerless workers. Revolution is us, after a lifetime of taking orders from teachers, administrators, bosses, foremen, cops, and politicians, learning to run our own lives in our own interests.

## Revolutionary Violence

"But don't revolutions cause violence? And isn't violence the kind of thing we're against?"

Revolutions always do involve violence -- because the ruling class will not surrender its power and privilege peacefully. Revolutionaries need not start the shooting. The ruling class almost always does: by using the police or national guard to break a strike, by framing and imprisoning revolutionary leaders, by terrorizing minority ghettos, by the Kent States and Jackson States.

Also, it's important to see that the current system is founded on violence. The starvation of America's poor; the fifty thousand Americans and a million Indochinese dead in our search for higher profits in Southeast Asia; the hundreds of thousands drugged and electroshocked in the mental institutions; the masses of women raped and beaten. Aren't these moments of violence that occur every day in every corner of America?

Socialist revolutionaries do not start violence. But perhaps a socialist revolution in America can bring it to an end, or at least lessen it.

## Who's On Top

"But," it might be asked, "do revolutions really change anything? Won't there still be leaders and followers, and won't the leaders oppress the rest of us?"

This is a real danger. The Russian Revolution started out socialist in name and action, and became a brutal, dictatorial system. But we can learn from the past. There were real historical factors which led to the Russian tragedy, not a "human nature" which makes all good things turn bad.

America is not Russia, and we do not have to follow its pattern. If we adopt the idea of revolution we've described here, the process of revolution itself will make it very hard for some new ruling elite to oppress us. If we see revolution as the masses of people becoming active on their own behalf, and not some new group, with whatever slogans and intentions, taking power, then the people themselves will be their own best defense.

## When?

Of course, all of this is very hard. The working class is divided by race and sex, by income and prestige. And we are taught in all areas of our experience -- families, schools and hospitals, factories and offices, universities, community organizations -- to obey, to take orders, to let the experts run things. The struggle for change goes on, but it progresses slowly.

My sceptical friends sometimes ask me, "When is the revolution?" thinking that only the final outbreaks of violence are really "revolutionary." They don't realize, and it is all too easy to forget, that every time people struggle to take control of their lives the revolution moves one step forward.

"When is the revolution coming?" It's already begun.

# campus notes

•Opposition is growing to attempts by the City and State of New York to force cutbacks in the City University of New York. In the first week of March, rallies involving 10,000 students took place at at least four CUNY campuses. New York City, in the grips of a continuing fiscal crisis, has announced plans to stop funding the four-year colleges in the CUNY system, turning them over to the State. The State Board of Regents has long sought control of the CUNY system in order to end open admissions and free tuition. A further proposal by CUNY Chancellor Robert Kibbee would reduce the number of CUNY students by at least 30,000 through school closings and changes in admissions standards.

•In the past two months, students in Georgia, Colorado, and Washington have begun to organize against planned tuition hikes and educational cutbacks. In Georgia, 500 students from Georgia State University, Atlanta Junior College, and other state colleges rallied against a 10% rise in tuition and a cut in state educational funds. Among other demands,

they called for the state to open all financial records of the university system to public inspection.

In Colorado, 600 state university students rallied to protest the 76% increase in tuition costs over the past five years and the additional 8-9% increase scheduled for next year. And in Olympia, Washington, 200 students took part in a demonstration against a planned 21-32% tuition hike.

•Native American students at Milwaukee Area Technical College are continuing an occupation of a counselling office that began last November 6. The National Indian Youth Council, which has organized the sit-in, has published a list of 16 demands involving financial aid, establishment of Native American Studies courses, and affirmative action in hiring. The students successfully forced the administration to set up a permanent Native American Community Advisory Board, but college officials have so far disregarded the board's recommendations.

•Harvard University students and dining hall workers have successfully forced the university to rehire a black shop steward fired last month. Sherman Holcombe, a shop steward in Local 26 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union, was "indefinitely suspended" following an argu-

ment with a supervisor shortly after he had submitted five grievances concerning work rules and safety hazards. Local 26 denounced the suspension as a "racist and anti-union attack" meant to retaliate against Holcombe for his past militance, and quickly collected signatures of 300 dining hall workers on a petition. Five days later, a student coalition which included NAM and several black and Latin student groups organized a boycott of the North House dining hall, where Holcombe worked. Fewer than 25 of the 350 people who normally eat there showed up for brunch. After two weeks of continued worker and student pressure, the university finally agreed to reinstate Holcombe.

•If Stanford students have their way, their school athletic teams will be known in the future as the Stanford Robber Barons. The school's old "mascot," the Stanford Indian, had been dropped several years ago because of protests by Native American students. A move to restore the Indian was overwhelmingly defeated in a student referendum. Instead, the students voted to name their teams the Robber Barons, after Leland Stanford, the railroad magnate who founded the university. The administration has so far refused to accept the results of the referendum, on the grounds that the name would "project a derogatory image of the school."

# Buffalo Consumers Fight Gas Company

by Bill Nowak, Buffalo NAM

Buffalo NAM's Utilities Project has been helping to lead the fight against a proposed \$5.18 a month increase in the average bill of customers of the National Fuel Gas Company. According to the Federal Power Commission, utility price increases have hit Buffalo harder than any other area in the nation. On January 22, when a standing room only crowd packed the city's Common Council Chambers at a public hearing called by the state Public Service Commission, it became clear that people were ready to stand up and say no to any further rate increases.

At the hearing, Shana Ritter read a statement for the NAM Utilities Project in which she detailed various short and long term methods for cutting National Fuel's costs without cutting utility workers' wages or jobs. The response to her statement was overwhelmingly favorable, and even the PSC staffers and gas company reps (who had looked half asleep for most of the hearing) began taking notes.

After the hearing, NAM helped organize a series of weekly pickets at the National Fuel Gas offices, drawing over 100 people and receiving media coverage for the demands they raised. They demanded: no rate increases; no more shut-offs (the Center for United Labor Action, which has been organizing against shut-offs, joined the picketing); an investigation of democratic control of utilities by consumers and utility workers; cutting corporate costs without cutting utility workers' wages or jobs; a Public Service Commission elected from working and poor people; and an affordable LIFELINE rate structure.

The third week of picketing was co-sponsored



by the Buffalo International Women's Day coalition. The Utilities Project is presently working with people who were drawn to the picket lines to keep pressure on the gas company and the PSC.

## Statewide Public Power Conference Called

In other utility news, a statewide action conference seeking to sharpen citizen demands for municipally owned electric power in New York will take place in Ithaca April 23-5. The

Conference Planning Committee includes people from trade unions, consumer, senior citizen, and environmental groups. The goal of the conference "will be to develop a statewide strategy for municipal ownership as a means of reducing electric rates, promoting job creation, attaining ecologically safe and dependable power, and as a method for providing revenue for our financially strained communities and cities."

For further information on the conference, contact the Upstate Community Resource Institute, P.O. Box 732, Ithaca, NY 14850.

## Shortcuts

### DISCRIMINATION KILLS

Apparently you can't be an activist feminist at the University of Rochester without risking your job ... or that of someone close to you, like your husband. At a recent N.Y. State NOW meeting, a U of R faculty member told of a woman assistant professor whose efforts to obtain equality for women staff and students irked the administration. Failing to intimidate her, they terminated her husband's position as Registrar. The day before his name was dropped from the payroll, which would have caused the termination of the insurance policy covering his family, the man committed suicide. (Majority Report)

### WELFARE MEANS DIVORCE

In Dallas, Texas, living on welfare means a choice of death or divorce for Ida Flint. She and her husband Gordon live on Gordon's \$488 monthly retirement benefits. Ida Flint is now very ill, and needs full time nursing home care, which costs far more than the Flints can afford. But the welfare department says that \$488 for two is too much to qualify for assistance, and that Gordon Flint, 88, is responsible for his wife. The only way the welfare department will pay the nursing home bill is if Ida is alone. So to save Ida's life, after 62 years of marriage the Flints are getting divorced. (Workers Power)

### NO BICENTENNIAL FOR GAYS?

A recent announcement of a \$5000 grant to the San Antonio Forward Foundation for a presentation of gay lifestyles as part of the city's Bicentennial celebration has brought an angry response from local politicians. The Dallas County Commissioners approved a resolution opposing the federal grant "allowing homosexuals to celebrate the Bicentennial in San Antonio." (New Times)

### L.A. "SOUP LINE" PROTESTS FOOD STAMP CUTS

Los Angeles NAM's Economic Rights Center organized a combination "soup line" and picket line on March 18 at the Federal Building to protest massive cutbacks in the food stamp program ordered by President Ford the week before. About 50 people joined in the demonstration, which received extensive media coverage and resulted in an educational television special on the cutbacks. The soup line included lentil soup and bread donated by a local bakery.

### GRAND JURY DEMO CALLED

The Grand Jury Project has called for a national day of protest against FBI harassment and grand jury abuse on Thursday, April 18. Demonstrations in a number of cities, including Boston and New York, will call for the freeing of Jill Raymond, Johanna LeDeaux, Veronica Vigil, and Jay Herbert Quinn, all in jail for refusing to talk to the FBI or testify before grand juries investigating political activism. The Boston demonstration begins at noon at Park Street Station.

### WOMAN JUDGE BARRED

A woman judge in San Francisco who had dismissed charges against 37 prostitutes on the grounds that their male customers went free has been barred from hearing any more prostitution cases by a superior court judge. Municipal Court Judge Ollie Marie-Victoire said in her rulings that police had made the women targets of an "intentional, purposeful, selective enforcement policy" of arresting female prostitutes but not their male customers. She added, "Most of the customers are white, married, middle class affluent males." Judge Marie-Victoire plans to appeal the higher court's ban on her hearing further cases. (Sister Courage/Hera)

### \$26,000 QUESTION

The state of North Carolina, commonly recognized to have a court and prison system only exceeded in its horrors by Alabama's, recently awarded a \$26,650 grant to North Carolina State University to find out why prisoners want to escape. (LNS/Weekly People)

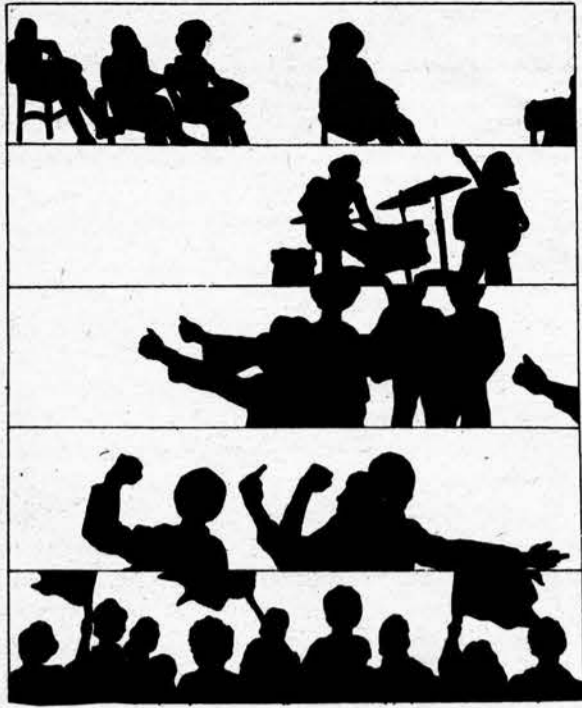
### HAVING THEIR CAKE AND EATING IT

Who in the world is cheap enough to hold a birthday party in their own honor ... and then sell the cake? Why, the phone company, of course. As part of its celebration of the 100th anniversary of the invention of the telephone on March 10, along with crepe paper and balloons, the company sold slices of cake in its cafeteria, for 41 cents a slice. For \$1.85, telephone workers could buy a roast beef and birthday cake dinner. According to one worker, the slices were pretty small, but "the cake was so disgusting it was more than you needed. It looked like it was made out of pink styrofoam." (Workers Power)

### ANGRY CROWD MEETS WALLACE

Carrying signs saying "racism hurts all poor and working people" and "we say no to racism," over 150 demonstrators marched outside the Somerville, Massachusetts, Armory while George Wallace campaigned inside. The demonstrators included members of NAM and the Somerville Tenants Union. Meanwhile, 115 community leaders in twelve Southern states have issued a joint statement condemning Wallace as a "political trickster" who would bring a police state to America. The signers, who plan to continue a campaign to defeat Wallace in the South, include black and white trade unionists, church leaders, elected officials, and community activists. (Black Panther)

# communities



"Everybody" agrees that the radical days of the 1960's are long gone. We no longer see hundreds of thousands of anti-war demonstrators in the streets. The campuses are quiet. "Everyone" has "seen the light" and once again supports "business as usual" in America.

That is what the politicians, the owners of the large corporations, and the corporate-dominated media want us to believe. And of course it is true that the spectacular, dramatic days of the '60's are behind us.

But something new is happening. More quietly, but much more solidly, a mass movement for social change is developing in this country. Local groups

of workers, students, and community activists are struggling against the system.

The issues vary: education in Trenton, New Jersey; childcare in California; repression in Texas prisons; highway expansion in Massachusetts. But what is common to all these situations is a growing consciousness of our need to unite together to fight the capitalist system and its governments.

The newspaper staff composed the articles in this centerfold to remind us all that local struggles are continuing and increasing -- and that the people of the United States are not going to passively accept repression, cuts in government services, or inadequate housing.

## Fighting for Health, Childcare, and Space

The "fiscal crisis" is upon us. Important government services are being cut back as politicians try to convince us that spending on these services is the cause of our recession and inflation. But we know that the real causes are the fat profits of the large corporations and the weakness of a profit-oriented system. So in many places local groups are joining together to fight for the services they need.

### Health Care

In Philadelphia on February 25, more than 5000 people rallied at city hall to protest the planned closing of Philadelphia General Hospital. Plans to close the hospital met with an angry response from the black community. PGH handles more than 250,000 outpatients a year, and if it is closed, many of its disabled and indigent patients would be thrown out into the streets.

The decision to close Philadelphia's only public hospital is part of a post-election "austerity" drive. Struggling against this attempt to make working people of the city pay for the growing budget deficit is a broad coalition of black trade unionists and community groups. Many city work sites were shut down when the unions encouraged their members to stop work to attend the rally. One union leader, speaking of Mayor Frank Rizzo's decision to close the hospital, said, "We're here to testify to his brutality in closing PGH."

### And Education

Chanting, "The people united will never be defeated," and demanding that taxes on the rich and the large corporations be used to solve the "fiscal crisis," 6000 angry teachers and students demonstrated against the proposed 1977 budget for New Jersey.

Under this budget, massive cuts would mean that 500 teachers would be fired, the teaching load would be increased by 25-30%, and different branches of the state college system would face tuition increases of 50-300%.

The demonstration was sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers and the New Jersey Student Association. Speakers, including the president of the AFT, several union officials, and student and faculty representatives for New Jersey's eight state colleges, stressed the need for student-faculty unity in the fight against budget cuts.

When Governor Byrne would not come out to speak to the angry crowd, many students broke down police barricades and stormed the building. The demonstration was probably the most militant in New Jersey since the Vietnam War.

### Childcare in California

The Board of Supervisors of San Francisco

claimed that implementing a three year old voters' referendum requiring the city to provide childcare would destroy San Francisco's "fiscal stability." A task force of childcare activists, parents, workers, and representatives of city agencies is challenging this claim.

"Proposition M" required that "low cost quality childcare be made available to all San Francisco children" in centers in which "policy shall be made by the parents and faculties at each center." In 1973, San Francisco voters approved Proposition M, but the city chose to do nothing about it.

Even now, after a court ruling that the city must implement the plan, the Board of Supervisors wants to repeal Proposition M rather than put it into effect. They claim that it will cost too much. But the city-wide Task Force disagrees. They believe that the Board of Supervisors exaggerates the real cost, and that low cost or no-cost ways of expanding city childcare services can be found.

As a newsletter of childcare activists states, "We have seen that the City did indeed ignore the wishes of its voters. And even now Supervisor Francis is attempting to sabotage Proposition M's implementation. ... With all the wealth in San Francisco, what does this mean? Are we living in a city that is not "fiscally stable" enough to care for its children? We will soon have an answer."

Similar questions are being raised by the Georgia Poverty Rights Organization and the Augusta Welfare Rights Organization. These groups have united to fight Georgia Governor Busbee's plan to make drastic cuts in welfare payments and services. Busbee has threatened to "use the budget as an effective management tool" and fire 1500 state employees.

There is also a bill before the State Assembly that would require licensing for social workers and all community organizers, which would prohibit people without college degrees from working as organizers and lead organizers and social workers who fought the system to be denied licenses.

Ethel Matthews, a leader of a January demonstration against these policies, said in a speech, "We don't have greenback power, but we sure enough have people power. We have a right to adequate health care, decent housing and enough food, just like Governor Busbee. The rich have police but for poor and black people, the only way to change is through non-violent demonstrations."

### Stop

Communities are fighting not only to have local governments spend money for the right things, but to get them to stop spending money for the wrong ones. A coalition of Middlesex and neighboring county residents in eastern Massachusetts have organized to oppose Route 213, a proposed new state highway which, as one of its opponents said, "cannot achieve its objectives, destroys neighborhoods, and is a waste of the taxpayers' money."

Similar struggles are being waged in the community of Jamaica Plain (just south of Boston). Community groups have banded together to fight the "arterial road," a new feed highway for Boston which would have the same effects as Route 213.

### SOCM

Four years ago at the first meeting of Save Our Cumberland Mountains, an East Tennessee resident declared that strip mining was "the worst thing that ever happened to Tennessee." The people present agreed that it was ruining everything from the drinking water to the Irish potatoes.

Since then, SOCM has waged a constant, all-out war on strip mining and related problems. SOCM now has 400 family members in the mountainous, coal-producing region northwest of Knoxville.

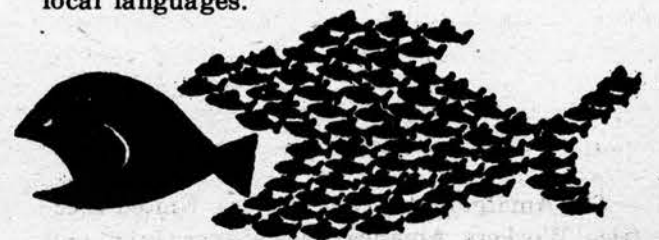
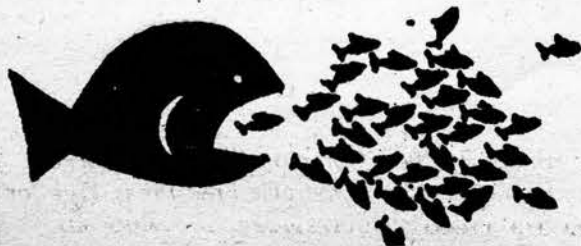
The group's four years of work has brought many significant victories. It's first campaign -- a suit forcing the state to tax coal reserves and mining equipment -- is still getting results. The state's coal severance tax has also been an issue for SOCM. Almost all of the revenues from the tax are returned to county governments. In 1973 and 1974, the tax was 10 cents per ton of coal. SOCM pressured the state into raising it to 20 cents a ton, and now is working to see that the money is spent in the parts of the counties most hard-hit by strip mining.

### And the Phone Company

The telephone has become a necessity of life in the United States today. Apart from its convenience, it is essential for dealing with emergency situations.

In the Bay Area, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese-speaking Americans are demanding bilingual operators and service personnel to communicate with people who do not speak English or who have learned English as a second language and are likely to revert to other languages when confronted with a blazing building or a bleeding child.

Despite \$27.8 million in profits in 1975, Pacific Telephone and Telegraph claims that bilingual services would cost too much. Recent Public Utility Commission hearings have attracted 300 supporters of bilingual telephone service, and may finally bring some results. Once its hearings are completed, the commission will make recommendations to the California legislature, which may pass a law requiring bilingual services throughout the state. A recent step toward official recognition of multilingualism as a fact of life in the U.S. is the requirement that ballots be printed in dominant local languages.



(In unity there is strength)

# Demanding a Decent Place to Live

In their search for more profits and less trouble, banks and landlords across the country are putting the squeeze on people who happen not to own a home. In legislatures, the urban housing emergency has suddenly become a fiction. More recent housing shortages are ridden like swings in the stock market by delighted landlords, and banks redline whole neighborhoods into deterioration. Tenants and frustrated borrowers are organizing groups to fight back.

## Winning Rent Control

In Madison, Wisconsin, supporters of a fair rent ordinance collected the necessary signatures to put rent control before the voters. The fair rent ordinance would establish one of the strongest pro-tenant rent control systems in the U.S. It is proposed as a complement to cooperative housing, tenant organizing, and tenant counselling and against private ownership of public housing.

In San Francisco, 300 tenants demonstrated against the threatened demolition of the International Hotel, which the landlord wants to turn into a parking lot. In the meantime, the Hotel provides one of the few low income housing sites in the crowded Chinatown area, where the vacancy rate is .5%. As another part of its strategy, the International Hotel Tenants Association is suing the hotel's owners for violations of the housing code. The owners would like to empty the hotel for "renovations," but the IHTA has shown such a maneuver to be patently unnecessary.

## Extending Rent Control

In Boston on March 4, hundreds of tenants from cities and towns across Massachusetts marched to protest the shelving of the state Rent Control Act. The former Act expires at the end of March, leaving Massachusetts with no rent control whatsoever. While renewal is held up by opposition of the chairman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee, tenant organizations in Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, and Lynn are preparing for local battles to protect tenants in those cities.

In Cambridge, about 150 people, mostly tenants, met to consider options on rent control and to confront City Councillors who have begun to back down from campaign promises to back rent control legislation.

In Lynn, the Lynn Tenants Action Group is going to court to challenge false signatures on landlords' referendum petitions. The petitions were meant to block the effects of Lynn's own rent control law.

Somerville landlords have already given up hope for a total repeal of rent control, and say that they want vacancy decontrol (which would allow landlords to raise rents when one tenant moved out and was replaced by another) as a compromise. Meanwhile, the Somerville Tenants Union is optimistic that it can get rent control passed in the city when the state law expires, and is working to collect petitions for statewide rent control.

Boston tenants have formed a coalition to set a strategy against the mayor's new hard line anti-rent control position. Tenants got an injunction against Boston's new vacancy de-

control law, but the injunction was lifted in early March.

## Redlining

Redlining refers to banks' practice of determining which areas of a city they will not accept mortgage applications from. Because one or several banks decide that people from a certain neighborhood are not likely to repay the loan and interest, or that for some other reason a loan is not apt to be profitable, residents from the proscribed area inexplicably find it impossible to buy or make major improvements in homes there.

In California, the Center for New Corporate Priorities completed a study of lending patterns across the state, showing that 14% of the population lives in areas which received less than 1% of single family mortgage loans, and that wealthy communities with 1% of the population received 14% of the loan money.

In Rochester, New York, research by a community coalition showed clear instances of redlining. They are now drafting preventative and disclosure legislation for the state.

In Providence, Rhode Island, a community group won its struggle to obtain data on loan approvals, and then pressured a local bank to change its policy to keep written records of mortgage applications, documentation of results, and to give priority to buyers of owner-occupied residences rather than landlords.

In Indianapolis, the Coalition to End Neighborhood Deterioration proved the use of redlining policies in six neighborhoods, then won full disclosure from several lending institutions by constant pressure and publicity.

# Resisting Repression

Hard times breed violence and crime. The government is as frightened of organized opposition to its policies -- protests, strikes, and demonstrations -- as most of us are of the disorganized violence that results when people try to survive in desperate circumstances, through theft, selling drugs, and other behavior that is antisocial as well as illegal. Both kinds of response are often criminal in the eyes of the law, and the government's answer to a rise in "lawlessness" is always the same: more laws, fewer rights for the public, and more people in prison. In a word, repression. In communities and in prisons, we are forced to fight not only for the things we need, but for the right to keep on fighting.

## S-1

Opposition to Senate Bill One, the most repressive piece of legislation ever considered by the Senate, is growing in San Francisco. The San Francisco Committee to Stop S-1 emerged from forums and demonstrations sponsored by the National Lawyers Guild, NAM, and independent local activists.

S-1 strengthens and defends the government's existing police powers. Although it masquerades as a reform of the federal criminal code, it is really a deliberate tool to repress popular movements.

The National Committee Against Repressive Legislation (NCARL) has named S-1 as one of its major enemies. NCARL is publishing one pamphlet noting the particularly racist aspects of the bill and another on those features directed against labor unions and labor organizing.

The San Francisco Committee to Stop S-1 is testifying before the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in support of Supervisor Mendelsohn's resolution opposing S-1. It is urging everyone to spread the word about S-1, to organize neighborhood, workplace, or church group meetings, to circulate petitions, and to write letters to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The Amalgamated Meatcutters, United Electrical Workers, American Newspaper Guild, and the Colorado Federation of Labor are among

the unions already mobilizing against S-1, along with civil liberties organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Lawyers Guild.

## Grand Juries

The New York-based Grand Jury Project is conducting a nationwide campaign to express public outrage at the use of grand jury investigations to harass and intimidate political activists and their friends. Terri Turgeon and Ellen Grusse were recently released from prison after eight months of confinement for refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating the harboring of fugitives Katherine Power and Susan Saxe. People across the country had pressured the judge and U.S. Attorney to release the two women.

The Grand Jury Project is now circulating petitions demanding release of Jill Raymond, a lesbian political activist, Johanna LeDeaux, a Cherokee/Navaho who served for over two years as a paralegal worker for the Lakota Treaty Council in South Dakota, Veronica Vigil, a Chicana activist in Denver, and J. Herbert Quinn, an Irish-American activist who refused to testify before a Concord, New Hampshire grand jury.

## Against Police Terror

More than 1500 Chicanos marched on the San Jose City Hall February 17 to protest police terror in the city. Angered by the killing of Danny Trevino by two white cops January 22, the demonstrators stormed up the stairs to the City Council chambers shouting "Justice for Danny Trevino!"

Trevino was shot in a car outside his girlfriend's house. Police claim they saw him reach for a gun, but no gun was ever found. Since his slaying, the Chicano community has been in a constant state of mobilization. There have been weekly protests of 200 to 600 people at City Council meetings and weekly planning meetings of 300 to 400 people.

The march on City Hall was preceded by a rally in St. James Park, where speakers from the

American Indian Movement, the United Auto Workers Union, the Commission on Justice of the Catholic Church Archdiocese of San Francisco, and WOMA (a feminist organization) addressed the crowd. In a telegram read at the rally, United Farm Worker President Caesar Chavez said that the union was "shocked and outraged at the killing of one of our own Chicano brothers by the San Jose police," and called for "a thorough investigation of this case so justice can be heard."

A day later, 400 people gathered in Philadelphia to protest another police killing, the third in that city since the year began. The latest victim, Michael Sherard, was a 16 year old high school student.

Chanting "No suspension, we want conviction," the crowd demanded that Sherard's killer, Patrolman Donald Woodruff, be prosecuted for murder. Woodruff has been charged with voluntary and involuntary manslaughter. He is the first policeman in two years to be charged in a killing, although in 1975 Philadelphia police killed 24 people, 22 of them black.

## And in Prison

Inmates at Harris County Rehabilitation Center in Humble, Texas, recently staged a three-week hunger strike to protest inhumane conditions in the overcrowded facility. Prisoners said that the causes of the hunger strike were poor living conditions and brutal treatment of inmates awaiting trial.

The Committee to Defend Vernon "T.C." Benton received information that it is now an unstated Rehab policy to put as many as three men in cells that were originally "designed" for one. The Committee is seriously worried about Benton's health and safety.

*These articles are based on stories which appeared in the Communicator, the Great Speckled Bird, the Black Panther, Common Sense, the Militant, Just Economics, the Somerville Free Press, Free for All, and Shelterforce*



Chile's Pinochet

*in Chile*

# Rats Desert Sinking Junta

by Arnold Specter and Rodney Larson

All is not well in the ruling circles of Chile. Sources in London and Mexico report that "at least ten Chilean generals have demanded radical policy changes and the immediate resignation of junta leader General Augusto Pinochet." Sergio Arellano Stark, one general who is particularly close to Pinochet, has already resigned.

This was followed by severe criticism of Pinochet by Christian Democratic Party leader Eduardo Frei. (Frei's party and supporters have accepted large amounts of CIA money and support in the past.)

The international image of the Chilean junta is being refurbished. The reasons behind this are simple: copper prices and the bankruptcy of the regime's economic policies.

## Copper in '76

There is little hope that copper, Chile's chief export, will help the poor Chilean economy in 1976. From a record price of \$1.52 a pound in April 1974, the international copper price fell to a low of under \$.64 this January. The total export income for 1975 was only \$1 billion, down from \$1.6 billion a year earlier. Copper sales make up almost 80% of Chile's foreign exchange earnings. The country's trade deficit is expected to rocket

from \$230 million in 1974 to \$500 million for 1975.

Since the drop in prices, the junta has tried several measures to improve production and bring in more foreign investors. Only ten days after the coup in September 1973, the military leaders announced that they wanted a return of private investment in Chilean copper mines. They also announced that there would be no returning of enterprises which had been legally nationalized. The copper operations would not be returned.

In March 1975, the government proclaimed that new mines could be totally owned by foreigners. Previously, half the investment had to be owned by the state. Among the investors wanting to dig themselves into the market were Canadian-based Falconbridge Nickel Mines, U.S. Filter Corp., and the mineral division of Standard Oil of Indiana. Foreign investors were promised long contracts and low taxes.

## Troubles

No bidding for Chilean copper contracts is coming from three corporations which were paid \$360 million by the junta for mines expropriated by the Allende government, Anaconda Co., Kennecott Copper Corp., and Cerro Corp. Surprise financing may come from Peking, which

may step up its copper purchases and reopen a \$58 million credit line that was granted to Allende and suspended after the coup.

Trouble may be brewing on another front. The junta fears attack from Peru, which recently purchased 100 tanks from Russia. Peruvians have resented the loss of the copper-rich Atacama Desert to the Chileans in the War of the Pacific a century ago.

Production policies and the global economic situation will determine the extent and rate at which the copper market will recover from its worst recession in more than 40 years. It may take until 1980 before consumption increases enough to justify an industrywide rise in production.

All of this means that Chile will have to find new sources of outside credits to keep the faltering regime in power. With world opinion outraged by the regime's cruelties, with important sectors of NATO like Britain breaking relations, and with a meeting of the "Paris Club" this month to reschedule foreign debts, the junta knows that something will have to be done.

In 1975, when Chile's principal international creditors met in Paris, they delayed judgement on the refinancing of the debt for several months. Britain and Italy boycotted the meeting. Behind this were the world protests over the inhumane policies of the junta and severe pressures from social democratic, Communist, and Christian trade unions in Europe. This year's session will be even more difficult.

If the copper market stays bad and Chile's internal economy continues to fail, the only hope for the junta and its supporters is a massive flow of foreign credits and investment. The U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation has been asked to end its refusal to insure U.S. investments in Chile. All of this will require some facelifting. That, and the price of copper, are the reasons for the murmurings of a palace coup against Pinochet in Santiago.

## Cuba, cont.

continued from page 1

scored important diplomatic gains, receiving visits from the leaders of Canada and Panama and visiting Mexico as well as Africa and the Soviet Union.

But while Cuba gains confidence domestically and scores diplomatic victories abroad, the U.S. appears increasingly hostile. Senators Jacob Javits and George McGovern visited Cuba during 1975. At that time, there was speculation about a thaw in the U.S. blockade and eventual opening of diplomatic relations between the two neighbors. But more recently, President Ford delighted Cuban exiles in Florida by labelling Fidel Castro an "international outlaw."

Cuba was a major target of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's February trip to six Latin American countries. Kissinger condemned Cuban support of Angola in each of the countries he visited. Upon returning to the U.S., he appeared before the Congress and asserted that the U.S. will not allow the Cubans to become "the policemen of Africa."

## Military Victories

The rapid military victories of the MPLA and the Cuban troops supporting it in Angola have worried the Pentagon, whose troops never achieved such victories in Southeast Asia, where they were considerably less welcome than the Cuban troops in Africa. After the Portuguese lost control of Angola, MPLA leader Agostino Neto asked the Cubans to increase their troops in order to fight against the South African and U.S. backed forces opposing the MPLA. The State Department is worried about the possible use of Cuban troops against unpopular white-settler regimes in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), Namibia (South West Africa), or even in South Africa.

Kissinger has also expressed concern that Cuban troops might be used in the Americas.

The U.S. is worried about unrest in its two outright colonies in Latin America, Puerto Rico and the Panama Canal Zone.

In September, Havana hosted the International Conference in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence, attended by 300 delegates from 75 countries. Speakers described Cuba and Puerto Rico as "sister republics" and "two wings of the same bird." Cuban President Osalado Dorticos affirmed that Cuban support for Puerto Rican independence is "non-negotiable."

In January, Panama's head of state, General Omar Torrijos, visited Cuba with 200 Panamanians. He was the second Latin American head of state to visit Cuba since the 1959 Cuban Revolution. The only previous visitor was President Luis Echeverria of Mexico, the one Latin American country not to follow the U.S. blockade of Cuba. Addressing a crowd of hundreds of thousands in Santiago de Cuba, Fidel Castro proclaimed, "Panama is a small country of 1.6 million people, but if necessary we can add nine million Cubans." In June, Fidel Castro will visit Panama to attend the 150th anniversary of Simon Bolivar's 1826 Panama Congress.

## "The Cuban Connection"

In November, the U.S. House Judiciary Committee released a report entitled "Terrorist Activity: The Cuban Connection in Puerto Rico." In nearly 200 pages the report condemns the Puerto Rican Socialist Party and the Puerto Rican Solidarity Committee for their alleged ties to Cuba.

The recent speeches by Ford and Kissinger are part of a calculated campaign to whip up an anti-Cuba hysteria in the U.S. It is even possible that the U.S., which still maintains the military base of Guantanamo on Cuba, is preparing military action against Cuba in the form of a naval blockade or an actual invasion.

This tiny country, whose population is less than 4% of that of the United States, has become a major obstacle to U.S. imperialism.

Cuba has helped prevent the U.S. from developing the kind of neo-colonial government in Angola which already exists in Zaire, Kenya, and other former African colonies, officially independent but economically under the thumb of the United States and Western Europe. Cuba is now supporting the anti-colonial forces in the United States' most obvious colonies, Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone. Americans who helped prevent further U.S. involvement in Angola and protested the war in Vietnam must not allow Cuba to become the government's next military target.

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# UAW Bosses Try to Crush Hospital Strike

by Alan Mass, Detroit NAM, and staff

For nearly forty years the men who run the United Auto Workers Union have carefully nurtured an impression of themselves as "progressives," championing the cause of the oppressed with the full resources of their 1.3 million member organization. Memories of UAW leaders marching arm in arm with Martin Luther King's freedom riders and Caesar Chavez's farmworkers for a long time seemed to justify that image.

In the past few years, this mask of righteousness has begun to slip, as UAW officials worked together with the auto companies to crush a series of wildcat strikes by supposedly content auto workers -- at one point storming a picket line at a Detroit Chrysler plant armed with baseball bats, another time helping police clear pickets from the gates of a Dodge truck plant.

But there has been little publicity outside Detroit of one of the most dramatic instances of strike-breaking by the UAW leadership. Less than a year ago, top UAW officials worked hand in hand with Detroit police in an effort to crush a strike by 487 predominantly black women workers at the UAW-controlled Metropolitan Hospital.

## Metropolitan Hospital

Metropolitan Hospital was founded in 1956 by Walter Reuther, then president of the UAW. Charging that Blue Cross and Blue Shield allowed doctors to charge exorbitant rates for unnecessary hospitalization, Reuther and other UAW leaders established Metropolitan to provide alternative low cost preventative health care. A health insurance cooperative, the Community Health Association (CHA), was set up with a \$2 million loan from the UAW to offer a full range of medical services at a rate lower than Blue Cross. By 1970, CHA had 72,000 members, served by Metropolitan Hospital's eight facilities.

In 1972, however, the UAW relinquished control over CHA's operations to its old enemy, Michigan Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The UAW, which retained control over the hospital's board of directors, claimed financial hardship. But hospital workers charged that the UAW leadership had no intention of spearheading the fight for improved conditions for hospital workers and patients. They accused the union of treating the hospital as little more than a business investment, where racism, speed-up, and increasingly inferior service could be rationalized in the pursuit of corporate security and growth.

In March 1972, militants at Metropolitan helped elect a Marxist, Peter Solenberger, vice president of Local 42 of the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU). A year later, militants won control of the executive board of the hospital bargaining unit, and another Marxist, Rita Valenti, was elected chairperson.

When bargaining on the 1975-76 contract began, the hospital workers' negotiators demanded a 25% increase in wages and cost of living allowance, along with a set of "workers rights" demands that would limit management control over work standards, lay-offs, and union activity. The administration rejected the union's demands, and called for a cut in the last contract's cost of living allowance.

Administrators offered to pay the prevailing wage rates at the city's top ten hospitals. But hospital union militants argued that people working for a UAW-run hospital should be the highest paid in the country, and that the UAW should willingly set a precedent for its capitalist competitors in the hospital industry.

## Strike and Strike-Breaking

After six months of fruitless negotiations, the Metropolitan Hospital workers voted to strike, despite a position of "neutrality" by OPEIU national officials that meant that strikers would receive no benefits from the national union.

For outsiders, the first indication that the strike might compromise the UAW's progressive reputation came just minutes after the walkout began. Determined to shut the hospital down, 200 picketers converged at the gate of the main facility in the heart of Detroit's black ghetto, chanting, "Men and women, black and white/Shut it down, shut it tight."

Suddenly, contingents of police began to clear a path through the picket line for scabs to enter the hospital. When strikers refused to yield ground, the police made their first arrest; she was Rita Valenti, chairperson of the bargaining unit. In a matter of minutes, the scene was repeated eight more times. All told, nearly twenty strikers were arrested.

Questioned after the strike had ended, Emil Mazey, the UAW's crusty secretary-treasurer and a charter member of the hospital board, revealed no misgivings about the tactics used against the strikers. "The police were out there to make sure the doctors and patients had a right to go to work without being molested," said the father of the UAW's cop-and-scab-fighting Flying Squadrons. "If the strike hadn't taken place, the police wouldn't have been there at all."

There was a time when Mazey, a former socialist, would have taken a swing at someone voicing that argument. In Senate testimony in 1958, he unashamedly defended the same sort of mass picketing in the long and bloody UAW strike against the Kohler Bathtub Co. Citing the firm's attempt to break the union by keeping the plant open with scabs, Mazey shrugged off suggestions by anti-labor Senators that mass picketing denied the "rights" of the scabs. The Kohler strikers, he explained wryly, "were probably out there to persuade the people from going in."

Some UAW officials, including President Leonard Woodcock, were apparently angrily embarrassed by the mass arrests, according to union sources. Vice-President Douglas Fraser said, "I'm opposed to the police using power or assisting or abetting the breaking of a strike. I've been victim of it too many times to change my attitude just because I'm a member of the Police Commission." But most UAW officials apparently shared Mazey's new found respect for law and order, and least where hospital workers were concerned.

## The Settlement

When bargaining resumed after two weeks, the strike was in a stalemate. The strikers had forced some of the UAW's top brass to expose their opposition to militant trade union struggle, and the strike was costing the hospital tens of thousands of dollars. But the hospital was still open, the strikers had failed to gain widespread support among the UAW rank and file, and with the aid of the OPEIU bureaucracy, the administration had weakened the strikers.

The final compromise agreement made the Metropolitan Hospital workers the highest paid private hospital workers in the area. But the union dropped the workers rights demands, accepting the hospital's pre-strike offer.

Militants in the UAW hope that the Metropolitan strike has in some small way helped to undermine the UAW bureaucracy. One UAW local president who has spent years fighting the leadership remarked, "They acted like the conscientious, frightened businessmen they are, just like your top industrial bosses. These men came from the bowels of laboring society and they've been on top for 30 years. They've got power, prestige, and honors. They're not about to give any of that up without a struggle."

"I'm not surprised they act this way. I'm surprised about the blindness of the little people who put them there and refuse to see what they've become. But things are changing and more people are opening their eyes."

## labor notes

•The United Farm Workers Union has appealed a court order to pay \$1.2 million to the California state unemployment insurance fund. The court decision was based on the novel idea that UFW members receiving strike benefits are actually "employees" of the union.

•General Motors workers in South Gate, California, have voted to occupy their factory if GM tries to close it. The vote followed reports that a scheduled two week layoff would be extended, perhaps indefinitely. The motion for an occupation, which passed unanimously at a union meeting in mid-February, read, "If GM decides to close the South Gate plant, we must answer that with occupation of the plant, like they are doing in Italy and England. We must defend our right to a job from the position of strength -- inside the factory and not on the unemployment line." An attempt by the local leadership to reverse the motion was soundly defeated, and the union meeting voted to select a rank and file occupation committee to make preparations.

•When the West Virginia Coal Association chose the coal miner as its "man of the year," it ran a series of ads with a picture of a man in a miner's helmet. But the "coal miner" in the ads was not exactly a typical mineworker, according to the United Mine Workers Journal. Rather than going to a coal mine and taking a picture, the association dressed up the vice president of their advertising firm in Baltimore for the posters.

## When Old Friends Get Together



"When old friends get together," reads the headline in *White Collar*, newspaper of the Office and Professional Employees International Union. The friends are OPEIU President Howard Coughlin [right], Steel Workers President I.W. Abel [center], and ... Nelson Rockefeller [left], whose family is not exactly known for its pro-union sympathies. With "friends" like that ...

# Desire Wanes

by Sandy Carter, Newspaper Collective

Coming on the heels of his whirlwind and much heralded tour of New England with the Rolling Thunder Revue, is Bob Dylan's new LP *Desire*. The excitement surrounding the "star-studded" northeastern tour (with pop celebrities Joni Mitchell, Joan Baez, Arlo Guthrie, and others) and the single release of the song "Hurricane," depicting the murder frameup of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, has primed an expectant audience clamoring for the new product. Some thought that the new album would prove conclusively the re-emergence of Dylan as a major force in contemporary music, politics, and culture.

But if hopes were high, reactions to the delivered goods are weighted with ambivalence. This is not to say there are no good moments on the new LP -- there are. Nevertheless, this new collection of songs proves an odd mixture of politics, mysticism, sexism, and romantic fascination with outlaws and outcasts of every variety. While musically strong, the dubious content of much of the material forces us to conclude that Mr. D's "desire" may not be our own.

Dylan's November tour provided the legions of east coast Dylan fans with a set of consistently energetic, inspiring, and high quality performances. Unlike the more hyped tour with the Band, where Dylan hastily mouthed his oldies to a reverent and nostalgic audience, on the Rolling Thunder tour his renderings of both old and new material were as passionate as the performances of the Dylan of old. In many respects the show seemed designed to evoke the '60's atmosphere of discontent as Dylan and Baez drew heavily on Dylan's "overtly" political material of the last decade.

But even without comparing *Desire* to the Thunder tour performances, the new LP disappoints. Musically, while sluggish contrasted to the live work, *Desire* is one of Dylan's richest creations. Long given to rather cursory recording techniques, Dylan has assembled a fine supporting cast headed by the sensuous fiddle playing of Scarlet Rivera. On harmony vocals he relies on the exquisite country voice of Emmy Lou Harris. The fine use of congas, mandolin, accordion, drums, guitar, and occasional piano gives Dylan's compositions a multicolored texture often absent in his other work.

## Hurricane Carter

But lest we be lulled by the music, the rub is the content. Most of the numbers on *Desire* were jointly composed by Dylan and Jacques Levy, a New York playwright. To them both must go the credit and discredit for the brilliance and inane-ness of the lyrics.

"Hurricane" opens the album, and it is powerful. Carter's predicament is fully recounted with a militant conviction reminiscent of the younger Dylan.

Here comes the story of the Hurricane  
The man the authorities came to blame  
For somethin' he never done  
Put him in a prison cell  
But one time he could've been  
The champion of the world.

Dylan has long been infatuated with society's outlaws and outcasts. So many of his songs from the past describe a person fighting against overwhelming odds to maintain human integrity in a meaningless world full of violence, injustice, and hypocrisy.

"To live outside the law, you must be honest" is Dylan's famous moral principle. While it is clear that his condemnation is aimed at the capitalist order in which he resides, it has never been so clear what it is that he seeks to affirm, aside from the abstract human essence. Although poet Allen Ginsberg refers to the new material as songs of redemption, just what it is that we are redeeming remains most hazy. The political confusion associated with this "mystic rebellion" surfaces throughout *Desire*.

In "Last Romance in Durango" and "One

More Cup of Coffee Before I Go," the outlaw theme is conjured up again as we are presented two short Sam Peckinpah type westerns. In "Durango," a song Dylan dedicates to Peckinpah, Dylan carries us with a bouncy Mexican rhythm south of the border to tell the tale of a murderer on the run from the law. "One More Cup of Coffee," a beautifully haunting song, finds our outlaw spending his last evening with a woman, "loyal to the stars above." She offers no sense of gratitude or affection to the troubled and chased after outlaw, and thus he prepares to return to the "valley below" to face his challengers alone and against almost certain death.

Is Dylan telling us that the individual struggle is hopeless? Is he indirectly urging us to come together and work collectively toward a solution to our problems? In her song "Diamonds and Rust," speaking of Dylan, Joan Baez comments, "You were always good at keeping things vague, but I don't need any of that vagueness now." Neither do we.

## Sisterhood?

"Mozambique" seems to be Dylan's tribute to the recently liberated African nation. Definitely the happiest and most affirmative number on the album, the song captures the joy of Mozambique's June 24 independence day celebration. Unfortunately, the song seems to celebrate Mozambique's blue sky, sunny beaches, and pretty girls more than the success of the revolutionary movement. It's all very nice to dance to, but a poor political statement.

Such ambiguity appears once more in "Oh Sister." In this song Dylan pleads for unity with his sister or sisters and states that we are all on this earth for one purpose -- to spread love in the world. If this song is Dylan's plea for solidarity with the women's movement, it's certainly been a long time coming. Over the years, he has built up a substantial body of material portraying women in the most narrow and remarkably sexist roles.

## Black Diamond Bay

Despite our many mixed feelings toward *Desire*, Dylan's poetic genius cannot be denied. If the lyrical power of *Desire* seems more erratic and less purposefully directed than that of his earlier works, his former strengths do periodically surface.

Although one of the least interesting songs musically, "Black Diamond Bay" reveals Dylan in near top form. This parable deals with an extravagant cast of characters all going about their isolated existences on a small island about to be destroyed by a volcano. Even when annihilation seems imminent, the various characters seem indifferent to their collective fate.

About midway in the song, there is a sharp break as Dylan transports us to a living room in Los Angeles where the news is being beamed to the nation on Walter Cronkite's nightly report of the day's events. Dylan's newswatcher quickly grows disgusted with "another hard luck story ya gotta hear." He turns the TV off and remarks that the event is no concern of his because he never planned to visit Black Diamond Bay anyway. This tightly constructed and classic tale captures the individualism, insensitivity, and sense of powerlessness so prevalent in modern capitalist society. "Black Diamond Bay" is Dylan's comment on apathy in the midst of rampant social decay.

But "Black Diamond Bay" is more than a social comment. It can also be understood as a personal statement -- Dylan reflecting on himself during his years of relative seclusion. The criticism is as much a self-criticism as it is social. It is Dylan breaking with his immediate past.

In fact, *Desire* as a whole can be taken that way -- Dylan once again entering the world, committed to fighting for his vision of a more just society. Unfortunately, that vision is cloudy and full of contradictions, marred by strong strains of mysticism and sexism. This is the source of our ambivalence toward *Desire*. The new album may well be Dylan's "coming out," but his destination remains to be questioned.

# health notes

by Rick Kunnes, Ann Arbor NAM

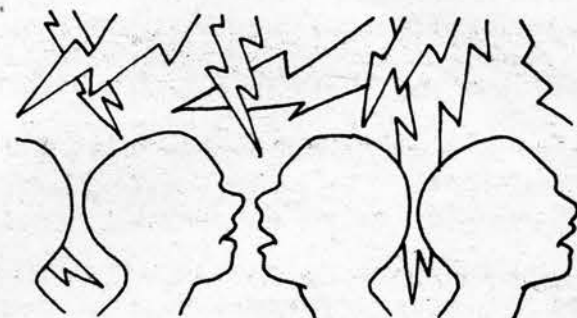
All the items below were contained in reports from major research and medical centers or government agencies, released in the last 60 days.

- When California's Medicaid program learns that one of its recipients has died, it mails the recipient Form Letter MC239-G, which states that "you are no longer eligible to receive Medicaid benefits because we received notification of your demise."

- More people have died in firework accidents than were killed in the U.S. Revolutionary War.

- In the largest medical lawsuit in American history, three women have filed a \$2.5 billion class action suit against manufacturers of DES. The drug was supposedly prescribed to prevent miscarriages. Two of the women developed cervical cancer as a result. Their court papers state that the drug companies "maliciously submitted false information on the effects of DES to federal regulatory agencies with reckless disregard for the truth concerning the hazards and dangers."

- The Environmental "Protection" Agency (EPA) knows of at least 100 pesticides currently in use which cause cancer in animals. However, the EPA refuses to limit their use because it can't prove they cause cancer in humans. Thus



humans become the testing ground for cancer-causing pesticides.

- One out of every five dollars spent for Medicaid and Medicare lab services goes for fraudulently performing laboratory services.

- Virtually any food additive which prolongs "shelf-life" has the opposite effect on your life. More than a billion pounds of additives were put in food last year, enough for five pounds per person in the U.S.

- Dr. Robert Heath of Tulane University has implanted more electrodes into the human brain than anyone else. Heath believes that "anti-social" behavior can be replaced by "positive pleasure feelings" through his electrosurgery. He has wired up his patients for sensations "better than sex." For Heath, drug addicts are not victims of poverty, racism, or alienation, but rather suffer from a "neurological defect in their pleasure centers." He notes that his patients are not troublesome once they can "indulge themselves at the rate of 1000 stimulations an hour ... I turn my patients into puppets."

**song**

# When I Was a Lad -- The Ballad of Gerald Ford

by David Spector, Max Factor, and other members of the Penn Street Theater Company

As the great Edsel stumbles his way through the primaries, we thought you might be interested in his biography put into song. This song was part of a play the Penn Street Theater Company performed at demonstrations protesting the choice of Gerald Ford as the speaker at the University of Pennsylvania graduation last May. It is sung to the tune of "When I was a Lad," from Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*.

When I was a lad I served for a time  
As offensive center on the Michigan line  
No helmet I used in any a game  
And so I acquired an abundance of fame  
And so he acquired an abundance of fame  
Playing all those games so suited me.  
That now I have the office of the Presidency  
Playing all those games so suited he  
That now he has the office of the Presidency


At playing games I became such a whiz  
That I entered the House of Representatives  
I always voted at my party's call  
I never thought of thinking for myself at all  
He never thought of thinking for himself at all  
I thought so little they rewarded me  
By giving me the office of the Presidency  
He thought so little they rewarded he  
By giving him the office of the Presidency

As Congressman I supported the war  
And genuine reactionary causes galore  
To Richard Nixon I seemed so fit  
When looking for a mate of course on me he lit  
When looking for a mate of course on him he lit  
That apologist job did so well for me  
That now I have the office of the Presidency  
That apologist job did so well for he  
That now he has the office of the Presidency


Today I suggested another maneuver  
I'm the greatest President since Herbert Hoover  
I'm a modern day Robin Hood, that's quite a switch  
For I steal from the poor and I give to the rich  
He steals from the poor and he gives to the rich  
I hustled for the rich so skillfully  
That they gave me the office of the Presidency  
He hustled for the rich so skillfully  
That they gave him the office of the Presidency

I supported every right wing point of view  
And I stood behind my good friend Thieu  
I asked for some aid, just a wee bit more  
So you could continue fighting in that war  
So we could continue fighting in that war  
Thieu took the money and off he went  
But I still stand here as your President  
Thieu took the money and off he went  
But you still stand here as our President

Workers and students now listen to me  
Please don't break the rules of society  
They are there for a reason, and that's no lie  
If you just follow orders, you are sure to get by  
If we just follow orders, we are sure to get by  
Stick close to the rich, and never disagree  
And you all may gain the office of the Presidency  
Stick close to the rich, and never disagree  
And we all may gain the office of the Presidency



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# Women and Science Fiction

Women of Wonder: Science Fiction Stories By and About Women  
edited by Pamela Sargent

The Female Man  
by Joanna Russ

by Elayne Rapping, Pittsburgh NAM

It's no news to anyone that we live in a male dominated society. Men control the government, the economy, the schools -- you know the list. But one of the most important things men control isn't usually put on that list.

That's the realm of fantasy and imagination. I'm not talking so much about "high" culture, although it's obvious that most of the "great" poets and playwrights, from Shakespeare to T.S. Eliot, have been male. What I'm really talking about is popular culture -- the so-called "trash" that everyone picks up and reads at newstands and airports or watches on TV.

From Superman to the Lone Ranger to James Bond to Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock, it's always men who do the really important and exciting things in life. Women, if they figure at all, are passive victims, evil demons, or most likely, long waiting wives and girlfriends, standing at the door with a drink in hand for the returning warrior.

All these fantasies play an enormous role in molding and defining what's possible and desirable for males and females in this world. But while James Bond and the Lone Ranger have always bored me, Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock are likely to put me into a rage.

This is because I take science fiction very seriously. It's one of the few contemporary art



forms that deals with the future in a positive, hopeful way. Where most "serious" bourgeois art wallows in cynicism and a sense of impending doom, science fiction is right out there talking about the future, as though it's really going to happen, and as though it could be a whole lot better than it is now. It insists that human beings have the power to change their condition for the better and it suggests all sorts of ingenious possibilities for doing that.

## Male Values

But since science fiction is dominated by traditional western male values, it tends to be heavily weighted toward technological, as opposed to social or interpersonal, speculation. It usually ignores the question of sex roles and relationships. For both these reasons, it has usually been more politically conservative than it might be.

Which is why it makes me mad. I've often thought that if more socialists and/or feminists started writing science fiction, we might get some really imaginative political fantasies. And in the last year or so it has started to happen. Two science fiction books by and about women have come out recently, and just as I suspected, the subject matter and point of view are refreshingly different from "Star Trek."

Women of Wonder, an anthology, is an ice breaker, including stories written between 1948 and 1973. While most of them aren't particularly politically exciting, taken as a whole they do point to new possibilities.

At the least, they all focus critically on the condition of women in contemporary society. In Sonya Dorman's *When I Was Miss Dow*, an alien from another planet takes the form of a human female, suffering and commenting on her oppression. Kit Reed's *The Food Farm* and Kate Wilhelm's *Baby, You Were Great* explore future worlds where the very different, but equally miserable, lives of extremely beautiful and extremely unbeautiful women are carried to their logical, horrifying conclusions.

But the most interesting stories portray future societies based on radically new social and psychological developments. Of these, my favorite was Joanna Russ's *Nobody's Home*, which takes place in a world where technology has eliminated scarcity and freedom is a reality. I liked that story so much I began searching the book stores for more of Russ's work, and, as luck would have it, I found *The Female Man*, which is one of the most exciting works of fiction I've read in a long time.

It's a fantasy about four different cultures -- two more or less contemporary, two in very distant and different hypothetical futures -- and the way in which the feminine personality and potential would develop in each. The plot concerns the coming together of four different women -- Janet, Jael, Jeannine, and Joanna (who is the author herself) -- from each of these worlds. It's a very complicated plot involving the usual paraphernalia of science fiction -- time/space travel, genetic and technological miracles, and so on. But I want to focus on what's unusual for science fiction: the speculations about meaningful work, family and child rearing arrangements, and personal relationships.

Jeannine and Joanna represent two more or less unhappy, but recognizable, possibilities for women today. Jeannine is a librarian with a boring boyfriend, moving inexorably if ambivalently toward marriage. She is a pathetic

creature who whines, dawdles, worries about her hair, her face, her frigidity, her chronic fatigue.

Joanna, on the other hand, is a career woman who has spent her life trying to escape the confines of the feminine role, and in the process become more and more "masculine," a mirror image of what she dislikes most in the male stereotype.

From these two models of contemporary femininity, Russ goes on to speculate on two possible futures. In Jael's world, the battle of the sexes has reached its horrible conclusion. Men and women live in separate but equally sexist societies. Manland is populated by "real-men" who run things and the "changed" and "half-changed" -- transsexuals and transvestites -- who are painfully realistic caricatures of femininity as we now know it. In Womanland the roles are reversed. Jael herself is a professional assassin, with a technologically produced and programmed male "house-pet" named Davy. One of the funniest (or most frightening) passages describes their sexual relationship in a perfect parody of traditional, male-oriented pornography, as mechanical and dehumanized as you can get.

But the real heroine is Janet, who lives in a world called Whileaway where there are no men. Women there, free at last from artificially imposed sex roles, have developed all the best qualities of both sexes. It's a sheer delight to read about this society where all women do serious work -- physical and mental -- and child rearing is an important, but always temporary, part of that work. It's also a sheer delight to read about Janet's adventures in our world, where she reacts in a thoroughly rational but socially horrifying way to all situations involving traditional male/female relationships. Janet actually says all those "I wish I'd thought of that" things women fantasize about when it's too late.

## Feminine Fantasies

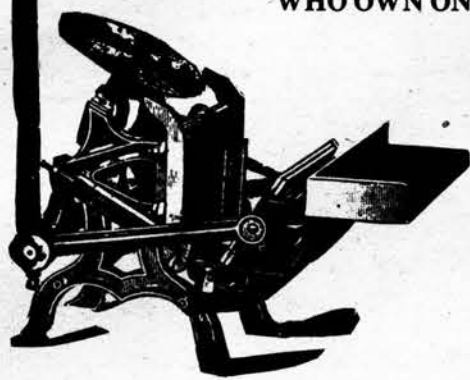
In a real sense this book is a collection of spiritually enriching feminine fantasies, and Russ makes it clear that that was her main reason for writing it. Speaking in her own voice, she tells how she first "invented" Janet and the effect this imaginary creature had on her own life. "Before Janet arrived," she says, "I was moody, ill-at-ease, unhappy, and hard to be with. ... But after I called up Janet, out of nothing, I began to gain weight, my appetite improved, friends commented on my renewed zest for life."

Russ intrudes again and again into her story to remind us of the "fantastic" nature of the book, and the enormous personal and political power she thinks such fantasies can have. What we can imagine, we can very possibly become, she insists, most eloquently in the book's closing passage:

"Good-bye to Janet, whom we don't believe in but who is in secret our savior from utter despair, who appears Heaven-high in our dreams with a mountain under each arm and the ocean in her pocket. ... Radiant as the day, the might-be of our dreams, living as she does in a blessedness none of us will ever know, she is nonetheless Everywoman. Good-bye Jeannine, poor soul, poor as-I-once-was. Remember: we will all be changed. In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, we will all be free. I swear it on my own head. I swear it on my ten fingers. We will be ourselves."

Well, as I said, I take science fiction very seriously. And I'm so glad people as talented as Joanna Russ are starting to, too.

## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS EXISTS FOR THOSE WHO OWN ONE.



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