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S-1 Could Jail Us All

by Red Cedar NAM

"Nixon's Revenge," the "Bill of Frights" -- these are just a few of the names being given to the 700-page piece of legislation innocently titled Senate Bill One (S-1). If the effort to get the bill through Congress in 1976 succeeds, it will mean an end to most Americans' rights to dissent from government policies. In the words of Senator Sam Ervin, S-1 "would establish what is essentially a police state."

S-1 started out as an effort to revise the U.S. criminal code, which is ~~inherently~~ and contradictory. But under the expert tutelage of Attorneys General Mitchell and Kleindienst and their boss Nixon, it became the most repressive legislation in recent history.

The bill provides for long jail sentences, and in many cases the death penalty, for a wide range of political activity. Every NAM member could be jailed for seven years for "participating as an active member in an organization that...incites others to engage in conduct that then or at some future time would facilitate the forcible overthrow of the government."

S-1 defines a riot as any "public disturbance of five or more persons" which "creates a grave danger of injury or damage to persons or property." Participation in a riot carries a three year penalty (seven years for a prison riot). What antiwar demonstration, or militant strike, would not have qualified as a riot under this definition?



All of the reporters and newscasters who helped in the exposure of Watergate, the CIA abuses of power, or Ellsberg's Pentagon Papers, would now be in jail for three to seven years under S-1 provisions, for not immediately returning classified documents to the proper authorities. The Watergate conspirators, on the other hand, would be free, since a section of the bill grants immunity to anyone obeying the orders of a higher authority when they commit a crime.

Wiretapping and Forced Confessions

S-1 upholds the Attorney General's power to wiretap at will. It allows prosecutors to use "voluntary" confessions in court even if they were obtained by secret police interrogation and the defendant was not informed of his or her rights.

The death penalty, life imprisonment, or 20 to 30 years and a \$100,000 fine are mandated for "sabotage," which is defined as any activity that "damages or tampers with" almost any property or facility used in national defense or even "particularly suited to national defense," with the intent to "interfere with or obstruct the ability of the U.S. or an associated nation to prepare for or engage in war or defense activities." Even improper production of war materials or raw materials (work slowdowns, for example) is covered by the law, as are all but "lawful" strikes. The coal miners' wildcat strikes this year would be illegal under S-1, since coal is a vital raw material. If the strikes occurred in peacetime, it would mean 15 year sentences for the strikers; in times of national emergency -- as defined by the President -- it would mean 30 years.

It should also be noted that sabotage activities are defined to include not only the United States, but also "associated nations," so that national defense has now expanded to become the defense of international imperialism.

S-1 was introduced in January 1975 by a group of conservative and moderate Senators, including Eastland, McClellan, and Tower. Even

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Inside:

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Printers Strike Washington Post

by Washington, D.C. Dollars and Sense

"LUDDITE VIOLENCE" screamed the Time Magazine headline. No better than "assassins of Presidents and ~~offits~~," charged the Washington Post. "The first time ever...in this country claimed a printing equipment manufacturer quoted in the Washington Star. Thus report the onset of a strike of American press

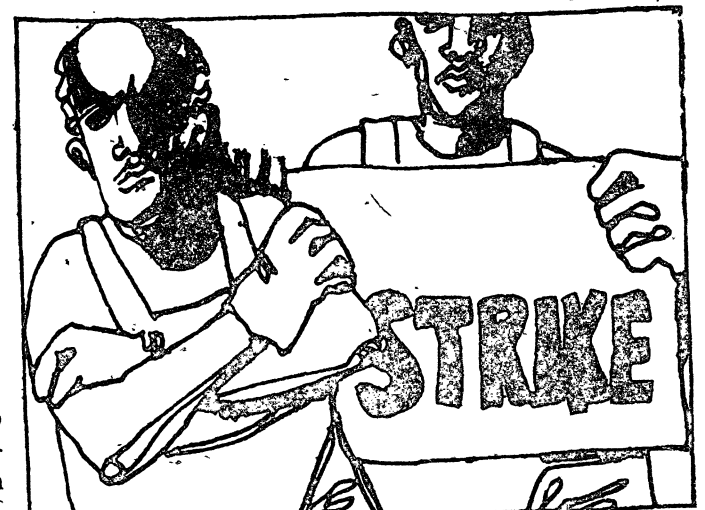
men at the Post, along with the Central Labor Council, have joined in calling for a public boycott of the newspaper. The massive campaign for public support is essential to winning the nearly two month old strike, where the unions, led by the pressmen, are fighting for their survival.

The Washington Post, after achieving acclaim for its exposure of the Nixon cover-up, was conducting a cover-up of its own. Photos and vivid reports of wrecked presses and a fire-damaged press room were splashed across its front pages, accompanied by stories heralding its efforts to continue publishing, flying typeset plates by helicopter to nearby non-union print shops. The Post did not report that the printers in these plants were being paid 2 1/2 times their normal wage to print the scab paper.

During the first tumultuous days of picketing, the Post got a court injunction limiting the union to three pickets. Police were stationed inside the Post building. Numerous arrests were made, chiefly of pickets trying to persuade non-union workers imported from West Virginia not to enter the Post.

Watergate figure Earl Silbert, now U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, is presently attempting to indict some of the pressmen. The government has requested and received an extraordinary court ruling prohibiting the unionists from having the same lawyer. This battle is still

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Southern Woodcutters Organize

This September over 200 people took part in the Fight-back conference sponsored by SCEF (the Southern Conference Education Fund). The conference was held in Eastabuchie, Mississippi, home of the Gulfcoast Pulpwood Association, an interracial union of wood cutters and haulers that has existed since 1971.

While there were differences of opinion about how to combat the current economic crisis, there was unanimous support for the GPA. Right now the GPA needs financial support to continue its organizing drives. Money can be sent to the Gulfcoast Pulpwood Association, P.O. Box 53, Eastabuchie, Mississippi.

This interview is with Mr. Fred Walters, president of the GPA. It is reprinted from the Atlanta newspaper the Great Speckled Bird.

BIRD: What is the GPA?

Walters: The Gulfcoast Pulpwood Association are people that cut and haul pulpwood to the paper companies. These companies are all over the South and what we do in the GPA is try and get these haulers together. We are in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and we are fixing to go into Louisiana.

Bird: What is the history of the GPA?

Walters: Back in 1971 we were hauling wood for the Masonite Corporation in Laurel, Mississippi. I had hauled there for many years. They had always given measurement for scale on our trucks. Then they changed from the scale to weight. We weren't getting anything to start with, not a decent living anyway, and this changeover meant \$20 or less on a load of wood. I guess I was one of the first that went over the scales and when I seen my pay slip why then I pulled my truck out on the lot there and I told the man, "Man, I can't haul this wood myself." And he said, "Well, you'll haul it or you'll go home." I said, "Well, I don't know too much about that," so I pulled out there in the parking lot in less than a couple of hours there were over 200 wood haulers. And we began to make decisions.

Bird: That was the first time you met?

Walters: Right. And these people had never been in a union. Oh, there may have been exceptions, but the wood haulers had never thought about a union or never been at a union meeting.

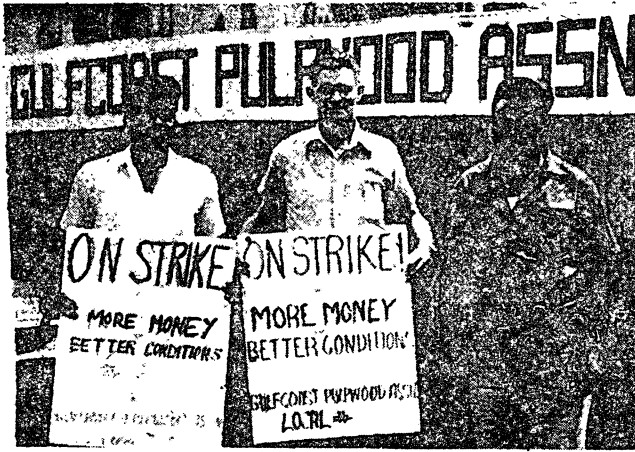
Then we began to decide about how we were going to do something about it and the only solution we could come up with was to put a picket line up there at the wood yard. We put our first line up in the morning.

Bird: Was the union both black and white from the beginning?

Walters: Yes. Before this strike, Masonite would not let the colored people have trucks or contracts up there. They had to work for the big contractors. So when we went on strike, why then that brought the company to have to recognize the colored man. And the only reason that they recognized him was that they wanted to get him to run over our picket line. And they bought a huge bunch of new trucks and new saws. But these colored people didn't haul over our picket line. No, they got the trucks, but they run with them down the road.

The difference was that they had already seen that the man didn't care nothing about them -- if he had he would have bought them trucks and saws before -- and that they were using them. You know, that is one thing a lot of people don't understand. They think because an old wood hauler hasn't got a certain degree in college he's a damned idiot. By God, they're not. And these people realized that they were going to be used, and that if we stayed out there on the line long enough we were going to get a little of what we were asking for.

And it happened, but you know, everybody that I knew would come by and say, "Look, you ain't going to do nothing out there, you'd just as well go home." We said, "We're making our decision, we stay here until we get ready to go and we don't let nobody else make our decisions." We didn't really know what we was doing, but we tried to get the company to recognize us and to give us a raise.



They didn't do it, but we stayed out there three and a half months, and they began to sweep that last chip in that hopper. The big boys rolled out there on the picket line and said, "Alright, boys, we've decided that we'll give you a little raise." Right then is when we realized that by working together the accomplishments that we could make.

Bird: What are working conditions like?

Walters: They are the worst of any people in this world, because you got a truck and you got a power saw, and this power saw that you're operating, if you take the least awkward lick with it a limb can hit it just right and it will throw the thing and cut your head off. And I've seen this happen. And if it don't do that, it will cut your arm off, cut your leg off, and split your hands to pieces.

This truck that you're talking about, now we have got these loaders on, and when you talk about loaders you're talking about a winch that will pick this big piece of wood up. Then you have got a topper that tops that wood. And this piece of wood, while you are swinging it around, that cable could break or the tongs could slip. And then if none of that happens, you may go out there and snag a couple of tires, or you may go out there and you'll bog down and it will take you two or three days to get your truck out.

Bird: You don't get paid for those days?

Walters: Man, you don't get paid for nothing but that wood when it is delivered at that plant.

Wages were the first thing we were fighting for because we were not making enough out of this wood to make a decent living. The concern of the Association is that a man goes out there in these woods and do all these hazardous things I've mentioned without any insurance, and it's not because he doesn't want that insurance, but because he can't afford it. There has been a demand for higher prices on our wood so we would be able to afford insurance and be able to afford a truck that we could put out on the highway.

Bird: Does the GPA put out any challenge to the system other than demands for better wages and working conditions?

Walters: The thing about is that people were being used, and we're talking about colored people. They have used the colored against the

white, the white against the colored. In a lot of cases the dealer will put you on a tract of timber, and they will put the white man out there and give him a dolloar, a dollar and a half more. They'll put the white man in the good timber and the colored in the bad, and pay him a-dollar and a half less. If we find out that they're doing this, then we're going to drive our trucks out of there, no longer will we cut a stick of his wood. And we have done that. Whenever I go into a new place I try to get each of the two races to see who the real enemy is, not the two of them but the real enemy.

Bird: Who are the dealers?

Walters: The dealer is a man that the company has got in a "cat's paw" to stand between the producer and the company. The company don't want to get charged with anything and they use this dealer as that. And there's no telling how much the company's paying the dealers for their wood. The dealer is going to do whatever he can to keep you from organizing, because he knows what's on his tail when we all get ready. And that's been proven to him.

We had two wood dealers out there yesterday. They were nice, and you know the reason why, don't you? I think this conference is one of the best things that have ever come to Mississippi, because they was a lot of people that had doubts about what we were doing and how we were doing it.

Bird: Why are there so few groups like the GPA and the UFW that are doing this kind of rural organizing?

Walters: This is really a hard struggle. This is not like going into a plant because in a plant you have got all your group going in and out on the same day, every day. And these people are scattered out in the country, and it takes a lot of gas, a lot of driving, to get to these people.

Also they tell you that you're an independent, but let me ask you this: if we're independent, why can't we haul wood anywhere we want? If the dealer buys you equipment you have got to haul direct to this man regardless if there's another one who's paying ten dollars more a cord. They have taken people out of the cotton patch, but they have placed them in these little factories and in them woods.

Bird: What are your plans for the GPA?

Walters: Right now our plans are to try and get our old locals back and also new locals. Then we need to be thinking about doing away with the dealer. We are planning to eliminate the dealer as soon as possible.

Bird: How can people in other places help the GPA?

Walters: Right now we are in very desperate need of money. This money would be spent to buy gas to get us from one place to the other to get our people together. This is one reason we're not able to get our people more because we're not able to afford it.



Steve Carlip, Chris Casey, Lisa Dennen, Lew Friedland, Roger Gottlieb, Dean Manders, Larry Miller, Kathy Moore, Karen Morgan, Carolee Sandberg, John Viertel

NAM Newspaper, 16 Union Sq., Somerville, MA 02143

The New American Movement (NAM) exists to help organize a movement for democratic socialism in the United States. Our aim is to establish working class control of the enormous productive capacity of American industry, to create a society that will provide material comfort and security for all people, and in which the full and free development of every individual will be the basic goal. Such a society will strive for decentralization of decision-making, an end to bureaucratic rule, and participation of all people in shaping their own lives and the direction of society. We believe the elimination of sexist and racist institutions and the dismantling of American economic and social control abroad are central to the struggle for socialism.

GI RESISTANCE CONTINUES

by David Cortright

When the all volunteer armed forces were introduced, many critics claimed that it would lead to the formation of a separate military caste, isolated from society and staffed with professionals eager for war. Many people feared that the end of the draft would eliminate the healthy questioning and protest which grew up in the ranks during the Indochina war.

So far, however, volunteer recruits have shown the same independence as recent draftees. In many ways, volunteers seem more feisty and troublesome for their commanders than conscripts were. Indeed, the volunteer services are encountering morale and disciplinary problems as severe as those of the Vietnam era.

Clear evidence for this continuing morale crisis comes in the Pentagon's personnel statistics. In 1974, service-wide AWOL and desertion rates were at record peacetime levels, only slightly below the all-time highs of 1971. In the Navy and Marine Corps, unauthorized absence rates have climbed to their highest levels in modern history. The 1974 AWOL rates were 79 per thousand for the services as a whole (compared to 84 per thousand in 1971), 53 per thousand in the Navy (nearly three times the 1971 level), and a startling 287 per thousand in the Marine Corps.

Another indication of the continuing problems within the volunteer force is the extraordinarily high number of courts martial and nonjudicial punishments meted out to enlistees. Article 15's (nonjudicial punishments imposed by a commander without trial) have climbed steadily in the last three years, and now stand at 180 per thousand, one of the highest rates on record.

Perhaps the surest indication of the military's internal difficulties -- and the most shocking statistic in human terms -- is the sharp rise in less-than-honorable, or "bad" discharges. In 1974, about 77,000 servicepeople, more than 11% of all those released, were separated without honorable discharges. This is the highest level in modern service history.

Protesting Working Conditions

These signs of unrest indicate widespread turmoil within the ranks, but they tell little about the state of organized political activity among volunteers. Here the picture is more confusing. The mass action and anti-imperialist opposition common during the Vietnam era is no longer evident. The number of GI newspapers and organizing committees has dropped from a peak of more than 100 to approximately 20.

But GI opposition has continued, its focus shifting from the purpose of the military to more immediate concerns such as working conditions. The style of protest and the disruption caused by rank and file resistance have remained the same. The continuation of the GI movement into the post-Vietnam era, even on a reduced scale, is an important challenge to military policy.

Especially in the Navy, the issue of working conditions has become extremely important. The latest in a series of mutinees occurred on August 5, when 60 sailors from the engineering section of the guided missile cruiser U.S.S. *Sterrett* walked off their ship to protest oppressive working conditions. The San Diego-based ship had been the scene of months of dispute over job safety and command harassment. It boasted its own GI newspaper, the *Sterrett Free Press*, one of several papers supported by the Center for Servicemen's Rights.

When the harried engineers were ordered on restriction for failing an equipment inspection, they angrily defied the order and gathered on the pier for a protest meeting. They agreed to return aboard only after the Captain pleaded with them and agreed to hear their grievances in a lengthy special meeting on the ship's messdeck. As a result of the action, the restriction on the engineers was lifted, and the ship's sailing was delayed several days.

In the first half of 1974, activists from the Center for Servicemen's Rights worked with crewmen from two other ships in campaigns similar to that of the *Sterrett*. On the U.S.S. *Chicago*, sailors edited a paper called *Pig Boat Blues* and launched a petition drive against

harassment and frequent drug arrests. On the U.S.S. *Agerholm*, disgusted crewmen put out several issues of a newsletter entitled *Scaggie Aggie Review*.

In October and November of 1974, wives of enlisted crewmen led a drive against unsafe and oppressive conditions on the carrier U.S.S. *Coral Sea*. They circulated a petition signed by 1500 Navy men and women demanding that the ship not be allowed to sail. Crew members did not form a separate on-board organization, but they made their feelings known by signing the petition and by engaging in frequent acts of sabotage and arson.

Last September in Okinawa, 40 marines at Camp Hague staged a protest strike and refused to work until the commanding general agreed to review their grievances. As a result, sweeping improvements were instituted at the camp, and work schedules were eased.

VRB/Out

GI movement activity has also focused on the military's denial of promised economic benefits. Congress' 1974 reduction of variable reenlistment bonuses (VRB) promised to Navy enlisted technicians touched off a storm of protest. Sailors formed an organization called VRB/Out, which has demanded either full payment of the bonuses or immediate honorable discharges. Chapters of VRB/Out have surfaced in San Diego, Long Beach, Honolulu, Newport News, Virginia, and Charleston, South Carolina. VRB/Out has a total active duty membership of about 800, and is receiving strong support from sailors' wives as well.



As the all-volunteer force has attracted a growing percentage of nonwhite recruits, the pervasive racism of military life has generated continued black rebellion. One of the biggest incidents occurred in October 1973, when nearly 200 black and Puerto Rican soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, members of what the command labelled a "black socialist club," engaged in simultaneous revolts at a number of bases near the DMZ.

Another important incident took place among minority crewmen of the U.S.S. *Little Rock*, flagship of the 6th Fleet. The struggle began in November 1973 with a shipboard brawl, and continued in Naples, Italy in 1974 with a major fight against MPs and a lengthy series of legal maneuvers.

Some black-led struggles have succeeded in attracting white support, as well. Perhaps the most significant recent example of such multi-racial GI unity occurred in 1974 aboard the U.S.S. *Midway*. On June 14, as the huge aircraft carrier set out for the Pacific from Yokosuka, Japan, nearly 80 crewmen left the ship and refused to sail in protest over racism and intolerable conditions. Led by black and Puerto Rican sailors, the racially mixed group of rebels demanded that the Navy end its policy of homeporting (stationing carriers in foreign ports near potential sites of intervention), and asked that the *Midway* be returned to the U.S. Over 30 sailors were charged for their role in the mutiny, but agitation aboard the *Midway* and circulation of the local GI paper, *Freedom of the Press*, has continued.

Haircuts

One of the most widespread grievances among enlistees is the military haircut policy. While GIs have always complained about short hair, only in



the past two years have they pressed the matter politically. The first major campaign occurred in Britain. In early 1974, Sergeant Dan Pruitt publically refused orders to cut his hair. Over 800 GIs signed petitions supporting his stand. He was court martialed and sentenced to four months imprisonment and a dishonorable discharge, but as he emerged from the courtroom, he was hailed as a hero by his fellow airmen and hoisted on the shoulders of his cheering supporters.

For Dan and many of his friends, the haircut question was not a trivial matter of personal appearance, but an important political and moral issue. Dan described military haircut regulations as designed "to keep people in the service separated and segregated from the public." He saw this attempt "to make us different" as especially important because "we may be engaged in domestic wars against our brothers and sisters." To these first haircut resisters, the struggle against short hair was a direct challenge to the military's repressive function and its separation from the people.

The most famous haircut case occurred in November 1974 in Berlin. Eight soldiers publically refused haircut orders and launched a major campaign to attract support. In just a few weeks, 1200 soldiers -- more than a third of the entire enlisted force in Berlin -- signed petitions backing them. When the Army tried to transfer the only black resister in the group, the struggle escalated. On the morning of November 25, 22 men of C Battery, 94th Artillery refused to report for duty and staged a day-long strike. Besides demanding a change in the military haircut policy and protesting command attempts to divide their group racially, they adopted the radical position that enlisted people should have the right to approve the selection of officers.

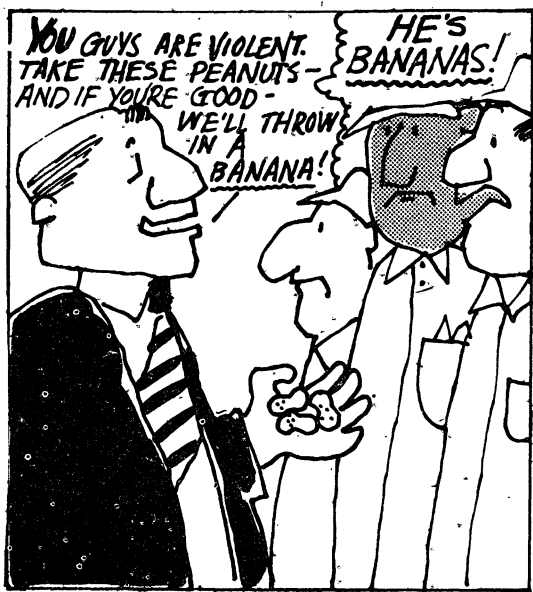
The Army reacted sharply to the strike, court martialing and punitively discharging most of the participants. But despite the repression, GI organizing in Berlin has continued, and the haircut struggle has spread, in Germany and throughout the armed forces.

New Approaches

Military resistance has changed since the early 1970's. Fewer people are involved, and the focus of political activity has shifted. The antiwar and anti-imperialist emphasis of a few years ago has been replaced by a more pragmatic approach, focusing on service conditions and restrictions on personal liberty.

This new emphasis may seem unrelated to military policy, but these struggles have far-reaching implications. The campaign to alter military service, even if it begins with minor issues, changes the structure of authority within the ranks.

By questioning the military's right to determine their conditions of service, GIs are challenging the very foundations of military order. They are adopting a more critical and independent posture toward command authority, and are grasping for basic human rights and responsibilities. The result is a shift in the balance of power in the service which makes the functioning of the military more dependent on the willing support of enlisted people.



what we mean SOCIALISM

This is the first of a series of columns that will explore the basic ideas of socialism. In this month's column, we will try to explain what socialism is, and why we believe it must replace capitalism. In coming months we will discuss the process of making a socialist revolution and see how well countries which consider themselves socialist, such as Russia and China, match up to this definition. In later issues we will discuss the nature of capitalism, alienation, the socialist concept of the state, socialist economics, socialism and democracy, imperialism, Marxism, feminism, revolution, and other topics.

by Roger Gottlieb, Newspaper Collective

Is capitalism the best form for society to take? Can legal reforms, education or technology solve the problems of poverty, unemployment, war, pollution, government corruption and the misuse of power by big corporations? We don't think so. The New American Movement believes that to solve these problems we will have to take the power to control our country away from the men who have it now.

In our present system the means of production -- the factories, farms, tools and resources used to produce the things we need -- are owned privately. Small groups of immensely wealthy men control our (and most of the world's) industries. Their wealth is based on the profit they make from our labor, the labor of the great majority of Americans who must work for wages in order to survive. The immense wealth of these men gives them enormous power, including a great deal of control over our government and influence over governments all over the world. Those of us who don't own GM, U.S. Steel, Exxon or the Chase Manhattan Bank must win that power away from those who do. Until we do, the problems we face in our daily lives will continue and increase.

Reforms

Capitalism cannot be reformed by a few new laws. Most reforms leave wealth and power in the hands of the people who have it now; and those people will always work to further their own interests and wealth at our expense. That's why the right laws don't get passed, or don't get enforced.

The only real reforms -- like the minimum wage, the 8-hour day, rent control -- have been those which take power away from the rich and chips away at their "freedom" to use their property to rule the rest of us. It is not enough to fight with a landlord, a boss or a politician to try to make them more generous or honest. Ultimately, working people must take away their power and take full control of the neighborhoods, factories, schools, farms and other institutions that shape our lives.

Basically, a socialist society is one in which all the people control all the institutions, economic as well as political. Socialism means that factories can be run by workers and consumers, schools by teachers, students and parents, apartment houses by tenants. When working people control the U.S. economy, we will be able to produce goods and services to meet people's needs, and not to make a fast buck. We will be able to build housing for people's comfort instead of for a realtor's profit. When we control the immense productive power of American industry, we will not let it sit idle because production is unprofitable. We will be able to make decent medical care and education freely available to everyone, as they already are in many countries poorer than the United States.

This collective effort to solve our problems can only succeed after we get rid of the existing division between a ruling class and a working class. Right now unemployment, racism, sexism and the U.S. control of foreign governments are not unfortunate accidents; they actually benefit our ruling class. (We will discuss this in future issues.) We can deal with these problems effectively only if we change society so that its most powerful members no longer benefit from our weakness and pain.

To struggle for socialism, then, is to struggle for mass ownership and control of industry, for a government that is made up of and represents ordinary people, and for an economy where no one makes a profit from another's labor. Socialism is a system where no one benefits from the conditions which oppress and divide us. Under socialism we can eliminate poverty and unemployment and begin to change the conditions that produce sexism, racism and war. It won't be easy and it won't happen overnight, but we'll have the power to do it.

Sounds pretty good, doesn't it?

Printers' Strike

continued from page 1.

being fought in the courts, and the strikers are resisting the attempt to use the grand jury to divide them.

What the press did not report was that the strike had been preceded by months of fruitless negotiations, in which the Post never deviated from its original position, a position which the union members saw as a direct assault on their union (Local 6 of the Newspaper and Graphic Communications Union). The pressmen fear that the Post, which had earlier brought in a tough new labor relations director, is trying to destroy their union, just as unions have been broken in the last few years at newspapers in Miami, Oklahoma City, Dallas, Shreveport, Kansas City, and Portland. After working for five weeks without a contract, being subject to speed-up and harassment, and hearing rumors of an impending lock-out, the pressmen finally ran out of patience.

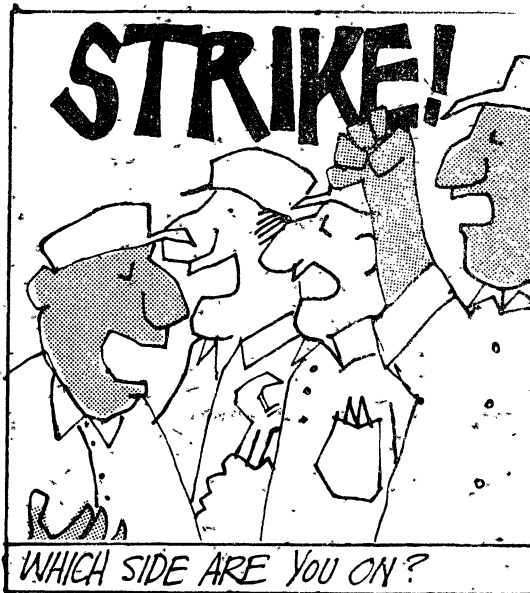
Union Busting at the Post

Katherine Graham, the chair of the Post's board of directors, said that "because of the violence...it would be the ultimate act of irresponsibility on our part to permit the pressmen to return under the old conditions." The Post, the largest corporation in Washington, D.C., and among the top 250 in the whole country, is openly speaking of increasing its current 9% profit rate to the 15% level it enjoyed in the mid-'60's. It wants to reduce overtime pay, curb rest periods and sick leave, curtail cost of living increases, and undo advances in grievance procedures made in the last contract.

Over the previous year, the Post had failed to implement the grievance procedure it had agreed to. Instead, grievances were being dragged out, sent to arbitration, and were costing the union hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees. In addition, after laying off a number of pressmen, the Post hired a substitute labor pool of part-time workers. These workers, who don't have the same benefits as regular workers, were being used on peak days to avoid paying overtime.

The strike has been complicated by the fact that Post employees are represented by a variety of different unions, including the Newspaper Guild representing writers, reporters, advertising and clerical workers. The Guild now officially supports the strike, and over half of its members refuse to cross the picket lines. But many Guild members see themselves as part of a professional association, not a union, and do not identify with the cause of the pressmen. Others feel that the pressmen are sexist or racist, and still other believe they "owe it to the community" to get the paper out.

The strikers' spirit and solidarity have remained strong, but they know that the cover-up by the press has made it difficult for them to get their story to the public. It remains to be seen whether the boycott of the Post can bring enough pressure on its managers and stockholders to force them to respect the basic rights of their workers.



LETTERS

Letters to be printed should be specifically addressed to this column. They should be no more than 200 words, or they will be subject to editing for length if necessary. We will try to print as many letters as we can.

To the collective:

Steve Carlip, in his article **Food Prices -- Blaming the Russians** (Oct. 1975) was correct in pointing out the role of the food monopolies in rising food prices. However, there is no denying that the increase in U.S. food exports beginning in 1972 (the year of the first Russian grain deal) has increased the price of grain -- it's just that prices paid to farmers do not make as much of an impact on retail food prices as do other factors.

I believe Carlip is also correct in implying that all the uproar about selling wheat to Russia is feeding anti-communism, although strangely enough, nobody gets upset about sales of wheat to China. There have been accusations that the Soviet leadership is admitting that it cannot feed its people.

The fact of the matter is that the U.S.S.R. does not need U.S. wheat to feed the Soviet people -- U.S. grain is going into meat and dairy production. If grain is fed to animals, more grain is used up in producing a pound of protein than would be if the grain is fed directly to humans.

By the way, China does not need U.S. grain to feed its population, either. China imports wheat, when necessary, in order to export an equivalent amount of rice, which is worth more on the world market.

Yours truly,
Milton Takai
LA Westside NAM

Actors and the Union

by Judith Charney, N.Y. Westside, NAM

People come to the theatre to be entertained after a hard day's work. But while they are being entertained, the actors are working. When I give my occupation as "actress," people respond, "That's not work, that's play." Acting can look like a lot of fun, but it is a hard job, with the typical problems of exploitation that other workers face. Our union, Actors' Equity Association, provides vital protection for about 20,000 professional performers in the legitimate theatre in the United States and Canada against the exploitation of the business of "show business."

During my tour with an Equity production of *Hair* this summer, several abusive situations arose in which the actors reacted consciously as workers and union members. On the first evening, with half of us still leaving the bus, the word was passed back that housing was the "usual mess." For the "stock jobbing" contract we were operating under, the management must arrange safe, sanitary accommodations, costing the actor no more than 20% of a week's salary -- above that, management pays. As is custom, the first thing we did after dropping our suitcases was to elect an Equity delegate from the cast, who immediately got on the phone to Equity. In fact, "Call Equity," a 24-hour hot line, is one of the most popular lines in the theatre.

The hotel situation was worked out when it was revealed that the business managers of the theatre "happened to be" part-owner of the selected "Inn." Finally, due to the Equity delegate's union savvy, our living arrangements were settled.

I was impressed by the union consciousness of the other cast members, their sense of "actor as worker." It is no accident; most of us learned the hard way, by being naively exploited at least once by some greedy producer. We have learned how necessary it is to use our union contract to protect ourselves and to squelch an unscrupulous boss.

Unpaid Overtime

For example, rehearsal procedures are carefully spelled out, with a lunch break and a five minute break during each hour of rehearsal -- which is necessary in an eight hour day of dance rehearsal. We had to point to these contract stipulations when a panicked director tried to work us through our rest breaks because he couldn't convince the producers to fork up any overtime money for extra rehearsal to insure a good first night performance. When this opening night pressure is on, the union is most appreciated by the actors. Later that night, the director tried to soften our hearts by invoking the great tradition of the "trouper" who willingly "gave of themselves for their art." What he was really doing was asking for an extra few hours of unpaid work. Needless to say, we refused to work free for the boss.

The spirit of "The Show Must Go On" is an incredible force when a co-worker is injured or when a troupe is doing something they really believe in, but it doesn't extend to a boss whose eyes are only on the cash collecting in the box office. Even during our dress rehearsal, six hours before opening night, our confrontations were



not over. The nails and splinters on the stage floor made it impossible to continue. There are Equity standards for working conditions, and before the producers even had a chance to make ultimatums to the cast about losing our jobs, our delegate was on the phone to Equity. We took a half hour break while the floor was repaired.

We turned to Equity again and again to protect ourselves from the management, and once also had to use the "professional behavior" clause to protect us from a co-worker, who continually came on stage stoned even though he was responsible for a tricky body-catch, and one night just about caused a disaster. He was warned he'd be reported to Equity, and he quickly "got his act together."

Many of these union rules and contract stipulations that we put into practice during our working hours are products of a long history of struggle between actors and producers. At the same time that many craft and industrial workers were organizing throughout the country, theatrical workers were also banding together to defend their interests and express their needs.

Before the Equity Union was founded in 1913, the plight of the actor was onerous and difficult. There was no standard contract; each manager drew his own conditions. There was no minimum wage. Rehearsal time was unlimited and unpaid; there was no guarantee of playing time; transportation in the hands of a defaulting manager left many a company stranded miles from home; holiday matinees were numerous and given free by the performers; all costumes had to be furnished by the actor; the production could be laid off during lean weeks; no salary was paid for performances missed by travel delay; and dismissal of the actor was possible without notice. In short, the manager set his own requirements, and few actors could stand against them.

The first negotiated contract was short-lived. But in 1919 the American Federation of Labor granted a charter to the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, of which Equity was the largest component.

In the famous strike of 1919 against the Producing Managers' Association, actors demanded recognition of Equity as their bargaining agent. The thirty day strike spread to eight cities, closed 37 plays, prevented the opening of 16 others, and cost everybody concerned \$3 million. Supported by the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees and the American Federation of Musicians, Equity's membership increased from 2700 to 14,000. By the end of the strike, the managers signed a five year contract granting practically all of Equity's demands.

After its recognition in 1919, the Association struggled for the establishment of an Equity shop, which it finally won in 1924. Also won in 1924 were the bonding agreements, under which managers must post enough money to guarantee actors' salaries and transportation. In 1933, actors won a minimum wage. In 1935, the first payment of rehearsal expense money was won -- \$15 a week.

Other achievements of the union have been the organization of resident, childrens', and dinner theatres, an overhaul of rules governing talent agents and their relationship to actors, and improved working conditions. The most controversial achievement was the establishment of a welfare fund and a pension plan. This was not easily won; it was one of the issues contributing to the Broadway Blackout of 1960, during which all New York theatres were closed for two weeks.

Unemployment

Still, actors are often transient workers, and the most serious problem facing the union is unemployment. At almost any given time, 80% of Equity members have no job in the legitimate theatre. In a typical year, 65% of the union membership earns less than \$2550, less than 5% earn over \$10,000, and 13% have no earnings at all.

There is nothing glamorous about the reality of trying to make a living as an actor. Because jobs are scarce, the actor goes after the few available ones with single-minded determination. Even when the rare job is secured, there is no promise that the show will run for long, so counting on the income is a real gamble.

Given this grim economic picture, more and more actors are beginning to realize that only a nationalized theatre, under the control of the workers in the theatrical professions, can eliminate the competitive pressures and exploitative factors present in the industry today. It is a struggle well worth waging.



RADIO FREE CALIFORNIA

by Len Krimmerman

A media reform group may soon seize control of a commercial radio station in San Jose, Cal. Public Communicators, Inc. (PCI) charges that commercial radio stations are not responsive to the community. By gaining control of radio waves, PCI will be able to air programs responsive and useful for the community.

Two main strategies have been used by other media reform groups: "good faith negotiations" with broadcasters based on comparisons of radio stations; and filing "petitions to deny" the renewal of licenses of broadcasters who have been unresponsive to community needs, problems, and interests. These petitions may be filed with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

These tactics require an enormous amount of time and energy with no guarantee of success. Licensed broadcasters are not legally bound to agreements made in these negotiations, nor do they obligate commercial licensees to seriously consider broadcast policies which might reduce profits. As yet, none of the "petitions to deny" against commercial broadcasters has resulted in revocation of a broadcast license.

The PCI has taken a different approach, based on FCC regulations which allow citizens to establish stations of their own. PCI has filed a **competitive license application** with the FCC for the right to operate KBAY-FM in San Jose, now operated by the United Broadcasting Corporation (UBC). This is the first time a citizens' group has filed to take a license away from a commercial broadcaster.

The FCC has accepted PCI's application, and a hearing has been set for later this year.

PCI contends that the UBC, being a privately owned profit-oriented station, has been unresponsive to serving the public. For example, almost 90% of UBC working messages are devoted to advertisements.

PCI's proposed plans include: (1) operation of KBAY-FM as a commercial but non-profit station; (2) the democratic election of a Board of Directors by the community with a majority composed of people historically excluded from media control -- minorities, women, and low income groups; (3) recruitment and training of management and broadcasting personnel from within the community; (4) a 50% minimum of working messages devoted to local issues and free citizen editorials; and (5) allocation of all revenues beyond operating costs to research programming designed to address community needs, and to train community residents for media-related vocations.

If their hearing is successful, PCI will win the right to operate their own station and establish a legal precedent valuable to low income community groups throughout the country. Furthermore, it will serve as a clear signal and encouragement to other citizen groups trying to gain control of radio air waves in their communities.

To win the competitive hearing, PCI must prove that it is financially qualified to operate its own station. In addition, it must secure enough resources to obtain depositions, hire counselors, and pay for other costs during the hearings.

Through loans pledged by groups and individuals around the country PCI has raised \$40,000. Their license application lists first year installation and operating costs at \$31,050.

The PCI is preparing a **Competitive License Handbook** to aid other people interested in developing community-oriented radio and TV stations in their own areas. Public Communicators, Inc., is located at 787 San Antonio St., San Jose, CA 95112.

Since this article was written, two important events -- one expected, one a total surprise -- have

brightened PCI's chances. On October 29, the FCC officially set a comparative hearing between PCI and United Broadcasting for January 21, 1976. This hearing is now scheduled for Washington, D.C., but PCI has filed a petition requesting a local hearing so that its community, its members, and its witnesses can attend without spending hundreds of dollars and missing work.

In a surprising development, a notice appeared in **Broadcasting** magazine: "The **Boston Globe** reported October 24 that its parent, Affiliated Publications, Inc., has reached agreement in principle to purchase KEEN-AM and KBAY-FM from United Broadcasting. Price is reported \$3.4-\$3.6 million." United Broadcasting is apparently on the run.

Further, as **Broadcasting** suggested, it is legally improper for United to sell KBAY to anyone, since its license has not been renewed, and will not be until the end of the FCC hearings (which often last several years). So United Broadcasting has seriously weakened its defense against PCI by circumventing FCC procedures and by once again disregarding the need for local and representative ownership.

labor notes

- The first National Conference of Working Women's Organizations ended recently with a decision to coordinate a national campaign against discriminatory practices in major industry. The conference, hosted by Boston's 9 to 5 Organization, included representatives from New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, and Cleveland. As its first national target, it selected the Chicago-based brokerage firm of Marsh-McLennan, the world's largest brokerage house. The campaign is expected to send shock waves throughout major insurance companies and client industries. A second conference is planned for next year.

- The average take-home pay for a worker with three dependents is now less than what it was ten years ago, according to the UAW's **Washington Report**.

- The 300,000-member American Federation of Government Employees plans a union drive to organize GIs. One Pentagon source told the **Wall Street Journal**, "Sheer horror! If you analyze the meaning of military discipline, you can't tolerate any organization that competes with the chain of command." The military may be getting some unexpected help, however. George Meany called the AFGE drive "the funniest thing I ever heard of."

- In the latest election results among California farmworkers, the United Farmworkers Union is pulling steadily ahead of the Teamsters. According to the state Agricultural Labor Relations Board, the UFW has won elections on farms representing 56% of the workers so far. The Teamsters will represent 38%; the remaining 6% voted for no union. The UFW scored what it considered a major gain by winning the first election in the Napa Valley, the part of the state in which it has been the least active.

- Last month, we reported on a worker-owned and controlled asbestos mine and mill in Vermont. The mine has now announced that it is netting \$100,000 per month. John Lupien, chairman of the board, told reporters, "It was really poor planning on our part. We never intended to make so much money."

S-1

continued from page 1

though Attorneys General Kleindienst and Mitchell had been discredited in the Watergate scandals by that time, the repressive sections of the bill which they wrote remained. Clearly Nixon was not the only person in power who was interested in legalizing the repression of dissent. In fact, even most "liberal" Senators have made only very guarded responses to the bill, with very few actually coming out in opposition.

Some people have asked, "Why not just try to get rid of the few objectionable sections rather than oppose the whole bill?" But it's not that easy -- there is too much wrong with the bill to clean it up. The American Civil Liberties Union has already counted more than 3000 places where S-1 would have to be amended to make it comply with the Bill of Rights and the Constitution, and they are still counting.

We must organize quickly to begin to fight against this bill, or we could all find ourselves communicating with each other from prison cells. In Michigan, a broad coalition including NAM, a number of unions, Women Against Prison, the National Lawyers' Guild, the American Civil Liberties Union, and other groups has formed. It is organizing a speakers' bureau, doing a petition drive, and building towards a demonstration in Detroit in early December. Other NAM chapters, such as the Port City (Baltimore) chapter, are also working to defeat S-1.

- Informational pamphlets on S-1 are available from the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation, 1250 Wiltshire Blvd., Suite 501, Los Angeles, CA 90017. It is difficult to obtain copies of the bill, which is -- conveniently -- out of print. For \$1.00, the Lansing chapter of NAM (1912½ E. Michigan Ave., Lansing, Michigan 48912) will send you a xerox of the 31 key pages.



graphic/Christopher Kohler

Quaker Yarn

WASHINGTON -- Officials of the American Friends Service Committee, accompanied by several religious leaders, have informed the White House that the AFSC has delivered 16½ tons of acrylic yarn to Haiphong for making sweaters for North Vietnamese schoolchildren.

The U.S. government had expressly denied the Quaker organization a license for the shipment, claiming that it was economic, not humanitarian aid.

The delegation to the White House was supported by silent vigils held outside the White House fence and in some 40 other cities, as several thousand people around the country witnessed in a call to the government to stop applying the Trading with the Enemy Act to Vietnam now that the undeclared war there is over.

The AFSC announced it is proceeding with plans to ship fishnets and agricultural equipment to South Vietnam as well as wood screw-making machines to cooperative workshops in an area carpet-bombed in Hanoi, North Vietnam. Licenses for these items have been denied. The AFSC has reapplied, urging the government to change its position.

These items will be shipped as soon as purchases are completed and shipping arrangements finalized.

Disapproval of licences by the U.S. government makes the AFSC's action technically illegal, subjecting the Committee's officers to possible imprisonment of up to 10 years and fines up to \$10,000.

Some 2000 people nationwide have publically associated themselves with AFSC's decision to ship by making donations of \$1 to \$1000 for the unlicensed items. This act of personal and direct financial support for such shipments conceivably could be held in violation of the Trading with the Enemy Act.

In connection with most vigils, photographic copies of the donors' forms and checks are being presented to local U.S. Attorneys. A complete national set of the forms and checks was turned over at the White House by AFSC's Executive Secretary Louis Schneider and Board Chairman Wallace Collett.

People across the nation are being asked to donate funds to purchase yarn for the AFSC project, to knit sweaters, or to donate new sweaters. Enthusiastic response has come from many communities. Residents of a retirement home near Philadelphia (Kendal) decided to knit 300 sweaters for the project.

by Di

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room for broader visions beyond the objectives of particular, limited struggles.

Populist Vision

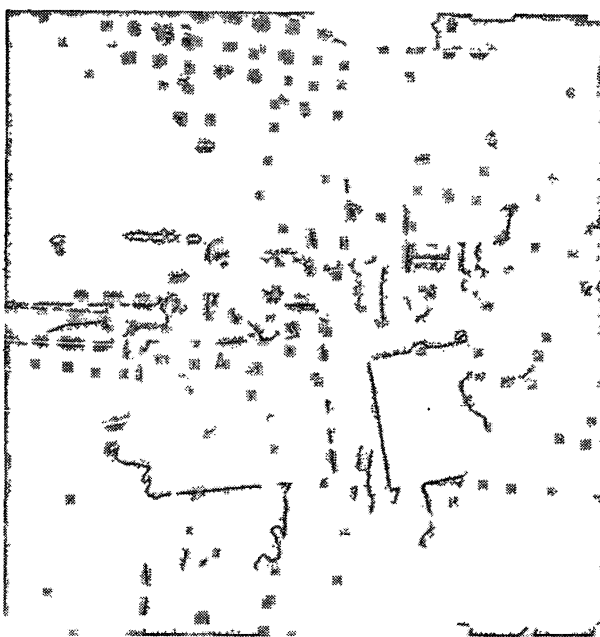
The People's Alliance, Boyte suggested, should seek to support existing practical struggles, to organize new ones, and to provide a sense of populist vision which draws upon public awareness of the way the great corporations dominate our lives. Such a vision should seek historic roots in earlier popular struggles, such as the Populist uprising of the 1890's, the labor struggles of the 1930's, and the civil rights movement.

Gays and

by Elayne Rapping, 'Pittsburgh NAM

Chanting "Gay and straight, gay and straight, organize against the state," some 125 angry demonstrators marched in freezing rain in front of the Pennsylvania State Office Building in Pittsburgh on November 12. The action, initiated by Pittsburgh NAM, was called by a coalition of highly diverse groups: NAM, Pennsylvania Social Service Union, Local 668, the National Organization for Women, and the Pittsburgh Gay Political Caucus. The list of 17 endorsers covered a broad spectrum of local organizations including gay, feminist, labor, religious, civil liberties, and socialist groups.

This alliance was formed in response to an unprecedented, and probably unconstitutional, piece of legislation passed recently by the Pennsylvania state legislature. Senate Bill 196 is intended to restrict homosexuals from working in penal, reform, and correctional institutions; in



An Interview with Laura Allende

by Dierdre English

Chile Today

Mrs. Laura Allende recently arrived in the United States for her second visit to this country since the October 1973 military coup in Chile. She is a former member of the Chilean parliament and the sister of Salvador Allende, the socialist president of Chile who was slain in the coup. One of her first meetings in New York was with a group of about 75 women who came together to hear her and to discuss ways that women can support the Chilean struggle against fascism and terror.

Since the coup, Mrs. Allende has devoted her efforts to building the "movement for solidarity with Chile," an international campaign to expose the dictators who overthrew the democratically elected socialist government of Latin America's "second Cuba." By the junta's own figures, over 30,000 Chileans have died, 50,000 are in exile, and 150,000 have been arrested or detained in the reign of terror following the coup.

The movement to stop the junta has focused on the United States because of the major role played by both the CIA and multinational corporations like ITT in "destabilizing" the Allende government. Since the coup, the U.S. government has gone to great lengths to help the junta, which is in deep economic trouble.

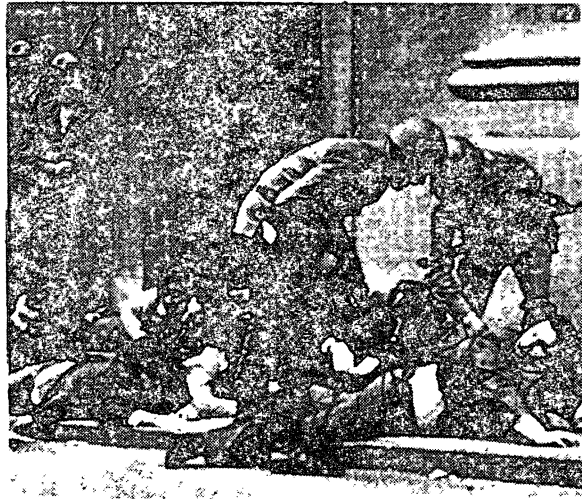
Mrs. Allende described a chart she showed to liberal politicians in Washington, showing that in the Allende years (1971-3) Chile received no financial aid from the U.S. But one month after the coup, the money started pouring in. Today Chile gets 85% of North American food aid to Latin America, along with large amounts of military aid and public and private credit.

The New York meeting took place at a tense and painful moment for Mrs. Allende. Only last week, her son, Andres Pascal Allende, was forced out of the underground, along with two other leaders of the MIR (Left Revolutionary Movement, which along with the Socialist and Communist parties is one of the major forces of the Chilean resistance).

Inside a Chilean Prison

Mrs. Allende was in prison herself for almost six months after the coup. She was allowed no communication with the outside world. Inside, she was packed in a small cell with thirteen other women:

"There were two bunk beds, and so little space that for two of us to walk, the rest had to be on the bed. The guards came always at the most horrible hours -- one or two a.m. -- to take women to the torture house. We were taken blindfolded -- because they are afraid we will recognize them later when the situation changes."



She was interrogated and insulted at first, and told that they would kill her son. They told her to make a statement on the radio telling her son to leave the country, a statement which would have been a demoralizing blow to many leftists who were desperately seeking ways to remain and survive underground.

Mrs. Allende looked at her listeners and quietly stated in English, "I refused." Then resuming Spanish:

"I became angry and took off my blindfold. For this I was beaten so badly I could not touch my face for weeks. Then I was pushed blindfolded into a hole where eight or ten people were crying in pain. It is a horrible feeling to be squashed in so tight that you are hurting somebody and will hurt them even more if you move. In the morning when I was taken to my cell I was covered with blood from the people I had been with."

Mrs. Allende told us that others experienced much worse than herself. They were tortured to find out their activities and their husbands'. Electric shocks were applied to their genitals. Afterwards the wounds bled and some couldn't walk.

Some women developed painful infections. Mrs. Allende explained very seriously that she did not want to tell us about the tortures she had seen and experienced merely to evoke sympathy or pity, but rather to arouse a "revolutionary solidarity," to motivate us to do everything possible to save the prisoners who remain. She is certain that international pressure has a strong effect on the fates of individual prisoners, and that she herself was saved by the campaign mounted on her behalf outside the country:

"Suddenly the insults stopped and treatment improved. One day they said to me, 'Senora, just forget about everything that has happened to you -- it was all just a mistake.'"

Mrs. Allende said women in this country must build the solidarity movement, and must organize to change this country as well. Our task must be to end the imperialism that created the conditions in Chile which the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende had set out to change, the imperialism that instead defeated and overthrew the U.P. government.

Women and Socialism in Chile

Seeing us all meeting together gave her confidence that we could make great changes, Mrs. Allende said, and reminded her of the days she worked with CIMA (Independent Women Commandos for Allende). She credited CIMA, which was formed in 1964 to campaign for the Popular Unity government, with bringing about her own election to the Congress, and with bringing left-wing ideas to many working class women who had not understood them before.

She criticized American women for often failing to place the women's movement in a class perspective, forgetting the need to change the social system, not just men. Women can be a conservative force, she said, unless they ally themselves with working class struggle.

For example, many middle class women in Chile allowed themselves to be dragged into the perspective of upper class women, who in turn were defending the interests of their husbands as

landowners and capitalists. In the early days, many working class women were conservative, too. In fact, President Allende lost four elections due to the women's vote.

But in a long process of political work, beginning with the organization of CIMA in 1964, working class women came to see the Popular Unity coalition as the best way of defending their interests. Later, when food shortages made for long lines at distributing centers, it was the working class women who waited patiently, because they understood the need to distribute the food fairly to everyone. But upper and middle class women reacted with alarm to their loss of privileged treatment, and staged the notorious conservative protest known as the march of the pots and pans.

Mrs. Allende's perspective echoed a story told to me by a young man, now in exile, who had been an activist in the Socialist Party in Chile. He had several sisters and a mother who had always slaved away at housework and cooking, working to provide for all of them.

At the height of the U.P. government, he came home for a vacation. On the dining room table he noticed a book of Lenin's writings, and he asked his mother which of his sisters was studying Lenin. "I am studying Lenin," came her reply, "And furthermore, I have joined the Socialist Party. I won't be doing all the cooking and cleaning around here any more, either -- I have meetings to go to. From now on you and your sisters will have to divide up the work and do your share."

That struggle was quelled with the rest of the revolution on the night of the coup. But the Chilean resistance continues. As Salvador Allende told the people of Chile, "I am certain that the seed we have planted in the dignified consciousness of thousands and thousands of Chileans cannot be definitively blighted."



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Contact your local NAM chapter (Chile support work is a NAM national program).

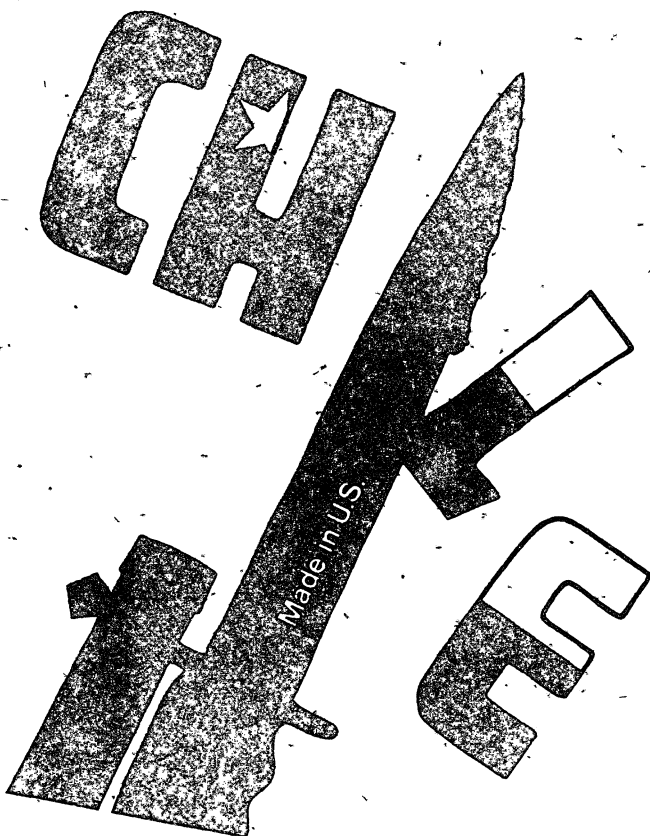
Contact a local chapter of the National Coordinating Center for Solidarity with Chile, or the National Office (room 516, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011).

In New York, contact Action for Women in Chile or Chile Solidarity Committee (room 322, 156 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011).

1 1/4 inch NAM buttons, smartly designed in blue and white. With safety catch. Excellent for strengthening NAM's presence at many different types of functions, and for helping you feel part of the group. \$.50 for one, \$4.00 for 10, \$7.00 for 20. Joni Rabinowitz, 2300 Pittcock St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217

1976 Labor History Calendar

Illustrations and text portraying struggles and events important in the lives of U.S. working people. Features on IWW, Mayday, women, the UFW, and more. Send \$2.50 per copy, \$2.00 for five copies or more to Philadelphia NAM, c/o 4512 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143.



The Evacuation of Phnom Penh

When the NUFK moved the people from Phnom Penh and other cities to the countryside in April, the American press lost no time in denouncing the revolutionaries for having perpetrated a brutal, inhumane act. The move was widely interpreted as an act of punishment toward those who lived in the cities -- a "purification" of city-dwellers generally, because of the unwelcome ideology which they were presumed to represent.

This condemnation of the evacuation as an act of ideological fanaticism, carried out without concern for human lives, appears to have been reached without any effort to determine the facts. A study of the evidence shows that the evacuation was ordered in response to urgent needs of the Cambodian population. It was carried out only after careful planning for the provision of food, water, rest, and medical care. The image communicated by the American press and U.S. government to the general public bears no relationship to the reality.

It should be noted at the outset that Phnom Penh was not a normally functioning urban



apparently by saboteurs under orders of the old government or the U.S. Power facilities were largely inoperative as well, also an apparent result of sabotage. The combination of unsanitary conditions, an overcrowded population, and general malnutrition had made the danger of epidemics a cause for alarm. French doctors from the Calmette hospital told one Western journalist of an increase in the number of dead rats in the street, and expressed fears of an epidemic of bubonic plague as well as cholera and typhoid.

the soldiers during the evacuation.

Perhaps the most inflammatory charge against the Cambodian government is that it forced the aged, the young, the sick, and the wounded to march along with the others in the evacuation of the city. But eyewitnesses described an organized effort to transport the sick and aged in cars and trucks which were apparently confiscated from their original owners for that purpose.

The new administration organized the supply of medicines from Phnom Penh to provinces in the north and northeast by boat, canoe, and junks. Evacuees reported that cholera vaccine was administered on the trip to the countryside, contradicting the view of editorialists that the Cambodian government had not provided any medical care for the refugees. They also reported, however, that the quantity of vaccine was insufficient. Because many people from Phnom Penh and Neak Luong had already contracted cholera from bad drinking water, there were many reported deaths from that disease.

In a population in which hundreds of thousands were physically weakened by starvation and tens of thousands were seriously ill, a high death toll among the evacuees was to be expected in the first few weeks. But to blame these deaths on the evacuation is clearly a case of misplaced responsibility. Both the conditions which caused starvation and disease and the lack of adequate medicines were part of the legacy of the U.S. policy in Cambodia.

The number of people who died during the evacuation of the cities was not greater than the numbers who were dying every week of starvation and disease in Phnom Penh at the end of the war. In fact, the continuation of the status quo without any way to feed the three million people in the city would have invited a public health catastrophe of unimaginable proportions. The evacuation of Phnom Penh, so condemned by the U.S. government and media, undoubtedly saved the lives of tens of thousands of people.

Organizing the Evacuation

An elaborate organization for processing and assisting the evacuees was set up, including a major reception center some miles from Phnom Penh and a second reception center in the region where evacuees were to be resettled. At the first center, the evacuees were registered with a mimeographed sheet on which they wrote their name, age, family background, and other information. Then they were directed toward a particular region, depending on where the family was originally from. At the second reception center, they were met by a local committee, which assigned them land to cultivate. Rice was distributed along the route from a vast stock of grain which had been built up in anticipation of victory, and both rice and dried fish were sold along the way at only one-third the prices in Phnom Penh. More than a dozen refugees interviewed in Thailand all said they had received enough food on the trip.

The charge that evacuees were mistreated or driven to exhaustion in the exodus from Phnom Penh is contradicted by eyewitnesses. A retired French military officer reported that the columns of evacuees moved slowly and stopped often for rest. Although the refugees wanted to rest longer than the soldiers charged with getting them to their destination, the columns only moved a half mile to a mile between rests. None of the refugees in Thailand reported having been mistreated by



center, as has been implied by much of the commentary on the evacuation. It was a city of refugees. Of the nearly three million people crowded in and around the city, fewer than 500,000 were true city-dwellers, who had lived and worked in Phnom Penh at the time the war began in 1970.

Phnom Penh had never been capable of supporting such an enormous population. By the end of the war it had little food or safe drinking water. There was a serious threat of major epidemics, and the medical care system had broken down.

Why the Evacuation?

The primary fact confronting the new Cambodian government was the lack of food in Phnom Penh and the difficulty of supplying the city from the countryside. Both U.S. and Cambodian officials said at the end of the war that there was only a few days' supply of rice in the city. Transportation of food by truck was not feasible; there was simply not enough fuel.

Nor was pleading for international assistance a reasonable alternative. Of the major powers, only China had any interest in seeing the revolutionary regime solve its food problems, and it was not prepared to undertake a massive airlift to feed the hungry in Cambodia's cities. The Cambodian revolutionary leaders themselves viewed the dependence on foreign aid as neither desirable nor necessary.

In the countryside, there were not only stocks of rice prepared in advance, but secondary crops as well to supplement the diet of the evacuees from the city. "If they go to the countryside, our peasants will have potatoes, bananas, and all kinds of food [for the evacuees]," said Vice-Premier Ieng Sary.

Beyond the lack of food, Phnom Penh was a city almost totally without normal public services. On the last day of the war, the water purification plant had been seriously damaged,





Rubyfruit Jungle Rita Mae Brown

by Kathy Moore, Newspaper Collective

I love this book. *Rubyfruit Jungle* is an incredibly funny account of the childhood and coming of age of a militant lesbian. Molly isn't taking any crap when we meet her as an ingenious seven year old troublemaker, and she hasn't gotten any softer by the end of the book. It's refreshing, in these days of fashionable despair and neurotic novels, to encounter a little boastfulness. And boastfulness in a woman novelist is cause for rejoicing.

Molly is a bastard from the wrong side of the tracks. Her adopted mother berates her for her illegitimacy and her utter refusal to be a nice young lady -- or any kind of a lady. Her adopted father is more sympathetic, but he is worn down by hard work, poverty, and his wife's reminders that she cannot have a "real" child because he has had syphilis. Molly's story is a delightful series of battles against everyone who wants to keep her in her place -- as a girl, as a bastard, as a



poor kid, and finally as a lesbian. This very amusing book is not so much about class oppression, sexual oppression, and gay oppression as it is about one terrific woman's class struggle, sexual struggle, and gay struggle (mostly the last two). In one way or another, Molly always wins.

"One woman's class struggle": a ridiculous notion. This is the book's paradox. Molly's battle is an individual battle, because reaching adulthood in the early 1960's, she has no allies. Her courage isolates her.

I longed to return to the potato patch and raise hell with kids who didn't know the difference between Weejuns and Old Maine Trotters. But those kids grew up and wore tons of eye make-up, iridescent pink fingernail polish, and scratched each others' eyes out over the boy with the metalflake, candy-red 1955 Chevy with four on the floor. There was no place to go back to.

I think it would be terribly unfair to fault the book for its individualism. Molly's frequent loneliness, as her friends and lovers back away from the choices she makes, reveals an important political truth about leftists' difficulties in communicating with other Americans: people are not so much convinced that we're wrong as they are terribly afraid of the consequences of joining us, of even believing what we believe.

Molly's sexual involvement with other women is a major theme of the book. In fact, I read *Rubyfruit Jungle* because a friend handed it to me after we agreed that *Fear of Flying* didn't

Read This Book Ruby Fruit Jungle

measure up to its seductive advertising. (200 pages of impotence is supposed to turn you on? Well, I know men who thought it was sexy.) But though, as my friend promised, the sex scenes in *Rubyfruit Jungle* were at least sexy, I was more involved in the form than the content. What mattered to me was not so much who Molly slept with (though this was clearly pretty important to her), as her insistence on doing what she enjoyed, an attitude totally consistent with her uncompromising approach to every other issue in her life.

What makes this novel different from many serious (if funny) novels about some of the same themes is that it's full of action and it's about a winner. And a woman, yet! It reminded me of Agnes Smedley's *Daughter of Earth* in its rural-poor setting and in the strength of its heroine, but it's even tougher and consequently more light-hearted. Where a lot of "feminist" novels are terribly introspective, Brown's Molly is busy slugging it out with the boys, locking her mother in the cellar, and slipping rabbit turds into an enemy's box of raisins.

Tom Sawyer was as full of tricks as Molly. Portnoy's Complaint was as dirty and as funny as *Rubyfruit Jungle* (the comparison comes to mind because both books made me laugh so hard that people kept coming in to see if I was all right). But while Molly's problems are a lot more serious than Portnoy's, she isn't complaining. She's too busy fighting to worry about being neurotic. Once she figures out that she likes to sleep with women, her sex life is absolutely joyous, if frequently interrupted by bigots.

The book's strengths -- its action and its positiveness -- are closely tied to its class politics. Most of our novels are written by middle or upper class intellectuals, most of them sensitive enough to be unhappy with life in twentieth century America. Everybody knows that something is wrong.

Tough and Light-Hearted

But most writers, including those with left wing ideas, take for granted their separation from the mainstream of American life, from the working class. They are outsiders, and as outsiders they can scarcely find the source of their malaise, let alone imagine doing anything about it. A recent *N.Y. Times* record-review praised a record which the reviewer liked as "an eloquent expression of adult despair." This is the fabled bourgeois decadence, the love affair with death and hopelessness of a privileged elite which can only watch helplessly as its culture falls apart. I think that's why we have so many boring novels about some sensitive thinker contemplating her or his navel, or at best her or his position in this mess of a dying society.

Molly doesn't have that set of problems. Although she struggles with some success to escape from her background and her battles are always for individual survival, she cannot destroy her ties to people more trapped in their poverty than she is:

Carrie, Carrie whose politics are to the right of Ghengis Khan. Who believes that if the good Lord wanted us to live together he'd have made us all one color. Who believes that a woman is only as good as the man she's with. And I love her. Even when I hated her, I loved her.

Molly knows very well that the enemy isn't something inside herself.

The book does have its ambiguities. For example, I found it hard to reconcile her portrait of compassionate, intelligent Carl, her adopted father, with her later observation that, "Men



bore me. If one of them behaves like an adult it's cause for celebration, and even when they do act human, they still aren't as good in bed as women." But the contrast is mine, not Brown's. She just tells the story.

Rubyfruit Jungle is published by Daughters, Inc., a feminist publishing house whose books may not be available everywhere. It's worth looking for.

Fred Hampton's Mother Sues

Iberia Hampton, mother of murdered Black Panther Party leader Fred Hampton, is suing the FBI and Illinois law enforcement officials. She is using the suit to force public examination of the events surrounding the deaths of her son and fellow Black Panther Mark Clark in a police raid on December 4, 1969. Mrs. Hampton wrote in an affidavit, "Though we seek \$47 million in damages, there is not enough money in the world to pay for my son's life."

Currently, Mrs. Hampton and the December 4 Committee are seeking to have U.S. Judge Sam Perry disqualified from hearing the case. They charge that besides Perry's hearing problems and forgetfulness, he is biased against black people, and especially against friends of the Black Panthers. Further, he has favored the defendants (the FBI and police officials) by allowing testimony relying on unidentified informants and by prohibiting release of information exposing apparent misconduct and illegal actions by state and federal law enforcement officials.



FRED HAMPTON of the Illinois B.P.P.

book review

Russian Marxist Calls for Socialist Democracy

On Socialist Democracy by Roy A. Medvedev

by Roger Gottlieb, Newspaper Collective

In 1962 the Soviet Union encouraged destalinization and Medvedev started studying Stalin's errors. In 1968 he completed his studies -- and was expelled from the Communist Party for his conclusions.

Medvedev has three basic goals in this book: first, to show that Soviet society faces serious problems -- from economic and technological stagnation to the steadily diminishing respect of socialist movements and countries abroad; second, to prove that many of these problems stem from the complete lack of democracy in Soviet life; third, to argue that a policy of increased democracy is necessary for the Soviet Union's growth and progress.

Medvedev's position on Russia contrasts sharply with that of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who is famous for his criticisms of the crushing realities of life under Stalin. Solzhenitsyn has no sympathy with the aims of socialism, believes that the Russian people are not even ready for democracy and wants the Russian Orthodox Church to resume its lost place as a leader of society. He has also supported myths propagated by the U.S. government: that the U.S.S.R. is solely responsible for the Cold War; that socialist movements in Asia and Africa are under the control of Russia; that the U.S.S.R. is dominated by a small elite while the U.S. is not.

Solzhenitsyn is correct in criticizing the degeneration of the ideals of the Russian revolution. From the leading party in a working class government the Communist Party became the government, outlawing opposition parties,

imposing rigid control on all institutions, barring dissent within the party itself and subjecting the population to psychological and physical terror. But Solzhenitsyn seems to forget that this degeneration was to a great extent a response to the enormous problems the C.P. faced: the enormous damage caused by W.W.I. and the Civil War, the backwardness and illiteracy of the population, the hostility and outright aggression of the capitalist powers, the need for rapid industrialization to produce a military force which could defend the country against German aggression.

From the Inside

Medvedev, unlike Solzhenitsyn, is working 'from the inside.' He is a friend of neither the capitalist West nor of China. He wants to combine socialism and democracy, to see his country prosper and to struggle for democracy within existing legal structures. He calls himself a 'party democrat,' distinguishing himself from the other major tendencies in Russia: those who would leave things as they are, those who would turn the clock back to Stalinism and those who -- like Solzhenitsyn -- would abandon socialism altogether.

He describes a society in which politics and culture are rigidly controlled. There is no freedom of speech or assembly, party bureaucrats and public control of the government is non-existent. Wealth, privileges and power are confined to a small elite. Party democrats seek to change this situation by slow, but far-reaching, reforms. They want: '...extensive and consistent democratization of our party and public life.... freedom of speech, freedom of the press...to

develop the different forms of economic democracy, including worker's self-management, to extend the rights and responsibilities of the trade unions, and to put the principles of self-management into practice on the collective farms."

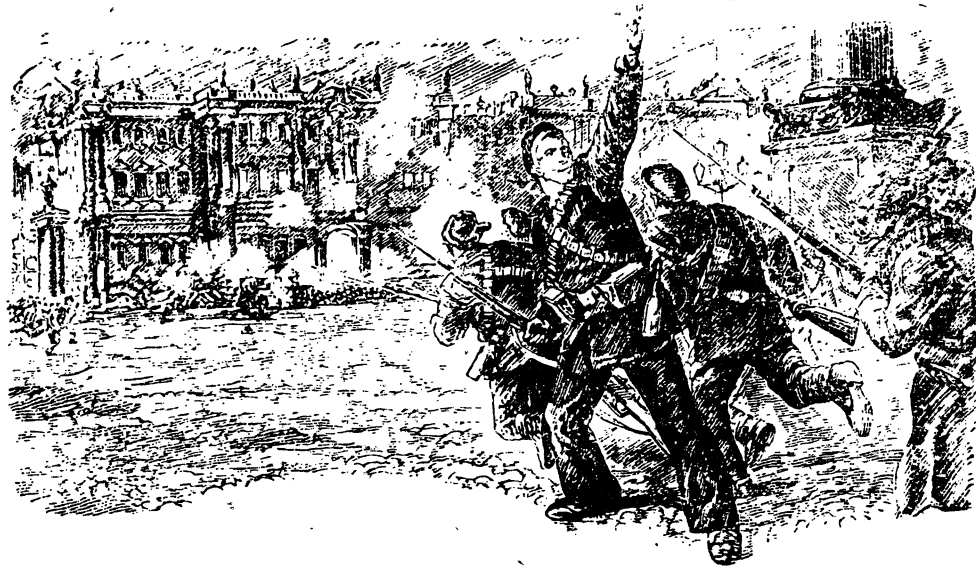
Medvedev prescribes significant reforms for the ills of Russian society: the re-opening of debate within the party, the election of government officials, decentralization in economic development, freedom of information and travel, an end to the persecution of minority groups.

Short-sighted and Elitist

Yet Medvedev often repeats the limitations of Russian society in his criticisms of it. Given the fact that little information or theory from abroad is available in the Soviet Union, this is understandable. But in this four hundred page book on democracy there is no mention of the oppression of women or of the considerable progress made by the Chinese revolution in the democratization of political life. Nor does Medvedev deal with the fact that Lenin's admiration for Western efficiency and authoritarianism in the factory (the philosophy of Taylorism) in part paved the way for the ruthless and brutal Stalinist industrialization of the twenties and thirties. Also, though Medvedev believes that democracy has moral and human value, he seems to feel that the most powerful arguments in favor of democracy are that it will help Soviet economic development and aid in her struggles with the West and with China.

Most significantly, Medvedev sees reform taking place within the present political system, led by a combination of the intelligentsia, progressive bureaucrats and party leaders. He wants to 'give' democracy to the masses, and speaks nowhere of the need for an organized rank-and-file workers' movement. But neither democracy nor socialism can be given to a people by an elite, no matter how 'scientific,' educated or well-intentioned that elite may be.

Again, his position may be inevitable in a society where political organizing is practically impossible, and it may in fact be necessary for the process of change to be started from the top before a broad movement can come into existence. Nevertheless, we must see his position here as somewhat short-sighted, utopian and elitist. He does not realize that it might well be possible to reform the Soviet system so as to provide freedom for scientific, technical and artistic life -- and still democracy to the great majority of the population.



health notes

by Rick Künnes, 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.

In the CIA's never-ending search for LSD subjects, no stone was left unturned. At the Lexington Addiction Center, the CIA offered drug addicts undergoing heroin and morphine withdrawal the narcotic of their choice in return for their, also trying LSD. Senator Richard Schweiker said, "I understand now why the cure rate at Lexington has been less than 5%."

More Americans are addicted to valium than to heroin.

Sominex, Nytol, Sleep-Eze, Excedrin PM, and other non-prescription "sleep aids" not only do not aid sleep, but also have potentially dangerous side effects.

The U.S. has the smallest proportion of women physicians in the world, except for Spain and Madagascar.

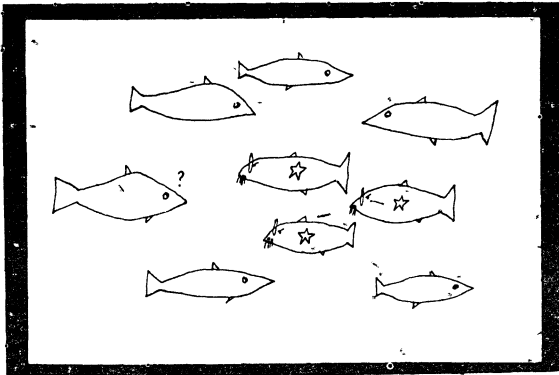
The American Medical Association has practiced what they call "professional birth control" by limiting the number of medical schools and the size of their classes. Thus two out of three med school applicants are denied admission, though many of these applicants are as well qualified as those who are accepted. To get an edge on the competition, hundreds of parents bribe medical schools every year in the hope of getting their children accepted. At one med school 77 of the 91 entering students or their families paid an average of \$50,000 per student to the institution.

Five million U.S. workers are exposed to dangerous noise levels at their jobs, which if continued will result in at least hearing defects and psychiatric disorders.

Loud new vacuum cleaners in combination with other noisy appliances like blenders can cause a physical narrowing of blood vessels, a condition dangerous to people predisposed to heart disease.

Bacon is the most dangerous food in the supermarket because of its high levels of cancer-producing nitrite preservatives.





N.Y. Burgerbits

by John Farley, N.Y. Westside NAM

Meet the Ruling Class

The air resounds with the sounds of hammering and chopping as New York's midget mayor hammers the big apple into marketable salvage for the banks. Chop! Close a hospital! Whack! Up goes the subway fare! Thunk! Another thousand lay-offs! Vital services for the city's people go down the drain.

Felix Rohatyn is Burger King, the chairman of Big MAC (the Municipal Assistance Corporation) which by now virtually runs the city government. He is also a partner in the international investment banking firm of Lazard Freres, a director of several large corporations (including ITT) and is reportedly a very shrewd operator in the politically sensitive field of corporate mergers. He is a registered democrat and an advisor to Senator Henry Jackson. Fred Feretti, Chief of the City Hall beat for the *New York Times*, explains Rohatyn's motivation for heading Big MAC: "He just likes to play games with big stakes, like a few countries."

Part of the problem is fighting this type of character is his anonymity. Nobody elected him and nobody knows who he is. In order to give Rohatyn more notoriety, Westside NAM and the Coalition against the Westside expressway (CAWSE) have made him the target of a letter-writing campaign, asking Rohatyn to pressure Mayor Beame not to build the Westside Interstate Highway.

Eight Million People Save the World from Communism, or DO NOT

In the Washington debate over federal aid to the city, Senator Adlai Stevenson III. (D-Ill.) asked the deep philosophical question: "There is an obligation here, but who is it to? The bankers? The investors? The people?"

In the House, former Undersecretary of State George Ball urged federal aid on the grounds that the financial-collapse of the city would help the Communists by appearing to prove what he called their propaganda about a "crisis of capitalism." He went on to say, "I would urge you not to overlook the consequence in the East-West struggle.... Europeans are perplexed and deeply disturbed, and some are even expressing suspicions that it is perhaps not only New York City that is in trouble.... particularly since the federal deficit this year may run as high as \$100 billion."

Ball added that, "at a time when Moscow is preoccupied with what the Soviets regard as the current crisis of capitalism -- the fulfillment of Marx's prophecy that capitalism would collapse from its own internal contradictions," the communists in France would use the occasion to proselytize among government workers. "Nothing would serve the Communist Party propagandists more than to be able to say to these workers: 'You have been badly deceived. Even in a great city like New York, jobs are not secure under capitalism since the city has gone bankrupt!'"

Richard Kelly (R-Fla.) dubbed "the congressman from Disney World" by New York's Governor Carey, was not persuaded. He replied to Ball: "Bailing out New York is not going to save us in our fight against communism. We should build a wall around New York and let it collapse. I don't think the rest of us will go down the tubes."

Christmas Shopping

by Chris Casey, Newspaper Collective

"We're doing our Christmas shopping at Robert Hall this year,
We're saving on clothes for Christmas at Robert Hall this year."

In 1927, Sinclair Lewis referred to Christmas shopping as the worst combination of "graft plus humbug" that had ever been devised in modern society. Nearly fifty years later, things are much the same -- the only change is that the graft and humbug are now on a grander scale.

The lead attraction in the exclusive Nieman-Marcus catalogue this year (not including, of course, the \$30,000 dinosaur bone safari trip to eastern Utah) is an \$8,000 miniature train with remote controls that serves condiments as it chugs around the table. *Vogue* magazine has decided that the real Xmas find this year is "sensuous, fluid, supple gold." Their top offering is a "sleek new gold compact" that can be had for a meager \$6,200.

My favorite, though, is a slightly elaborate *Monopoly* set made by Alfred Dunhill of London, designed for those families who have done well at the game off the playing board. It features 9-carat gold hotels, sterling silver houses, gold and silver tokens, and ivory dice, all encased in a velvet-lined cabinet. At \$5,000, it's hardly intended for the Baltic Ave. crowd.

While the economic noose continues to tighten around the budgets of working people and the unemployed, department store chains do their best to coax the ailing buying spirit out. Indeed, big chains like Sears-Roebuck and Montgomery-Ward typically earn about 40% of their annual profits in the fourth quarter. Louis Goldblatt, the president of Goldblatt Bros. department stores in Chicago, commented in *Newsweek* last year about the sharp drop in fourth quarter Christmas sales: "The mood of consumers is subdued. They're reluctant to spend any money. We have to slug a little harder."

But while the retailers go to bat earlier every year (**ONLY 45 SHOPPING DAYS LEFT UNTIL CHRISTMAS!**), the trend developing is towards last-minute get-what-you-can buying and scattered thrift shopping that begins as early as August.

Most Americans will find room in their budgets to purchase a variety of garlic presses, cologne sets, acrylic rain hats, and Skil-Saws typically cited as "best Christmas buys any-



where" in magazines like *Good Housekeeping* and *Women's Day*. This was the general impression I got during sidewalk interviews in New York and Boston. Most people registered the familiar complaint that Christmas was too commercialized and that prices were "absolutely ridiculous." An older woman remarked that "it's still a money-making scheme where people buy way beyond their means." Another person commented in a similar vein that Christmas shopping was "a one-armed bandit." A number of people stated flatly that they didn't have any money to do shopping. A young black woman put it bluntly: "Christmas shopping? In plain English, it's a lot of bullshit."

But despite a generally pervasive bah-humbug attitude towards Christmas shopping, most people seemed to enjoy talking about the spirit and memories of the season itself. I found myself being thrown back to the Christmas eve worries over whether I would get an only-one-toy overdose of Fruit of the Loom underwear. Or the mysterious letter campaigns that the nuns would begin every year in the middle of December (the thought of who those letters were addressed to still gives me laughter cramps to this day) to put Christ back into Xmas.

Then there was the year I felt utter relief approaching my Christmas stocking because my parents had switched from coal heat to oil. My worst Christmas ever was as a nine year old, coming home from Midnight Mass on the verge of tears and darkness. I thought I had committed a mortal sin because I was the only altar boy picking his nose during the service. This was made worse by the Catholic double-whammy-on-the-conscience effect of committing an even greater mortal sin by receiving communion, as altar boys at Midnight Mass must, with another mortal sin already on the soul. Some nifty toys finally saved the day, though, and my conscience cleared obligingly the next morning as I tromped downstairs to enjoy them.

Jingle Bells

So with all its tinsel commercialism and its jingle-bell-of-the-cash-register profit making by the department stores, I will admit to enjoying my annual bath in Christmas spirits and memories. In a time when most of us have had a harsh awakening from the Great American Dream of our youth, and when New York City is in the running for the *New York Times* Neediest Cases Fund, Christmas remains a tradition of sharing with friends and family we would probably recreate (in one form or another) if it ceased to exist.

Indeed, I was amazed at the number of people I interviewed who were very serious about the "true meaning" of Christmas. A number of people talked about their wish that a spirit of non-competitiveness, togetherness, and sharing could exist throughout the year.

With no concern over whether it has become a cliché or not over the years, the people I spoke to still had this old broken hope of Christmas ready on their lips. That hope, trivialized by the mass media and nearly buried by capitalism, persists in a very real and unsentimental form. A young Puerto Rican man I spoke to expressed it simply and earnestly: "The system takes advantage of the human feelings involved. For a lot of people, all this commercialism has ruined Christmas, but a lot of people like myself still try to keep it from destroying those feelings."



Yesterday's Dinosaur, Today's Compact



by John Viertel, Newspaper Collective

It is part of the rites of autumn: the new cars appear in the dealers' show rooms. 1976 promises to be the year of the small cars, with rising gas prices and the general scarcity and costliness of materials.

How small are they?

Detroit's motto, 'the bigger the better,' leads to a continual inflation of the outer dimension of American cars. In 1954, the 'standard' sized Chevrolets, Fords and Plymouths were between 193 inches (Plymouth) and 198 inches (Ford) long and about 74 inches wide. Wheelbase length ranged from 110 inches on the Plymouth to 115 inches on Ford and Chevy. To be sure, there were larger cars: Lincoln at 214 inches overall length, Buick at 218 inches, and the largest Cadillac and Packard sedans at 237 and 238 inches.

In 1975, the standard Chevies, Fords and Plymouths are between 222 and 224 inches long (on a 122 inch wheelbase) and 80 inches wide -- their external dimensions are greater than the large Buicks, Oldsmobiles and Lincolns of 21 years ago. The new "compact" cars are almost identical in dimensions to the old "standards": Valiant is 199 inches long, 71 inches wide on an 111 inch wheelbase; for Chevy Nova 197" long, 72" wide and 111" wheelbase; for Mercury Monarch, 200" long, 74" wide and 110" wheelbase.

More striking yet are the figures for weight, the most important factor in gas consumption. Weight for the 1954 standards ranged between 2889 pounds for Plymouth and 3145 pounds for Chevrolet. Cadillac and Buick weighed around 4350 pounds while the largest Packard weighed 4650 pounds and the largest Cadillac 5030.

The '75 standards weigh from 4446 pounds for the Chevy to 4695 pounds for the Ford -- they have gained almost 1500 pounds and weigh more than the largest Buick of 1954. Indeed, the 1975 Ford LTD weighs 45 pounds more than the majestic '54 Packard!

Thus the compacts and the "intermediates" -- Chevelle, Polara, etc. -- which in 1975 account for about 40% of U.S. car sales, are as large or larger than the most popular 1954 standard models. Only the "subcompacts," which accounted for about 10% of 1975 sales, are smaller -- and the foreign imports, which cut into the U.S. market up to 20%.

The Triumph of "Styling"

How can we explain this growth of the outer shell and the shrinkage of usable space, while our resources become scarcer, our roads and streets more congested, and the fumes which ever larger engines belch forth make our air more poisonous?

While automobiles grow ever longer, faster and more costly, our cities become more and more congested. It has been estimated that if just one foot were chopped off the length of all its automobiles, New York City would gain 80 additional miles of usable streets.

But does this elephantiasis of the American car at least provide us with greater comfort? More space in which to enjoy the ride? It does not. For in one crucial dimension American cars have shrunk: in 1954 most American cars, including Plymouth, Ford and Chevrolet were 64 inches high. Today's cars range around 54 inches even the Cadillac Sedan de Ville measures only 54.3 inches to its roofline.

Even if we allow several inches for lower chassis, half a foot or more of height has been lost. When seats and rooflines are lower the more extended limbs require more horizontal space, while the sharply slanted windshields press the steering wheel down into the driver's legs.

In the low cars of today the only usable space for passengers is between the wheels. Wheelbase length is a more significant measurement than overall length: on a 120 inch wheelbase car, less than 80 inches of this length is usable for human beings. On a 1958 Cadillac "dreamboat" only one-third of the area and one-fifth of the total volume were reserved for human habitation. This has been the standard which all subsequent standard cars have tried to emulate.

It is because Detroit is not interested in producing a socially useful functional machine, but, in its quest for profit, markets primarily a combination of "dreams and illusion." As one advertising executive put it, the automobile "tells us who we are and what we think we want to be...it is a portable symbol of our personality and our (social) position."

Because of this, "styling" -- external appearance -- totally dominates rational engineering. Mechanically, the American car is little changed from the first motor car, with its engine in front, where the horse used to be, and its gears, drive shaft and differential transmitting the power to the rear wheels. The introduction of the electric starter early in the century, of independent front suspension in the early '30's and automatic transmissions in the early '40's represent the only significant modifications of this basic design.

After World War II., Volkswagen brought its economical and reliable Beetle to these shores. Its rear engine design was a major innovation which did away with the long, heavy and space-consuming drive train under the car. But the rear engine takes up useful luggage and passenger space between the rear wheels and

tends towards strange and even dangerous steering characteristics.

In France, in the early '30's, Citroen brought out its "traction avant" -- the front wheel drive car. With a long wheelbase but no front and rear overhang, designed for the greatest ease of repair and maintenance, it offered the maximum in passenger comfort and driver control. On the open highway it could cruise all day at speeds between 60 and 70 mph. If today, forty years later, Detroit were to produce the exact replica of this car, it would represent the most momentous advance in mechanical design in its entire history.

Detroit and the American Woman

On the whole, the energies and resources of Detroit have been concentrated on design-developments that are wholly cosmetic. As the vicepresident in charge of styling at Ford during the 60's said.

"Beauty is what sells the American car. And the person we're designing it for is the American woman. It is the woman who likes colors. We've spent millions to make the floor covering like the carpet in her living room."

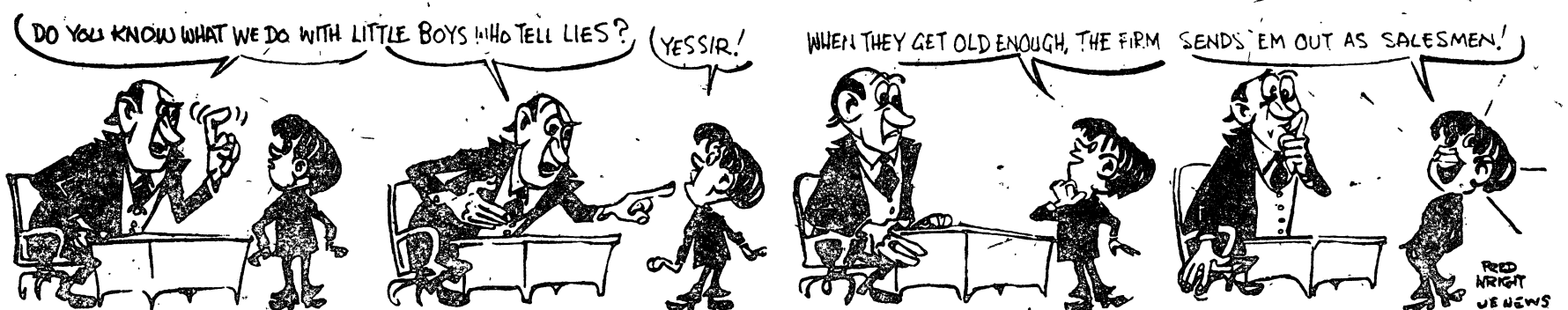
But the long low cars with their phallic projections and pubic rear ends, designed to look like but not to perform like sports cars, are hardly intended to appeal to women.

Women -- the image of women held by the automakers -- have however been responsible for the most important mechanical innovations of recent decades: automatic transmissions, power steering, power brakes, flashing lights on the dashboard instead of calibrated dials.

The image to which Detroit intends its feminine customers to conform is based on the assumption that all women are mechanical imbeciles -- for women to display any technical competence would be threatening to the male egos of those who produce cars and of the male customers to whom they direct their appeal. So that is what we get: cars designed for mechanical imbeciles.

This greatly increases the cost of the cars and the cost of repair and maintenance. The auto companies make more money on replacement parts, while a further economic incentive for buying a new car is imposed on the owner. Either way the corporations increase their profits.

And car prices continue to rise at an astonishing rate. As one dealer said: "Detroit's answer to overproduction is kind of interesting. It used to be the law of supply and demand. If you get too much supply for the demand, what you do is lower the price. What Detroit does is cut the production and raise the price. They've just kind of amended the law of supply and demand so they'll always get theirs."



Tired of Fuckers

by Bev Grant

When I'm walking down the street
and every guy I meet
Says, baby, ain't you sweet
I could scream.

For I know those guys are sick
and think only of their prick,
It ain't sweet I feel, I just
feel good and mean.

Chorus

They whistle for me like a dog,
they make noises like a hog,
Heaven knows they sure got
problems, I agree.
But their problems I can't solve
cause my sanity's involved,
And I'm tired of fuckers fucking over me.

When I'm tryin' to take a walk
and some guy says he wants to talk
And my way proceeds to block, I
get real sore.

Cause although I talk real fine,
that just ain't what's on his mind
I'm a pretty piece that he's just
tryin' to score.

Chorus

Well I know that life is rough
and to be a man is tough,
But I have had enough and I
can't ignore,
That their masculinity just don't
respect to be
And I solemnly do swear I'm going
to war.

Chorus

Well we sing this song in hope
that you won't think that it's a joke,
Cause it's time we all awoke
to take a stand,
We've been victims all our lives,
now it's time we ORGANIZED
To fight we're gonna need
each others' hand.



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"Working People Gonna Rise"

by Brian Doherty

Good hard rock and roll with some politics to it is pretty hard to come by these days, but the Human Condition has done it, and done it well, on **Working People Gonna Rise**.

Paced by lead vocalist Beverly Grant, a woman who is establishing a growing reputation in music and political circles for her solid, moving delivery of songs that are designed to make one think rather than just sing along, they've accomplished something special. You can think and sing along at the same time, which is no mean trick. This five member group, which also includes Mario Giacalone, Gene Hicks, Jerry Mitnick, and Peter Farnesse, has succeeded in combining good politics and good music, sacrificing neither and improving the quality of both.

Alas, they no longer perform together as a group, but we do have this one album to remember them by, along with some good memories about the amount of time they contributed to building the movement while they were together, appearing at countless demonstrations, rallies, and benefits.

The record is on the independent, anti-capitalist Paredon label, and it contains a booklet that gives the words to such songs as "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," "Working People Gonna Rise," "Chain Reaction," and "Janie's Janie." In the written introduction to the record, titled **Why this Record Is Dangerous**, Paredon outlines why you may not have heard their songs on commercial radio. According to Paredon, Human Condition challenges "the basis from which all the biggest radio station revenues flow: commercials buying air time for nationally advertised brands, products made by the giant monopoly corporations. And because they refuse to play the game, choosing to live and work like

people in any other industry rather than as seemingly privileged puppets kept apart from the people they sing for, you won't hear them."

The most powerful song on the album, "Clifford Glover," describes the murder of a ten year old boy by a cop named Shea. (The incident actually took place in New York.) Backed by a rising crescendo of rock music, Grant lays it on the line about the nature of real justice: "Now if you hear a cop got shot today, Don't be surprised if his name is Shea/Cause when the people feel they've had enough/Things get rough..."

"Charlie's Song" serves as an interesting continuation of the clearly feminist "Janie's Song." Charlie is Janie's counterpart lover/oppressor, a man who is genuinely surprised when his wife leaves him: "And he curses the iron as he ruins another shirt." But he's thinking "about power/every lonely hour/knowing that he's never had it in his life/Though he tried everything/To feel like a king/The truth would hit him every time he went outside."

The lyrics of the songs on this album may stand cold in print, but put to music they are startling, if simply because we are not used to hearing stuff like that put forward in a musically enjoyable manner. We can only hope that other groups of politically conscious musicians pick up where Human Condition left off, or that Bev Grant is able to reassemble another group, as she is in the process of doing. Until then, a few listenings to **Working People Gonna Rise** should be in order for people who think that music needs politics, and indeed, that politics needs music.



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Men, Women, and Rape

Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape
Susan Brownmiller

by Elayne Rapping, Pittsburgh NAM

Rape is one of the ugliest, most frightening words I know. I can't remember a time when it didn't color my existence. I can still see my mother's face tighten and her step quicken at the approach of a strange man on an empty street. I can still feel my heart pound in terror as a bunch of "big" boys pushed me into an alley one late afternoon and shoved and taunted me for what seemed like hours but was only minutes. And I don't know a woman whose consciousness hasn't been shaped, to some extent, by such chilling memories.

That's why Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* is such an important literary event. Every feminist, in fact everyone, should read it. It is an informative, fascinating and ultimately shattering experience from which no one, I think, will emerge unmoved or unchanged.

Having said all that, however, I'm forced to say that it's not a good book. In fact, it is in many ways a bad book -- theoretically weak and sloppy, and -- more importantly -- profoundly and dangerously wrong in its conclusions.

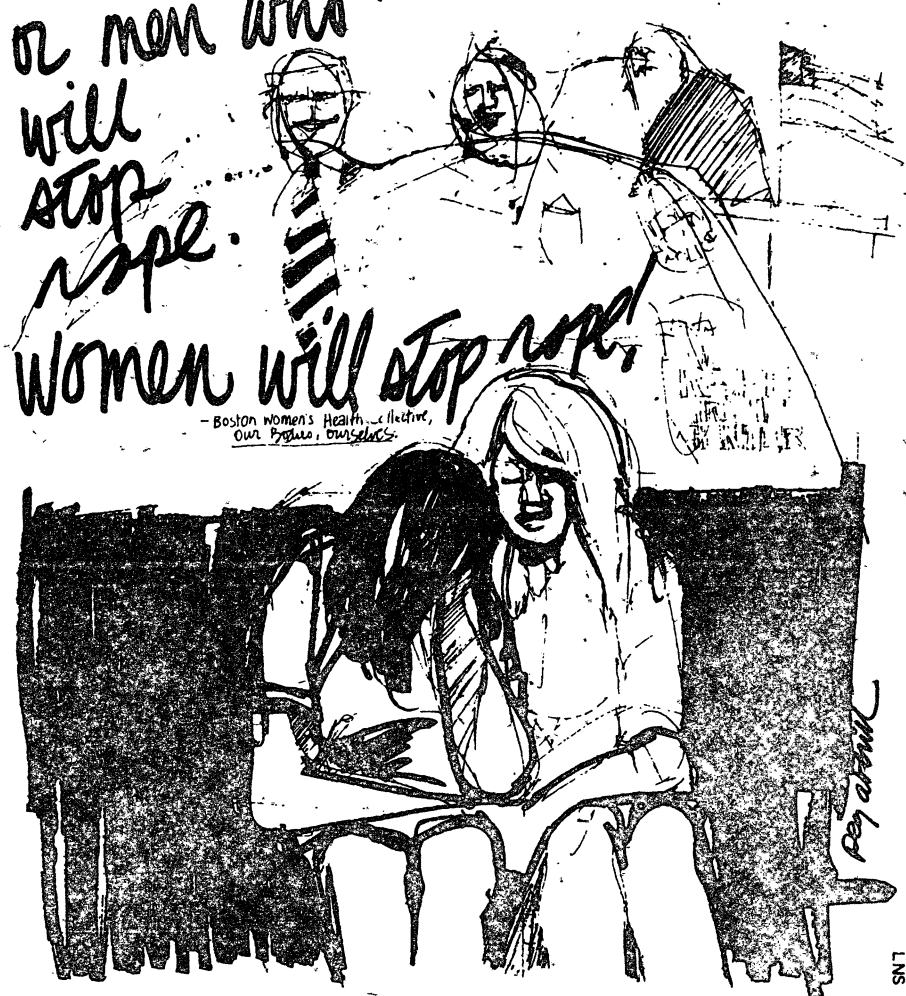
Unfortunately, its success probably has more to do with its weaknesses than its strengths. Even before publication, it was being hailed as a "classic"; featured in publications from *Time* to the *Village Voice*; serialized in four different periodicals and chosen as a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection. Clearly, in spite of its "strident" feminist tone, it was no threat to the capitalist class. And why should it be? It never mentions capitalism. Brownmiller is a radical feminist, and her book is an object lesson in the strengths and weakness of that perspective.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. It's important to understand the book's enormous value in order to appreciate the grave implications of its theoretical shortcomings.

Atrocities and Nightmares

Its greatest strength comes from its raw material -- from the devastating effect of reading page after page of atrocities and nightmares committed by male-dominated societies from the

It is not the police, the courts
or men who
will stop
rape.
Women will stop rape.



Stone Age to the present. Brownmiller begins with the Bible and charts the course of rape as a part of every war from Troy to Vietnam; every political and racial conflict from revolutions to pogroms; every human situation based on hierarchies of power, from homosexual rape in prison, to the molesting of children by adults; to the "legal" violation of women by their husbands.

She brilliantly demystifies these phenomena by demonstrating that rape and rapists are as "normal," by western sexual standards, as male supremacy itself. From the widely accepted Freudian views of male aggression and female masochism as signs of sexual maturity; to the glamorization of sexual violence, from Bluebeard to Mick Jagger; to the everyday truisms about "no" meaning "yes" and women longing to be "taken," our culture teaches us from childhood to expect and accept sexual violence.

The problem comes with Brownmiller's insistence that a single aspect of human nature and experience can explain all this. She insists that men rape because they are men; that it is part of male nature to overpower and violate women. The fact that "in terms of human anatomy the possibility of forcible intercourse... exists" seems to her "sufficient to have caused the male ideology of rape. When men discovered they could rape, they proceeded to do it."

Money and Property, not Brute Strength

Her most convincing examples come from historical and social situations -- prisons, wars, preagricultural societies -- in which brute strength and violence were in fact essential to survival. But these are not typical or "natural" circumstances. In fact, soldiers, prisoners and the human race generally have tended as quickly as possible to less violent and precarious social structures in which money and property, rather than brute strength, were the marks of power.

I have no quarrel with Brownmiller's tracing of the roots of contemporary sexual violence to precapitalist times. It is her denial of the existence, much less importance, of economic factors in determining its historical development that leads her astray. She refers to the fact that women have been considered "private property" for as long as that concept has existed. She knows that marriage, from the start, has been a "system of exchange" in which women are "precious possessions." She even cites studies suggesting that "men began to rape women when they discovered that intercourse was responsible for pregnancy" -- that is, that women were an important means of production. But she dismisses this idea for no good reason. "I frankly do not believe that men needed to wait that long to discover the benefits [of] rape" she says off-handedly, leaving the reader to ponder what

these universally desirable "benefits" could be, and why a number of societies -- most notably China -- seem perfectly happy without them.

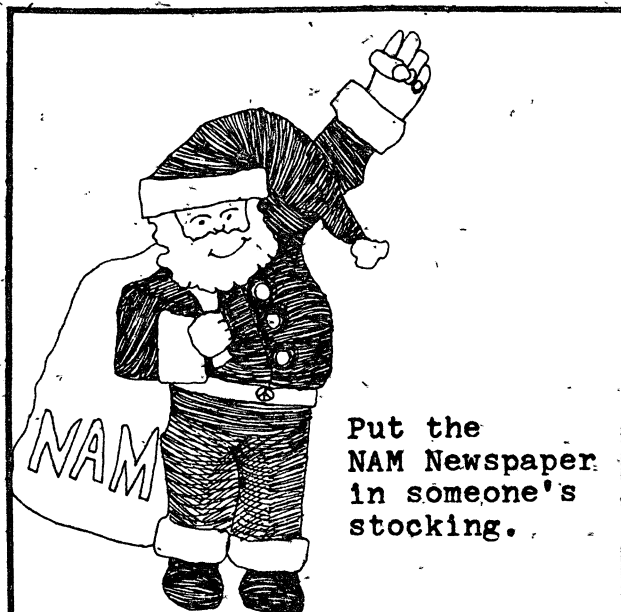
Brownmiller's failure to mention China -- a socialist country which, from all accounts, has solved the problem of rape -- stems from the book's most serious flaw: its absolute hostility to all leftist ideas. She is intent on proving that "there's no way you can explain rape as a capitalist crime." It's hard to see what satisfaction she can get from this, since it leads her to a political dead end as depressing as it is reactionary. For if everything depends on biology; if men are born brutes who "continue to rape" simply because "they continue to get away with it," what can we do but stop them from "getting away with it"? We have to crack down. Increase prison terms. Outlaw pornography and prostitution. Put women on the police force. And so on. These are Brownmiller's solutions.

Law and Order

You see why the media love this book. It comes out for Law and Order. But this is the only solution a radical feminist can come to. If the cause of all our problems is men, themselves, what can we do but lock them up or bop them on their heads?

I'm uneasy criticizing such a valuable and strongly feminist book. But the subject, and the book itself, are important enough to demand serious thought and response. As socialists, we know that there is more to the politics of rape than mere biology. It is possible to arrive at a more realistic (and optimistic) strategy for ending rape by studying the economic and political, as well as the sexual factors involved. For while sexism -- which makes rape possible and, in many ways, acceptable -- was not created by capitalism, it is culturally and ideologically important to its functioning. And it will not be eliminated as long as capitalism survives.

This is because the violence toward, and the exploitation of, women by men -- and the weak by the strong generally -- is inherent in a system based on competition and greed. In our system, a small group of powerful men own, control and plunder just about everything in sight in their search for profits. These men are not "rapists" in the literal sense, but they are in a metaphorical sense. For rape is an accurate metaphor for the way in which capitalism and imperialism treat human beings and the natural environment. To see the issue of rape in narrowly sexual terms is to miss the way in which all oppressed groups -- whether sexual, racial or national -- share a common plight, a common enemy and a common goal: the creation of a social system based on such human values as cooperation, mutual respect and dignity, in which the desire to "rape" anyone or anything would cease to have meaning.



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