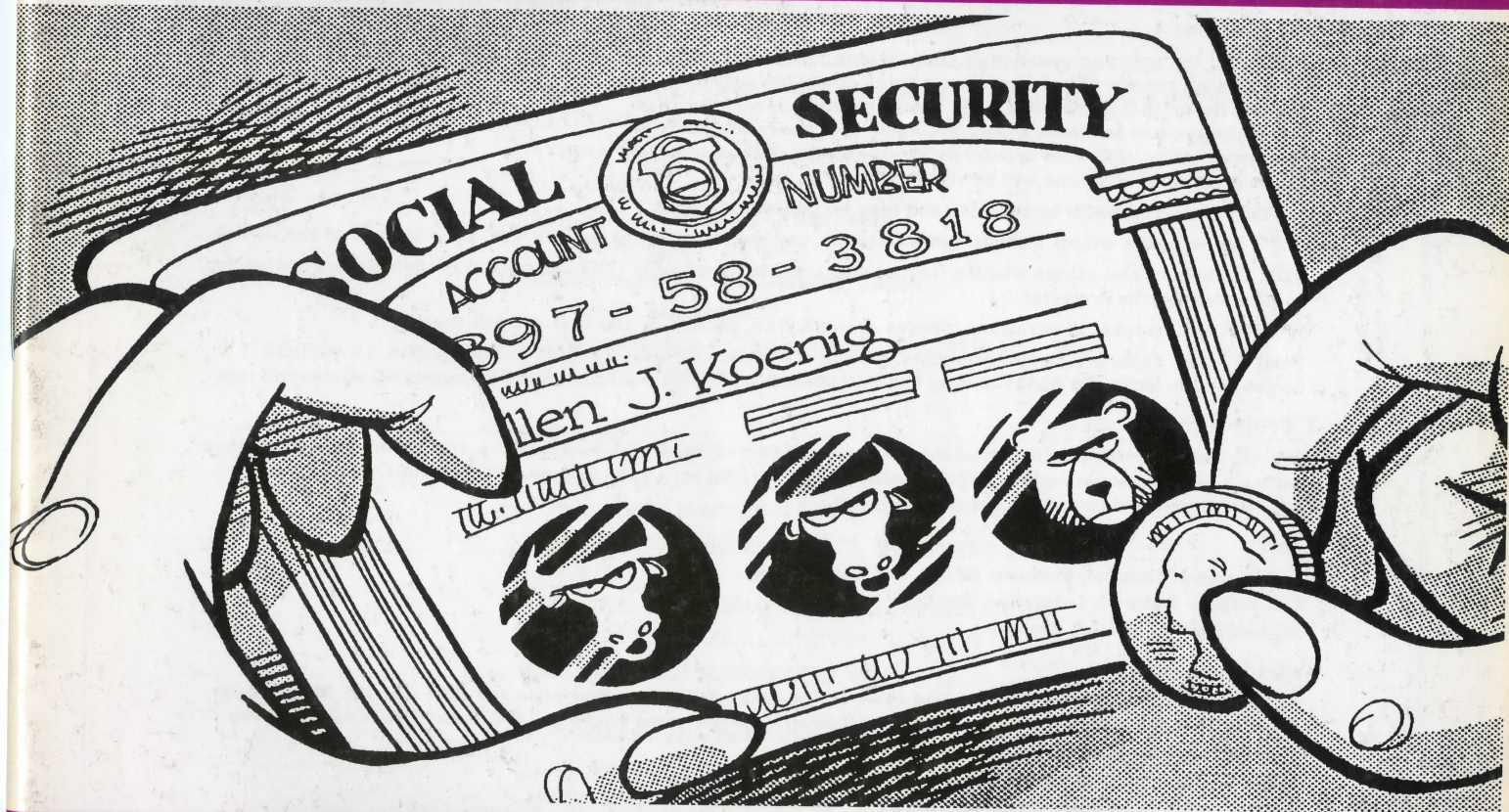


MARCH 1997

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Z Magazine



Pence But No Justice in Guatemala
Price Fixing at Kraft
The Fate of Social Security

Plus: An interview with Noam Chomsky



Z Magazine is an independent magazine of critical thinking on political, cultural, social, and economic life in the U.S. It sees the racial, gender, class, and political dimensions of personal life as fundamental to understanding and improving contemporary circumstances; and it aims to assist activist efforts for a better future.

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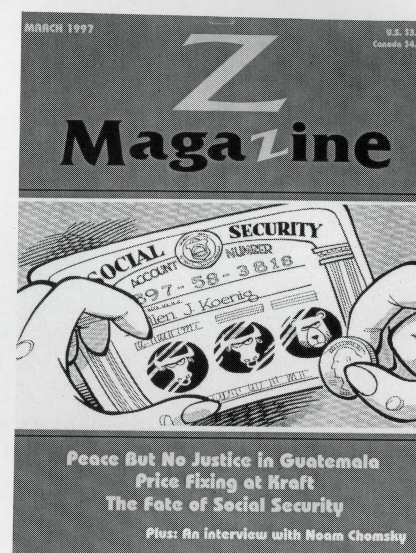
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Illiberal Media

I agree with Edward Herman's article "the illiberal media (Z January 1997). During October of 1996, there were 60 people arrested in Minneapolis for protesting outside a land mine factory. Many of those arrested were nuns, and others connected to religious denominations. Was there any coverage of this outside the local Minneapolis news sources? I saw no coverage in my St. Louis or Illinois news media. The following month, on November 16, 60 individuals were arrested for placing crosses on Fort Benning, Georgia property. They were protesting the School of the Americas training program. Three nuns, two priests, and 55 other Americans were arrested that day, fingerprinted, photographed, and detained for three hours. There was local coverage of this event, but I never saw any coverage in my area. Thirty of those arrested were over 55, and one 70-year-old man was a purple heart veteran of World War II.

I thought news was supposed to be about startling events, and one would think that priests, nuns, and senior citizens getting arrested would arouse media attention.

As I perused the paper daily looking for reports of these arrests, none were to be found, but curiously enough, I read daily updates of the condition of Mother Theresa of Calcutta. We are spoon fed what the conservative media wishes us to know, and world-renowned Mother Theresa is a safe topic, writing about religious people fighting for justice must be kept quiet. Thanks for exposing the "illiberal bias." You sure hit the nail on the head.

—Elsie Speck
Carbondale, IL

Urban Decay

I would like to respond to R. T. Landry's article "The Status of Decay" (December 1996). I appreciate Landry's attempt at cultural criticism; but I'm afraid the argument was based purely upon speculation.

Urban Decay is a line of cosmetics worn primarily by young men and

women of the punk and Gothic (wannabe vampire) scenes. For the most part, they are middle and working class youth, living at home or on their own. They do not live in gated communities; they live in suburbia or inner cities. These are not people who have "capital at their fingertips."

No one can definitively say what statement those who wear Urban Decay are making, but it is my opinion that it is not necessarily "arrogant posturing, a dismissal of other's grief and suffering, an ultimate pretension which projects other's misfortune as chic gear."

It has been my impression that young people in the punk and Gothic scenes are generally concerned people. They are outcasts from their suburban utopias because they are "different." This alienation has opened them up to the suffering of others: the poor, minorities, and animals. I've seen them at vegetarian societies and at human rights rallies. You will not see them at country clubs or upscale malls.

I've tried to understand the social meaning behind the often gruesome nature of punk and Gothic fashion (dark colors, skulls, etc.), and I have two hypotheses. Both are based upon the sudden recognition that the world is not as beautiful as we (middle class, white youth) were lead to believe. The first reaction is the desire to display to others that "the gig is up. We know your commercial, idyllic reality is a sham. We're going to show the rest of the world the ugly underbelly of America."

The other is "You can't hurt me; I'm already dead." Remember that the word "cool" used to mean that one was stoic and unaffected by joys and sorrow. Fashion companies are trying to tap into punk and Gothic style and turn it into the late-20th century form of "cool."

Thank you, Landry, but if you want to know why the Goth grl is wearing Urban Decay, just ask her.

—Michael Schaefer
St. Louis, MO

Assaults on Memory

As a grandson of a Nazi holocaust survivor, I grew up quite conscious about other forms of oppression, past and present. In agreement with Churchill, it angers me when I encounter indifferent Jews to the black experience in Amerikkka. Today I find the politics of scapegoating of blacks and Latinos very similar to the scapegoating that resulted in the Nazi holocaust. The tremendous rise of prison labor in the U.S. (50 percent of the prison population is black) is dangerously moving this country towards a fascist regime. The social construction of the "underclass" as pariah people draws strong comparisons to the Jewish experience under Nazi rule. Conservative Jews must realize that their "white" privilege is only a recent gift of the white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. It is sad that Jews who still have memory of the holocaust attempt to ascribe a phenomenological uniqueness to the event rather than looking outward. As we all know, a threat to justice somewhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

—Jed Weiss,
Oxford, OH

Cassini

I wonder if your readers know about the Cassini Project. The radioactive threat from Russia's failed Mars Probe that recently tumbled back to earth is small fry compared to the Cassini Project, NASA's plans to launch over 73 pounds of plutonium to provide electrical power on a mission to explore Saturn.

How many of us heard on the "News" that Russia's Mars 96 came down in the Pacific Ocean? Not true. Northern Chile and Bolivia were the unhappy recipients. By and large everyone has forgotten about Russia's failed Mars Probe. And it is in the interests of the powerful and well heeled that no one gives either serious or honest consideration to the Cassini mission either. On or after October 6, 1997 NASA plans to launch the Cassini Probe with 150 times the amount

of hyper-toxic radioactive plutonium of the failed Russian Mars Probe. A Titan IV rocket will propel the Cassini, the same rocket that blew up over California in 1993 with another secret military satellite onboard.

Public concerns about Cassini's plutonium load briefly surfaced following the failed Mars Probe. However, defenders of the space industry rapidly made several arguments to put everyone back to sleep. One of them went like this: "If the Titan explodes at launch, the ceramic form of its plutonium dioxide will break apart into just a few big hunks with very limited and concentrated areas of exposure."

This dubious proposal ignores the most frightening aspect of the mission: If the integrity of this very poisonous load survives its launch, Cassini will have one more chance in August 1999 to bring back home its death and destruction when it hurtles towards Earth at over 40,000 miles per hour on a "slingshot maneuver" designed to use Earth's gravitational field to sling it on to Saturn.

If by some unforeseen difficulty (most difficulties are unforeseen), and this Saturn Probe does not hit the reentry envelope precisely (tangential intersection at 310 miles), Cassini will either bounce off our atmosphere and hurtle more radioactive debris into space, or it will very likely vaporize as it plunges through the atmosphere, raining plutonium on us and everything we eat. There is no material known that can survive an impact with our atmosphere at 42,000 mph. Given that the half life of plutonium dioxide is .5 million years, a vaporized Cassini will insure that life on this planet will be forever changed.

Cassini is just the tip of the iceberg. Plans are in the works to launch into orbit hundreds of satellites carrying nuclear payloads. Satellites constantly circle overhead. And, whether we hear about them or not, satellites routinely fall from orbit into our fields, forests, oceans, and backyards. No, alas, the Doomsday Clock was not turned back this fall when Clinton signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty before an unenthusiastic UN Assembly. That was show business as usual. If Cassini is a "success," we are poised on the verge of a new and frightening chapter in this nuclear age at this "Gateway into the 21st cen-

tury." After Cassini, the Department of Defense (which has been sponsoring more and more NASA activities), and their co-conspiring military contractors (old friends), will have demonstrated that the U.S. public is adequately desensitized, and they can proceed with crowding the remaining orbital space with satellites each carrying their own nuclear payload for their various SDI deeds.

Indeed, Russia is reconsidering the prudence of continuing their nuclear disarmament because of the perceived threat of the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD—Star Wars latest name). That's good news for the U.S. military industrial complex whose existence can not continue to be rationalized without a credible enemy. However, the BMD concept of the Space Shield will not make us safe. Not only can decoy technologies and very low flying missiles get past this shield, there are plenty of other ways major destruction can be delivered into our communities.

The primary beneficiaries of tax revenues earmarked for plutonium launching (over \$3.3 billion/year) are large military contractors and nuclear research facilities: large corporations (like GE and Westinghouse) who finance the reelections of both parties of the House and Senate, and have President Clinton bought and paid for several times over. It is well over \$170 billion yearly (and growing) in corporate welfare, at this time most of it military, that is busting the budget.

Write your representative (Congressional switchboard: 1-800-962-3524). Contact the Florida Coalition for Peace and Justice, Box 90035, Gainesville, FL 32607; 352-462-3295. Call Governor Chiles and ask if he is willing to open and aggressively pursue a public debate on the Cassini and its many implications. No one, anywhere, is prepared for the consequences if Cassini should fail. No one is prepared for the next level of global risk in the works, should Cassini succeed.

—Perry Keidel
Veterans For Peace
Gainesville, FL

Dineh Nation

We wish it to be known that we, the Sovereign Dineh Nation and Traditional Dineh, stand united in our oppo-

sition to the Accommodation Agreement and the current Manybuds v. United States settlement agreement, PL 104-301, signed into law by President Clinton on October 11, 1996.

After 23 years we still resist forced relocation, continue to live in our traditional way, practice our religion, and protect and care-take the sacred land. In 1974, the U.S. government legislated control over more than one million acres of land inhabited by 15,000 traditional Dineh and Hopi to the Hopi Tribal Council. This was done in order to expedite mineral leases in a region officially designated a "National Sacrifice Area." Under the law we became trespassers on the land where our ancestors are buried, our native language is spoken, our families are raised, and our sacred sites are worshipped.

On this same land, Peabody Western Coal Company operates the largest coal strip-mine in the world. PL 104-301 is the final offensive in a 23 year low intensity war against us. We are told we have three choices: sign relocation papers and move our families; stay on the land under an accommodation agreement; or be forcibly evicted. None of these options are acceptable. If we were to sign, we would be renters and the Hopi Tribal Council would be landlords. Already, the daily harassment and inhumane conditions imposed on us are severe. In effect, the Accommodation Agreement is a way to evict our families from the land.

Judge Earl Carrol and the Hopi Tribal Council tell us that if we do not sign by March 31, 1997, our families will be forcibly evicted by the federal government and Hopi rangers. One of our young men has been notified that his home will be bulldozed within 30 days.

We stand united in our opposition to relocation, the Accommodation Agreement, and forced eviction. We ask you to stand with us, to assist in documenting human rights abuses, and to demonstrate international solidarity with Dineh resistance. Contact us at PO Box 30453, Flagstaff, AZ 86003; 520-522-8741; sdn@primenet.com; http://www.primenet.com; ~ sdn

—Sovereign Dineh Nation
Flagstaff, AZ



Virginia Slims Does The Woman Thing

Phillip Morris' feminine cancer stick division is going into music. Virginia Slims is producing a series of CD's showcasing up and coming female vocalists in what critics describe as an end run around upcoming advertising restrictions. Au contraire, says event marketer Mary Jo Gennaro, "It's all part of Virginia Slims' tradition of providing opportunities for women to showcase their talents and interests." Such venerable traditions can not be ignored. First on line to be promoted is Martha Brynes, the star of TV's "As the World Turns." She is being sent on a nationwide tour with her new CD, *The Woman Thing*, available free with the purchase of two packages of Virginia Slims. Brynes, a non-smoker, says "I don't feel I'm being used.... The goal of the label is to bring women into a positive light, period." Interestingly, Virginia Slims is being marketed as a men's cigarette in Korea where they have an underdeveloped sense of *The Woman Thing*.

(WSJ 1/15)

Corporate Welfare Gets a New Name

A new "populist" coalition formed by House Budget Chair John Kasich and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin plans to tackle the problem of corporate welfare. The coalition

includes at least a dozen organizations ranging from the right-wing Americans for Tax Reform to Ralph Nader-style citizens' groups. The coalition hopes to eliminate some very worthy targets such as subsidies for advertising overseas, insurance for foreign investments, and funds for building logging roads for timber companies. Unfortunately, conservatives in the group vetoed closing any tax loopholes, leaving the coalition with only about \$2 billion in corporate welfare they could agree on cutting out of a yearly total of \$140 billion. But even then the compromises were not complete. Treasury Secretary Rubin has announced he does not like the "corporate welfare" slogan and prefers it be called "corporate tax-base broadening." Much more positive, don't you think? Please erase the offending slogan from your memory banks.

(WSJ 1/17)

The FBI Fights Crime

The FBI has made a modest request of Ma Bell. They would like the capability to make 60,000 simultaneous wiretaps in what would be the nation's biggest chat room. Says the *Washington Post*, "The number of potential taps may seem huge, but the agency said it expected only modest increases." To set this all in perspective, the *Post* quotes the words of FBI assistant director James Kallstrom: "This is not about columns of numbers. This is a story about fighting crime and protecting people." So true. Where would we be today if J. Edgar Hoover hadn't had wiretaps on Martin Luther King Jr.? Meanwhile, in a masterpiece of bureaucratic foresight, the crime fighters offer precise statistics on their expected future use of phone bugs. Their use is expected to rise 5.92 percent from 1994 to 1998. The taps on cellular phones will grow by a whopping 14.3 percent

during the same period. So invest now in FBI stock...Or do they have stock?

(WP 1/15)

An Offer That Can't Be Refused

Imagine a convicted killer granted immunity in return for promising to obey the law in the future. Improbable? Well just listen to this one sentence from the *Wall Street Journal* describing the deal proposed by "superlobbyist" Thomas Hale Boggs Jr. to the tobacco industry. "In return for Congress granting immunity from future liability suits, the industry would accept the FDA's landmark regulations to curb underage use of tobacco." The tobacco industry "would accept..."!? Who else has to be negotiated into accepting the law of the land? Just as interesting is the fact the deal is to be brokered by "superlobbyist" Boggs and a panel made up of former Senators turned lobbyists, Howell Hefflin and Howard Baker, and lobbyist wannabe ex-White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta. It's as if mere elected officials are too low in the Washington, DC food chain.

(WSJ, Letter to the editor by Sean Cahill of INFACT, 1/13. Original quote in WSJ, 12/19)

New Civil Rights Movement

The Democratic National Committee decided to refuse future injections of foreign campaign donations. This has raised an outcry of discrimination from foreign-owned businesses in the U.S. Apparently the DNC spaced out on just how many companies are foreign owned. A host of major corporations like Universal Studios, Seagram's Whiskey, and Brown & Williamson will now be barred from contributing to the Democrats because their owners lack green cards. Unfair? Yes, says Sidney Sheinberg, one of the Dems biggest

contributors. "People should have the right in a democracy to give money," Then in a classic statement, our budding protestor adds, "I'm not sure I understand the logic of it; influence is influence, whether it's foreign or domestic." So true. A buck is a buck and a bought-off Senator is a bought-off Senator. What's the problem? Fortunately there may be little need to worry, for as the *Wall Street Journal* told its readers, "fundraising records suggest it won't be hard to get around the rules." Now that's reassuring.

(WSJ 1/24)

Recruiting Immigrants

Back in 1985, six Americans were murdered in an attack in El Salvador. The man believed responsible for planning the attack, Pedro Antonio Andrade, was captured and, after informing on his fellow rebels, quietly paroled to a new life in the U.S. Twelve years later, the wheels of the federal bureaucracy caught up with him. A recently declassified Inspector General's report concluded that "U.S. officials violated no laws in allowing the former guerrilla to settle in New Jersey." It's comforting to know you can bring suspected killers into the country without breaking any laws. Or as KHPY radio commentator Barrington Daltrey put it, "What is this, some special tourism program? Thank you for killing our citizens, now please vacation in Miami?" Even better is the report's conclusion after admitting that U.S. officials deliberately allowed Andrade to skip through immigration. The Inspector General found that the process for coordinating parole requests "needs improvement." That's it. "Needs improvement." Are we talking serious bureaucracy here?

(NYT 1/12; Department of Justice Press Release, 1/22)

Our Embassies at Work

With the Cold War long dead and human rights out of fashion, do you sometimes wonder what our embassy employees actually do all day? Well, rest easy, for they are hard at work promoting McDonald's, Boeing, and American business. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that a record of business advocacy is how American diplomats justify themselves to Congress and how junior officials enter the fast track for promotions. This trend is credited to Lawrence Eagleburger, Secretary of State to George Bush, who issued an empowering "Bill of Rights for U.S. Business." In it he spelled out the policy that "Executives had...the right to have their views considered in foreign policy decisions." Does anyone need a translation here? Unfortunately, Eagleburger's page on workers rights was inexplicably missing from my copy.

(WSJ 1/21)

Investing In America

A new study on the returns special interests are getting for their investments in politicians was released by the Center for Responsive Politics. Surprisingly, the Center found a direct correlation between money donated to legislators and their votes on issues. For example, when environmentalists tried to repeal the salvage law that allowed timber companies a free hand cutting old growth trees, the vote failed 54 to 42. Senators siding with the timber industry averaged \$19,503 in timber PAC contributions while those opposed averaged a mere \$2,675. It all sounds very damning until you hear the rest of the story as told by the special interests themselves. Chris West, of the Northwest Forestry Association, explained their \$71,230 investment in Senator

Slade Gorton as a result of their agreement with him on a broad range of issues. In a statement as dense as the fir trees they clear-cut, West said, "They're not buying his vote on one bill." No, they buy it for a lot of bills.

(ST 1/24, Center for Responsive Politics)

Selling to the World

The International Advertising Association has been bombarding over 200 countries with \$300 million worth of ads touting the virtues of commercials. Typical are these two ads just recently introduced to U.S. audiences. In the first we see a rock band performing in front of logos for Shell, Pepsi, Xerox, and British Airways. A voice then asks, "Have you ever wondered why most pop concerts are sponsored? It's really quite simple. Without the ads, the beat would not go on." Then one by one everything disappears until we are left with the announcers voice proclaiming "Advertising. Your right to choose." But even dearer to my heart is the next ad on brand names. We see a woman at a grocery checkout counter unloading familiar names when a voice tells us: "A friend is someone you know about, someone you can trust. A brand's a bit like that. You meet this friend through advertising.... Without advertising, how would you recognize your friends?" All I can say is.... "I love you Big Brother!"

(Village Voice 12/24)

The Clinton Money Machine

The release of documents by the Democratic National Committee came too late to be of help for Christmas shopping, but here are some gift ideas for next year. For \$10,000 to \$25,000 you can buy an intimate dinner with the vice-president or a dinner with the

president and 100 of his friends. For only \$50,000 you can have a private dinner with Bill and talk about how America has become, in his words, "hostage" to moneyed interests. CEO William Brandt explained it best after hosting a \$10,000 a plate dinner for the prez at his home in Chicago. He and his guests from the bankruptcy industry, he said, just wanted to send a message. "End of story. It's American participatory democracy." Lorraine Voles, spokeswoman for Al Gore, had some helpful tips on how we should address these "participants." Speaking of the guests at Gore's thank you party for the 200 largest contributors, Voles said, "You call them donors. They call themselves friends of the Vice-President." Did all catch that distinction?

(NYT 12/27)



Free Fingerprinting

The citizens of Georgia woke up this new year to discover their legislature had passed a bill mandating fingerprinting for anyone wanting a driver's license. The bill, intended to halt the forging of drivers licenses, was snuck through on the last day of the legislative session past lawmakers who had failed to read the provisions. The bill's sponsor, Rep. Bobby Parham,

who describes himself as "a fierce defender of an individual's freedom" who doesn't "like George Orwell's book where big government knows everything," said the bill actually didn't require the state to fingerprint, but "merely empowered the Department of Public Safety and the governor to implement the policy." Of particular interest is the fact the "empowered" agency has few, if any, restrictions on what they can do with the fingerprints. This could include use in criminal investigations to being sold to credit bureaus or insurance companies. Similar legislation is pending in 30 states.

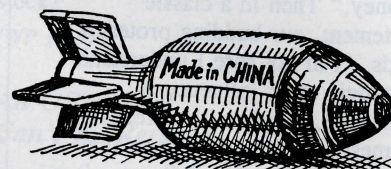
Marketer of the Year

Nike was named by *Advertising Age* as the tops in marketing in 1996. Nike, which now makes 37 percent of all tennis shoes, was honored for becoming a "marquee integral to the sports culture it targets," so successful it no longer even puts its name in ads, just its patented "swoosh." A key to Nike's success has been their ability to establish an identity as a "brand with an anti-establishment attitude." That attitude is something Nike hopes to hold onto despite its success. Says CEO Phil Knight: "Being big in and of itself isn't bad and doesn't run counter to what Nike stands for...If the average customer sees us as the establishment in 5 years, then I would say we have failed." He didn't remark on how the 42 cents an hour workers in Indonesia view their company, but I'm sure they too will appreciate Nike's "anti-establishment attitude."

(AA 12/16)

Selling Arms to our Friends

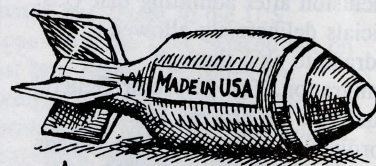
Both departing Secretaries William Perry and Warren Christopher have urged the president to end the ban



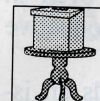
Bad Bomb

on the sale of arms to South America, designed to deter an arms race in this area. They feel it's time to change the policy and open up this lucrative market "because all Latin American nations except Cuba are now democracies." Having attained their maturity, these nations can now be entrusted with the indebtedness increased military spending will bring. Unfortunately, someone went and threw a monkey wrench into this logic. When Belarus went ahead and sold two types of advanced aircraft to Peru, Washington warned, according to the *NY Times*, "they threatened regional stability." So our Administration is sitting in the following bind: arms sold from foreign sources to South America are destabilizing, while arms sold by us are....(fill in the blanks). Stay tuned to see how they solve this conundrum.

(WP 1/16; NYT 1/20)



Good Bomb



Workplace Voices

The Politics of Family Leave

By John Buell

During a state visit to Canada several years ago, President Clinton was asked about the long overtime hours many U.S. and Canadian auto workers are frequently forced to work. He responded glibly: "Where I come from, they call that a high class problem" and suggested that workers should be grateful for the overtime hours.

The President's reading of the public mood changed as the campaign season approached. Last July he promised to seek expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which currently allows workers to take 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a sick relative. The President recently kept that promise by asking Congress to amend that act by requiring employers to grant employees an additional 24 hours of unpaid leave a year to attend to any family concern. The willingness of Clinton, who embraces the center/right policy consensus in so many areas, to raise this issue should give us pause. Is there less here than meets the eye?

Clearly, such issues as working hours and time for family life deserve an ample airing. Full time U.S. workers now work, on average, a month more per year than they did a generation ago. The *New York Times* reported last summer that the number of families unable to take any vacation this

year increased to 38 percent from 34 percent the previous year.

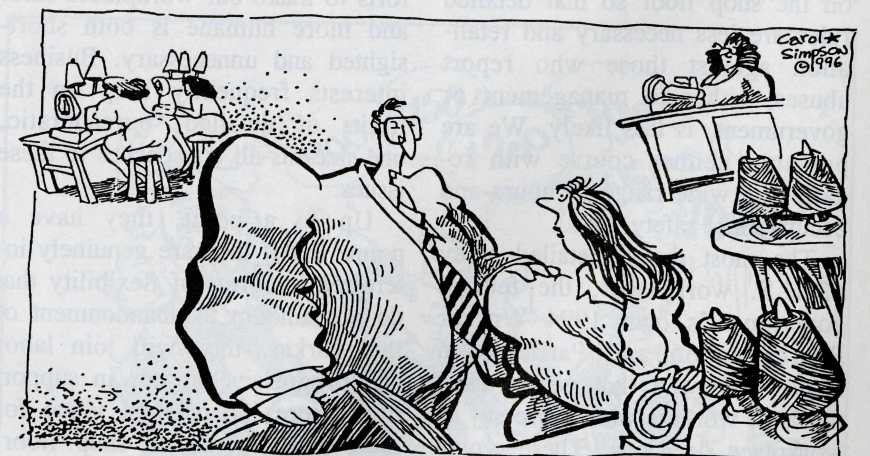
With this new attention to stressed out workers and families, it is important to take a look at the effects of previous legislative efforts on family leave and working hours. From the sound and fury of the debate, one would have thought that the initial family leave law portended the biggest change in our economy since the National Labor Relations Act. Congressional liberals trotted out stories of bereft families who would be saved by such legislation. Business lobbyists made dire forecasts about the loss of U.S. competitiveness that would flow from "tying the hands" of management.

Fast forward four years and the story seems quite different. I know of no comprehensive study of family leave practices, but it seems clear that relatively few American workers have availed themselves of the law. And it is clear that the level of stress experienced by most working families is not shrinking. I suspect that the lack of tangible impact of the Family Leave Act is a major reason why the business lobby did not press Bob Dole to make its repeal one centerpiece of his campaign.

Unfortunately, just as before, whatever amendments to current family leave policy emerge from the 105th Congress, the rhetorical onslaught is once again likely to signify very little improvement in the day-to-day lives of most workers. The problem goes beyond the tactical dilemma of crafting a Congressional majority for significant reforms. The exclusive reliance on sweeping governmental mandates has major strategic limitations. Workers are unlikely to gain more time off, more economic security, or more flexibility in the use of their time until they achieve more power in their workplaces.

Perform an intellectual experiment. (Or perhaps you live this experiment.) You are a junior level technician or a secretary at a factory or retail outlet. Your spouse has just developed a serious medical condition and could use help around the house for a few months. Even if you are fortunate enough to be able to get along without your salary, will you ask your boss for the time off? Or threaten the boss with a law suit if your request is refused?

Workers are smart enough to know that they are one downsizing away from the loss of a job and



"But you're doing a fine job of feeding MY family."

that their record in management's eyes will determine if they survive the next reorganization. I suspect that most employees now taking leaves are so indispensable that employers don't want to risk alienating them; or they work for one of those few corporations in which workers and management have negotiated cooperative agreements on such issues. These workers, for the most part, would have been granted leave without the law.

I am not trying to argue that law is powerless to address social problems. I support the Family Leave Act. But laws are little more than wish lists if they are not an outgrowth of grassroots and rank and file social movements which are committed to their enactment and able to enjoy some role in their implementation and enforcement. The Employer Policy Foundation, an employer supported think tank, recently estimated that workers would get an additional \$20 billion a year if businesses ceased violating long standing regulations on overtime pay. Federal laws protecting workers become virtually meaningless unless we are willing to pursue one of two courses. We can fund extensive and intrusive enforcement mechanisms. Or we can fashion a genuinely level playing field on the shop floor so that detailed rules are less necessary and retaliation against those who report abuses, either to management or government, is less likely. We are pursuing neither course with regard to a wide range of hours and occupational safety laws.

The most recent detailed study of U.S. workplaces, the federal government's own 1994 Worker Representation and Participation Survey, showed that nearly two-thirds of workers want more say in workplace decisions. These workers want something more than employer-sponsored suggestion boxes or "quality circles" where manage-

ment chooses employer representatives and limits the topics under discussion. Eighty-five percent of workers want to choose their own representatives to worker-management committees and more than three-fourths of the workforce believes that an active and independent worker voice in worker training, technology choice, and safety policy will improve corporate performance. Nor is this merely wishful thinking on their part. Studies, both in this country and internationally, over many years indicate that when workers have a broader stake in corporate profitability and an independent voice in company policy they are also more productive.

Absent more democratic relations on the shop floor, we are likely to have little more than a proliferation of feel good laws followed either by disillusionment or endless controversies surrounding intrusive, detailed, and often costly and inefficient modes of government regulation. In practice, intrusive and detailed enforcement efforts are followed by calls for regulatory reform. In the current climate, "regulatory reform" means scaling back efforts to make workplaces more safe or less polluting in the interests of enhancing employer profits. Abandoning efforts to make our workplaces safer and more humane is both shortsighted and unnecessary. Business interests frequently harp on the limits of detailed, bureaucratic, one-size-fits-all approaches to these issues.

Up to a point, they have a point. But if they are genuinely interested in forms of flexibility that do not amount to abandonment of the worker, they will join labor and progressive groups in support of a more independent voice for their workers on the shop floor. Right now, unfortunately, most corporate boards are unlikely to move in this direction. To do so

would amount to an unprecedented sharing of wealth and power, one unlikely to be undertaken even in the interests of a more productive and humane economy.

Clinton desperately needs an issue to show that he is empathetic with the concerns of average working class families. Strengthening family leave is a quick fix for him. It allows him to express that concern without challenging the corporate economy that creates the problem in the first place. Women's groups, unions, and other progressive forces shouldn't let him get away with this. By connecting traditional concerns with wages and worker rights to the question of family time and quality of life, they can up the ante of popular resistance the President must confront. They should pressure Clinton to fight for not only adequate family leave and overtime policies but an independent union movement able to organize the workplace in support of such an agenda. Striker replacement legislation, endorsed but never pushed during Clinton's first two years, and streamlining NLRB procedures so that employers can't stall certification efforts interminably, would be a good place to start. Such a policy agenda would simultaneously create more good paying jobs for the poor and improve quality of life for stressed full time workers.

As a society we pay more than we realize when workers lack a powerful, independent, and democratic voice within their own workplaces. If political leaders of either party are genuinely worried about both business efficiency and the quality of family life, the next Congress will make that powerlessness its top priority. **Z**

John Buell is a political economist living in Maine. His most recent book, co-authored with Tom DeLuca, is Sustainable Democracy: Individuality and the Politics of the Environment. (Sage)



State of the Art

Panic on Wall Street

By Bob Harris

The big news is on Wall Street, where stock traders have been enjoying more cheap highs than the road crew at a Cypress Hill show. Most nights, the TV news-models proudly recite the Dow Jones industrial average like a winning sports score, accompanied by video footage of excited bald guys in Brooks Brothers suits messing up each others comb-overs. You're supposed to think happiness on Wall Street is good news for the rest of us. Ain't necessarily.

Last week was a good example: There's this thing called "momentum investing." Simply put, it's buying into whatever stock is going up really fast, assuming there must be a good reason, and trying to get back out before everybody else realizes there isn't.

Momentum players cause enormous temporary price gains, which in turn attracts more cash into the casino. People who think of themselves as too smart for the lottery pour their IRA's into mutual funds, and if there aren't any bargains, fund managers still have to put the money somewhere. So even some truly lousy stocks are still going up, and most folks are pretty happy.

That's why private companies like the Boston Celtics, Ticketmaster, and Super Wash (the car wash chain) are rushing to go public: people are willing to pay more for their shares than they're probably worth.

Somebody explain the growth potential here: Ticketmaster isn't any more likely to double the ca-

capacity of Comiskey Park than the Celtics are to begin franchising. As for Super Wash, do you really want to sink your life savings into a company you can replace with a garden hose, a bucket, and a damp rag?

The skyrockets make a pretty show, but by most historic pricing yardsticks—earnings, yield, book, etc.—the stock market is looking at about a 15 percent drop just to reach a relatively normal value. That's about 1000 Dow points from here. Yaaaa.

That won't necessarily happen right away, if at all. Maybe prices will hold for a year as earnings catch up; maybe kablovey tomorrow. Maybe three more years of tulipmania, and then we party like it's 1999.

Anyhow, Federal Reserve Board chair Alan Greenspan, who speaks like an undertaker trained in hypnosis, made a single small mention last December of "irrational exuberance," hinting that stock prices might be approaching speculative levels. (Greenspan went on to theorize that cheese comes from cows, bowling balls roll, and *Millennium* is such turgid crap you wonder why *The X-Files* is any good.) Boom. Worldwide panic selling—130 points off the Dow in 30 minutes.

Why all the fuss? Greenspan and the Fed can deworm the tequila at will, simply by raising interest rates a notch. That makes money itself more expensive, discouraging speculation.

Which would hurt business at the Harrah's on the Hudson.

Traders calmed down quickly, however. Some good news came in. Read this next with bitter irony.

Fortunately for investors, "The Labor Department reported early Friday that non-farm payroll jobs grew by just 118,000 in November, and the nation's unemployment rate rose to a four-month high at 5.4 percent. The two figures suggested that the economy is slowing down, allaying some fears about rising interest rates."

Read that paragraph, which comes verbatim from CNN, again. Go on. You glazed over the first time. Read it again.

To Wall Street, low job growth and surging unemployment are good news, because the Fed is forced to keep interest rates low so the faltering economy won't flatline entirely.

This is not unusual. It's just the most recent example.

As the labor/management covenant called the New Deal is dismantled, wealth centralizes, and



America moves toward a third world style, two tier economy, good news for Wall Street is bad news for you and me. And vice versa.

This fact is openly discussed in *Barron's*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, and the rest of the nation's business press. Without shame.

So next time you want to find a searing indictment of how deregulation and globalization are destroying the American middle class, don't bother looking for a progressive voice in the corporate media darkness. Just pick up *Business Week* or *Forbes* or watch CNBC. And pay close attention to what they consider good news.

Consumer Price Index

The oldest Baby Boomers are turning 50. Soon America will have more folks over 65 than ever. To anyone with human parents, that should be cause for pride.

Social Security works "pretty darn well." Only about 10 percent of the elderly live in poverty these days. In 1960, that figure was one in three. However, many analysts

are alarming younger people by claiming Social Security will collapse sometime around 2029, shortly after a glut of Baby Boomers retire and overload the system.

There's only a problem if you assume that the U.S. economy will grow at only a Depression-era rate for the next several decades. If it grows at anything near a more realistic historical rate, the problem's not nearly that bleak.

Stories about Social Security's impending collapse are supposed to scare you into accepting the privatization of the entire system, primarily for the benefit of Wall Street investors. But that's the long-term scam. In the short-term, a Senate commission now claims to have discovered that the current Consumer Price Index (CPI) overstates inflation. They recommend a change in how the CPI is calculated, reducing the current figure from 3.2 to 2.1 percent.

Washington actuaries claim that, coincidentally, this little adjustment will help stabilize Social Security and save the government \$166 billion over the next ten years, while reducing monthly payments to current retirees by only eight bucks in

1988. And if you buy that one, you probably think static electricity can bring down a 747.

The big trick lies in compounding that little 1.1 percent cut. Assuming that the reduction remains constant, 10 years later that's a 10 percent cut. A decade later, it's a 19 percent cut. And so on.

Since Social Security is indexed to the CPI, the younger you are, the more you lose. If you're 30, this sneaky little maneuver cuts your future Social Security payments by about a third.

Tax brackets are also indexed to the CPI. A downward revision means that the brackets will rise more slowly than your actual wages, eventually "creeping" you into a higher bracket. So it's a tax hike as well.

Finally, since wage increases will now appear to exceed inflation, shysters in both parties can grandstand in 1998 about how much better off we all are. Sweet deal.

The Clinton administration is getting tips on smooth-talking this rip-off from Burson-Marsteller, the same PR firm that handled Bovine Growth Hormone, Bhopal, and the Exxon Valdez. Their advice? "Explain to the average person that they are not being denied anything, but are only getting what they are entitled to." Classic B-M.

Where will our money go? To help trim a national debt created largely by huge corporate tax favors, subsidies, and arms contracts.

This CPI scam grossly contradicts the will of the American people. November exit polls showed that protecting Social Security is more important to voters than a balanced budget, and improving education and health care is a far higher priority than gold-plating the Pentagon.

Even if the budget was America's main concern, that's still no excuse for waiting until Christ-

mas—when many people are too busy and light-hearted to notice—to furtively raise taxes and cut Social Security for every single American.

While some careful adjustments to the system may be necessary, Clinton's pending boast of "saving" Social Security—simply by slashing it—is predictable. After all, this is the same guy who "reformed" AFDC by abolishing it.

Ben Franklin once said that nothing is certain but death and taxes. Artificially depressing the Consumer Price Index will do a fine job of bringing America's elderly more of both.

Bob Harris is a political humorist and lecturer.



Nuclear Politics

Nuclear Treaties in the Age of Pentagon Capitalism

By Vijay Prashad

On 10 September 1996, the UN General Assembly voted on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)—158 member states voted in favor of it, 5 states abstained, and 3 voted in opposition. The opposition included Libya, Bhutan, and India. The nuclear elites (U.S., Russia, France, UK, and the People's Republic of China) as well as Australia (who sponsored the measure) attacked India from late August, when it decided not to go along with the treaty's language. India appeared isolated, even though it won the support of the five abstainers (Cuba, Tanzania, Lebanon, Mauritius, Syria) and the various states

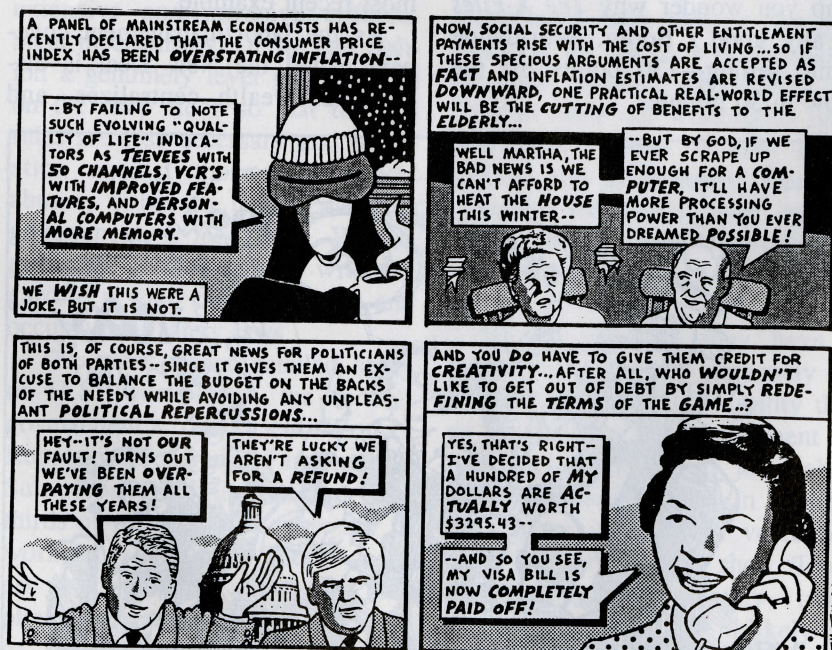
who did not participate (such as North Korea). States such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal offered intimations of agreement with the Indian position even though they signed the treaty. The special treatment accorded to India comes from a technical point in the CTBT: since the CTBT failed in the UN Conference on Disarmament (CoD), the Australian government introduced it as a "private nation's bill" in the General Assembly with the proviso that the 44 states with nuclear reactors or research facilities must sign the bill for it to come into force (the "entry into force" provision). India, one of the 44 states, scuttled the process.

Why did India fail to sign a bill which it first proposed in 1954 (and which the French and British have consistently fought against)? Why did India turn away from a treaty which makes possible a nuclear-free world? Whatever India's reasons (and there are some, such as Praful Bidwai, who speculate that the pro-Bomb lobby in India controlled the process), treaties such as the CTBT are largely irrelevant in terms of the carnage being visited upon the multitude by "conventional arms." Focusing on nuclear treaties serves to obscure

the massive trade in "conventional arms" which play an important role in the economies of the overdeveloped world, notably in the economies of the nuclear elites. As far as nuclear treaties are concerned, only the naive trust the nuclear states to dismantle their arsenals without pressure from a powerful international popular peace movement.

The Security of Illusions

The CTBT's preamble notes that it is a "meaningful step in the realization of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament." However, the treaty does not carry any firm commitment towards this goal and it certainly does not offer a time-bound process for eventual disarmament. In a sense, the CTBT repeats the spirit of Article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1970 which noted that the nuclear elites must "pursue in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament." The CTBT, in Article 1, calls for an end to the conduct of "any nuclear-weapon test explosion, or any other nuclear explosion." The negotiation record shows that the parties agree that "any" nuclear



explosion must be understood as explosions with yields greater than zero (that is, explosions with any impact are banned). In January 1996, the Indian ambassador to the CoD argued that the CTBT should be "anchored in the global disarmament context and be linked through treaty language to the elimination of all nuclear weapons in a time-bound framework." The Indian argument was not taken seriously.

After the passage of CTBT in the UN, the U.S. State Department spokesperson Nicholas Burns made the unequivocal statement that nuclear disarmament was not on the agenda. Burns made it clear that such a quest is in the nature of an idle dream rather than a "realistic" option: "We do not live in an ideal world," he said prosaically, "we live in a world that exists. A world in which the United States will continue to have nuclear weapons, and Russia, China, Britain and France will. There is no getting around that."

Treaties related to nuclear matters have only been signed by the nuclear elites after the value of the regulated issues is superseded by superior technology or after that particular mode of testing is rendered worthless. When underground testing superseded atmospheric testing, the nuclear elites forbade the latter. CTBT currently forbids live testing, but the nuclear elites will be able to conduct "sub critical" or computer testing procedures which may render live treaties unnecessary for the short-term. The treaties are not signed with nuclear disarmament in mind, but in order to prevent non-nuclear states from entry into the nuclear club. The NPT, for instance, was initiated in 1968 after the five nuclear elites completed their major tests and after underground tests became technologically more effective for measurement and for containment of radiation. The 1986

Treaty of Raratonga called for an end to testing and the emplacement of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific: the French signed in early 1996 after it finished its latest round of tests and the U.S. and UK also joined after it became clear that nuclear submarines will not be needed to form a security ring around the USSR.

The CTBT, similarly, appeared on the table after the nuclear elite found itself secure in the belief that its weapons are well oiled and ready. Certainly, "sub-critical" tests "are not adequate for new weapon development or qualitative improvement," but it is certain that these technologies will act as "auxiliary aids to explosive tests" in the short-term (which is the time frame of some significance since the nuclear elite is known to break treaties which do not work in its interest—such as the shoddy treatment given to UNESCO and the recent U.S. refusal to pay its share of UN monies). When the U.S. State Department was asked about its use of "sub-critical tests," a spokesperson said in typical doublespeak, "I'm just going to limit myself today that we've pledged, in voting for the treaty, to not test on a zero-yield basis, which is a key part of this."

Pentagon Capitalism

In 1970, Seymour Melman published *Pentagon Capitalism: The Political Economy of War* (New York: McGraw Hill) which detailed the tight nexus between the military elites and industrial capital. Melman showed how military control over national resources narrowed the choices available for other state programs. Further, he argued that the military-industrial complex uses arms exports as a means to manage domestic economic problems as well as to push an imperialist policy via proxy. Aggressive arms sales to the Third

World began after the onset of the long recession in 1973. Arms sales to the Gulf States, for instance, enabled the recovery of revenue spent on oil. The major arms merchants sold intermediary military technology to the Third World (keeping the latest inventions for the awesome military might of the overdeveloped world). The military industrial complex earned major revenues from the exchange which enabled the defense industry to subsidize its domestic production as well as to keep the companies productive during times of lean domestic demand.

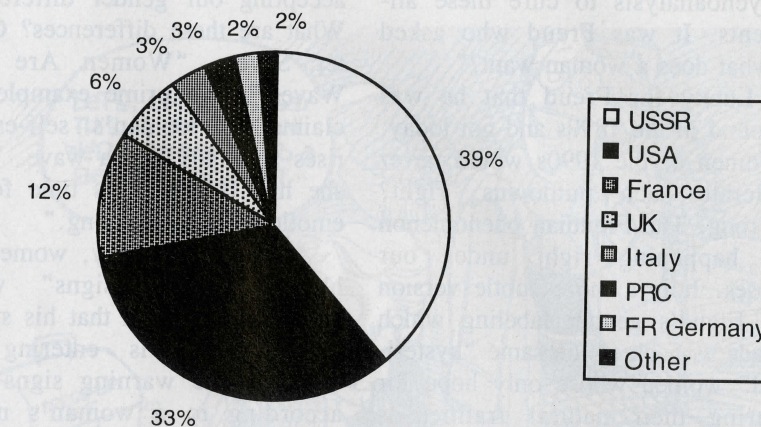
Further, arms production enabled states with flagging economies to keep employment steady. The overdeveloped world benefited from these sales even at a time when its own economies suffered from the burden of stagflation. The nuclear elites developed a theory to justify their sale of "conventional arms" to the Third World: "conventional weapons," the nuclearcrats argued, provided a "means to circumvent" the use of the nuclear option by non-nuclear and threshold states (India, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa). If these states receive adequate amounts of "conventional weapons," this wisdom contends, then they will not engage in nuclear weapons production. In other words, let these folks kill themselves with weapons which only have local range; let them have neither long-range nuclear devices nor access to "conventional weapons."

The latter option, total disarmament and non-proliferation of "conventional weapons," is not an option because the arms industry is structured into the heart of the economy of the overdeveloped world. The Third World buys vast quantities of arms from the overdeveloped world: India, for instance, imported \$17 billion of military goods between 1985 and 1989; Iraq was next on the list

with \$12 billion (and it was in the midst of a bloody engagement with Iran at this time). From 1992 to 1994, India increased its arms expenditure by 12 percent and Pakistan by 19.5 percent. The major exporters of arms to India include France, Sweden, UK, U.S., and Russia; Pakistan is outfitted by PRC, France, Sweden, UK, and U.S. The role of the nuclear elite in such transactions is apparent. The graph shows the volume of arms sales to the Third World controlled by the nuclear elite between 1971 and 1985. From 1983 to 1993, the U.S. increased its share of the pie to 55 percent and Russia decreased its share to 10 percent. Within the past four years, the U.S. renamed its Office of Munitions Control to the Center of Defense Trade. With the end of Cold War II (1979-1989), the arms business has become "trade" rather than a matter of "control."

The U.S. occasionally frames laws to restrict arms sales to states which engage in nuclear production. Two such legal provisions are the Symington Amendment, section 669 of the Foreign Assistance Act (which prevents U.S. sales to states who do not meet International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards) and the Pressler Amendment (which suspends U.S. military aid and USAID assistance to states engaged in nuclear weapons development and proliferation—in this instance, Pakistan). These legal remedies are frequently exempted to funnel weapons to allies or to those states which pay top dollar. The international community forged two protocols to control the proliferation of "conventional weapons," but even these provisions are nowhere near comprehensive. The UN Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (October 10, 1980) is only for weapons "which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects" while the Wassenaar Arrangement

MAJOR ARMS EXPORTS TO THE THIRD WORLD, 1971-85



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *Arms Transfers to the Third World, 1971-85* (Oxford: OUP, 1987).

on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies (November 1996) is only to prevent proliferation to states "whose behavior is, or becomes, a cause for serious international concern." Other states are offered free use of weaponry.

Of course, there is a contradiction in the policy of the nuclear elites. On the one hand, these states, as the congealed representatives of their industrial, commercial, and financial blocs, want to promote a subdued passivity in the Third World in order for "commercial freedom." On the other hand, the nuclear elites want to create discord in the Third World in order to prevent a unified front to the ambitions and interests of the overdeveloped world. There is widespread resentment amongst the peoples of the Third World at the policies of the nuclear elites. States might vote with the nuclear elites at the UN, but their own populations display an impatience which comes out in mass protests or in the growth of unsavory populist movements.

India votes against a hollow treaty and the nuclear elites and their clients round up the usual suspects to begin a campaign of

condemnation. The people of the overdeveloped world, soaked with propaganda from the media (which in foreign affairs, acts as the mouthpiece of the state department, et. al.), put their faith in the doublespeak of the nuclearcrats. The nuclear elites, meanwhile, balance their budgets on the blood of innocents via the sale of "conventional weapons." There is no pretense of morality in this phase of Pentagon capitalism.

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Gender
Labeling

Reincarnating Freud

By Susana McCollom

Freud is not likely to be a name found on a woman's list of heroes. While he is recognized as the pioneer of psychotherapy, Freud cemented historical labels of

women as "hysterical" and "neurotic," and recommended years of psychoanalysis to cure these ailments. It was Freud who asked "what does a woman want?"

Lucky for Freud that he was around in the 1890s and not today. Women of the 1990s would never tolerate such putdowns, right? Wrong. The Freudian phenomenon is happening right under our noses. It is a more subtle version of Freud's gender labeling which leads us back to the same "hysterical" women whose only hope for curing their natural frailties is years of counseling, anti-depressants, or a steady diet of self-help publications.

Freud's contemporary followers have one advantage. The capacity for selling these images of women has skyrocketed as a result of technological innovations and mass media. The subtlety of these images and their messages is continuously overlooked as women's educational, political, and financial strides convince many that gender equality is becoming a reality. The professional heirs of Freud are joined by marketing wizards (including women) in helping self-help book authors and publishers, women's magazines, and pharmaceutical companies to promote the notion that women need help. And women are buying it.

The Packaging of Neurosis

When a man goes into his cave, it is important for a woman to do something enjoyable. Read a book, do some gardening, take a bath, go for a walk, go shopping or call a girl friend for a good chat.

No, this is not a quote from Freud. This advice comes from the contemporary relationship expert, Dr. John Gray, author of *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus*. Gray asserts that men and women are from different planets,

resulting in communication problems which can only be solved by accepting our gender differences. What are these differences? Chapter Seven, "Women Are Like Waves," is a prime example. He claims "a woman's self-esteem rises and falls like a wave. When she hits bottom it is time for an emotional housecleaning."

According to Gray, women exhibit "warning signs" which should alert a man that his spouse or girlfriend is entering her "well." The warning signs vary according to a woman's mood. She may feel insecure, resentful, confused, passive, controlling or demanding. But fortunately for men, there are 101 ways to "score points" with women (as opposed to 26 ways to score points with men).

The theme is very straightforward: men must learn to appease women's natural tendency to chatter or cry at the drop of a pin. A man should "compliment her on how she looks," "give her four hugs a day," or "pay more attention to her than to others in public." Women, on the other hand, need to resist the urge to constantly nag their mates. They "score big with men," if "he makes a mistake and she doesn't say I told you so," "if he disappoints her and she doesn't punish him," or if "she really enjoys having sex with him."

Like women in the 1800s, today's women are characterized as neurotic and lacking any sex drive. Yet since it was first published in 1992, *Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus* has remained a bestseller in the United States. Gray has since published additional versions of his planetary discoveries, further advising men and women on relationship skills both in and out of bed.

However, while Gray's appeal to (mostly) women has made him a relationship guru, his advice sin-

gles out married and committed couples. For the single, presumably miserable, women who have failed in their attempts to capture a husband, help has arrived. In *The Rules: Time-tested Secrets for Capturing the Heart of Mr. Right*, Ellen Fein and Sherrie Schneider guide the single woman in search of the man of their dreams—or any man, really. Unlike Gray's book, many women and men alike scoff at *The Rules* and its "outdated" advice.

What are some of these rules? First, women must "look the part" by wearing lipstick while they jog or by getting a nose job if it means a man will find them more attractive. But equally important is "acting the part." Fein and Schneider advise, "Be feminine...don't be a loud, knee-slapping, hysterically funny girl...when you're with a man you like, be quiet and mysterious, act lady-like, cross your legs and smile...You may feel that you won't be able to be yourself, but men will love it."

The authors acknowledge the differential responses to their "timeless" advice and respond to skeptics such as the cynical career woman. "A relationship with a man is different from a job" claim the authors, "...the man must take charge. He must propose. We are not making this up—biologically, he's the aggressor."

Fein and Schneider's message is basically that women must play hard to get. Really hard to get. Even if it means they have to set a timer to ten minutes to get off the phone first. The authors claim that "when you do *The Rules*, he somehow thinks you're the sexiest woman alive! ... you don't have to worry about being abandoned, neglected, or ignored!"

Fein and Schneider promote and encourage behavior which polarizes men and women. Essentially, the authors attempt to reinstate the

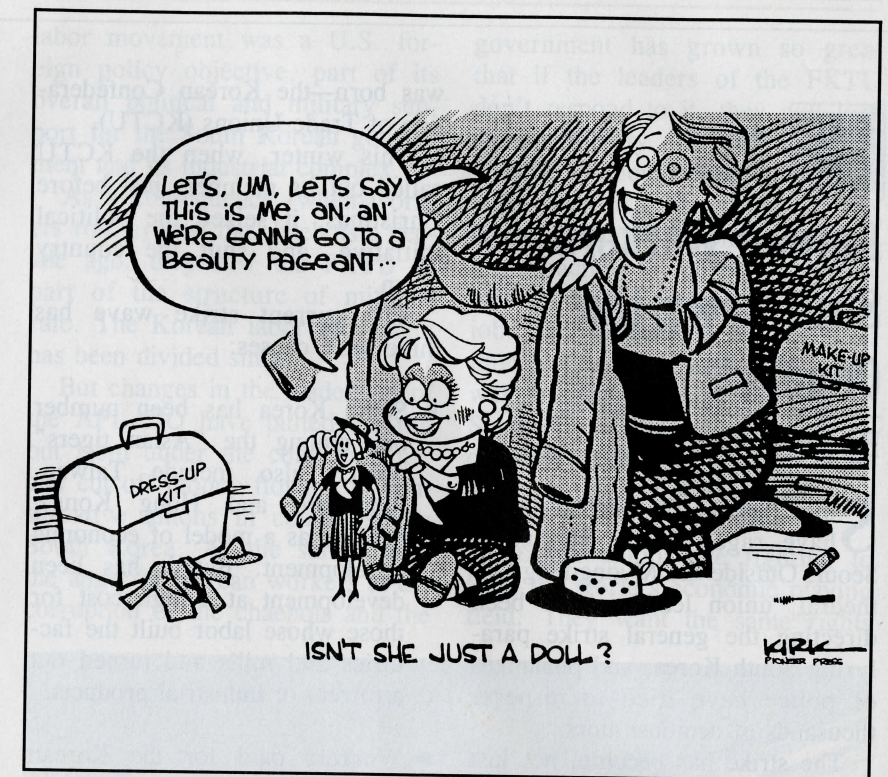
"say no but mean yes" mentality that oppressed women for years and which only recently, through advocacy, education, and policy changes, has begun to subside. So much for the vindication of women's rights. According to these authors, women are too stupid to know they have any. While seemingly ridiculous, *The Rules* remains a bestseller and provides the authors with a string of public appearances.

Women As the Target

The irony in today's self-help mania is that neither Fein, Schneider, nor most men are responsible for placing this book on the bestseller list. Nor are they the ones raving about gender planetary differences. On the contrary, women are the die-hard supporters of the self-help book market.

Recent research suggests that anxiety, the nation's leading psychological problem, strikes twice as many women as men. Psychologists, women's magazines, and the general media have seized this finding as they eagerly promote self-help books, articles, and anti-depressants to women. Through their advertising they reinforce the concept that women are inherently neurotic—ringing the 1890s bell louder than ever.

The pharmaceutical industry also contributes to the perpetuation of this neurotic image. Historically, "female" diseases were treated through physiological methods including hysterectomies, a recommended cure for hysteria. Freud's predecessors also suggested hours of bathing to treat hysteria, often resulting in life-threatening dehydration. While these remedies are likely to be perceived as inhumane today, anti-depressants have become the contemporary physiological remedy for "female" anxiety. By targeting women in college, at work, and at



home, drug companies join the self-help industry in selling and profiting from the image of the neurotic female.

We've Come A Long Way?

Although the media and self-help industry produce and perpetuate negative female stereotypes, apparently much of our society remains willing to accept them. Women—many of whom are encouraged to undergo years of counseling and physiological treatment as they did during Freud's era—are the most likely to accept and perpetuate such stereotypes by succumbing to the means through which they are marketed, purchasing self-help books and magazines as fast as they are published.

Self-empowerment, through means including education, sports, and community involvement, is less interesting to the profit-oriented media. Such pursuits may enhance women's self-esteem, but they don't sell as many books. Even exercise or a healthy diet are

not sold to women as ways to relieve stress, but rather as methods to lose pounds. The ultimate message is that there is something wrong with women, either socially, mentally or physically.

It is unfortunate that negative female stereotypes are continuously accepted in our society. More tragic, however, is that so many women acquiesce to the subtle but massive marketing of Freud's depiction of them. His labels are bought again and again, in printed or bottled versions of products that cause too many women to accept their own worst self-perceptions and make many men perceive them as the basket cases they were—and still are—advertised to be. Research may show that women are twice as likely to suffer from anxiety as men, but if this finding is accepted at face value and is mass marketed, it not only implies that psychological problems plague a huge number of women—it indicates that we have a serious social problem and a potential self-fulfilling prophecy. Z



Strike Waves

Korean Workers Shut Down the Chaebols

By David Bacon

Since January 14, pitched battles have raged in the streets of Seoul. Outside the Myongdong Cathedral, union leaders have been directing the general strike paralyzing South Korea, and phalanxes of police have tried to disperse thousands of demonstrators.

The strike has become, not just a movement of workers, but a pro-democracy movement involving all parts of Korean society. TV newscasters have left their studios and joined the strikers. University professors and white-collar workers rub shoulders with industrial laborers. They have all surrounded the Myongdong Cathedral, trying to hold the police at bay.

The Korean strike draws its strength from the hundreds of thousand of workers at big auto plants, steel mills, and shipyards—the heart of the Korean economy. When industry stopped in late December, the stock market plunged and the social structure began to waver and shake.

Their movement has its roots in the labor unrest of a decade ago, when workers organized new, militant unions in the heart of Korean industry. That upsurge was so violent that it destabilized the military dictatorship of Park Chung Hee. It was the opening move in the forcible democratization of the south. Out of the industrial battles of that era a new labor movement

was born—the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU).

This winter, when the KCTU called out its members just before Christmas, it seized the political initiative, and shut the country down.

The current strike wave has three basic causes:

- South Korea has been number one among the “Asian tigers” (which also include Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong), held up as a model of economic development. But it has been development at a high cost for those whose labor built the factories and mills and turned out a torrent of industrial products.
- Workers paid for the Korean economic miracle by giving up their labor rights. After the Korean War, the government decided that strong unions would drive up the cost of labor, and restrict the growth of the chaebols—the huge industrial conglomerates like Hyundai, Samsung and Daewoo. Strikes were originally banned outright. Then, after the uprising a decade ago, the government started jailing union leaders for almost any strike-related activity. KCTU President Kwon Young-kil was himself arrested last year for union activity, and many other leaders are presently imprisoned for the crime of “disrupting business.” The KCTU is an illegal union, with no right to exist under Korean labor law.
- Repression has kept the cost of labor low for Korean industry. Although wages have been rising in all the “Asian tiger” countries, partly because of growing labor militancy, the

salary of a Korean industrial worker is still far below that of someone doing the same job in the U.S., Europe, or Japan. The average cost of an hour’s labor, including wages and benefits, in Korea was \$5.53 in 1993. In the U.S. it was \$16.73. In Britain it was \$12.76. Korean workers paid for their country’s enormous industrial growth with a low standard of living, while making the chaebols some of the world’s largest and wealthiest corporations. Workers are angry about paying this price, and determined to change it.

The Korean government precipitated the current unrest with its intention to strip away even further any legal protection for union activity. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has been pressuring Korea to reform its labor law as a condition of admittance. But after promising reforms, the government produced something very different.

In a late-night, seven-minute session of the Korean Congress, to which only government-party legislators were invited, a new law was passed, legalizing the hiring of replacement workers, or scabs, during strikes. This may not raise eyebrows in the U.S., but only because U.S. labor laws are among the world’s most backward in this respect. In Korea, as in most other countries, hiring strikebreakers has always been illegal.

Breaking the government’s previous commitment, the new law also maintains the KCTU’s illegal status. Kwon Young-kil declared that the KCTU would continue striking “until the government makes an official commitment to reopen the parliamentary discussions involving the trade union

representatives for a re-amendment of the labour law.” The legislation, he said, “was passed in an undemocratic manner and contains various pernicious clauses that are aimed to set back the clock on both the working conditions and trade union rights.”

An offensive against workers’ social benefits is spreading throughout the industrial world. Last year, when the French government went after workers’ health care, and the German government went after their sick pay and vacation, massive strikes broke out in response.

This international attack has now hit Korea. The Korean labor law reform not only undermines union rights, but it also abolishes one of the Korean industry’s most basic job benefits—employment security. By making layoffs much easier, the Korean government is helping Hyundai, Daewoo, and the other chaebols to shed thousands of employees, while demanding greater production from those that remain.

The strike wave has one new feature, however, which promises to give it much greater strength and staying power—joint action by its unions. Unlike the struggle of a decade ago, this time the KCTU has been joined, albeit reluctantly and intermittently, by the more-conservative Federation of Korean Trade Unions.

The FKTU was organized with the blessing of the Korean government. It has been a conservative labor movement, intended to make workers more cooperative in building the country’s economic miracle. The FKTU didn’t challenge the chaebols, but insulated them instead from a more militant brand of unionism.

During the cold war, the FKTU received assistance from the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, which was historically connected to the U.S. intelligence apparatus. Creating a conservative

labor movement was a U.S. foreign policy objective, part of its overall political and military support for the South Korean government and its industrial complex.

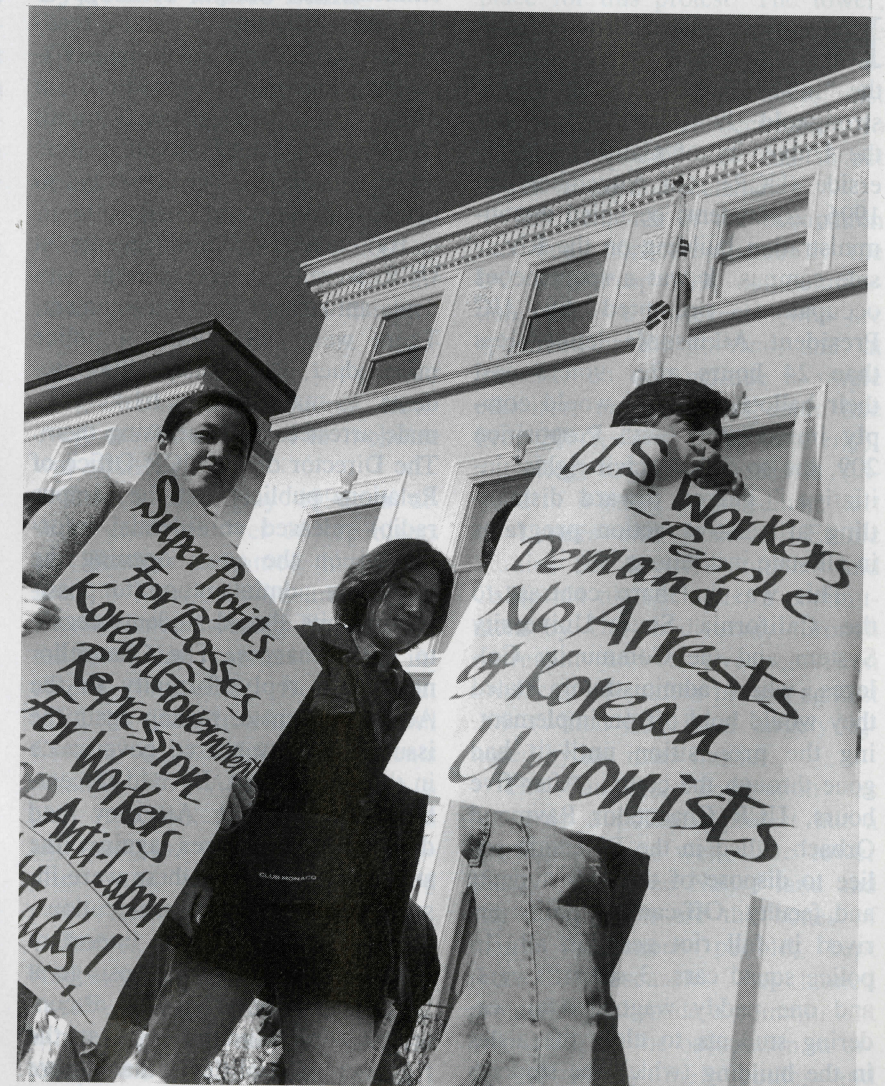
As a consequence, when workers rose against the chaebols a decade ago, they saw the FKTU as part of the structure of military rule. The Korean labor movement has been divided since.

But changes in the leadership of the AFL-CIO have pulled the rug out from under the cold warriors, and cut off money flowing to conservative unions in countries like South Korea. At the same time, the anger of Korean workers at the corruption of the chaebols and the

government has grown so great that if the leaders of the FKTU don’t respond to it, they will lose their credibility.

This all should be good news to U.S. workers. The denial of the rights of Korean unions has been a big attraction for corporate investment, a low-wage magnet drawing jobs and production. When U.S. unions lined up with U.S. cold war foreign policy, supporting the South Korean government and the chaebols, it didn’t just hurt Korean workers. It cost jobs at home as well.

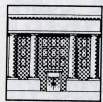
Korean unions are fighting to level the world’s economic playing field. They want the same rights



Korean Consulate, San Francisco—David Bacon

and economic standards workers struck for in France and Germany, and which (in the case of prohibiting strikebreakers) workers in the U.S. wish they had. **Z**

David Bacon is a freelance writer and photographer on labor issues.



Student Activism

UC-Riverside

By the Student Coalition for Justice

Fifty miles east of Los Angeles lies the county of Riverside, the "Inland Empire," a Republican stronghold, home to Sunkist and the University of California, Riverside (UCR). On November 11, 1996, 20 students occupied the administration building on the Riverside campus. It was a spontaneous occupation, prompted by UC President Atkinson's letter, less than 24 hours after voters cast their ballots, that UC would comply immediately with Proposition 209, the so-called "civil rights" initiative," geared toward dismantling affirmative action programs in all state institutions.

This was in sharp contrast to the California State University System and the Community Colleges, where administrators stated they would hold off on implementing the proposition until it had gone through the courts. After five hours, UCR Chancellor Raymond Orbach called in the Riverside police to dispose of the 150 students and faculty. Off-campus police arrived in full riot gear—in all, 15 police squad cars, 3 sheriff's cars, and one paddy wagon. After ordering students to clear the aisles in the building (which the students did) police arrested 20 people—18

Latinos and 2 Anglos—on charges of failure to disperse. Over half of those arrested were women.

Faculty members, mobilized by the students' actions, rapidly convened a meeting of the Academic Senate of the UC Riverside campus. At a meeting attended by around 300, including 100-plus faculty members and observers from the student body and wider community, the faculty voted overwhelmingly to support the students and passed two resolutions. One advised Chancellor Orbach, who was sitting in the audience, that no campus disciplinary measures be taken, and that he talk to the Riverside District Attorney and recommend that charges be dropped. The other was that he send a resolution to President Atkinson advising the university to hold off on implementing Proposition 209 until faculty, staff, and administrators could consult and develop ways to maintain diversity at UCR.

By early December events at UCR were still in limbo as students anticipated their arraignment. There were allegations of police misconduct, from mishandling students, to male officers frisking female arrestees and harassing them. The Director of the UCR Office of Relations publicly (on the campus radio) released confidential information on the case, opening the university administration to possible lawsuits should students decide to press charges. The Chancellor never did reply formally to the Academic Senate, raising again the issue of faculty shared governance in the UC system. By mid-December, the District Attorney had dropped the charges against the students. Apparently there were insufficient grounds for prosecution.

There are several important points signaling that the upsurge at UCR is part of a growing discontent among students against the right-wing politics that have gripped California and the nation.

Although the demonstrators and their supporters are a mixed group of Latinos, African Americans, Asians, and Anglos, it is no coincidence that the leaders are Latinos. The Latino community as a whole in California, stung by Proposition 187, increasing anti-immigrant hysteria, and Proposition 209, responded with demonstrations and took to the polls in record numbers. In October, 50,000 Latinos marched on the nation's capital to protest anti-immigrant legislation. In a harbinger of elections to come, a young unknown Chicana, Loretta Sanchez, unseated right-wing Republican Bob Dornan in the conservative stronghold of Orange County.

The student organizing is a continuation of Latino community politics and efforts to stop the passage of Proposition 209. Monica Ponce, chair of UCR MECHA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan), has said she became involved "because there were issues which hit close to home... friends, family...and I knew it would affect me directly as well as so many others. Seeing injustices happening...it's our responsibility to fight them so they will not keep building and building. We need to eliminate them at the root.... My involvement began with Proposition 187, when I heard about what children of undocumented people might face—being barred from school and that teachers would ask for parents' papers. And I was also worried that even though my brother and I were born here, that my family might not get their social security checks, get kicked out of their jobs."

African Americans, some Asian Americans, and Anglos also participated in the sit-in at the UCR administration building. Rebecca Cox, one of the women arrested, explained, "I got involved because it was an issue of justice. It wasn't because I am a woman...and I'm

here for my benefit. It was just that I saw it as an issue. It was an injustice. Whether or not it affected me directly didn't matter."

Women are playing a major role in the leadership of student organizing and in the demonstration. MECHA is headed by Monica Ponce and women are active in other leadership roles. One female high school student sat in and was arrested. One toddler later donned a T-shirt saying, "Chancellor Orbach sent my mommy to jail." Several leaders of the Student Coalition for Justice, a student group formed as a result of the protest, are women. Although women in California, by a slim margin, voted for Proposition 209, an overwhelming number of non-white women voted against the measure. If all women had been informed correctly about the measure's impact on affirmative action programs, undoubtedly many more would have voted against it.

An encouraging sign in the course of the protest and its aftermath has been that student protesters have framed their arguments in the language of morality, justice, and human rights. Faculty members, many of whom were organizers in the 1960s, were moved by the students' activism. Many recognized that they are in the same temporal position to students now that they had been to the veterans of the 1930s. Faculty also have drawn upon the history of earlier movements, including the chair of the Ethnic Studies Department, Ralph Crowder, who said in his opening address to the UCR Academic Senate meeting, that proponents of Proposition 209 wanted to "return us to that 'color blind' era of the 1950s."

While the majority of students go about their business oblivious to the winds of change, some are beginning to take notice, ask questions, and ponder how these issues relate to them in an era of economic downturns and increasing

conservatism. The Student Coalition for Justice is planning to continue their struggle for diversity on the UCR campus, and to organize with other groups in California, and around the country.

Prepared by the Student Coalition for Justice and concerned faculty, UCR.



Student Activism

UC-Berkeley

By Jennie Marie Luna

Students at the University of California, Berkeley waged an arduous campaign against Proposition 209—walking precincts, phone-banking, and rallying—for months prior to the November 1996 election. When Prop 209—to end affirmative action in the state—passed, on top of the passage of Prop 187 against immigrant rights, it felt like yet another defeat. This time around, however, our commitment to mobilize was stronger.

On Election Day 1996, a diverse group of over 60 organizers and leaders crammed into Casa Joaquin Murrieta, the independent Xicano co-op housing facility near the Berkeley campus. They included students from Casa, MECHA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan) and Students Against 209. After generating a plan of action, we painted banners and posters, wrote lists of supplies, and typed demands and press releases.

The next day, thousands gathered at on campus at Sproul Plaza to rally in opposition to Prop 209. When the rally ended, protesters took to the streets, stopping traffic, blocking intersections, and leading the police to believe they were go-

ing to the freeway. But there was no such intention; the plan was to take over the Campanile Clock Tower on campus.

Eight protesters entered the tower during regular business hours and took the elevator to the top. Maria Brenes, Eva Camarena, Jennie Luna, Maritza Madrigal, and Jose Palafox chained themselves to a pillar with help from three other students, Solis Aguilera, Jesds Barraza, and Kahlil Jacobs-Fantauzzi, who stayed with them.

When the marchers outside announced the occupation to the crowd, it became clear why the Campanile tower was the perfect place for this protest. The tower, which had long symbolized the university to the world, had become an elitist and exclusionist ivory tower. The occupation to protest Prop 209 was thus an act of resistance and reclamation.

The demands of the occupation included: non-compliance by the UC with Prop 209; democratization of the UC Regents (who are appointed by the governor and, at present, do not include a single educator, only businesspeople like Prop 209 sponsor Ward Connerly); a College of Ethnic Studies (instead of it being a subordinate part of Letters and Science); Ethnic Studies for transfer students and California high schools; a commitment by UC to diversity through outreach; and a live television broadcast of student protest against 209 (which had been largely ignored by the mass media).

The Campanile occupation was not only a political protest but a spiritual act as well. The tower stands on Ohlone Native land and stored within it are the bones of many indigenous people, kept there for research. The chained protesters had made a commitment to fast during the occupation in order to purify their bodies and strengthen their spirits. As Xicanos and Xicanas, they wanted to make



Prop 209 protesters at the Campanile Tower—Jennie Luna

the point that the university only wants indigenous people when they are dead. Thus the protesters were demanding respect for the land, its people, and the many broken and violated treaties. They were demanding that the physical and cultural genocide end, beginning with rejection of Proposition 209.

To everyone's surprise the police did not move to arrest anybody immediately. As one Xicano officer told a protester, they wanted to wait until much later, when people had left, avoiding arrests that could provoke more demonstrations.

During the night, the chained protesters shared their stories. Others who climbed to the top (the elevators had been shut down) rang the tower bells. Those in the tower, and hundreds who remained outdoors overnight, would join in drumming and singing. Across the

cold night air their voices would go from chants of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, to Native traditional drum songs, to songs of farm workers and other labor movements.

At approximately 5:30 AM, police moved to end the occupation. With no official warning to disperse and wearing no badges, they started moving supporters aside to get to the protesters. Students chanted "No violence!" as police used what most considered excessive force. After breaking two pairs of glasses and a wheelchair, leaving its occupant on the ground, and scratching a young woman's eye when she lost her balance and tried to hold on to an officer, police cleared the way to the tower. As they reached the top, protesters drummed, singing "Through my people speaks the spirit, the spirit never dies."

After we read our demands, the officers gave us one last opportunity to leave, then broke the chains and arrested 23 for trespassing (students inside) and unlawful assembly (those outside the tower) All charges were later dropped except one (for resisting arrest, because she had accidentally fallen against an officer's baton and ended up with a black eye.)

The same day, protests continued with students disrupting classes, demanding air time on the campus radio station, tearing up the *Daily Californian* (a campus paper which had endorsed 209), negotiating meetings with the vice chancellors, and strategizing for the next steps. UC Berkeley students, in solidarity with others at UC Santa Cruz, Stanford, San Francisco State University, and others, had ignited a fire that continues to burn. Now the real work

begins: maintaining the activist spirit, dealing with bureaucracy, negotiating with UC officials, mobilizing high school youth, and continuing to fight for what's right. ¡Viva la Causa! **Z**

Jennie Marie Luna is a staff writer for Raza Teca Publications.



**Green
Parties**

Still Seeking Unity

By Howie Hawkins

Greens ran more than 60 candidates in the 1996 election and the results were encouraging. Among the Greens' strongest showings were:

- Arcata, California: The Green Party won three out of five majority on the city council, with Jennifer Hannan and Bob Ornelus joining Jason Kilpatrick.

- California city councils: The election of four more city council candidates—Dona Spring and Chris Kavanagh in Berkeley, Mike Feinstein in Santa Monica, and Julie Partansky in Davis.

- Hawai'i: A strong second for Keiko Bonk for mayor, with 33 percent to the Democrat's 39 percent and the Republican's 23 percent. Other

strong seconds were Julie Leialoha (33 percent) and Julie Jacobsen (28 percent) for county council. Karen Archibald (21 percent) also ran well against a Democrat (53 percent) and a Republican (23 percent) for a state House seat.

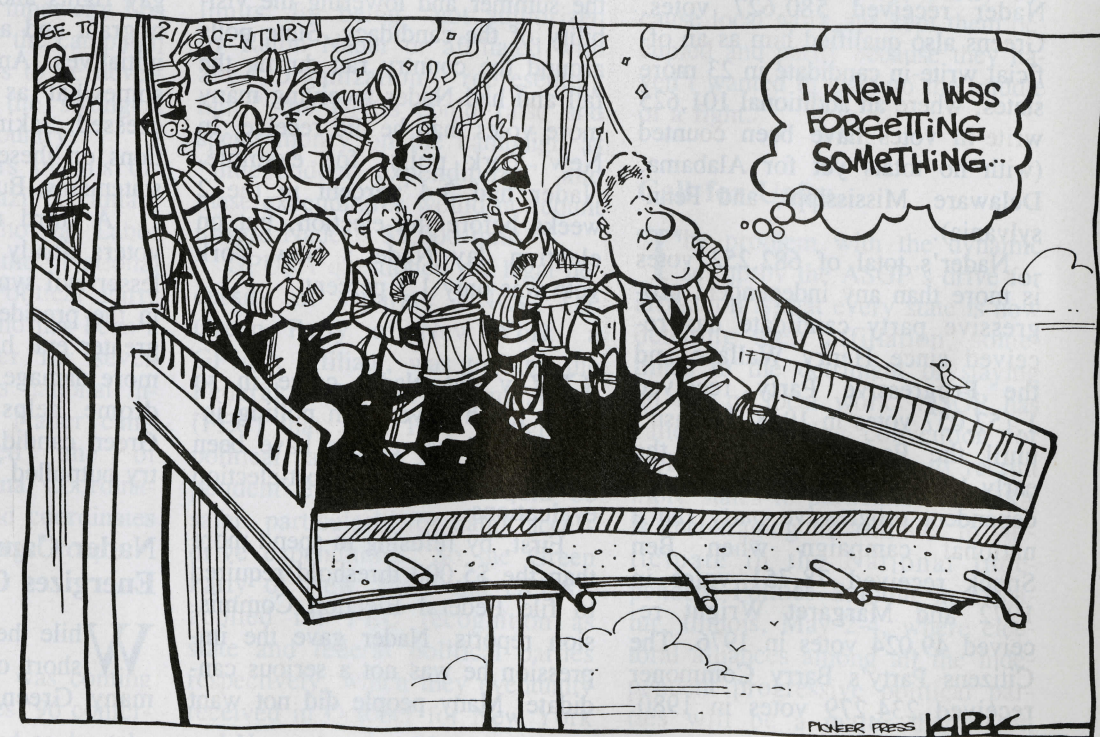
- New Mexico: Peggy Helgeson received 11 percent of the statewide vote for Corporation Commission, the same as Roberto Mondragon received running for governor in 1993. Mondragon received 35 percent for state legislature from Santa Fe this year and Fran Gallegos won a municipal judgeship there, as well. Other strong showings were 29 percent for Bob Anderson for state legislature from Albuquerque; 25 percent for Andres Vargas for District Attorney in Taos, Colfax, and Union counties; and 25 percent for Scott Jones for county commissioner in Cibola County.

- Wisconsin: Bill Anderson was re-elected to the Douglas county

board of supervisors, but the other two Green incumbents, Ted Ciskie and Kay McKenzie, both lost by just 24 votes.

- Minneapolis: A 25 percent second-place vote for Cam Gordon for state representative, ahead of the Republican (19 percent) and behind the Democrat (56 percent).
- Alaska: A second-place finish in the U.S. senate race for Job Whitaker, whose 13 percent vote beat the Democrat's 10 percent.
- Brooklyn, New York: Craig Seeman's 7 percent third place for a Brooklyn State Assembly doubled his total from two years ago and put him in a strong position for a March special election for the seat vacated by his Democratic opponent, Eileen Dugan, the 3rd ranked Democrat in the state assembly.

- At least seven Greens are already announced for 1997



aces. Most are municipal candidates, this being an odd year when municipal races are predominant, but they include Madeline Hoffman, a leader of the Grassroots Environmental Coalition, for governor of New Jersey.

Outpolling Nader

In all but a few races, local Greens won more votes than the Ralph Nader presidential ticket did in their districts. Nationally, Nader received 682,252 votes, or 0.7 percent of the total vote. In states where he was on the ballot, Nader's percentages were: 4 percent in Oregon and 3 percent in Alaska, Hawai'i, Washington, and Washington, DC; 2 percent in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Maine, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and Vermont; 1 percent in Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and Wisconsin; and less than 1 percent in Arkansas, Iowa, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Utah.

In the 22 states where the Greens placed him on the ballot, Nader received 580,627 votes. Greens also qualified him as an official write-in candidate in 23 more states, where an additional 101,625 write-in votes have been counted (with no totals yet for Alabama, Delaware, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania).

Nader's total of 682,252 votes is more than any independent progressive party candidate has received since Henry Wallace and the Progressive Party received 1,157,057 votes in 1948. It wasn't until the People's Party of the early 1970s that a non-sectarian independent progressive party ran a national campaign when Ben Spock received 78,751 votes in 1972 and Margaret Wright received 49,024 votes in 1976. The Citizens Party's Barry Commoner received 234,279 votes in 1980.

On the other hand, running as an independent without party affiliation, Eugene McCarthy, the anti-war former U.S. Senator, received 752,728 votes in 1976.

A positive outcome for the Greens was new-ballot status parties in Connecticut, Nevada, Vermont, Wisconsin, and DC, and reaffirmation of their status in Alaska, California, New Mexico, and Oregon. By not meeting vote thresholds in Hawai'i (10 percent) and Maine (5 percent), the Greens may have lost their ballot status in these states unless pending ballot access reform bills in both states are adopted.

Based on polling data, Nader, and many Greens, had expected a much higher vote. The only national polls that included Nader were taken in the spring when the *Los Angeles Times* had him at 6 percent and CBS at 8 percent. The polls for California at that time had Nader at 8 to 11 percent. Though he was running ahead of Perot in these polls, the major media excluded Nader from subsequent national polls, hurting the ballot-access petition drives during the summer and lowering the visibility of the candidacy. State polls around the country ran during the fall and had Nader receiving many more votes than he did receive. In New York polls, for example, Nader had 3-4 percent in the 2 weeks before the election, but on election day Nader's New York vote was only 1.1 percent.

Why did Nader come in so much lower than polling indicated? Three reasons have been prominent Green post-election evaluations.

First, by refusing to spend more than the \$5,000 threshold required to file Federal Election Commission reports, Nader gave the impression he was not a serious candidate. Many people did not want

to "waste their vote" on a candidate they perceived as not running the strongest campaign possible.

Second, Nader alienated many potential supporters by declaring early on that he would avoid the so-called "wedge issues" (abortion, affirmative action, gay rights, immigration) in order to keep the focus on his anti-corporate, pro-democracy message. Not only was this approach bad political ethics (i.e., subordinating the particular demands of oppressed groups in order to presumably build a broader front against the common corporate enemy), it was bad political strategy. Ironically, Nader has a solid history of practical, effective anti-discrimination legal work, notably against bank and insurance redlining. But the more Nader tried to ignore these issues, the more the focus switched from the anti-corporate message Nader wanted to emphasize to the social issues he wanted other Greens to address. Many Greens, as well as the Independent Progressive Politics Network, urged Nader to change his approach and come out forcefully for abortion rights and gay rights and against the anti-immigrant and anti-affirmative action initiatives. And Nader did change somewhat as the campaign progressed, taking progressive positions on these issues in his public statements. But it was not enough.

A third reason is that when voters finally get to the polls, the lesser-evil syndrome is most strong in the presidential race, where the greater evil has more power to do more damage. The lesser evil syndrome helps explain why local Green candidates across the country outpolled Nader.

Nader Campaign Energizes Greens

While the Nader campaign fell short of the expectations of many Greens, the campaign did

bring many new activists and energy into the Greens. In New York, for example, the number of solid locals more than doubled from 7 to 18 during the course of the campaign.

For the GPUSA, the Nader campaign brought a new group of veteran activists into national leadership. Muriel Tillinghast, an activist since she was a leader in SNCC, Mississippi Summer, and the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, was recruited by the New York Greens to be their "favorite daughter" vice-presidential candidate on the Nader ticket. She ran a vigorous campaign, was elected to GPUSA's National Committee, and is now coordinator of GPUSA Finance Working Group. Coordinating GPUSA's legal team is Mark Dunlea, another veteran independent political activist who co-founded the New York Public Interest Research Group, managed Sonia Johnson's 1984 Citizens Party presidential campaign, and spearheaded the organization of the Green Party in New York, but who had stayed out of national work until the Nader campaign. In California, inner city Los Angeles Greens used the campaign to build what appears to be developing into one of the strongest Green locals in the country.

One of the leaders of this organizing drive, Kwazi Nkrumah, (a union organizer who was Labor Commissioner of the National Black Independent Political Party in the early 1980s, and has been a Green Party member for seven years) stepped up his national involvement with the Nader campaign, was elected one of GPUSA's three National Coordinators in December, and coordinates the Organizing Working Group.

The Split

In early 1996, GPN was coming off two Third Parties '96 conferences where it claimed to be tak-

ing the lead in uniting third parties. This effort was divisive and confusing, as it was done independently of the existing network of progressive third parties, the Independent Progressive Politics Network. The GPN's theme was to go "beyond left and right." So they invited the Libertarian and Natural Law parties, Perot's Reform Party, and the Newman-Fulani Patriot Party, as well as progressive parties. By the second 1996 conference, Nader had already agreed to run for president on the Green primary ballot in California and was open to running elsewhere if grassroots organization developed to run the campaign. So in February, Linda Martin of the GPN created a DC-based Draft Nader Clearinghouse (DNC).

With Tom Linzey, a lawyer from Pennsylvania, providing legal advice, the DNC urged Greens to set up Draft Nader Committees (DNCs) independent of the existing state Green parties. The separate DNCs were publicly rationalized as a legal necessity to conform to Nader's \$5,000 spending limits. By being "not authorized by Ralph Nader or affiliated with any organization representing him," the DNCs could raise and spend money on the campaign as "independent expenditures" and these expenditures would not count toward Nader's \$5,000 limit.

GPUSA questioned the legal necessity of separate DNCs. The Green Party of New York, a GPUSA affiliate, was told by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) that as a FEC recognized political party, the status of "independent expenditures" would be safer, particularly for ballot access drive expenditures. So the Green Party of New York and GPUSA applied for FEC recognition as state and federal political parties respectively, which they eventually received in October for New York and November for GPUSA.

In retrospect, it is clear that the GPN leadership of the DNC used the presumed legal necessity for separate DNCs to build up its own network outside GPUSA. Nader was not talking to either DNC or GPUSA during the campaign, to avoid the appearance of coordination which would make DNC and GPUSA campaign expenses count toward his.

While GPUSA knocked itself out campaigning in the fall, the DNC was organizing a mid-November meeting to launch a new national Green Party, the Association of State Green Parties. GPN had been calling, without success, for an Association of State Green Parties independent of the existing GPUSA since 1992.

The November meeting brought about 100 people to Middleburg, Virginia. Eleven states have now joined the Association of State Green Parties, though most of them are fledgling groups formed out of DNCs or states that have also affiliated with GPUSA and are pushing unity. Several state parties have not affiliated with either side nationally, partly because local work has kept them occupied and partly because they haven't wanted to get into the middle of a fight.

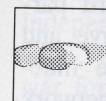
Call for Unity

The problem with the dynamic set up by the ASGP's drive for affiliation is that every state is now debating their affiliation, sometimes to the detriment of staying on top of local work. ASGP has called a founding convention for April 4-6 and is trying to recruit more states to participate. GPUSA is encouraging its affiliates to participate in the National Independent Politics Summit in Decatur, Illinois, May 2-4, where electoral alliances among all the independent progressive political parties will be a major discussion theme. GPUSA will hold its 1997

National Green Gathering in New York, tentatively around Labor Day weekend. In the meantime, a third force of Greens calling for unity is developing.

It is clear that most Greens are sick of the squabbling. Hundreds of Greens, several state parties, and the National Committee of GPUSA have signed a call for unity conferencing to work out a structure with broad support that could be ratified by state and local Green organizations. The problem is that ASGP leaders have not signed on and have a history of "leadership" by unilateral action instead of grassroots authorization. But grassroots Greens can reject those divisive maneuvers and enforce unity from below. The big question is, will they?

Howie Hawkins is active in the Syracuse Green Party and is a New York representative on the Green Party USA's National Committee.



**Farm
Organizing**

Price Fixing at Kraft

By John E. Peck

On December 5, 1996 over 100 angry farmers and sympathetic observers stormed out of the final meeting of the governor's taskforce on cheese pricing in Madison, Wisconsin. Moments before the taskforce had rejected a modest proposal by University of Wisconsin Agriculture Economics professor, Ed Jesse, and Wisconsin dairy farmer, Darin Von Ruden, to partially peg dairy prices to actual farm production costs. The outcome came as no surprise since the taskforce was stacked by Gov-

ernor Thompson with agribusiness apologists.

While bureaucrats and lobbyists fumbled for legitimacy inside, the farmers and others reconvened outside for their own strategy session. Under the slogan "united we stand, divided we fall," they drew plans for boycotting corporate dairy subsidiaries and rerouting milk to responsible, locally owned processors; forging fresh alliances with urban consumer, religious, environmental, and social justice groups; and even denying access to their land for hunting, snowmobiling, and picnicking until their right to farm is recognized and respected. One powerful statement was provided by an older man who simply pulled a box of Velveeta cheese food from his faded overalls and stomped on it in front of the cheering assembly.

In Wisconsin the dairy industry is worth \$17 billion per year

(about 9 percent of the state's total economy), yet only 25,000 dairy farmers are left with, on average, 3 farms going under every day. Most of these family farms remain diversified small-scale operations with herd size averaging 55 animals. For decades they have managed to survive regressive property taxes and subsidy programs, biased lending policies and extension services, as well as runaway sprawl development and local zoning discrimination.

Lately, though, another menace has loomed on the rural horizon—large-scale, vertically-integrated, corporate-dominated "factory farms." These carpetbag operations can pack as many 2,000 cows into a single facility where animals are force-fed processed rations (often laced with dangerous antibiotics and protein supplements, such as the remains of other dead livestock) and routinely injected with synthetic hormones (like RBGH). Such agribusiness practices rely heavily on external farm inputs, urban-based managers, and low wage workers, draining economic resources from already struggling rural communities, while also creating dangerous volumes of livestock manure and consumer products of dubious quality.

Close to 85 percent of all milk produced in Wisconsin goes to make cheese, which is where the greed of Kraft Foods dictates the life and death of family farmers. Kraft is an \$18 billion per year subsidiary of Philip Morris—the mega-tobacco conglomerate best known for Marlboro cigarettes.



Only suits are left after farmers storm out—John E. Peck

Just four firms—Borden, Sargento, Schreiber, and Kraft—controlled 42 percent of total U.S. cheese trade in 1992, and Kraft has long been the industry leader. Like any other corporation intent on the bottom line, Kraft could care less about the fate of family dairy farmers in its pursuit of cheaper milk supplies. This is even more so in the wake of Philip Morris's expensive and controversial takeover of Madison, Wisconsin-based Oscar Meyer a few years back, after which orders came down from the executive suite to squeeze more out of Kraft's dairy division.

In March 1996 the UW-Madison Agricultural Economics Department and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection issued a report that finally revealed what many had suspected all along—namely, that Kraft was manipulating national dairy markets in order to price gouge both farmers and consumers, reaping millions in windfall profits as a result. The site of all this dirty work is a quaint building in Green Bay, Wisconsin known as the National Cheese Exchange (NCE). Each

Friday at 10:00 AM the NCE opens its doors for an exclusive 30-minute session where 40 carefully screened and selected agents are allowed to swap cheese in 40 pound blocks and 500 pound barrels. This hardly "open and free" pseudo-market, involving less than 1 percent of U.S. cheese output, is then used by the USDA to set not only all cheese prices, but also the basic formula price for fluid milk nationwide.

According to the UW-Madison report, between 1988 and 1993 Kraft Foods deliberately dumped cheese on the NCE to artificially depress farmgate prices, while simultaneously inflating supermarket costs. Such corporate malpractice is "standard operating procedure" in the dairy industry. In 1993 the U.S. Justice Department meted out over \$90 million in fines and penalties, as well as 24 criminal indictments, against 48 executives and 43 companies found guilty of rigging dairy prices for public schools and military bases. Yet, despite the mountain of evidence, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) exonerated Kraft Foods (and its parent, Philip Morris) of



Farmers strategize after walking out on taskforce meeting—John E. Peck

any federal anti-trust violation in July 1996.

Anticipating rural outrage over the ridiculous federal ruling, Governor Thompson scrambled to create his own statewide taskforce to investigate the allegations and draft recommendations. As a private nonprofit corporation, the NCE's very existence is at the discretion of the sovereign people of the state of Wisconsin, but as with so many other "legal fictions" its operation has effectively escaped public accountability for years. Its own managers openly admit that the NCE was never designed to fulfill the task it was assigned by the USDA, and that it has fallen easy prey to corporate collusion.

Meanwhile, Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture, Alan Tracy, has been busy recruiting large confinement dairy operators from California to relocate to Wisconsin, ostensibly to provide a "good example" to those "economically unviable" (and politically pesky) family farmer types. If state officials prove too slow in facilitating factory farm expansion into the Midwest, well the dairy industry can always get milk for bottom prices in Mexico—where health, labor, and safety rules are virtually nonexistent. Tracy knows this option quite well since he was one of the masterminds behind the agricultural "free trade" provisions of both NAFTA and GATT under President Reagan.

Even as the taskforce back peddled, Kraft and its dairy industry cronies were back to their old tricks at the cheese exchange. Between October and December 1996 milk prices fell another 30 percent, robbing the average Wisconsin dairy farmer of \$3,300 from their monthly check, according to the calculations of Ron Statz with the National Farmers Organization (NFO). In an open letter to the taskforce, John Kinsman, a dairy farmer in Hillsboro and president

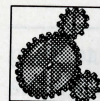
of Family Farm Defenders, graphically described the situation as one of farmers being trucked to the "slaughterhouse" and ominously noted that "the farming people of the Mexican state of Chiapas rebelled on the day NAFTA went into effect—they knew they were to be the first to lose everything." Meanwhile, consumers nationwide were appalled to find dairy prices skyrocketing on grocery shelves—up 12 percent (3 times the rate of inflation) this last year alone.

Corporate spin doctors and public relations flaks have since been working overtime to circumvent any emergent popular awareness that might challenge the ruthless tactics of agribusiness. Through its Dairy Trust Fund, Kraft earmarks \$150,000 per year for grants to so-called "farmer assistance" programs in Wisconsin. One such grant was given to the WI Farm Bureau to produce and distribute a video series for public elementary schools that celebrates "modern" (ie. capital-intensive, corporate-friendly) agriculture, while another went to a UW-River Falls professor to investigate the feasibility of Hmong and Hispanic [sic] immigrants as a "cheap docile" labor pool for new Wisconsin factory farms. Meanwhile, Kraft Foods is doling out money directly to urban school districts through the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program—meant to increase parental involvement in children's education. Madison beat out Milwaukee, Fort Worth, and Atlanta as the "lucky winner" of Kraft's 1996 \$200,000 FAST award. All the media hype and token charity, though, does little to mitigate the real costs of corporate profiteering—and one wonders if Kraft would be so keen to help support the food shelves, counseling services, and homeless shelters farmers will need as their way of life goes onto the auction block.

Thanks to such unifying issues as runaway biotechnology, workers' rights, community-supported agriculture (CSA), land trusts, and agrichemical pollution, numerous grassroots connections already exist between rural communities and their urban counterparts. What's still lacking is broader affiliation with a national movement that helps citizens to transcend their parochial perspectives, symptomatic concerns, and remedial reforms to identify and tackle the root cause of our current political crisis.

Fortunately, this longer term project is already underway through the work of such groups as the Alliance, the Program on Corporations, Law, and Democracy (POCLAD), and the Greens, to name a few. In Wisconsin this effort is best exemplified by Democracy Unlimited, which has enjoyed great success in bringing together people of diverse backgrounds, interests, and persuasions to dispel the myth of corporate rule and further the demand for citizen autonomy—whether the relevant local target is Exxon's copper sulfide mine in the pristine north woods or PepsiCo's junk food invasion of public school cafeterias. This last fall, the Democracy Teach-In Clearinghouse, based out of a tiny office at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, assisted over 100 campuses and communities to host events surrounding the provocative question "Can we pursue democracy and social justice when corporations are allowed to control so much wealth and power?" **Z**

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Domestic Policy

The Fate of Social Security

Will labor rally to oppose Wall Street?

By Michael Eisenscher & Peter Donohue

It was a slow news day, just before a major holiday—a good time to release politically sensitive or potentially embarrassing news. Buried in the innards of the December 30 national edition of the *New York Times* (p. A-9), was a report by Leslie Wayne entitled "Interest Groups Prepare for Huge Fight on Social Security." It paints a troubling picture of the prospects for defending the Social Security system against the greedy ambitions of Wall Street bankers, insurance executives, and securities firms. The report begins by proclaiming there is a "broad consensus that the Social Security system needs reform..." and marks the center of the debate not just over whether Social Security should be privatized (the article all but assumes it), but over the degree and manner of privatization.

The Cato Institute, a libertarian "think tank" in Washington, has a \$2 million war chest provided by business donors to fund a 3-year campaign to dismantle the present Social Security system. They hope to panic people with much talk about a looming "crisis" in the Social Security trust fund, while pushing their "free market" solutions. Apparently they calculate that the new Congress and Clinton can be relied on to deliver the goods if enough noise can be made, misinformation generated, and popular confusion created. Cato advocates that all the Social Security funds be made available for each individual worker to invest in the stock and bond market as she or he deter-

mines. According to the *Times* report, this would provide \$400 billion annually (the value of annual SSA payroll taxes)—\$2 trillion if the whole fund is invested—for market speculation.

Is there a "crisis"? Not hardly. The Social Security trust fund currently runs a surplus of over \$60 billion per year. Based on current projections there are sufficient reserves in the trust fund to cover all retirees until 2029. In 2012, as the baby boomers begin to retire, benefit payouts will start to exceed taxes collected. This means that the Social Security Administration will have to draw on interest earned on the fund to cover benefits. In 2019 benefit payments will exceed taxes collected and the fund will have to start drawing down its reserves. By 2029 the trust fund would be depleted, at which point FICA taxes collected would only cover about 77 percent of benefits due. Dean Baker, an economist and policy analyst at the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), cautions that inaccurate assumptions about demographic changes, productivity, inflation, and wages can produce unrealistic and overly pessimistic projections about the viability of the trust fund.

Social Security fund trustees report that the gap over the next 70-plus years amounts to 2.2 percent of the taxable U.S. payroll. Linda Stern, commenting in *Modern Maturity*, observes that covering that shortfall entirely today would mean raising the present FICA employee/employer tax from 12.4 percent to

14.6 percent, or reducing benefits by 15 percent. But we don't have to cover it all immediately, and there are many other ways to generate revenues to assure the adequacy of funds in the next century. Even by the most pessimistic scenarios, a FICA tax increase on employees and employers of just 0.05 percent each per year between 2010 and 2046 (total of 3.6 percentage points) would be sufficient to maintain current benefits into the foreseeable future. The growth rate of the U.S. economy over the past 20 years averaged 2.8 percent per year; it is conservatively projected to be 1.8 percent over the next 20 years and then drop to 1.4 percent or less. A slightly more optimistic projection would require an even smaller FICA tax adjustment.

An Advisory Council on Social Security was named by Clinton in 1994, composed of 13 members, including: Robert Ball, a former commissioner of Social Security; Sylvester Schieber, from Watson Wyatt Worldwide, a benefits consulting firm; Fidel Vargas, described as a California policy analyst, appointed purportedly to represent "Generation-Xers;" and chair Edward Gramlich, professor of economics at the University of Michigan. Ball, Gramlich, and Schieber each have proposed their own set of reforms, which have become the focus of the Council's deliberations. The Council went public with its proposals (none of which mustered a majority) on January 6.

- **Ball Plan:** Ball proposes Social Security be gradually invested in the private market for

stocks, bonds, and other securities (up to 40 percent) and that management of those investments be by government-appointed trustees or fund managers. Under his plan, investments would be in passively managed index funds (mutual funds that track the stock market).

- **Gramlich Plan:** Gramlich proposes that 1.6 percent of each workers' taxable income be set aside as an additional tax payment (over and above the current employee contribution) into a mandatory government-supervised retirement plan, similar to a 401(k) savings plan. Workers would be offered choices as to how their accounts were invested. Upon retirement, benefits would be paid out in an annuity.
- **Schieber Plan:** Schieber proposes to split Social Security into a two-tiered plan. The first tier would offer a basic monthly benefit of up to \$410 (in today's dollars). The second tier would set aside 5 percent from the payroll tax contribution to invest tax-free for retirement. Each worker would manage her/his own investments.

All three proposals include some number from among these additional changes: increased payroll taxes, taxing benefits that exceed contributions, shifting the Medicare portion of the tax on Social Security benefits into the trust fund, increasing the computation period from 35 to 38 work years, bringing in presently uncovered state and local public employees, cutting future benefits by changing the percentage of income on which benefits are calculated, raising the normal retirement age to 69 and pegging it to life expectancy tables, and cutting spousal benefits from 50 percent to 33 percent. Many, if not most, of these changes are to the detriment of most workers. The three plans would have different impacts on different income groups.

The prospect of gaining access to the trust funds has Wall Street



practically delirious. The mutual fund industry, and such venerable brokerage houses as Merrill Lynch, have teamed up with the National Association of Manufacturers and other corporate interests to steamroll the privatization initiative, with differences between them only over the details of privatization. On one point they seem to concur—they want to keep the federal Government from having any influence over how Social Security funds are invested. At present, the funds are invested exclusively in interest-bearing government securities (usually held to maturity), backed by the "full faith and credit" of the federal government.

With such powerful capitalist forces eager to take a whack at the program that has represented a sacred covenant between government and the American people for six decades, one would expect that the AFL-CIO would be mobilizing its troops for a determined defense of what has been the last relatively unscathed remnant of the New Deal system. Well, not quite.

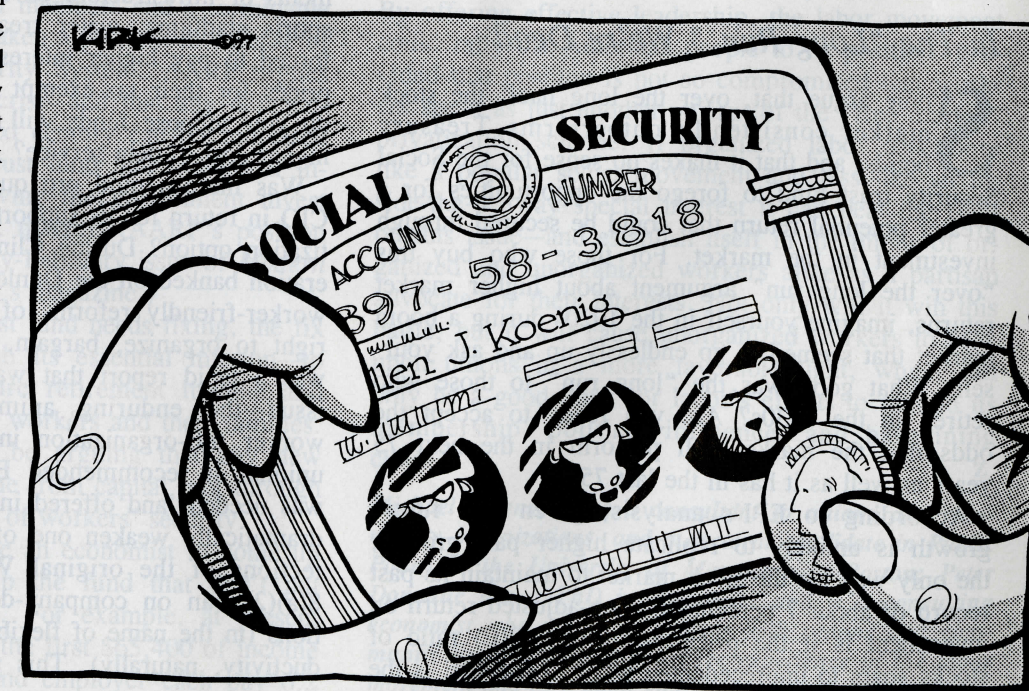
While it opposes conversion of the Social Security trust fund into a forced savings plan in what amounts to individual retirement or 401(k) accounts managed by each worker, the AFL-CIO declared its readiness to accept investment of up to 40 percent of the trust fund in publicly traded stocks and bonds (the Ball plan). This from no less prominent a voice than Gerald Shea, director of the Governmental Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO, lieutenant to John Sweeney, and one of the three labor members of the Advisory Council. Shea promises a major labor campaign to prevent full privatization, but he concedes a large chunk of the political argument in advance by describing the battle as between "those who see that Government has a role in Social Security and those who believe it should have none." This neatly side-steps the fact that the government, for six decades, has had the role, not just a role, and the AFL-CIO seems prepared to give that ground without even a struggle.

Pushing Privatization

The Cato gang argues that they don't want government determining where Social Security

funds ought to be invested because it would give the government influence over the decisions and practices of private corporations. It is conceivable that government could end up owning as much as 10 percent of the shares of major corporations, making the public the largest single stockholder and enabling government to potentially exercise significant influence over corporate policies. Gerald Shea points out that this could have a potentially "good effect on how corporate America operates." One argument for allowing investment of some portion of the trust fund in the market is that government could then exert significant influence on how corporations do business, requiring them to be more socially responsible. This, of course, drives the Cato clique and their corporate cronies right up a wall. But Shea abandons the advantages of constructive government influence by accepting the proposition that government should have only a passive investment role.

Assuming, for sake of argument, that the federal government could (through public pressure campaigns) be induced to exercise its investment clout to oppose the rapacious practices of corporations in matters such as capital flight, disinvestment, export of capital and jobs, technological change, environmental and occupational health practices, sustainable development, and other corporate decisions, that opportunity is foreclosed if the government only invests in passive stock-index funds, regardless of how many shares the government holds. So that argument in favor of government-directed partial privatization goes right out the window. Much like ESOPs in which employees are pressed to make concessions in return for stock but are barred from exercising stockholder



rights to influence their employer's policies, the government would become a passive (second class) investor—providing the money but gaining none of the influence other major shareholders exert. The Social Security trust fund would become Wall Street's piggy bank, no strings attached. There would be no restriction on how corporations use these funds.

Absent such accountability controls on how government funds are invested, newly available investment capital could easily be used to finance the next wave of overseas investment, mergers, buyouts, and acquisitions, leading to closures, further down-sizing, job-displacing and deskilling automation, and other job-killing and environment-destroying practices (as well as providing additional resources in capital's battle against unions). That would amount to a "free ride" for capital. Unrestricted by any requirements for socially responsible investing (however one understands that), workers could find their Social Security taxes being invested against their own interests.

At present the Social Security system has an administrative cost that is just 0.7 percent of benefits paid out. EPI notes, by contrast, the operating costs of the life insurance industry exceed 40 percent. The operating cost of Chile's privatized retirement system (held up as an example by the free marketeers) runs close to 15 percent. Aside from added risk, investment of even 40 percent of the trust fund in stocks and bonds would subject the fund to a much larger administrative cost, while rewarding Wall Street traders with a bonanza of fees and commissions. Little wonder the investment firms are so eager to push these reforms.

In The "Long Run," We're Dead

Some argue that, over the long haul, the stock market consistently outperforms Treasury bonds, and that it makes no sense for the Social Security trust fund to forego the opportunities for a greater potential return that could be secured through investment in the market. For those who buy this "over the long run" argument about higher market returns, imagine yourself in the 1920s during a boom market that seemed to go endlessly up and ask yourself: What good was the "long run" to those who retired in the 1930s? Are you ready to accept the odds that the market will perform in the next 75 years as well as it has in the last 75?

According to EPI's analysis, given that future growth is unlikely to replicate higher past growth, the only way for the stock market to maintain its past record of about 7 percent inflation-adjusted return on investment is if the price-to-earnings (P/E) ratio of stocks soars to unprecedented levels. (The P/E is the

ratio of the price of a stock to the amount of corporate earnings per share, a common measure of stock values.) They note, "If the growth projections used for Social Security are accurate, then to generate 7 percent returns the P/E ratio in the stock market will have to rise to over 60 to 1 by 2030. It will have to rise to 460 to 1 by the end of the planning period in 2070. By comparison, the P/E ratio now stands at 22 to 1, a record high."

By most accounts we are at or near the top of the market, a time when share prices are artificially inflated by speculation. Privatizing Social Security now means buying into the market at its highest prices on the assumption it will continue to rise. A wise investor buys cheap and sells dear, but the privatizers would turn that advice inside out, allowing Wall Street to reap a sweet reward at the expense of working people. The volatility of the market is one indicator that it may not take much to burst the speculative bubble.

Dumping billions of dollars into the market has yet another effect. Removing 40 percent of the SSI trust fund from the federal debt market (government securities) would have the same effect as if the trust fund dumped Treasury bonds. Their prices would be depressed, pushing interest rates up. Treasury bonds are widely held, especially by banks and other lending institutions, as part of their required reserves. The result would be to depress the value of those reserves, reducing their ability to make loans, pushing interest rates up as borrowers bid for increasingly scarce loanable funds. As interest rates climb the cost of servicing the Federal debt will also rise. Municipalities needing to raise capital for local improvements or infrastructure development (roads, schools, sports stadiums, water treatment plants) would be forced to pay higher interest rates and accept lower prices for their tax-exempt municipal bonds. Where do you suppose funds will be obtained to meet the higher cost of debt service?

Was there a quid pro quo obtained by the AFL-CIO in return for its support of the 40 percent privatization option? During Clinton's first term the Federation banked on the Dunlop Commission for major worker-friendly reforms of the laws governing the right to organize, bargain, and strike. What it got was a tepid report that waltzed around the central issue—the enduring animosity of employers to worker self-organization in autonomous democratic unions. It recommended Band-Aids where surgery was needed, and offered in the bargain proposals to dramatically weaken one of the few remaining protections of the original Wagner Act, the Section 8(a)(2) ban on company-dominated labor organizations (in the name of flexibility, efficiency, and productivity, naturally). This provided aid and encour-

agement to a mounting employer offensive to repeal 8(a)(2) that surfaced in the form of the TEAM Act, saved from enactment only by Clinton's veto. No one seriously believes there is any hope a deal can be cut for meaningful labor law reform from this Congress (whether to protect strikers or help workers organize). Any confidence that a deal to privatize Social Security in return for a pledge of future action to meaningfully strengthen union and worker rights is a form of serious delusion. Furthermore, in a deal gone sour, who would trust lame-duck Clinton (a president who never met a corporate donor he did not like) to veto Wall Street's privatization scheme?

If all the potential pitfalls outlined above could be somehow dealt with, and if government were allowed to exercise its influence over investments to induce more responsible worker/environment-friendly corporate practices, and if the labor movement and its allies were able to force government to actually exert that influence in their behalf, an argument might be made that partial market investment is not inherently a bad thing and is a reasonable way to solve the 21st century funding problem. Well, that's a lot of "ifs."

Local unions, labor councils, state federations, workers' rights advocates, the Labor Party, seniors organizations, and anyone else concerned with the fate of Social Security should express their opposition to the Federation's readiness to accept passive private investment, as well as the even more extreme individual investment proposals, as a solution to Social Security's expected shortfall (which is not projected to occur before 2019). We should demand that the AFL-CIO defend the Social Security system.

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), with millions of members and a formidable lobbying operation, has taken a position in defense of the current Social Security System. AARP argues that there is no present crisis and that any deficiencies in funding in the next century can be addressed without converting the trust fund into individual investment accounts or having the government invest speculatively in the stock market. (AARP's position is explained in the January-February issue of *Modern Maturity*, the organization's magazine.)

If, as is argued, the trust fund needs fixing, the fix should be consistent with its essential mission—to provide a safe and secure retirement income and safety net for the nation's workers and their families. The AFL-CIO ought to be arguing that any new money needed should come from capital, not through speculation at the expense of workers' security.

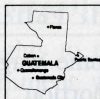
One does not have to be an economist to come up with ideas for beefing up the fund that don't put workers' benefits at risk. For example, at present FICA taxes apply only to the first \$65,400 of income on which the employee and employer each pay 6.2

percent. Why not tax all income? High income wage earners could be allowed to invest that portion of their FICA taxes contributed on incomes above \$100,000 in stocks and bonds as they see fit. If they want to gamble and lose, the trust fund is not put at risk. Only their own accounts would be affected, and even then only that portion accrued from taxes on high earnings. Additional revenue could also be derived if other forms of income received by the wealthy, like dividends and interest, were subject to an additional tax to support the SS trust fund.

Labor Needs Own Program

The point is that the AFL-CIO should be putting together its own program of reforms, a worker/senior-friendly set of alternative proposals. It could join with AARP in appointing their own "blue ribbon" committee, inviting friendly academics and other specialists to help labor design a truly progressive set of reforms that become the centerpiece of a massive national campaign. Working with groups that share labor's concerns, a powerful voice could be created that Congress and the President would have a hard time ignoring. There should be little doubt that an effective campaign could be mounted, particularly if organized labor really mobilizes its members rather than relying on traditional lobbying methods. Clinton himself saw the potency of the issue and was able to win substantial popular support distinguishing himself from the Republicans during his reelection campaign after he spoke out clearly in defense of Social Security and Medicare. By offering effective leadership, the labor movement could rally the American people to its position, provided that position is not so compromised that workers see it as just another variant of the "free market" privatization scheme. If organized labor acts more like a popular social movement and less like an inside-the-beltway special interest it can beat the right on this issue—and establish itself in the minds of organized and unorganized workers alike as a partisan advocate for their interests. Not only will it win this battle, but it will cause unorganized workers to look upon unions in a more favorable light, which can only be a good thing for labor's efforts to rebuild its membership, political influence, and bargaining clout.

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No Justice, But Peace (For Now)

Hard-won political space in Guatemala

By Piet van Lier

Give me a U. Give me an R. Give me an N. Give me a G. What's it spell? U-R-N-G! I can't hear you. U-R-N-G! U-R-N-G! U-R-N-G!" It sounded like a high school basketball game, but several hundred representatives of Guatemala's popular movement were doing something they never had the chance to do before—openly express their sympathy for the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) as they waited for the legal arrival of the four guerrilla comandantes at Guatemala City's Aurora airport.

In Guatemala, where accusations of being a guerrilla are tantamount to a death threat, the scene was slightly surreal, even though the signing of peace accords between the URNG and the government were scheduled for the next day.

This open support for the URNG is indicative of hard-won political space that continues to open in Guatemala, a country that remains highly militarized. The past few months have seen the assassination of several activists including Mayan leaders, a unionist, and a journalist. As one Guatemalan confided, this kind of openness has gotten people killed in the past, and it's too early to know whether it is safe.

Five years of negotiations led to the peace signing on December 29, 1996, but even with that long, tortuous process, it was hard to shake the feeling that the final stretch of negotiations were rushed and haphazard.

Negotiations, which had been moving at a snail's pace, were prioritized by Alvaro Arzu's nascent administration even before his National Advancement

Party (PAN) won the runoff presidential elections and took control of the congress in January 1996. Arzu met with the guerrilla comandantes before taking office, and once in power appointed an ex-guerrilla to his team of negotiators and pledged to have the accords signed before the end of the year.

Among the obstacles to negotiations, a faction of the URNG was implicated in the October kidnapping of a member of one of Guatemala's wealthiest families. In the wake of the scandal, during which the extreme right called for a halt to negotiations, the leader of the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), Rodrigo Asturias, alias Gaspar Ilom, withdrew from the negotiations to get them back on track.

The peace accord presents a challenge for Guatemalans who want to change the way their country is run. At best, they present loose mechanisms for change, democratization, and a leveling of the playing field for the 80 percent of Guatemalans who live below the poverty line. In reality, the vague language of the accords makes for great reading, broad interpretations of what can actually be done, and only long-term hope for change.

An immediate challenge thrown down by the still-powerful army, and presented in a law approved by Congress and signed by President Arzu, has been the issue of amnesty for human rights violations committed by the military and paramilitary organizations who have held sway for so

long in Guatemala. In a country with a population of about 10 million, at least 140,000 civilians were killed or "disappeared" and more than 1 million people became internal refugees, while another 200,000 left the country. The army's counterinsurgency war caused most of the suffering: by its own count, the military's scorched-earth campaign destroyed 440 villages in the early 1980s.

The army has long been a target for those wanting justice, but now a new procession has begun as accused killers ask for amnesty under the Law of National Reconciliation that went into effect the day before the peace signing ceremony.

Leading the parade on January 6, barely a week after the signing, were the army officers who allegedly gave the orders in the 1990 assassination of Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang. Mack's assassination has been one of several high profile human rights cases that have slogged through the Guatemalan judicial system and tarnished the image the army has tried to create in recent years. Helen Mack, the victim's sister, helped found the Myrna Mack Foundation, one of many human rights groups in Guatemala. As of this writing, the accused in five other human rights cases have come forward to request amnesty, including the ex-soldier convicted of stabbing Mack to death, and soldiers involved in the 1995 massacre of 11 returned refugees.

Although the law is laden with ambiguity, a broad range of critics, from the solicitor general and members of congress to human rights leaders and the United Nations, say the general and two colonels implicated in this case cannot receive amnesty because Mack was not directly involved in the armed conflict.

Last year, a coalition of human rights groups formed to advocate a limited amnesty pardoning only political crimes, such as taking up arms against the government. The Alliance Against Impunity is now leading the fight against the National Reconciliation Law and requests for amnesty by the military and paramilitary groups.

Amnesty is discussed in the context of four categories of crimes: political crimes, politically related common crimes, common crimes, and crimes against humanity. There is little argument about political crimes,

such as rebellion against the state. This type of amnesty applies to the guerrillas, and is included in the national reconciliation law. Most also seem to agree that politically related common crimes should be included as well, although here interpretations diverge. Some say that the taking of hostages during a political uprising, for example, qualifies as a politically related common crime, while other interpretations are broader. All say common crimes are not included, but here the contest begins: which "common crimes"—extra-judicial executions, killings, abductions—were part of the armed conflict?

The lawyer representing the officers implicated in the Mack case says the killing was political because Mack, an anthropologist, was carrying out research about internally displaced Guatemalans. The military's case even cites a 1992 statement by the Human Rights Ombudsman's office, a government watchdog with no legal powers, saying Mack's studies "were considered high risk because they concerned policies of the Guatemalan government." The military's argument is that the political sensitivity of Mack's work, even though she was a civilian, is enough to qualify the murder as political and pardonable under the law. A February decision did reject amnesty for the officers in the Mack case, a ruling likely to be appealed by the defendants.

Even so, amnesty for many human rights violators may be a done deal. "Politically, I believe that this was the pact through which the army has permitted some changes in its role and powers, in exchange for this amnesty," says Victor Hugo Godoy, of the Human Rights Ombudsman's office.



Four URNG comandantes at Guatemala City's Aurora Airport—Piet van Lier/Impact Visuals

It stands to reason that the army, which has been responsible for the vast majority of human rights violations, would not sign on to the peace process without guarantees that its wall of impunity, so carefully constructed over the decades, would hold and protect most of its members from crimes committed in the past. Without the support of at least one faction of the army, no peace accords would have been signed.

Godoy points to previous amnesty laws passed in Guatemala, none of which were written in such broad terms. "They realized the gap that existed in previous amnesty laws," he says, and made sure the new law opened up the possibility for the pardon of a wider range of crimes.

"The government threw a hot coal to the judiciary," says political analyst Edgar Gutierrez, affiliated with the Myrna Mack Foundation. "The government knows (the judiciary) is weak. Congress should have opened a true national debate so that the law did not have so much ambiguity, so many gaps and contradictions."

The military may well have home-field advantage in the Guatemalan court system, because the judiciary is known not only for its corruption and vulnerability to intimidation, but for a lack of background in applicable human rights law, say lawyers and activists.

Combined with the court system's historic corruption, especially in high profile human rights cases, this lack of expertise puts the outcome in doubt. "Against public opinion, even though members of congress and the solicitor general say the law doesn't apply in this case, even though MINUGUA (the United Nations Mission to Guatemala) says it's not

applicable, everyone says the law does not apply in Myrna's case...anything could happen. Taking into account the ignorance, and adding bad faith, anything could happen," says Gutierrez.

One of the main goals of MINUGUA, which arrived in Guatemala in 1994, has been to strengthen Guatemalan institutions, such as the judiciary, so they can function more effectively and help support the rule of law in Guatemala. Various countries, including Spain and the United States, have programs, both governmental and non governmental, that work to strengthen the courts and security forces. The recent implementation of oral trials is an example of reform in the court system.

This work to strengthen the judiciary has not been effective, say many Guatemalans. According to Gutierrez, in 1995, the courts suffered a "20-year setback because the appointment of judges was politicized, and the political judges marginalized judges who had been handling human rights cases and handing down positive sentences. And this setback has been notable in spite of the presence of MINUGUA and other institutions."

Cases such as Myrna Mack's, are, in a sense, just the tip of the iceberg. The issue these cases represent runs deeper, as the name of the Law of National Reconciliation suggests. How, in a militarized, deeply-divided society that has seen terrible violence for decades, do people put the past behind them? It was time for the war to end. And yet the divisions, hatred and fear are so ingrained that reconciliation is still just a word. Reconciliation means the settling of differences, restoring harmony, a coming together of society. In a predominantly agrarian society where two percent of the population still owns 70 percent of the land, true reconciliation seems a distant dream, and not a primary concern of those who hold power nationally and internationally.

The day after the peace signing, Rigoberta Menchu, Mayan activist and 1992 Nobel Peace Prize winner, invited journalists and representatives from both sides of the conflict on a trip to the interior. In attendance were the defense minister, members of the government's negotiating team, leader of the Guerrilla Army of the Poor (EGP) Ricardo



"Palo volador" ceremony outside the National Palace—Piet van Lier/Impact Visuals

Rosales, alias Rolando Moran, and other commanders of URNG units. The soldiers who came, including the Defense Minister, all wore uniforms of the Kaibil, the army's elite, most bloodthirsty unit. The trip's purpose was to "promote the peace" in two conflictive rural areas in the Ixcán and the Peten.

Aside from addressing the people who came to listen, talking about what peace meant and how Guatemala was changing, the rebel leaders and soldiers spent a lot of time embracing, talking about battles fought, and visions shared for Guatemala's future. But it was not all hugs and smiles. At Cantabal, the first stop, a leader of the Ixcán Grande Cooperative accused the army of trying to annihilate the indigenous of the Ixcán region and demanded more governmental attention to the problems facing the area. The audience in Cantabal was divided—just under half, mostly from the Cooperative, supported their representative and shouted enthusiastically on seeing the rebels, while the other half of the crowd politely clapped through it all. The quiet half, according to two different analyses of the event, was either forced to attend by the army or was loyal to the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), former General Rios Montt's right-wing party. Either analysis paints a picture of a polarized community.

Rigoberta Menchu spoke forcefully in Cantabal. "Reconciliation is not a decree or something we can do in one day," she said. "I tell you I will never accept that the torture of my mother was necessary for the future. I simply will promise myself that this will never happen again."

While soldiers and rebels may now claim friendship, reconciliation certainly will be a long process for much of the civilian population. "Perhaps with the guerrillas and the army, they were in equal situations, two armies with weapons," says Lesbia Tevalan, of the Association of Guatemalan Jurists. "The civil society, we didn't have weapons. We suffered at the hands of the military, of the state. It's very difficult."

And it could be worse in the rural areas, says Rosalina Tuyuc, Mayan activist leader of CONAVIGUA (National Coalition of Guatemalan Widows) and one of six members of Congress belonging to the New Guatemala Democratic Front (FDNG). The FDNG grew out of the popular movement and participated for the first time in the 1995 elections. "I believe it's going to take 5, 10, 15 years" before the wounds start to heal, says Tuyuc. "In my village, popular movement organizations still are not accepted, they still say, 'well, they're guerrillas' even though they aren't, and it's going to be worse" when people openly representing the URNG start working in the communities. Among other



Excavating graves in El Chal—Piet van Lier/Impact Visuals

plans, the former rebels are creating a political party to contest elections in 2000.

The roots of a solution could have been planted in the peace accords, with mechanisms to investigate the massacres and killings of the past, but the accords are especially weak in this area. What began as negotiations for a Truth Commission ended with an accord for the "Historical Clarification of Human Rights Violations," which not only does not provide for the prosecution of suspected criminals, but will not even name names. While this was not a surprising outcome given the balance of power in Guatemala, it could make any efforts at true reconciliation much more difficult. While President Arzu called for pardon and forgiveness in his speech at the peace signing, it will be hard to expect victims to forgive when the truth is not even acknowledged, let alone justice served.

Piet van Lier is a freelance journalist and photographer based in Cleveland, Ohio. He lived and worked in Guatemala as a volunteer for Peace Brigades International in 1994 and 1995, and continues his work there as a journalist.



Expanding the Floor of the Cage

An interview with Noam Chomsky

By David Barsamian

I know you've just been on a month-long trip to Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. I want to tell you about a little trip that I took with Howard Zinn to Florence.

Florence, Italy?

I wish. Florence, Colorado, the home of a new maximum security prison. It was about the same time that I read that classrooms in New York City schools are so overcrowded that students are meeting in cafeterias and gyms and locker rooms. I found that quite a juxtaposition, this building in Colorado, brand-new, high ceilings, glass everywhere, tile floors, and then what's going on in the nation's largest public school system.

There are several reasons for it. They're certainly related. Both of those activities target the same population, a kind of superfluous population there's no point in educating because there's nothing to do with them. You put them in prison because we're a civilized people and you don't send death squads out to murder them. But it's not in the rich, professional suburbs that kids are sitting on the streets. They have classrooms. They're not going to prison, either, even if they commit plenty of crimes. For example, the prisons are being filled by mostly drug-related crimes, usually pretty trivial ones. But I haven't seen any bankers in there, although probably more than half the narco-money passes through U.S. banks. I think they're not only related, they're the same phenomenon. They're targeting the same population, which is useless from the point of view of short-term profit making. They're treated differently in different societies.

There's another factor, too. Prison construction is a state industry, and by now it's a fairly substantial stimulus to the economy. It's not on the scale of the Pentagon, but it's growing. For some years now it's been growing enough that the big financial institutions like Merrill Lynch are interested in floating bonds for prison construction, and even high-tech industries are interested. High-tech industry has for some years been turning to the idea of administering prisons with high-tech equipment, meaning supercomputers and (maybe some day) implanted electrodes and so on. I wouldn't be entirely surprised if we find that prison incarceration levels off and that more people are imprisoned in their homes. Because if you think about the capacity of the new technology, it's probably within reach to have surveillance devices which will control people wherever they are.

There's a lot of attention to crime in the streets. The FBI estimates that it's about \$4 billion a year, a figure that's been fairly stable in the last few years. Ralph Nader talks about "crime in the suites," white-collar crime. Multinational Monitor estimates that it's somewhere around \$200 billion a year.

First of all, crime in the streets, you say there's a lot of attention to it. That's correct, but the question is whether crime in the streets is high. Fact is, it hasn't changed much for a long time. Although it's high by the standards of comparable societies, it's not out of sight. There's only one major domain in which the U.S. is off the map. That's murders with guns. But that's because of the gun culture. If you look at other crimes, the U.S. is sort of toward the high end of the industrial societies. That hasn't changed much. So why the attention?

I think it's not because of the problem of crime. It's because of the problem of social control. There is a very committed effort to convert the U.S. into something which has the basic structure of a Third World society, meaning sectors of enormous wealth and a lot of people without security or benefits or jobs and a lot of superfluous people. And you have to do something with them. First of all, you have to make sure that they don't notice that something is wrong and do something about it. The best way to do that, traditionally, is to get them to hate and fear one another. Every coercive society immediately hits on that idea. Crime is perfect for that. So, you get people to worry about crime, not the fact that their salaries are going down and that somebody else has got money coming out of their ears. You get them to focus on the fact that they don't want to get robbed by the kid from the ghetto, or the welfare mother who is having too many children. That's a technique of social control.

Another technique is needed for those that you don't have any use for, whose jobs you can more easily send out to Mexico. That gives you a superfluous class, and they have to be controlled in another way, sometimes by social cleansing, sometimes by incarceration. So the attention on crime certainly serves a purpose. It's striking that the U.S. is perhaps the only society in which crime is considered a political issue. Politicians have to take a stand on who's tougher on crime. In most parts of the world it's a social problem. It's not something you fight about at elections.

Most of the incarceration by now is drug-related, certainly a very high percentage of it, targeting mostly small-timers. On the other hand, if you can believe the international estimates, like the OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development), more than half of the dirty money, the narco-money, goes through U.S. banks. The last estimate I saw was over a quarter of a trillion dollars a year. There's something rather suggestive, at least, about the figures on foreign investment. The latest figures that I've seen from the Commerce Department for foreign direct investment in the Western Hemisphere, excluding

Canada, which is part of Europe, but the rest of the Western Hemisphere, are for 1994—that was when there was all the excitement about emerging markets. It turns out that in 1994 about a quarter of the foreign direct investment went to Bermuda and another 15 percent or so went to the Cayman Islands and other tax havens, some more to Panama and the rest mostly short-term speculative money picking up assets in Brazil and so on. That means something close to half of what they call foreign direct investment is some sort of dirty money. They're not building manufacturing plants in Bermuda. The most benign interpretation is it's some form of tax evasion. A less benign interpretation is it has to do with handling the flow of narco-capital, which is conceivable.

Corporate crime, however, is not really considered crime. If you take, say, the S&Ls, is that crime? Only a very narrow part of it is considered crime. Most of it is just picked up by the taxpayer with bailouts. If we look at things that actually fall under the category of crime, they are mostly not investigated and not prosecuted. Is that surprising? Why should rich and powerful people allow themselves to be prosecuted?



You mentioned that the U.S. ranks very high in gun deaths, 24,000 a year. Russell Mokhiber of the Corporate Crime Reporter has written about this, contrasting these two statistics, 24,000 gun deaths a year, 56,000 Americans die from job-related accidents and induced diseases.

In the 1980s, the Reagan Administration essentially informed the business world that they were not going to prosecute them for violating the law. One of the things that happened is that OSHA, the Office of Safety and Health Administration, regulations were either not investigated or prosecuted. The number of industrial deaths and accidents went up rather high. That's the state telling you, Look, commit any workplace crimes you like. We're not going to bother with it. If it kills lots of people, fine.

The same is true of environmental issues. If you weaken the regulatory apparatus on, say, toxic waste disposal, sure, you're killing people. On what scale? The effort to deregulate, decrease infrastructure spending harms people, a lot of them, to the point of killing them. It harms a lot of them in other ways. Is it criminal? Well, that's a doctrinal judgment, not a legal judgment.

In the last few years you have taken some major international trips to Australia, India, and, recently, South America. How have these trips informed your understanding of what's happening to the global economy?

It's actually possible to sit in Boston and find out pretty much what's going on.

But that's statistics, right? You're dealing with books and papers.

It's one thing to read the figures about poverty in India and another thing to walk through the slums in Bombay and see people living in hideous, indescribable poverty.

If you walk through downtown Boston you also see appalling poverty. I've seen things in New York which are as horrifying as anything I've seen in the Third World.

Comparable to the favelas in Brazil?

It's hard to say "comparable." But conditions which are about as horrifying. Remember, how bad conditions are depends on what else is around. You could be a very happy Stone Age person and not have a computer or a television set. No doubt the people in the favelas live better than in the Stone Age, although probably not by nutritional or health meas-

ures. Even if you look at things like effects on health or life expectancy, the relative position that people have in a society plays a big role. So if you're much poorer than other people, that harms your health. But I'd say that there are parts of New York or Boston which are not unlike what you find in the Third World. Black males in Harlem, it was discovered a couple of years ago, have roughly the mortality rate of Bangladesh. On the other hand, going back to your question, seeing things first hand you discover a lot of things that are never written about.

For example, there's very little written about the way in which popular struggles are dealing with problems. You can only discover that by being there. And there's plenty of it. I've seen things in India and South America that I wouldn't have known about if I hadn't been there.

In Brazil you met with the Workers Party.

I met with the Workers Party, but I also spent time in slums and meeting with people who are doing things directly. Meeting with the Workers Party was extremely interesting. Lula in particular is a very impressive person.

There are now formations in Brazil of landless peasants.

There's a very big landless workers movement which probably has settled about 150,000 people or so on land takeovers. They happened to be having a conference, some of the activists in the landless workers movement near Sao Paulo when I was there. They're a very important and substantial popular movement. They have close links to the favelas, because the people in the favelas are mostly driven off the land. Brazil has an enormous agrarian problem. It's got a very high land concentration, an enormous amount of unused land, basically being held as a hedge against inflation or for investment purposes, but not really used. It's got a very brutal army and military history, especially since the coup of 1964. There was a lot of violence against peasants. When I was there there were informal judicial proceedings taking place—because the judicial system didn't work—involving the murder of a couple of dozen peasants in a land takeover operation this past April in one of the northern regions. There's plenty of killing and violence. But there has also been very substantial organization. And there's integration of some kind, I can't say how much, between the landless workers and the groups working in the slums, the favelas, the shantytowns that are scattered all over the place. It's linked in some fashion to the Workers Party, but I don't think anybody can say exactly how. One thing that is

agreed on is that most of the landless workers do vote for the Workers Party and support it, but organizationally they're separate.

I should say that I was asked on a national television press conference why I thought that people voted against their class interests by not voting for the Workers Party. My feeling is that that's not necessarily against their class interests. A vote for the Workers Party, given the social structure of Brazil, is a dangerous vote because one possible consequence is a huge capital flight from Brazil, which is devastating for the economy. Remember that these societies have a very serious problem: They don't control their wealthy, and the wealthy have virtually no social obligations, from paying taxes to keeping their money in the country. That's their core problem, the state is subordinated to the wealthy. If you look at the major problems they face, from what's called debt to the agrarian problem to violence, it essentially goes back to that. Unless that problem is dealt with, you can understand why a poor person would vote for an oppressor. Because voting for someone who has your interests at heart may harm you, since that will bring on violence by the rich.

It's exactly the same if you're a poor person in Central America. If voting for your own interests will bring on you the terror organized and directed by the superpower of the hemisphere, that's a good reason not to do it, in fact, a rational reason not to do it. There are Central America societies which are so weak that they can't really solve their internal problems in the face of U.S. power. But in South America that's not quite true. They have resources, potential, and probably could deal internally with some of their major problems. But they haven't done it, for all kinds of reasons, historical, and so on.

Should one be careful to extend this analogy to U.S. workers, why they are voting against what seems to be class interest? If they're voting at all.

I'm not sure that's true. The vote is only between two class enemies. There's no one who's presenting themselves as representing their class interests. But if there were, you can imagine reasons for not doing it. Suppose there's a candidate who represents my interests. I trust the person and think they would try to do exactly what I want. There would still be good reason not to vote for them if the consequences would be that

people with real power would make my life much worse, for example, by disinvestment or by capital flight. Capital flight isn't so much of a problem here. It's a different sort of situation, but take, say, Brazil or Argentina or Mexico, anything south of the Rio Grande. All of these countries are supposed to have a debt problem. That's what's limiting social spending and equitable, sustainable development. Any decent project that might be carried out is instantly constrained by the need to pay off the debt. The argument is that's why they have to obey the orders of the international financial institutions and impose neoliberal, free-market solutions of the kind that the rich never allow for themselves but are happy to impose on other people. That's the argument. But why is there a debt problem?

First of all, is there a debt problem, say, in Brazil? Brazil is maybe the biggest debtor in the world, by official figures. Is that true? If I borrow money and I send it to a Swiss bank and then I can't pay my creditors, is it your problem? Or is it my problem? Economists have no answer to that question. That's a question of moral values and doctrinal judgment. The people in favelas didn't borrow the money. The landless workers didn't borrow the money. The money was borrowed by the generals and their friends and the super-rich, who sent most of it abroad as soon as interest rates went up, leaving a crushing debt that is being paid by the poor people.

It's interesting that this issue isn't raised much. But when the point is raised, they very quickly understand it. I don't think that would be true here. I





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don't think that in educated circles here you could even get the point across. That's one of the striking differences you notice as soon as you get out of the First World into the Third World. Minds are much more open. We live in a highly indoctrinated society. That's part of the prerogative of wealth and power. You really don't have to think. You can be self-righteous. Even wealthy and powerful people in the Third World tend to have much more open minds.

Here's a matter of breaking out of doctrinal shackles, which is not easy. As long as they accept the principle that Brazil has a debt and that the poor people who didn't borrow the money have to pay it, it's perfectly true that they can't do anything to solve their own problems. If you look at the figures, capital flight from Latin America was not much below the debt. This is one of the interesting comparisons between Latin America and the Asian growth areas. They're constantly comparing themselves to the Asian growth areas, and rightly so. But the two are very different in many respects. One is that whatever you think about Japan and South Korea and Taiwan, they not only control labor and the poor, but they also control capital and the rich. In Japan they didn't allow export of capital until 1972, when its economy had already reconstructed. I think South Korea probably still doesn't. They have debt, but not the kind that Latin America has, because they control their wealthy. They have internal investment rather than export of capital. That shows up in other respects, too. So in Latin America, which has the worst inequality in the world—East Asia has maybe the least—you not only have the capital exported, but you have luxury goods imported, whereas in East Asia typically the imports are for capital investment and are controlled. These are differences between so-

cieties that have, for one reason or another, handled their internal problems differently. Unless the potentially rich, powerful Latin American countries like Brazil and Argentina, can handle problems internally they're always going to be in trouble.

When I say, "they're" going to be in trouble, that's a little misleading. There are people there who are very happy with all of this. There's a sector of extreme wealth. But that's true even if you go to central Africa. You can see it anywhere in the world. It's possible to live in the poorest countries and be in very wealthy and privileged circumstances all the time, just as you can live in New York and somehow not

pay attention to the fact that there are homeless people sleeping in the streets and that a couple of blocks away there are children hungry. You can do it. We all do. In the Third World, you can also do it. They are more grotesque because the dimensions of the problem are larger, but qualitatively not different.

What kind of contact did you have with the media in Brazil and Argentina and Chile? Did you see any new developments that might interest people?

First of all, as anywhere outside of the U.S., I had a lot of contact with the elite media.

State television and radio?

And commercial, too. They're just a lot more open. On the other hand, I also did see some interesting things which I knew nothing about. For example, the structure of a Latin American city is that the suburbs are mostly where the poor people live. It's not that you don't find shantytowns and slums in the city. You do. But that's the basic structure. Outside of Rio, there are huge suburbs, basically cities with a mixture of millions of poor, working-class, unemployed, and landless peasants. I went out to the biggest one, called Nova Iguaçu, a couple of miles from Rio. I went with some friends, but also with an NGO, which originally consisted of some professionals, artists, people in television, and so on, who wanted to try to find a way to bring popular media to the communities for their own benefit.

These are artists, professionals, intellectuals who wanted to have something besides commercial television destroying people's minds. They got some equipment. They spent a couple of years designing

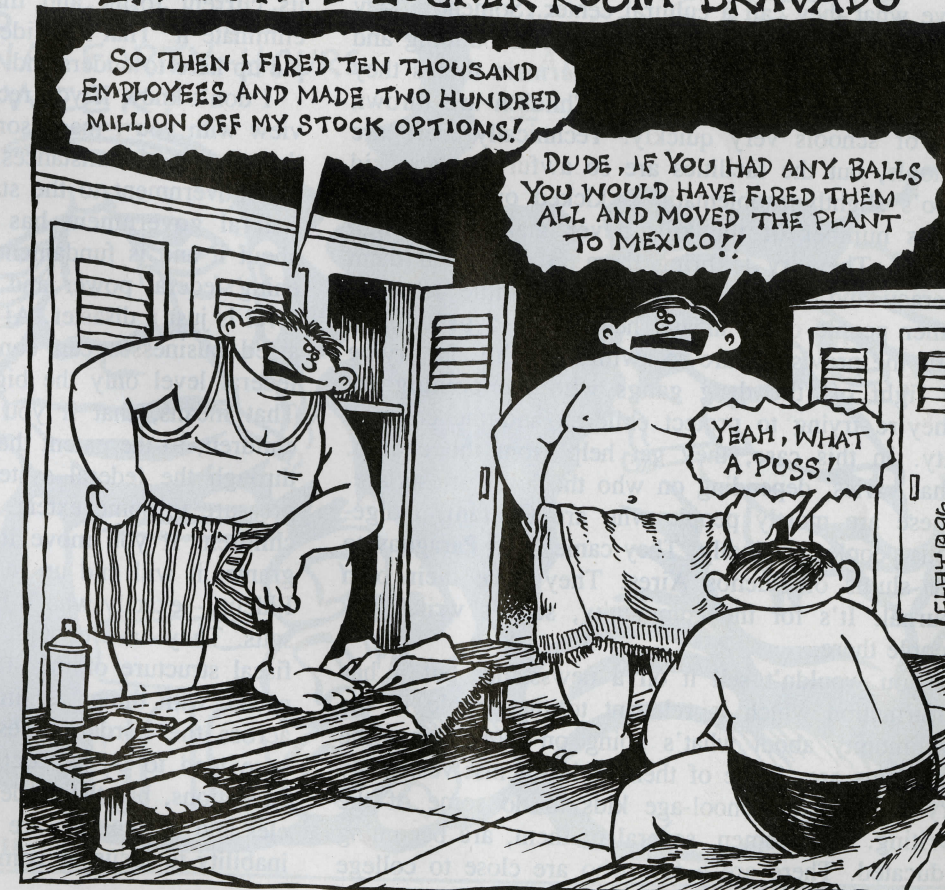
television programs that would be shown on a big screen in a public place in the poor community. The idea is, a truck will drive in with a huge screen on it. They will find a public area and they will show these skits or documentaries dealing with real problems and try to get people to watch and participate. They planned very well, with church people and community leaders and others. There's a lot of popular organization going on. They went to the leaders of the popular organizations in the community to which they were going, and spent a fair amount of time working on texts and figuring out how to make it accessible to people and how to put some humor in. I hadn't seen them, but apparently they were very well done. Then they went out to try it.

It completely bombed. People came around because there was something going on, watched, looked for a while, and then walked away. They then did some wrap-up sessions to try to figure out what had happened. They discovered that although the leadership groups were coming from the community, they did not represent the views of the community, even though they lived there. The way they put it was, they spoke a different dialect than the people in their own community, with intellectual words and Marxist ideas and whatever goes along with the people who are considered intellectuals, even though they were coming from the community.

So they went back, and this time they avoided the community leaders and went to the groups themselves. They tried to get people right there, 16-year-old kids, to get interested in filming, script writing. That worked. It wasn't easy. A couple of years later we went out to Nova Iguaçu. The NGO at this point is doing nothing but bringing in the equipment. So they moved in the truck and the big screen. These are supposedly very high-crime areas, and everybody warned us you can't go there. You'll get murdered. It's totally untrue. They were perfectly friendly. So we went out there. Big screen in the middle of the public area. Little bars around. The actors in the

film were people in the community, mostly young. They had written the scripts. They had done the filming. They got a little technical assistance, but essentially nothing else from the urban professionals. There were a lot of people around. It was prime television time, nine o'clock in the evening. Lots and lots of people from the community, very racially mixed—children, old people. Obviously they were very much engaged in what was happening. I couldn't understand a lot of the dialogue—it was in Portuguese—but you could understand enough to see that they were really involved. There was a skit on racism. There isn't supposed to be any racism in Brazil. In theory it's all been overcome. They'd have some black person in the community going to some office and asking for a job and show what happens, and then some white person redoing it and of course being treated totally differently. Everybody recognized what was happening. They were laughing and making comments. There was a segment on AIDS. There was something about the debt. That was mixed in with humor and clowns and other things. One of the actors, a kid who looked about 17, maybe, who was quite good, she had a microphone and she was walking around where the people were and talking to them. After the skits ended she interviewed people

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who were sitting around, asking them what they thought about it, did they have some comments and criticisms. That was all being filmed. So they were watching themselves being filmed discussing the content of what they had just seen.

This is very impressive community-based media of a sort that I've never seen before in an extremely poor area, done with an initial failure of the kind I described, and finally success when it did actually have roots in the community.

What about the independent press and radio?

There is a sort of independent left journal published in Sao Paulo. It's in Portuguese, so I have only a superficial sense of what's in it. But the material is extremely interesting, very well published. It looked a lot better than *Harper's* or the *Atlantic*, physically. Complicated, interesting articles. Quite left wing. I don't know who reads it. I couldn't find out.

We spent some time in a shantytown in Buenos Aires. It's kind of like the *favelas*. We went in with some friends who were from the university, but who are also activists who work there. These are places that are really in trouble, very poor communities in a very rich city. It's being organized by women. That's very typical in such communities. There are some mothers who are trying to start an organization. They have what they call a cultural center. Somehow they managed to find an abandoned concrete building and somebody built a roof. One of the main things they try to do is bring in children. Children are thrown out of schools very quickly. Technically there are schools, but the facilities are so awful that any kid who's slightly problematic is kicked out. An enormous number of the kids never make it through school. They try to bring them in and teach them literacy and numeracy, then skills, a little artwork. Other people come in and help. Even a pencil is a gift, the provisions are so awful. They're also trying to fight off the drug gangs who are coming in. They're trying to protect children and the community. In this case, they get help from the church. That varies, depending on who the local priests are. These are mostly people who are Guarani, indigenous people, originally. They came from Paraguay to the slums of Buenos Aires. They have their own journal. It's for the community, so it's written by people there.

You wouldn't sell it on a newsstand, but it has information which is relevant to the people in the community about what's going on there, what the problems are. Some of them write themselves. They try to get high-school-age kids to do some of the writing. The women, several of them, are becoming educated. There are a few who are close to college

degrees in things like nursing and professions. On the other hand, they all say they won't ever get out of the shantytowns because of the way they're dressed and the way they look when they try to get a job somewhere. But they're dedicated and they work hard, and they're trying to save the children. And they get some support from outside, like these friends of ours.

Here's another difference that struck me. There happens to be a very lively anarchist movement in Buenos Aires. I met with other anarchist groups as far as northeast Brazil, where nobody even knew they existed. They showed up and we had discussions. They were sort of libertarian people, outside the Bolshevik left, whatever you call that, kind of anarchist to libertarian socialist. There was a lot of discussion about the question of minimizing the state. That's the big neoliberal line. People there understand that they have to protect the state. Even if they're anarchists who regard the state as totally illegitimate, as I do, they realize that it is necessary to protect the public arena, which means state power. The reason is, when you eliminate the public arena and the one institutional structure in which people can, to some extent, participate, namely the state, you're just handing over power to unaccountable private tyrannies that are much worse. So you protect the public arena, recognizing that it's illegitimate in its current form, and that you ultimately want to eliminate it. That's an idea that's very hard for people up here to understand.

I don't know if you recall that in a previous interview with you I made some comment about how, in the current circumstances, devolution from the federal government to the state level is disastrous. The federal government has all sorts of rotten things about it and is fundamentally illegitimate, but weakening federal power and moving things to the state level is just a disaster. At the state level even middle-sized businesses can control what happens. At the federal level only the big guys can push it around. That means, that if you take, say, aid for hungry children, to the extent that it exists, if it's distributed through the federal system, you can resist business pressure to some extent. It can actually get to poor children. If you move it to the state level in block grants, it will end up in the hands of Raytheon and Fidelity—exactly what's happening here in Massachusetts. They have enough coercive power to force the fiscal structure of the state to accommodate to their needs, with things as simple as the threat of moving across the border. These are realities. But people here tend to be so doctrinaire. Obviously there are exceptions, but the tendencies here, both in elite circles and on the left, are such rigidity and doctrinaire inability to focus on complex issues that the left ends

up removing itself from authentic social struggle and is caught up in its doctrinaire sectarianism. That's very much less true there. I think that's parallel to the fact that it's less true among elite circles. So just as you can talk openly there about the fact that Brazil and Argentina don't really have a debt, that it's a social construct, not an economic fact—they may not agree, but at least they understand what you're talking about—whereas here I think it would be extremely hard to get the point across. Again, I don't want to overdraw the lines. There are plenty of exceptions. But the differences are noticeable, and I think the differences have to do with power. The more power and privilege you have, the less it's necessary to think, because you can do what you want anyway. When power and privilege decline, willingness to think becomes part of survival.

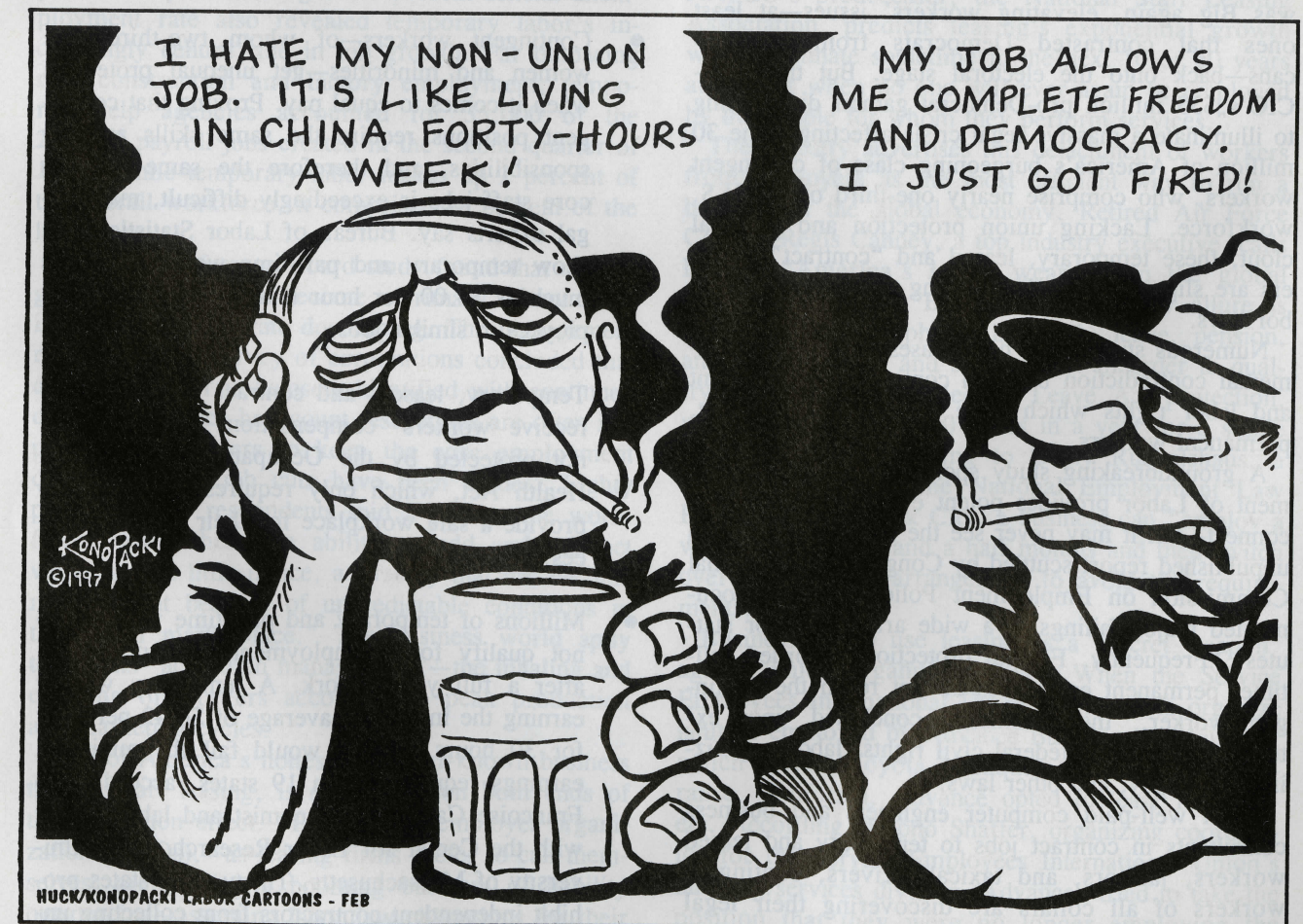
I know when excerpts from that interview we did were published in The Progressive, you got raked over the coals for this position.

Exactly. When I talked to the anarchist group in Buenos Aires, we discussed this. Everybody basically had the same recognition. There's an interesting slo-

gan that's used. We didn't mention this, but quite apart from the Workers Party and the urban unions, there's also a very lively rural workers organization. Millions of workers have become organized into rural unions which are very rarely discussed. One of the slogans that they use which is relevant here, is that we should "expand the floor of the cage." We know we're in a cage. We know we're trapped. We're going to expand the floor, meaning we will extend to the limits what the cage will allow. And we intend to destroy the cage. But not by attacking the cage when we're vulnerable, so they'll murder us. That's completely correct. You have to protect the cage when it's under attack from even worse predators from outside, like private power. And you have to expand the floor of the cage, recognizing that it's a cage. These are all preliminaries to dismantling it. Unless people are willing to tolerate that level of complexity, they're going to be of no use to people who are suffering and who need help, or, for that matter, to themselves.

Z

Part II of this interview will appear in a future issue of Z Magazine.





Unprotected Work

The downsizing of labor rights

By Christopher D. Cook

Workers were a hot item in 1996. Born-again populists of both parties jostled for votes from the anxious and the downsized. Labor was Big again, elevating workers' issues—at least ones that contrasted Democrats from Republicans—back onto the electoral stage. But the AFL-CIO's \$35 million pro-Democrat gambit did nothing to illuminate a massive legal crisis affecting some 30 million of America's burgeoning class of contingent workers, who comprise nearly one-third of the U.S. workforce. Lacking union protection and political clout, these temporary, leased and "contract" workers are slipping through widening cracks in U.S. labor laws.

Numerous studies and court cases indicate a fundamental contradiction between contingent employment and labor rights which were scripted for full-time, permanent workers.

A groundbreaking study sponsored by the Department of Labor provides potent evidence of this disconnect—but it may never see the light of day. In an unpublished report scuttled by Congress, the National Commission on Employment Policy (NCEP) documented major failings in a wide array of labor statutes. "Frequently, Federal protections afforded full-time, permanent employees do not reach the contingent worker," the commission concluded, upon extensive analysis of federal civil rights, labor organizing, equal pay, and other laws.

From well-paid computer engineers and business consultants in contract jobs to temporary and leased workers, janitors, and taxicab drivers, contingent workers of all collars are discovering their legal

rights are even less secure than their jobs. The list of exclusions encompasses nearly every aspect of U.S. labor law:

- Contingent workers—of whom two-thirds are women and minorities—get unequal protection when it comes to equal pay. Proving that contingent positions require the same skills and responsibilities, and therefore the same pay, as core staff jobs is exceedingly difficult, many legal experts say. Bureau of Labor Statistics data show temporary and part-time workers earn as much as \$5.00 per hour less than full-time employees in similar jobs.
- Temporary, leased, and contract workers rarely receive workers' compensation, and most are not protected by the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which only requires companies to provide a safe workplace for their own employees.
- Millions of temporary and part-time workers do not qualify for unemployment insurance, even after a full year's work. A temporary worker earning the industry's average of \$6.42 per hour for 30 hours a week would fail the minimum earnings requirement in 19 states, according to Francoise Carre, an economist and labor expert with the Center for Labor Research at the University of Massachusetts. Thirty-eight states prohibit independent contractors from collecting un-

employment compensation, and many others explicitly bar part-time workers from receiving benefits during a job search.

- Part-time, temporary and casual workers at small businesses have little protection against discrimination, according to NCEP's study. Companies that employ people sporadically often fall below employee numerical thresholds which determine whether an employer is liable for civil rights violations.
- Independent contractors are excluded from anti-discrimination protections covering civil rights violations and sexual harassment. They are also exempted from workers' compensation insurance. The General Accounting Office has found that 40 percent of supposed "contract workers" are actually employees who are improperly denied legal protections.

Rising from the ashes of corporate downsizing, contingent labor has arrived as a permanent fixture in corporate cost-cutting wars. A June 1996 Labor Department report boasting a 5.3 percent official unemployment rate also revealed temporary labor's increasingly central role in job growth. Far outpacing new construction and factory employment, temporary-help agencies accounted for 35,000 of the 239,000 payroll jobs created in the second quarter of 1996. While temporary labor makes up 2 percent of the overall workforce, it comprised 15 percent of the latest jobs.

A 1995 Conference Board study found that contingent employment has become a primary, if not vital, ingredient in corporate downsizing. The management research firm's survey of corporations concluded that contingent labor is "closely identified with continued downsizing, since headcount restrictions are often imposed on managers to keep the core employment down once the job cuts have been made." Eighty percent of the respondents said a just-in-time workforce "gives them the ability to add and subtract workers with little notice, a strategy that has become more urgent because of unpredictable conditions in the global marketplace." The business world aptly terms this "accordion management"—the inhaling and exhaling of workers according to peak production and marketing cycles.

One of America's hottest yet lesser-known business trends, staff leasing, is cashing in on both ends of this accordion effect. "Professional employer organizations (PEOs)," as leasing firms prefer to call themselves, are making a booming business of liability outsourcing—assuming labor law obligations for their

client companies' workers. To avoid the headaches of personnel management and labor law compliance, more and more businesses are firing their staffs and renting their workers from a leasing company.

The Your Staff leasing firm, a 5,000-employee subsidiary of the Kelly Services temporary labor corporation, is one such company promising, as a promotional video puts it, to "provide your company with an extra measure of insulation against damaging litigation and inflated insurance costs...Your Staff becomes the employer of record for your employees, while you maintain day-to-day control over directing them."

The promotions are working. Leasing's member group and lobbying arm, the National Association of Professional Employer Organizations (NAPEO), reports a staggering industry-wide revenue growth rate of 30-40 percent per year. According to the Bankers Trust Company, an investment analysis firm in New York City, this boom is likely to continue through the next five to ten years.

In the past 12 years, leasing has exploded from 98 firms leasing 10,000 workers in 1984, to 1,700 companies which now employ 2 to 3 million workers. Gregory Hammond, the former general counsel of NAPEO's predecessor, the National Staff Leasing Association, predicts leasing's exponential growth will "culminate sometime in the next 10 or 50 years at a point when no one will ever again be employed by the people for whom they perform services."

The industry advertises this detachment of workers from employers as the most efficient way to run a business in the global economy. Retired Air Force Colonel Regis Canney, a top industry executive, calls leasing "America's secret weapon" in the global business battlefield. But leasing's primary allure is that it exploits loopholes in family leave, pension, and worker health and safety laws. In order to qualify for Family and Medical Leave Act protection, workers must log 1,250 hours in a year for a single employer. But according to Cathy Ruckelshaus, a staff attorney with the National Employment Law Project in New York City, a business can "employ a worker for eleven and a half months and then switch over to a leasing arrangement to avoid the requirements."

Businesses also use leasing as a "secret weapon" against union organizing drives. When the Service Employees International Union attempted to organize janitors employed by Advance Building Maintenance, which cleans Toyota headquarters offices in Torrance, California, Advance opted to lease its workers. According to Jono Shaffer, organizing coordinator for the Service Employees International Union's building services division, Advance "tried to take the position that they were no longer employing the

workers, that our dispute was with the leasing company." Through aggressive corporate campaigning, SEIU forced Advance to settle collective bargaining agreements and numerous wage and hour disputes.

With such tantalizing loopholes, this risky business of liability outsourcing is expanding rapidly under minimal regulatory oversight. Only 13 states require PEOs to obtain a license or register their business. Likewise, the industry's self-monitoring body, the Institute for the Accreditation of PEOs, reports that but 13 of the nation's 1,700 leasing firms have met the group's standards for ethical behavior and financial stability.

In their quest for cheap, hassle-free labor, more and more companies are finding creative—often illegal—ways to erase workers' rights. As a condition of employment, taxicab firms now require drivers to sign "lease agreements" which, on paper at least, turn employee drivers into independent contractors, thus denying them minimum wage, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and other protections.

Workers' compensation is routinely denied to cab drivers, who, according to a recent study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, hold the most hazardous job in America. In 1994, 86 drivers lost their lives on the job, the study found. Thousands more are badly injured, and frequently these uninsured workers must pay enormous hospital bills out of pocket.

In a profession where knifings and beatings are part of the job description, signing away your rights to workers' compensation seems suicidal. But drivers say that under the cab industry's contracts—recently ruled illegal in a class-action lawsuit—it's "economic suicide" to become an employee.

According to the industry-authored lease agreement, "lease-drivers"—those who sign as independent contractors—pay \$85 to rent a cab for a 10-hour night shift, while "employee-drivers" must pay \$103. For the extra \$18 a night, employee drivers get workers' compensation and unemployment insurance. Over the course of a year, access to these basic employment rights costs \$3,500 to \$4,000 a year—forcing drivers to choose between higher incomes and employment rights.

"It's gangsterism," adds Paulsen, a driver for DeSoto Cab Company since 1976. "You either drive for these guys or you don't drive at all. You have no control...The driver is kind of like an economic slave."

Spurred by the near-fatal, on-the-job beating of driver John Coleman, thousands of San Francisco cab drivers joined and recently won a class-action lawsuit against three major taxi firms. According to the original complaint, "Taxicab drivers who are injured

in the course and scope of their service...are unable to obtain medical care for their injuries, lose employment, are denied unemployment insurance benefits, and in many instances are forced on welfare." If it withstands appeal, the San Francisco Superior Court ruling will force taxi companies to cover their drivers for workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, and other employee rights.

But Ruach Graffis, a long-time organizer with San Francisco's United Taxicab Workers, says major financial incentives still encourage worker misclassification. "This will keep happening forever, until we get national health care, because these companies don't want to pay workers' compensation," says Graffis.

Legal aid lawyer Christopher Ho, who represented the drivers and has handled similar cases involving strawberry pickers, agrees. "This whole independent contractor misclassification thing has really taken off. Employers are doing it with increasing frequency because it's easy for them to avoid statutory obligations...The fact that it's happening so far afield shows that employers are using this as a ruse to save money."

Low-wage and immigrant workers are not the only victims. Even highly paid independent contractors by choice are denied basic rights. Minnesota business consultant Caryn Wilde endured sexual harassment by a county development official for more than a year before filing a restraining order. Within two weeks of her complaint, the county agency, Wilde's largest client, "voted to cease all communications" with her, Wilde testified in court. Two months later, according to Wilde, the agency terminated all its business with Wilde.

Meanwhile, Wilde's legal and medical expenses related to the case soared to more than \$30,000. After losing her biggest client and tens of thousands of dollars due to her sexual harassment complaint, Wilde also lost in Federal Court. The judge ruled that since Wilde was an independent contractor, she was not protected by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; nor was she covered by the Minnesota Human Rights Act. When Wilde appealed to a Circuit Court, the EEOC took notice and, at first, offered its support. According to Wilde, the agency soon backed out, saying that "although they were very interested in the case, they were still living under the narrow interpretation of the term 'employee' as ordered by the Reagan/Bush Administration."

The EEOC's about-face corroborates the National Commission on Employment Policy's finding that Reagan-era Federal courts have narrowed the scope of employee status, often denying workers legal protection. "The breadth of...the legislative language is narrowing," the report stated. "Congress may want

to expand coverage by extending the definition of employee to independent contractors." To date, this has not happened.

The ultimate challenge, says Anthony Carnavale, who headed the National Commission on Employment Policy, "is how to reconcile the need to furnish contingent workers protections in the workplace similar to those afforded permanent employees while continuing to provide employers with the work force flexibility they need to be competitive in a global economy." The commission warned that expanding contingent labor without extending labor rights promises dire results: "It is incumbent upon us to decide if, in the long-term, it is economically and socially viable for this country to sustain a large portion of the American working population in such a precarious and insecure employment status."

The commission answered its own question rather boldly, which may explain why congressional Republicans and the Clinton administration agreed to eliminate the group. "Our goal should be to provide all workers with the same level of protection to reduce the incentives to create a two-tiered labor market," the report said.

But as contingent labor proliferates, policy makers are ignoring this challenge. Only two members of Congress have proposed reforms, and both (Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum, and Colorado Representative Patricia Schroeder) have opted for retirement—effectively removing contingent labor from the national policy making map. The two congressional attempts to extend legal protections to contingent workers languish in archival obscurity.

Senator Metzenbaum's "Contingent Workforce Equity Act," proposed in October 1994, remains by far the most comprehensive attempt to protect contingent workers. It proposed to "extend the protections of Federal labor and civil rights laws to part-time, temporary, and leased employees, independent contractors, and other contingent workers, and to ensure equitable treatment of such workers." Among other provisions, the bill would have made it illegal for companies to pay temporary and part-time workers less than regular employees doing similar jobs. The European Court of Justice has already taken a similar tack, ruling that unequal pay for part-time workers is discriminatory.

When Metzenbaum retired the measure was passed along to now-retiring Illinois Senator Paul Simon; it has since been forgotten. Nonetheless, the bill amply reflected attempts by advocacy groups and unions to write contingent workers into the law. The National Employment Law Project, a New York City-based group advocating for the unemployed and working poor, is urging the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission to include Workfare recipients and other

contingent workers within its antidiscriminatory aegis. The aim, according to staff attorney Cathy Ruckelshaus, is to "make it clear in the definition of employee that they're covered."

The Law Project and many policy researchers urge a complete overhaul of U.S. labor law, arguing that single-issue reforms "simply encourage the development of new forms of contingent status," a coalition of worker advocacy groups told the Dunlop Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations in 1994. "Mandating fair treatment for employees...gives employers a reason not to directly hire 'employees,' but instead to hire 'temps,' 'lease' workers or engage 'independent contractors' for whom they have no responsibility."

Francois Carre and fellow labor experts Virginia duRivage and Chris Tilly, say the National Labor Relations Act needs to be re-framed to allow new forms of union association—enabling temps and other transient workers to join collective bargaining units based on their occupation or geographic location, rather than on the traditional NLRA model of employer-based unionism.

Proposals for reform pile up by the dozens at labor conferences and in congressional archives. What's missing is government will and interest in discouraging unprotected work and expanding labor protections. If the silent slaying of NCEP's report is any indicator, politicians of both parties would rather not even discuss it. And while some unions, most notably the Service Employees International Union and the United Food and Commercial Workers, have pressed hard to address the needs of part-time and contract workers, the labor movement has been slow to embrace contingent workers as the new frontier for organizing.

Even in seemingly labor-friendly circles, the legal problems of contingent workers are merely "a topic that merits further inquiry." Such was the conclusion of the Dunlop Commission, a Clinton Administration fact-finding panel that many saw as the best hope for progressive labor law reform. Contingent workers merited but 2 pages in the commission's 200-page report, which failed to promote any reforms. According to one labor union source close to the commission, chair John Dunlop, the U.S. Labor Secretary under President Gerald Ford, "just didn't want to talk about it. He didn't think contingent workers were an issue that needed to be addressed." Z

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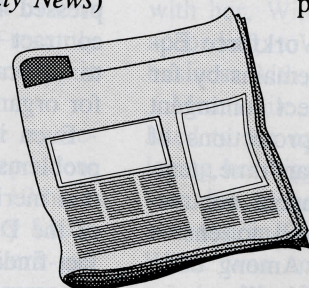


The Inky and Me

A study in market-driven journalism

By Edward S. Herman

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* (*Inky*) is widely regarded as a very good newspaper. This reputation derives in part from its great superiority over its predecessor, Walter Annenberg's *Inquirer*, notorious as a partisan Republican rag and instrument of Annenberg's personal vendettas (most famously, his refusal to allow mention of the name of the liberal Democratic Governor of Pennsylvania, Milton Shapp). After the Knight system acquired the *Inky* (and the Annenberg-owned *Philadelphia Daily News*) in 1970—Knight merged with the Ridder chain in 1974 to form Knight-Ridder—it brought in professional managers, sharply upgraded the news operation, and terminated the paper's service as a personal political vehicle of the owner.

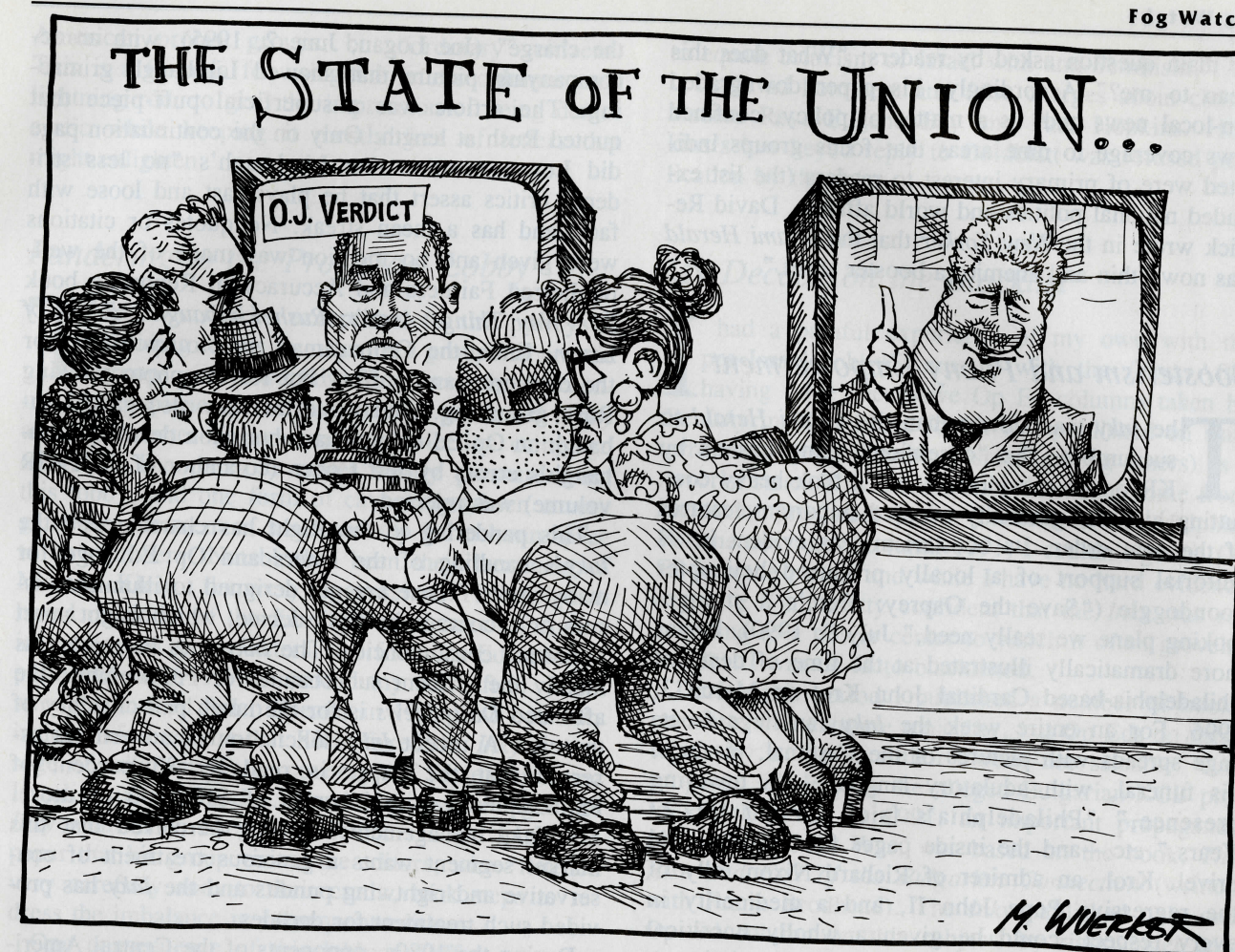


The paper's favorable reputation also rests on positive accomplishments. Knight-Ridder has had some first rate journalists like Frank Greve and Juan Tamayo, whose reports occasionally appear in the *Inky* (these reporters have been attached directly to the Knight-Ridder-owned *Miami Herald*). The *Inky* has had a fair number of in-house news articles and investigative studies of issues such as the wetlands, police abuses, local political corruption, and others that are very good journalism. Barlett and Steele's periodic multi-part investigative reports on the tax burden and income distribution, despite limitations (noted below) are worthy efforts. The paper is not closed, and publishes news articles and occasional opinion pieces that conflict with the party line the paper is supporting editorially.

Despite these positives, however, the *Inky* has always been an establishment institution that keeps news and opinion very much within the bounds of establishment parameters. It is a market-driven paper, increasingly so over the past decade, and as a result has done a very poor job of maintaining a "public sphere" within which issues important to the entire citizenry are freely discussed and debated. Its news arm has the deficiency of all mainstream commercial papers—it depends too heavily on official sources, so that it is regularly led by the nose in the direction officials desire; and where officials want silence and afford few leads, the paper fails to follow a story and allows silence to prevail. (Often, where officials want the *Inky* to go its editors want to go anyway.) One result is that the *Inky* has frequently served as a propaganda arm of the state, as in the case of its news/editorial treatment of the NAFTA debate and Mexican bailout, where the news coverage was thin and uncritical, the editorial page hugely biased and demagogic.

Market-Driven Journalism

The *Inky*'s parent, Knight-Ridder (KR), is a publicly owned company traded on the New York Stock Exchange, and in consequence is under steady pressure to attend to the bottom line. This pressure sharpened over the past decade during



which newspaper profits suffered from recession, high newsprint prices, and competition for advertising from cable and other rivals. John Knight, a liberal Republican with an old-fashioned respect for investigative journalism, died in 1981; the Ridder half of the combine was always more business oriented, and Tony Ridder, now the CEO, is noted for his marketing focus. Under Ridder, and his predecessor as president, James Batten, KR has pursued a number of strategies: it has tried to diversify into new media (unsuccessfully), it has engaged in union busting in Detroit, and it has tried to cut costs in all its papers by reducing personnel. This led to the departure of the *Inky*'s top executive, Eugene Roberts, in 1990, and then to the resignation of executive editor James Naughton in 1995. In leaving the *Philadelphia Daily News* in 1995, editorial page editor Richard Aregood remarked that KR "was becoming a company on the standard model of corporations rather than on the Knight model." David Von Drehle, who once worked for the *Miami Herald*, stated that the recent deterioration of standards at KR led

him to conclude "that its time to pronounce the experiment of publicly traded newspapers a failure."

The other line of attack by Knight-Ridder has been a more aggressive (or sycophantic) catering to readers and advertisers. James Batten, president of KR from 1988 until his death in 1995, pioneered this new phase of market-driven journalism, and was featured in the recent books *When MBAs Rule Newsrooms* (Doug Underwood) and *Market-Driven Journalism* (John McManus). From 1988 Batten campaigned within KR for what he called "customer obsession," the word customer encompassing both readers and advertisers. The marketing underpinning of this "obsession" was clear: an intensified focus on profit margin targets, and the *Wall Street Journal* noted back in 1990 that KR seemed to be "borrowing heavily on the innovations of Gannett Co.'s *USA Today*...[with] graphics and bright colors [that] highlight stories on baby-boomer 'hot buttons,' such as divorce, personal finance, housing trends and the workplace." According to *Miami Herald* executive editor Doug Clifton, the paper should be answering

the main question asked by readers: "What does this mean to me?" Accordingly, his paper downgraded non-local news and, as a matter of policy, confined news coverage to nine areas that focus groups indicated were of primary interest to readers (the list excluded national politics and world affairs). David Remick wrote in the *New Yorker* that the *Miami Herald* was now "thin and anemic, a booster sheet."

Boosterism and Phony Empowerment

The *Inky* was slower than the *Miami Herald* to succumb to the "obsession" being pushed by KR on its subsidiaries, but it took heavy cost-cutting hits and gradually adopted important features of the new order. Its boosterism was evident in its editorial support of a locally produced helicopter boondoggle ("Save the Osprey: Here's a strange-looking plane we really need," July 9, 1990). It was more dramatically illustrated at the time of death of Philadelphia-based Cardinal John Krol on March 3, 1996. For an entire week the *Inky* ran huge front-page spreads with pictures of the Cardinal, his bier, his funeral, with adulatory language—"a towering presence," "Philadelphia's [sic] Servant for 27 Years," etc.—and the inside pages full of detail and drivel. Krol, an admirer of Richard Nixon, ally of the regressive Pope John II, and a mediocrity in every respect, could be given a wholly uncritical hero's celebration only by a newspaper pandering to a bloc of readers.

The 1990 *Wall Street Journal* account of the new "reader friendly" KR noted that KR papers' editorial pages now featured "'empowerment boxes' giving names and phone numbers, so readers can take action." The *Inky* was one of those papers. Many KR papers also installed Citizens Voice programs that encourage readers to get together to exchange opinions and to have them expressed in a special part of the paper. The *Inky* has adopted this with energy and has devoted many pages to brief expressions of "citizens voices." This new "civic journalism," sometimes called "commercial populism," is basically a copout and fraud. It is a copout in that the paper abandons its own responsibility to address issues and treat them in depth; it is fraudulent in its pretended interest in ordinary people's views and in the notion that allowing controlled expressions of opinion by these citizens in any sense "empowers" them (when in fact the brevity and range of voices assures that they will have no coherence or consequences).

The *Inky* also has a reader-friendly Ombudsman, who displayed his and the *Inky*'s true colors in an incident involving the publication of a front-page article on Rush Limbaugh, "The king of talk, leading

the charge" (Joe Logan, June 2, 1995), with an accompanying picture that showed Limbaugh grimacing. The article was a superficial puff-piece that quoted Rush at length. Only on the continuation page did Logan mention that Limbaugh's "no less strident" critics assert that he plays fast and loose with facts and has a mean streak. No quotes or citations were given and no mention was made of the well-publicized Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting book *The Way Things Aren't: Rush Limbaugh's Reign of Error*. Enter the Ombudsman, not to apologize for the omissions and puffery but for the photo showing Rush grimacing. And while the *Inky* also gave Limbaugh an Op Ed column, a submission detailing Limbaugh's errors by Jeff Cohen (co-author of the FAIR volume) was rejected.

This pandering to the Right has characterized the *Inky*'s handling of the letters and Op Ed page for many years. These are not designed to illuminate issues or encourage in-depth debate, which might upset important constituencies. The *Inky* sees its market as mainly the affluent suburbanites of Philadelphia; the affiliated *Daily News* is for the lunch pail citizenry of the city. A recent *Inky* solicitation of advertisers asserted that the paper is read by 83 percent of Philadelphians with incomes of \$100,000 or more. The *Inky* management has long perceived that this market segment wants a generous treatment of conservative and rightwing pundits and the *Inky* has provided such treatment for decades.

During the 1980s, opponents of the Central American wars steadily protested the *Inky*'s Op Ed page generosity to the war party, causing the editor, Edwin Guthman, to write two columns acknowledging that the antiwar letters were outnumbering those supporting Reagan, and literally appealing to rightwing readers to write in to correct the imbalance and presumably justify the pro-war columns (April 6, 1986). We may be sure that no *Inky* editor has ever appealed to liberals and leftists to write in to support a liberal-left position or program.

In an editorial commenting on the reception to the Barlett-Steele series in 1996, the *Inky* editor noted that letters supporting Barlett and Steele greatly outnumbered those in opposition. This once again suggests that the conservative bias of the Op Ed page and close rationing of liberal-left commentary is not justified by the voices that reach the paper, but results from the desire to provide a page that satisfies important readers and advertisers.

In an August 1990 letter to Central American protestors explaining *Inky* letters policy, the letters editor wrote that the letters column is "primarily for plain old ordinary readers first, not for groups and organizations seeking a platform to expound their beliefs." Citizens Voices for the *Inky* are not people in Central

American protest groups, but "ordinary" citizens. This is a formula for using the letters columns as a lightning rod, to give the impression of being democratic while keeping it mostly free of letters that might enlighten.

Pandering to the Pro-Israel Lobby

The *Inky* makes exceptions to the policy of avoiding letters by organized groups where the groups are powerful and effectively threatening. A conspicuous case involved the pro-Israel lobby and the Specter-Yeakel senatorial election campaign of 1992. The paper is under steady pressure from this lobby, and one form of cave-in has been a very generous allotment of letter and Op Ed column space to its members. Notable has been their treatment of Morton Klein, the very aggressive, Philadelphia-based president of the Zionist Organization of America, who had seven letters and four Op Ed columns published in 1991-1992 (and many thereafter). Klein strongly favored Arlen Specter in 1992, and one *Inky* insider informed me that Klein faxed the *Inky* a message of criticism for its coverage of the election and Israeli issues every day. The lobby also besieged the *Inky* with visits; one of its members noted in a local paper that his group visited the editors, who "listened very carefully and, to their credit, took steps to redress the imbalance in subsequent editions."

One consequence of this lobbying effort was that *Inky* coverage of the Specter-Yeakel campaign was assigned mainly to reporter Nathan Gorenstein, whose pro-Specter bias was blatant. He, and other reporters as well, repeatedly referred to Yeakel's wealth and the fact that some of her own money went into her campaign, but he never mentioned the much greater sums poured into the Specter campaign by the pro-Israel lobby, and real issues and Specter's record were not covered. One of the sinister features of Specter's campaign was the claim that Yeakel's Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church was anti-Semitic, because they had had some pro-Palestinian speakers on the Middle East among a large set that included Specter (this last point was never mentioned by Gorenstein). Gorenstein's stories treated this charge of anti-Semitism as a genuine issue, not a smear tactic, and the *Inky* never explored the use of this dirty trick by Specter and his supportive lobby.

The *Inky* also supported the lobby and Specter by publishing successive letters attacking the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church by Klein, CAMERA zealot Gary Wolf, and the fanatical local rabbi Michael Goldblatt. The last was featured by the *Inky*, although full of errors that any competent editor should recognize, such as "No Jewish leader has attempted

to equate criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism," and it made ad hominem and false charges about church leaders Rev. Eugene Bay and Paul Hopkins. Hopkins's low-keyed reply to Goldblatt was refused publication by the *Inky*.

My Decade on the Blacklist

I had a painful experience of my own with the pro-Israel lobby's muscle with the *Inky*. After having three successive Op Ed columns taken by the *Inky* in 1981-82, a fourth was published on state terrorism, which identified Israel (among others) as a terrorist state. This elicited flak, including some from important pro-Israel power brokers in Philadelphia. For the next decade (until 1991) I couldn't get an Op Ed into the paper, and while I have no hard evidence of cause I am pretty confident that the *Inky* was responding to a power center to which it often grovels, and that I was de facto blacklisted.

During this period I published a number of books on matters of extreme topicality, but Op Eds on these topics by a "local author" were not saleable. One proposed Op Ed, on the alleged Bulgarian-KGB plot to kill the Pope in 1991, an important propaganda ploy of the Cold War, was based on the book, *The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection* (written with Frank Brodhead). The *Inky* published only one Op Ed column on this subject, by rightwinger Michael Ledeen, who took the plot as already proven. The *Inky* not only rejected my offering, they also turned down an opinion piece on the subject by Diana Johnstone, the well-informed *In These Times* correspondent from Paris, which I submitted on her behalf. In its news columns, also, the *Inky*'s reporters never once departed from the party line; its "specialist" was completely uninterested in pursuing counter-evidence that I pointed out to him. When the case against the Bulgarians collapsed in an Italian Court in 1986, the *Inky* offered no reassessment; nor did it review the issue in 1991 when former CIA official Melvin Goodman told congress during the Gates confirmation hearings that the CIA professionals knew the case against the Bulgarians was fraudulent because, for one reason, they had penetrated the Bulgarian secret services. In short, in this major propaganda exercise the *Inky* was a gullible instrument of misinformation.

Several of my rejected columns during the blacklist years were on the Central America wars. One was based on the book *Demonstration Elections*, also written with Frank Brodhead, that tried to show that the 1982 Salvadoran election met none of the conditions of a genuine free election, but was a public relations gambit designed to prove to the U.S. public

that our intervention was justified, thereby allowing the war to continue. (At the same time, both here and in El Salvador it was claimed that the election was a means of terminating the fighting.) The only Op Ed column in the *Inky* during the 1984 Salvadoran election period was by James Kilpatrick, who, of course, found it a wonderfully democratic exercise. The *Inky* was editorially "against the war," but interestingly this did not cause their editorials to challenge the demonstration elections as fraudulent, nor, in the case of Nicaragua, did they expose the Reagan peace plans as cynical and call the contra war state-sponsored terrorism. No—they regularly lauded the good intentions of the terrorist sponsors, agreed that Nicaragua had a "dictatorship," and that their hot pursuit of contras into Honduras was reprehensible, etc. So, in the case of the Salvadoran elections of 1982 and 1984, with the news department following the official lead, and the editorials weakly critical, the *Inky* on balance supported the war policy.

The same conclusion was arrived at later by the Media Committee of the Philadelphia Pledge of Resistance, in two detailed and excellent studies of the *Inky*'s coverage of Central America for 1989-1990, showing (among many other things, and with solid data) that the *Inky* was "twice as likely to use [derogatory] labels" for "enemies" than U.S. allies; that it depended excessively on U.S. official sources and "rarely quoted or interviewed" civilians or victims; that its photo selection policy supported State Department policy (no photos of civilian victims in El Salvador or Panama); and that it rarely covered Salvadoran military killings and almost never mentioned its responsibility for the vast majority of civilian deaths. As U.S. officials ignored Guatemala, so did the *Inky*, and it gave "very limited coverage to the unprecedented upsurge in U.S. national and local demonstrations/civil disobedience against U.S. policy and intervention." The paper's bias as regards each country in the region was substantial and supportive of U.S. intervention.

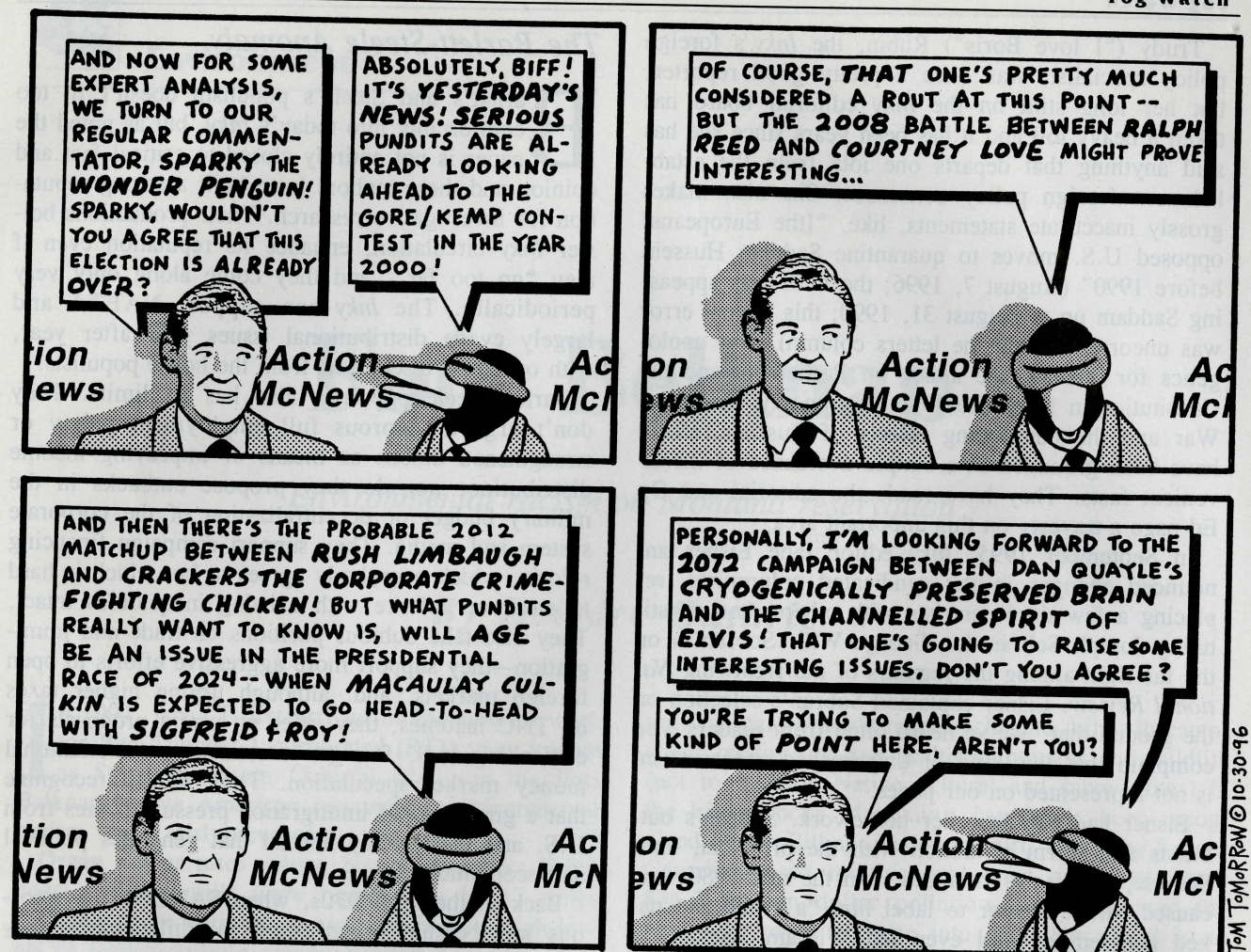
Columnists From Center to Far Right

Back in the 1970s, when the *Inky* had George Will and William Rusher of the *National Review* and far-rightists John Lofton and Smith Hempstone (feebly balanced by Mike Royko and David Broder) as columnists, I visited the editorial offices to try to sell them on Howard Zinn, who then had a syndicated column. I failed in this, and the *Inky* has never had a regular columnist as far "left" as Mary McGrory. They have had lightweight, issue-evading centrists like Broder, easily overpowered by rightwingers like Will and Charles Krauthammer,

who all through the 1980s pressed the Reaganite propaganda lines on Central America, the soviet threat, and the welfare mother threat, with only weak opposition. The *Inky* defends the columnist imbalance on the ground that their own editorials are liberal, as is their cartoonist Tony Auth, so the "left" is well covered. But this argument does not hold water. As noted on Central America, even when tending toward opposition to official policy *Inky* editorials are badly compromised, and on many policies they are distinctly illiberal: the *Inky* editorially supported Clarence Thomas, the Panama and Gulf wars, and Clinton's bombing and starving of Iraq; NAFTA; the anti-PC crusade; privatization; the urgent need to balance the budget; the Concord Coalition view of the threat of Social Security; and Boris Yeltsin as savior of the highly desirably Russian "reforms." With liberalism like this who needs conservatives?

Each new rightwinger who comes on board in this country goes straight into the *Inky* Op Ed columns—Greg Easterbrook and Michael Silverstein on the threat of the environmentalists, Mickey Kaus on the end of equality, Richard Rector of Heritage on the welfare threat, Christina Sommers and Camille Paglia on the menace of feminism. Sommers and Paglia are not needed anymore as the Op Ed page has latched on to Cathy Young, who has had over 50 columns since 1993, a large fraction aggressively attacking feminists. It is true that the *Inky* often carries Ellen Goodman and Sally Steenland, but these women are general-interest columnists who rarely address and defend feminist concerns. They in no way offset the steady anti-feminist aggression of Young, supplemented by columnist and former editor David Boldt, local rightwing contributing editor Mark Randall, and local fanatic Ronald James ("Where are the feminists when a sister needs help? Free Leona!" July 8, 1992).

The *Inky* has also been very kind to Dinesh D'Souza. His book *Illiberal Education* was given a featured double review (one favorable, one critical). With his new racist tome, *The End of Racism* [sic!], he was given generous Op Ed space (and identified as a conservative "scholar"), a featured book review, plus an accolade by David Boldt. When D'Souza spoke at St. Joseph College following publication of *Illiberal Education*, his speech got a generous *Inky* write-up complete with a flattering picture of the speaker. At almost the same moment, Noam Chomsky was in Philadelphia, giving a fund-raising speech at a downtown church. Not only was Chomsky's speech never mentioned in the *Inky*, the paper refused to report that it was to take place, despite repeated requests. Chomsky has never had an Op Ed column in the *Inky*; he supplied one, by invitation, several years ago, but it was never published, and no



explanation was ever given for the failure to do so. The most frequently published economist on the Op Ed page—22 columns, 1994-1996—is Walter Williams, the black reactionary first syndicated by Heritage and holder of an Olin Foundation chair. He specializes in attacking entitlements (of poor people), welfare, and affirmative action. The local progressive economist, Richard DuBoff, gets published much less frequently—two columns, 1994-1996—and his submissions put the Op Ed editor under stress. For example, DuBoff submitted an Op Ed on July 16, 1996, defending Social Security. The Op Ed editor, when pushed, told DuBoff that he couldn't find a "peg" for the piece, although social security is a hot issue and he was publishing "unpegged" feel-good tripe and Walter Williams columns without a problem. The piece was never published. DuBoff submitted another one in January 1997 on the immensely topical issue of investing Social Security money in the stock market. The editor was trapped: so what he did was solicit an "answer" from Michael Tanner of

the Cato Institute, to set alongside DuBoff's piece (which he also cut and softened), to provide "balance."

The two most frequently published *Inky* insiders are Claude Lewis and Trudy Rubin. Lewis, who is black, is perfect for the *Inky* as he gives ethnic balance while staying nicely within the bounds acceptable to the white establishment. He strongly supported Clarence Thomas (although to his credit he recently expressed regret and admitted having made a mistake), supported Arlen Specter for the Senate in 1992, found that "So far Bush is a pleasant surprise" (September 13, 1989), argued along Reagan lines that the homeless made a free choice and asked for it ("Homeless, by deciding not to work," Dec. 27, 1989), and in a recent marvel on the crack-cocaine CIA connection, notes that "Even if the CIA flooded inner cities with crack, blacks didn't say 'no'" (September 25, 1996). Lewis shows his black solidarity by bravely denouncing Texaco officials for racist talk and talk show hosts for racist innuendo.

Trudy ("I love Boris") Rubin, the *Inky's* foreign policy specialist, was once a pretty good reporter, but her long stint on the *Inky* editorial board has taken a heavy toll and it has been years since she has said anything that departs one iota from the establishment foreign policy consensus. She also makes grossly inaccurate statements, like, "[the Europeans] opposed U.S. moves to quarantine Saddam Hussein before 1990" (August 7, 1996; the U.S. was appeasing Saddam up to August 31, 1990; this factual error was uncorrectable in the letters column). Her apologies for Yeltsin, the attack on Parliament and the Consitution in 1993, the 1996 election, the Chechnya War and the devastating effects of Russian reform have been grounded in a simple avoidance of inconvenient facts. They have made the editorial and Op Ed page a travesty on this important area.

In September 1995, *Inky* editor Jane Eisner announced changes in the syndicated columnists, replacing a few tired centrists with others, and substituting Joseph Sobran for George Will. Sobran is on the far right among the regulars of the rightwing *National Review*. Eisner explained Sobran's selection on the ground that "we've heard often from readers who complain that this kind of unvarnished conservatism is not represented on our pages."

Eisner had not done her homework. Sobran's outbursts and warm affiliation with the pro-Nazi, anti-Semitic, and racist instauration in the mid-1980s had caused Midge Decter to label him "a crude and naked anti-semit" and even led William Buckley to distance himself from Sobran, briefly. In 1994 Sobran criticized *Schindler's List* as "holocaust harping" that has "gotten out of control," and in another column assailed Roosevelt for having gotten us into war in 1941 because of his unreasonable antipathy to Nazi Germany.

Eisner took quite a bit of flak for bringing in Sobran, but defended herself in print by a selective reading of his work and his personal assurances that he regretted some of his past remarks. She also stated with great pomposity that "I understand that some readers wish to open these pages and find a set of opinions that conform pleasantly to their own views. I am afraid that I can't accommodate them." Eisner apparently forgot her previous statement admitting her accommodation to rightwing readers desirous of an "unvarnished conservative." A letter signed by 55 individuals pointing out her inconsistency, and asking why the Left has to be satisfied with beltway centrists who never challenge the status quo, was refused publication. The Letters Editor did, however, publish a letter extolling Eisner's "clear reasoning." So much for Citizens Voices.

The Barlett-Steele Anomaly

Barlett's and Steele's populism doesn't fit too comfortably into today's *Inky*, but as noted the paper is not entirely closed to critical fact and opinion and these authors have built a strong reputation for investigative research. Their productions bolster *Inky* circulation, enhance its reputation even if they "go too far," and they come along only very periodically. The *Inky* can support NAFTA and largely evade distributional issues year after year, with only rare discomfort from the house populists.

Barlett/Steele populism also has its limits. They don't urge a vigorous full employment policy or strengthened unions as means of improving income distribution; nor do they propose cutbacks in the military budget or decentralization of the corporate system and media. They support campaign financing reform, which everybody agrees to but which is hard to enact or enforce with existing inequalities intact. They also take dubious positions on trade and immigration—they support more aggressive efforts to open foreign markets, and, although urging higher taxes on TNC incomes, they offer no useful proposals for controlling U.S. foreign investment or international money market speculation. They fail to recognize that a great deal of immigration pressure comes from U.S. and IMF policy abroad that generates political and economic refugees.

Back in the mid-1970s, when SANE was a vigorous membership organization in Philadelphia, they organized a membership protest against the very conservative editor of the *Inky*, Creed Black, with many scores of letters and numerous phone calls to John Knight and others in the top management. Black was replaced by Ed Guthman shortly thereafter, and the *Inky* did become a somewhat better paper. But we failed to maintain that organization and level of activism, and the liberals and Left of Philadelphia have largely sat on the sidelines as citizens without representation, as far as the *Inky* goes. And the *Inky* remains a "part of the problem," speaking consistently for the establishment, giving the Right ample voice, and marginalizing citizens of the Left. We need new media for a real voice, but we also have to fight harder to get representation and a modest public sphere operating in the existing media, which will accommodate to some extent those who press hard and with tenacity.

Z

Edward S. Herman is a professor of finance at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, and the author of numerous books and articles on media, economics, and foreign policy.



Environment

Fort Belknap

Environmental racism on Montana reservation

By Deirdre Guthrie

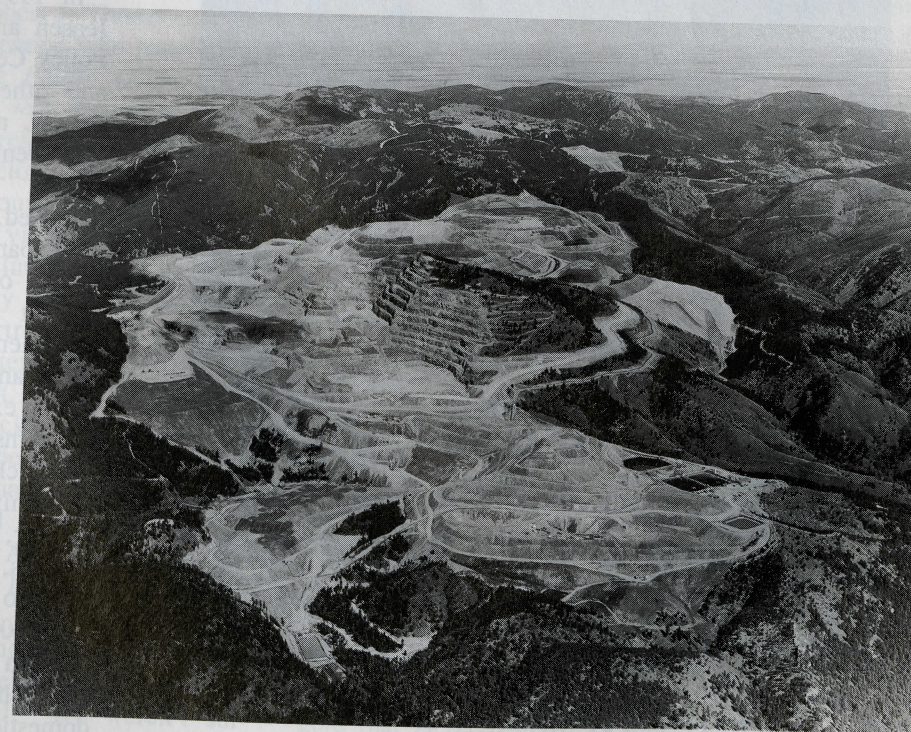
In 1994, when I first arrived in Montana to work for Red Thunder Incorporated (RTI), now known as Spirit Mountain Cultural Clan, on the Fort Belknap Native American reservation, environmental racism was a fairly new term.

Organ cancer rates among Navajo teenagers living near uranium spills were reported to be 17 times higher than the national average, there were high levels of lead poisoning among African-American children in inner city housing projects, and birth defects and high cancer rates among Latino children of farm workers exposed to pesticides.

In 1992, the Southwest Network, an eight-state coalition of hundreds of multi-racial community-based organizations and individuals, formally accused the EPA, which has "trustee" responsibility for Indians through its Department of the Interior, of environmental racism by allowing harmful industrial and government facilities to be disproportionately located on reservations, as well as in communities of color and low income.

At Fort Belknap, evidence that Pegasus Gold Inc., a

multinational cyanide heap-leach gold mine, threatens water quality and the health of humans and wildlife (not to mention Native cultural and sacred sites) in the Little Rocky Mountains, has finally been recognized by the Billings Federal Court. Now, the former Canadian-based multinational must pay a landmark \$36.7 million dollar pollution settlement over the next five years to come into compliance with state and federal water quality laws.



A carved-out mountain—Johnathan Smart

According to the *Billings Gazette*, Pegasus violated federal and state laws by discharging acidic metal-laden wastewater from its mines in the Little Rocky Mountains into water draining into the Milk and Missouri Rivers. The maximum fine could have exceeded \$100 million. Still, the settlement is the largest a mining outfit has had to pay in Montana's history. The *Gazette* reports, "The mine must expand their mine waste water treatment and put up a \$32 million bond to ensure that is done; pay a \$2 million civil penalty that will be evenly divided between the state and federal governments; pay \$1 million to the Fort Belknap tribes in partial settlement of their separate claims; and perform supplemental environmental projects estimated to cost \$1.7 million."

Back to business as usual, the state gave the go-ahead this October for extending the life of the Zort-

man mine five to eight more years, and its neighbor three miles away, the Landusky mine, for another year. According to Sandi Olsen of the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), total disturbance will increase to 2,195 acres; an additional 7.6 million tons of ore and 7 million tons of waste rock will be mined from the Landusky mine; 80 million tons of ore and 60 million tons of waste rock will be mined from the Zortman mine.

That the Racicot administration has now allowed for an expansion of the mine, to more than double its size, comes as no surprise to environmental activists and the Fort Belknap community who've documented the mine's unchecked, flagrant violations for years.

To tribal activists, the record of slow or non-existent regulatory action from the Department of State Lands, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Environmental Protection Agency has a long, tired history which has consistently pointed to a disturbing trend of discrimination in the region.

It has led some, like Jim Jensen, President of the Montana Environmental Information Center (MEIC), to declare "There's such an extraordinary pattern here of failure to enforce that it seems to me that at some point down the road there should be some discussion of whether or not there has actually been a conspiracy between this company and some individuals or agencies."

In 1991 the *Billings Gazette* quoted Jensen and Wil Patric, of the Mineral Policy Center, as citing 31 leaks, spills, and other environmental problems at the ZL mine over 13 years that allegedly went unpunished by department officials.

Indeed, since its opening in 1979 and its expansion through ten amendments to the original permit—none with the benefit of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) until now—the Zortman-Landusky mine has been plagued by an extraordinary number of serious problems and noncompliances. The litany includes cyanide leaks and spills, contaminated groundwater, a ruined aquifer, heap-leach pad mass stability failures, and bird and wildlife deaths. Prior to this year's settlement, only one \$15,000 fine by the Water Quality Bureau in 1982 was ever levied against ZL, when cyanide appeared in nearby domestic water supply taps.



Murky water emanating from mine—Johnathan Smart



Opening ceremony of a powwow—Johnathan Smart

In late August 1993, the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences filed a lawsuit against Pegasus, alleging the mining company was violating the state water quality law. Robert J. Thompson, special assistant to the attorney general who handled the case for DHES, stated in the *Phillip County News* that the decision to file suit was prompted by the actions of two groups on the reservation, Red Thunder and Island Mountain Protectors (IMP).

Earlier these two tribal groups had filed citizen suits charging Pegasus with violating the Federal Clean Water Act. By DHES filing suit "on behalf of such concerned citizens," they effectively knocked RTI and IMP out of the courtroom. RTI's lawyer, Don Marble, believed this lightened the pressure and enforcement of Pegasus in court.

In the article, Thompson acknowledged that the violations cited in the suit had been public knowledge for some time and that Zortman Mining, Inc. had been making an effort to deal with them "but not entirely to our satisfaction." And yet DHES still needed the actions of RTI and IMP to prompt them to file suit.

Eric Williams, public relations coordinator for Pegasus at the time, relayed the company's intent to work with the state and added, "We weren't sur-

prised" by the suit. He added, "We are going to do everything we can within reason not only to continue these operations but to obtain our mine life extension permit." Williams continued, "We see the request for those permits (discharge permits which strangely allow for the seepage of wastes) more as a policy change by the agencies. The agencies have known for some time and in some instances for several years that we have those minimal discharges up there...up until this point they haven't said 'you need those...discharge permits'."

In early 1994 BLM officials admitted what Indian activist groups already suspected; that acids and metals were damaging all drainages emanating from the mine. RTI had obtained documentation showing that sulfide ores—which cause acid mine drainage—had been mined, despite the fact that the ZL's permit was for oxide ore only. Pegasus was neither permitted nor bonded for mining sulfide ores and the operation was not designed to handle acids.

It should be noted that the ZL has the distinction of being the lowest grade gold mine in the U.S. This means that it is disturbing more ground for minute quantities of gold than any other mine (more than 60 tons of earth must be excavated for every ounce of gold that is recovered). Despite Pegasus's record of

unchecked hazards, the recent approval of its expansion allows sulfide ores to be mined—"officially."

Olsen said, having completed the EIS for Pegasus expansion in March, the DEQ's role is to monitor the mine to make sure it complies with state law. She said that source controls (like capping and soil barriers) and water treatment plans are in operation to prevent acid mine drainage from occurring. When asked about the risk of AMD in mining sulfides, Olsen offered, "it depends on the sulfides and their reactivity." But what about AMD problems that went unheeded in the past? "We thought there was less of it [AMD] than there actually was," she admitted.

For tribal activists, it seems that in spite of their efforts to diligently document violations of the mine and prepare litigation, Pegasus continues to get away with murder. Ever-present is the fear that Pegasus could pull out after gold deposits dry up, allowing the ZL mines to go bankrupt, and leave a superfund site in their wake. To add to the frustration, the Clean Water Initiative (I22) failed to win enough votes on November's ballot (the mining industry having raised the lion's share of 2.2 million in its campaign against the initiative).

Gary Buchanan, of Montanans for Clean Water, said I22 was launched after the 1995 legislature rewrote several laws to weaken state water-quality standards for some 100 cancer-causing materials. I22 would have required greater amounts of carcinogens, toxins, and other pollutants to be removed from mine run-off before discharging into water supplies.

Zortman

In August 1994, I accompanied a *Denver Post* reporter to Zortman, a small town on the south side of the reservation consisting of a bar, diner, motel, trailer park, and store.

That day we interviewed the business owners of Zortman—all of whom said they derived 99 percent of their business from the mine (1 percent from tourists, hunters, and government employees). They made it clear that without Pegasus, Zortman would be a ghost town.

As a summation of public sentiment, the store-owner pointed at a cap he sold which read: Save Montana's Endangered Species: Ranchers, Miners, Loggers, and Sportsmen. Zortman's inhabitants claimed that there had never been any cyanide spills at the mine, thanks to over 200 monitor wells, and that there was no problem with heavy metals. Any problems in the past with old mine tailings floating down King Creek had been graciously cleaned up, courtesy of Pegasus. They derided RTI as a radical

group, or as another so eloquently put it, "assholes with moccasins."

The store-owner stated proudly that the mine extracts 100,000 ounces of gold each year. "People need logs for their houses and gold for their rings," he concluded. Eighty-five percent of our nation's gold supply is used to fill this most indispensable of needs—jewelry. Walking back to the car, I read the bumper stickers plastered on the many parked pickups. "If it can't be grown, mine it!" "What would the U.S. do without Zortman?"

The Red Road

The traditionalist peoples of Fort Belknap voice that the significance of the Little Rocky Mountains rests upon the idea of the sacred. The mountains provide a physical landscape upon which the human animal can communicate with the spirit world.

Virgil McConnell, an Assiniboin elder and healer, told how sometimes someone may come and ask you to help them and you're not sure what medicines they need. So you sweat or go to a lodge and pray. Still, nothing may come. So you have a dream and in it you may see the medicine or hear a voice.

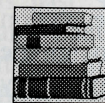
Once Virgil heard a voice and all it said was, "Go to the mountains." So he went. He prayed and fasted for three days. On the last day a wolf came to him with the medicine in its front paws and offered it to him. This was the cure.

Virgil wants to protect the sacred sites in the Little Rockies. The mine is steadily encroaching over the mountain range and threatening an abundance of spiritual resources. Old vision quest sites and fasting shelters are being obliterated. Animals who bring messages and guidance are being poisoned, as are the healing waters and medicinal plants.

"All the knowledge you need is up in the mountains and will never die as long as the spirits there live on," Virgil has told me. "The only thing we pray for is to let the Great Spirit open their eyes to see the destruction, and soften their hearts so they can feel the utter pain our great mother earth has to endure because of greed and dishonesty."

He pointed out a fork on top of the Sundance lodge, above the Thunderbird's nest. It represents two roads; one is the shorter, easier path, the longer fork is the road of hardship but great strength. This is the Red Road, the road of resistance, whereupon the traditionalist peoples of the Fort Belknap reservation continue today to fight for their way of life. **Z**

Deirdre Guthrie is a freelance writer from Chicago.



Book Reviews

Small Hours of the Night

Selected Poems by Roque Dalton

Edited by Hardie St. Martin

Translated by Jonathan Cohen, et al.
Curbstone Press

By Carlos Suarez-Boulangger

*You told me there is something
they call the light
it's impossible to describe
with your hands.*

The Salvadoran writer Roque Dalton described in a poem entitled "Looking for Trouble" (not included in this selection) the night of his first communist meeting: "When we left, it had stopped raining/my mother scolded me for getting home late." When I read that poem I was struck by the parallels in my own life. The morning of my first demonstration was cold and damp, the sky was overcast, and I told my parents I was going to class. In the mid-1970s I lived in a country run by a military junta. Then, going to a demonstration always implied the chance of never coming back—your life stopped by an always mysterious bullet, or getting arrested and beaten up in jail.

My classmates and I were all in our late teens, and the possibility of dying seemed very remote to privileged kids. But I had seen students getting shot and arrested, and we all knew someone in jail for political reasons. In spite of the possible consequences, we assumed the role of political activists as part of our lives, not as our dark faith or as sacrificial lambs

offered at the altar of a better world. I know that the motivating force for our activism was an indestructible yearning for a joyful egalitarian existence. To 18-year-old activists the world seemed wonderful and full of adventure, and we wanted everyone to share this joy equally.

The hope and hunger for the different world promised by our activism is what I always found in the poetry of Roque Dalton. His poetry is the voice of the activist who assumes his or her role without nostalgia for the comfortable life left behind, but fully aware of the trouble ahead:

*When I die, they'll remember
only my obvious joy each morning,
my flag that hasn't the
right to collapse,
the hard facts I passed
around at the fireside,
the fist I made unanimous.*

Twenty-one years after Roque Dalton was assassinated by a faction of his divided guerrilla group, Curbstone Press has made available to English readers a beautiful collection of his poetry. *Small Hours of the Night* is not the most complete selection of Roque Dalton's work. I wish some of my favorite poems were included, I wish some of the translations had retained the mischievous twinkle of the Spanish original. But I know that any selection of Dalton's work has to come up short. After, all he produced 18 volumes of poetry and prose, which include, in addition to the 10 books mentioned in this selection, several superb books of poetry (*Clandestine Poems*, *Red Book for Lenin*), the testimonial classic *Miguel Marmol* (also available from Curbstone), essays ("Cesar Vallejo," "Revolution in the Revolution?" and "Right Wing Criticism"), plays (*Walking and*

Culture

Singing, Animals and Heroes, Dalton and the CIA), and a novel (*Poor Little Poet That I Was*). Now, the poet who escaped two death sentences, who walked away from crumbling jail walls, who created in the midst of struggle and in exile, can be read in English:

*So I'm bringing you this
little mouthful of water
the river and I set it down
on your brow
to make you smile and
pronounce
a flower*

During the 1980s I had the privilege of working with an international group in Nicaragua. Often, I wished my non-Spanish speaking friends could read Dalton's poetry, as a way of fortifying a connection created in struggle. How I wished I had *Small Hours of the Night* available in English or German. Dalton's poetry expressed so clearly so many of the ideas and emotions, the daily doubts, the countless joys, the disappointments, the irony of a life dedicated to a cause. Dalton had lived and worked in Cuba, Czechoslovakia, and Vietnam, and was therefore familiar with the conflicts of creating a new society. Dalton challenged the established order but also the one he was helping to create. His commitment was to a joyful, courageous, honest world, and not to a bureaucratic farce:

*Socialism? It's not bad at all:
even the poorest among us
have toasters, televisions,
French stockings...
The only bad thing is that it's
all better
in West Germany.*

Dalton's uncompromising posture, both in his personal life and in his writing, his passionate criticism of the backward order, make his poetry the perfect terrain where principled multi-cultural progressive dialog can take place. That dialog is as necessary now as it ever was. In spite of the most ominous conservative aspirations, the United States is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual country. We have to learn from each other, we have to listen. Read this book, have a dialog with its ideas, and laugh out loud. That is, until there is a complete translation of Dalton's work or you can read it in its original Spanish version and can get the full impact of his courageous, hallucinated, egalitarian, socialistic, lyrical version. Dalton did his part, now we have to do ours:

*Say flower, bee, teardrop,
bread, storm.
Don't let your lips find my
eleven letters.
I'm sleepy, I've love, I've earned
silence.*

Carlos Suarez-Boulangger is a political activist and freelance translator and editor living in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm

By Murray Bookchin

San Francisco, AK Press 1995; 86 pp.

Review by Mickey Z

You'd think that in the Age of Gingrich, anarchy would be, well, in vogue, so to speak. Practically every nasty prediction ever made by any anti-capitalist who ever put pen to paper has come to pass and there is frighteningly little on the horizon that poses even a modicum of hope. A perfect envi-

ronment for the anti-statist forces, right? If so, it might take some doing to explain the vacuum on the Left, and that's what the venerable Murray Bookchin has in mind with this slim volume. *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism: An Unbridgeable Chasm* does precisely what the title suggests: choose sides in the battle for the hearts and minds of anti-authoritarians everywhere.

First, Bookchin explains what he defines as "lifestyle anarchism." The problem with this side of the dichotomy, Bookchin postulates, is an emphasis on individuality, which he calls "autonomy," as opposed to "freedom." To the longtime author and activist, this brand of anarchism is unrelated to the working class or to any promise of social revolution.

"Hardly any anarcho-individualists exercised an influence on the emerging working class," Bookchin writes. "They expressed their opposition in uniquely personal forms, especially in fiery tracts, outrageous behavior, and aberrant lifestyles in the cultural ghettos of New York, Paris, and London. As a credo, individualist anarchism remained largely a bohemian lifestyle, most conspicuous in its demands for sexual freedom ('free love') and enamored of innovations in art, behavior, and clothing."

In contrast to this vision, Bookchin quotes Mikhail Bakunin: "...even the most wretched individual of our present society could not exist and develop without the cumulative social efforts of countless generations. Thus the individual, his [sic] freedom and reason, are products of society and not vice versa: society is not the product of individuals comprising it; and the higher, the more fully the individual is developed, the greater his freedom—and the more he is the product of society, the more does he receive from society and the greater his debt to it."

As someone who has often slipped into an almost anti-social form of freedom, I felt many of Bookchin's barbs hitting home. Personal revolution and evolution count for little if they do not tie into a collective theory. Sure, any of us can egotistically take pride in not watching sit-coms, not owning a car, or not eating meat, but what does such individual autonomy do beyond, at best, serving as an example for others?

In addition, I fully agree with Bookchin's disdain for the primitivists who reflexively disdain technology while romanticizing the lives of pre-history humanity. Technology is only as good or bad as those who control it, and, as a result, I believe the primitivist is aiming for the wrong target. In the end, the noble gesture of not owning a computer or microwave oven becomes no less a status symbol than a mohawk hairdo or a pierced nipple.

After doing a rather commendable job of dismantling what he calls lifestyle anarchism, Bookchin presents—in defense of social anarchism—an essay titled "The Left That Was: A Personal Reflection." However, while presenting a valid thesis designed to transcend nationalism, patriotism, and human-made borders, Bookchin oddly diverges into his own brand of yearning for the past. While there is much to be applauded in, say, Bakunin's view that "we should place human, universal justice above all national interests," and his belief that "everyone who sincerely wishes peace and international justice, should once and for all renounce the glory, the might, and the greatness of the Fatherland, should renounce all egotistical and vain interest in patriotism," there is little to gain in Bookchin's harking back to the proverbial good old days. Sure, the anarchists of the past were less self-absorbed and more socially-oriented, but conditions have changed, and for Bookchin to

mock primitivists while romanticizing turn-of-the-century anarchists is rather ironic. What's past is past; hunter-gatherers are gone and Bakunin is long dead. Thus, the reality is that neither side of Bookchin's dichotomy is 100 percent right or wrong. The old movements were collective, but they failed miserably. As for modern "anarchism," well, it's drowning in a sea of vanity, hollow gestures, and rarefied language.

Too often political, social, economic, and cultural issues are defined in stark black-and-white, i.e., lifestyle anarchism vs. social anarchism. But life is not that simple. For example, in this age of corporate fascism, it would behoove even the most staunch anti-statist to battle the current legislative agenda. Given the choice be-

tween a Third World model and a welfare state, it's obvious that today's anarchists must ironically align with the state—for now. If such a contradiction is difficult to swallow and has the potential to make your manifesto obsolete rather quickly, well, reality has a funny way of ruining even the most perfectly crafted theory (indeed, I speak from experience).

Therefore, for me at least, one question remains: Can a new, cohesive, and collective anarchist movement—spawned in individual autonomy—learn from the mistakes of its predecessors while simultaneously overcoming the internal bickering of today's self-centered stars who write for all the hip magazines? If not, well, we're left with a scenario where the modern (so-called) anarchists continue to

satisfy their massive egos by writing essays on old typewriters while old-timers like Bookchin tell war stories. Meanwhile, the corporate elite churns on, unencumbered in their task of slowly destroying all that we need and love.

I'd say the stakes are a little too high for any of us to be only writing books, pamphlets, or composing letters to *Anarchy* or *The Match*. It's time to unite and decide if anarchism (or whatever name is given to a movement) can adapt to the 21st century as a path towards collective freedom or merely remain just another coffee house curiosity.

Z

Mickey Z is a columnist for Curio magazine.



Events

READING - Margaret Randall, teacher, activist, feminist, and author of over 60 books, reads from her latest book, *Hunger's Table: Women, Food & Politics*, at Full Circle Books in Albuquerque, NM, on Saturday, March 8 at 5:30 PM.

Contact: Full Circle, 505-266-0022.

FAIR - Bound Together bookstore presents the 1997 Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair on Saturday, March 29 at Golden Gate Park from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM. Admission free.

Contact: Bound Together Books, Book Fair, 1369 Haight Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Job

LABOR - Labor Notes and Transnationals Information Exchange-North America are looking for a full-time staff member to help involve rank and file unionists in international labor solidarity work. The staff member will organize workshops, forums, tours, and delegations. Salary is \$19,000 per year plus health insurance and generous vacation benefits. Starts April 1.

Contact: Martha Gruelle, Labor Notes, 7435 Michigan Ave., Detroit, MI 48210; 313-842-6262; fax: 313-842-0227.

Resources

VIDEO - *Testimonies: Israeli Soldiers on the Intifada* is a documentary made by a group of Israeli peace activists, in an effort to present a point of view absent from Israeli mainstream coverage. It consists of interviews with soldiers who have been actively involved in the violent suppression of the Palestinian uprising. The video is 54 minutes long; \$35/\$23 low income.

Contact: Racheli Gai, 3624 N. Forgeus, Tucson, AZ 85716; 520-323-2851.

BOOK - *The More You Watch, The Less You Know: The Media Adventures of a Network Refugee* by Danny Schechter is now available from Seven Sto-

ries Press. Weaving autobiographical experiences with media analysis, Schechter names names and points his finger at key players in the megamedia corporations that rule the airwaves. Schechter recounts his media adventures, from when he was "Danny Schechter the News Dissector" on Boston's WBCN radio, to his development of innovative programming like Globalvision's "South Africa Now" and "Rights & Wrongs" as an independent producer. 320 pp. \$22.95 in hardcover.

Contact: Seven Stories Press, 632 Broadway, 7th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Campaigns

PLEDGE - In 1987, Humboldt State University (CA) initiated a Pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility. It states: "I pledge to investigate and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job opportunity I consider." Since that time, dozens of colleges and universities have enacted the voluntary pledge, which allows students to define what "responsible" means to them. In 1996, Manchester College began coordination of the campaign effort, which has taken different forms at different institutions. At Manchester, students sign and keep wallet-size cards stating the pledge, while students and faculty wear green ribbons at commencement with the pledge printed in the formal commencement program.

Contact: Neil Wollman, NJ Wollman@Manchester.edu; GPA, MC Box 152, Manchester College, North Manchester, IN 46962; <http://www.manchester.edu> (click "index," then "Graduation Pledge Alliance").

BOYCOTT - Join the solidarity struggle with the Detroit newspaper strikers. Gannett has spend hundreds of millions of dollars fighting the striking workers

who are holding fast in their second year on strike. They have begun publishing their own Sunday journal.

Contact: In Detroit: 313-965-1478; <http://www.rust.net/workers/strike.html>; in New York: New York Metro Labor Communications Council at 212-677-3900 or the Newspaper Guild at 212-575-1580.

Ongoing

MOBILIZING - The Puerto Rico Collective (PRC) was formed in 1996, as a committee of the National Congress for Puerto Rican rights, to help prepare for 1998, the 100th anniversary of U.S. colonization of Puerto Rico. The PRC opposes colonialism in Puerto Rico and anywhere else. The PRC is for a truly democratic system in Puerto Rico, and not one that allows Puerto Ricans to be exploited by a foreign power or a native elite class.

Contact: PRC, PO Box 1860, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159-1860; 212-631-4263; email: ergonzal@shiva.hunter.cuny.edu

**HEALING GLOBAL WOUNDS
ENDING THE NUCLEAR AGE**
All Peoples' Gathering
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SPRING GATHERING '97

**Stop current waste shipments
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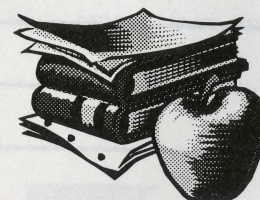
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PO Box 13, Boulder Creek CA
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**Monday, March 31st
CRITICAL MASS ACTION
TO BREAK THE NUCLEAR CHAIN**

Z is PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE 4TH ANNUAL

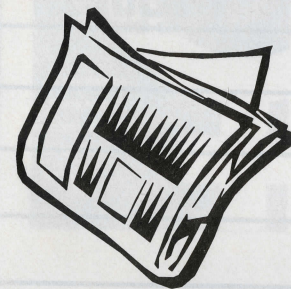
Z MEDIA INSTITUTE 1997

A SUMMER SCHOOL FOR MEDIA AND POLITICS



The Z Media Institute, sponsored and organized by the staff of Z Magazine, offers a 10-day session in June designed both for those who want to learn how to start and produce their own media, as well as for activists who want to improve their media skills. It will also provide analysis of U.S. mainstream media and the institutions it serves. And it will teach people how to set up and run a media project and how to work democratically.

ZMI MEDIA SKILLS & POLITICS COURSES



Media skills courses include: Starting and running a media project (newspaper, radio, magazine, media studies center, organizing project). Producing press releases, newsletters, brochures, posters. Also pressuring mainstream media and investigative reporting.

Introductory and advanced computer courses include: word processing, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, data base, and telecommunications.

Skills courses include: finances, promotion, fund raising, design, production, promotion, editing, facilitating meetings, structure and process, workplace diversity.

Political courses include: Analysis of mainstream media, challenges of alternative media, foreign policy, political economy, gender, race, political satire, ecology, strategy, and economic and social vision.

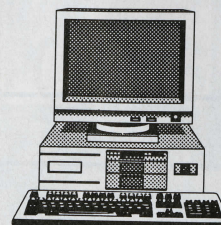
ZMI STAFF & FACULTY



Guest speakers include: Noam Chomsky, Ron Daniels, Barbara Ehrenreich, Holly Sklar, Chip Berlet, Elena Featherston. Guest faculty include: Charlotte Ryan, Margaret Cerullo, Clarence Lusane, Stephen R. Shalom, Howard Hawkins, and more.

ZMI full-time staff include: Michael Albert (Left On Line), Lydia Sargent (Z Magazine), Dionne Brooks (South End Press), Jerome Scott (Project South), Skip Aschheim (Computers), Leslie Cagan (Cuba Information Project).

ZMI SPECIFICS



ZMI 1997 will be held from June 4 through June 13. The fee is \$1,000, which includes room, board, materials, computers, etc; \$250 is due on acceptance, the balance by May. To apply, fill out the application form and send or fax to Z Media Institute, 18 Millfield Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543; fax 508-457-0626. Students will be accepted on a first come basis. Deadline for applications was January 20, but you can still apply. ASAP please.



Zmi 1997 APPLICATION

Deadline for applications is past, but you can still apply. ASAP please.

Name _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____

GENDER _____ AGE _____ ETHNIC GROUP _____

MAIN INTEREST _____

(print, radio, organizing, politics, media watch, other)

POLITICAL BACKGROUND _____

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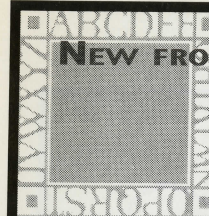
COMPUTER SKILLS _____

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF ZMI? _____

The fee for room (two to a room), board, computer use, study materials is \$1,000; \$250 due on acceptance; the balance by May. There are limited scholarships. If you need one, please explain.

I CAN PAY FULL AMOUNT _____ I CAN PAY _____

Send application asap to ZMI, 18 Millfield Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543; fax 508-457-0626; email Lydia.Sargent@lol.shareworld.com

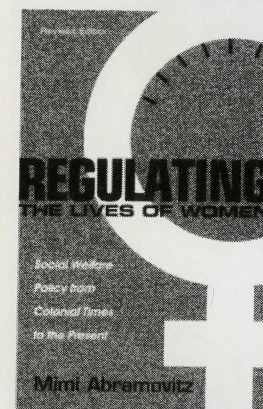
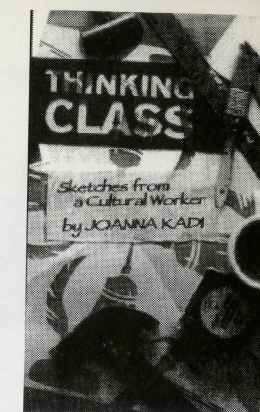


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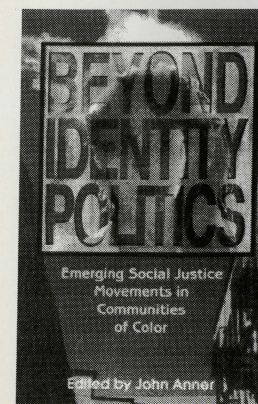
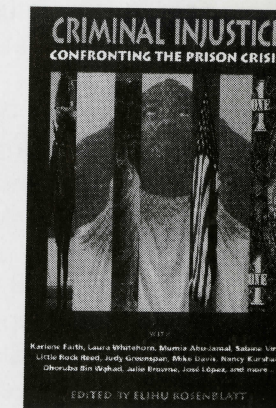
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From 1993 to 1995 Decatur was the site of some of the most significant and massive labor battles of the '90's. The workers' movement in Decatur is continuing, running and winning independent labor candidacies for city council and school board, increasingly linking its workplace-based activism with that of the local community.

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For more information, contact the Independent Progressive Politics Network

**Tel: 718-624-7807 • Fax: 718-643-8265 • E-mail: indpol@igc.apc.org
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