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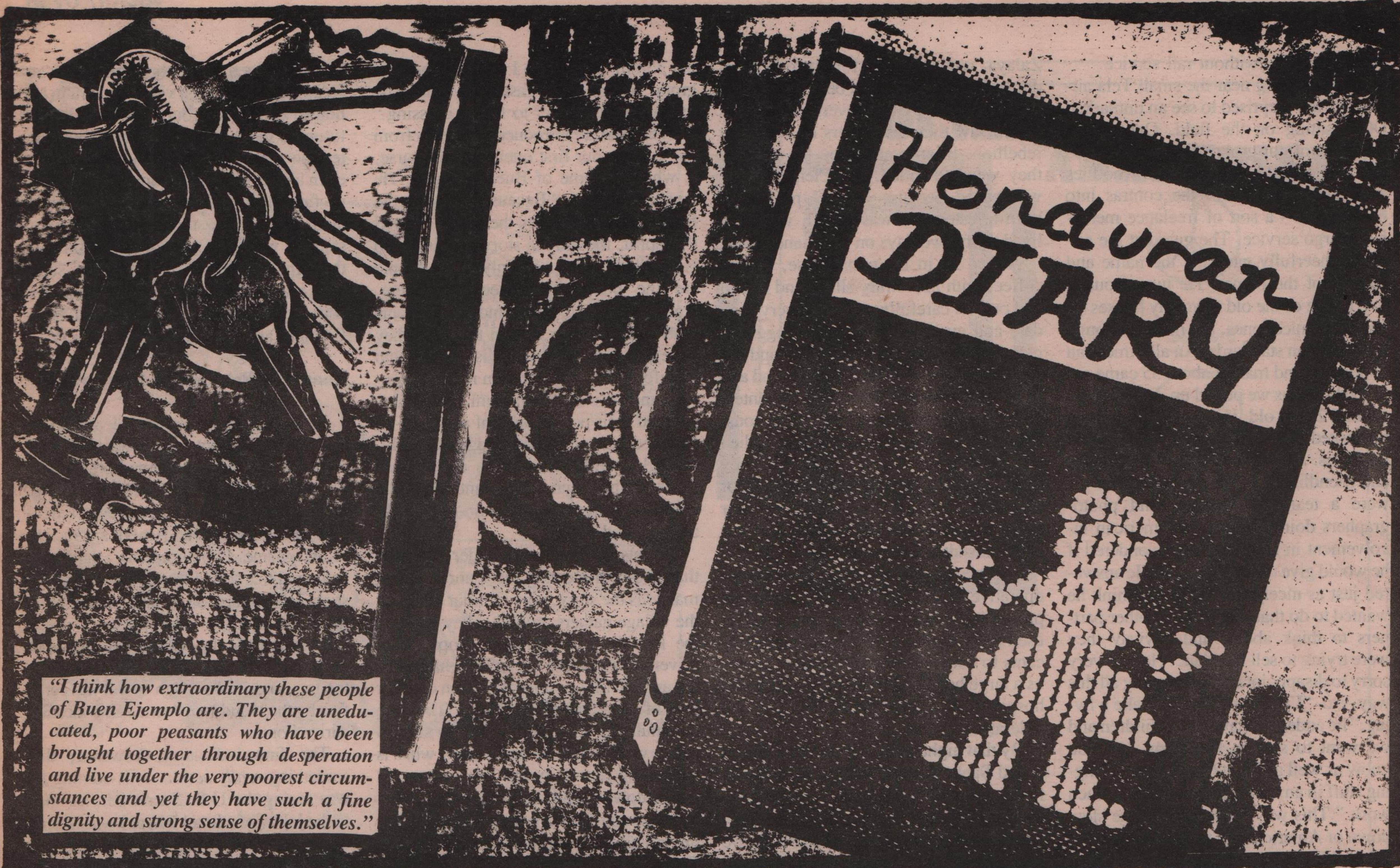
circa 1913: photo of "Adelita", a Mexican
revolutionary

• Mutual Aid in Honduras

• Sandino — Part 2

• Black Feminism • Ecuadorean Feminism: An Interview

• Marching Through Central America • Process Thoughts



Honduras: January 14-February 1

by J.M.

Driving north towards the Atlantic coast, over the mountain range that divides the country, we could have been anywhere in the Rocky Mountains — beautiful pine forests, lakes, spectacular views. Our destination on the first day is Puerto Cortes, the main commercial port on the Atlantic coast, very near the Guatemalan border, about six hours from Tegucigalpa. Approaching the coast about mid afternoon, we see coming towards us a military convoy, headed by an M.P. jeep with flashing red light. In the jeep are two American soldiers and what follows is a convoy of over twenty large vehicles with heavy construction equipment — cranes, bulldozers, oil tankers, large trucks. All driven by fresh-faced young Americans. This equipment has been landed and stored at the port facilities in Puerto Cortes and is being moved into a mountainous area in the interior where the U.S. is building a network of roads. At first I am amazed at what I see, feeling like the villagers lined up along the road, gaping at this incongruous parade so at odds with the quiet poor countryside. But in the following days it becomes a familiar sight — U.S. military equipment moving through Honduras.

A few miles outside the town of Progreso, a regional commercial center in the heart of the rich banana and African palm plantations, we visit the *Centro Capacitacion Campesina*, a training and education center for peasants. Miguel Murillo, the director, gives us the history. Sixteen years ago the center was established by INA, the government institution responsible for agrarian reform. Up to 100 peasants come here for courses through the year, which run from one week to two months. Popular education techniques are used to teach skills in organization, production, communication, self-reliance, etc. Murillo directed us to two peasant agricultural cooperatives in the region: Guanchias and Guaymas. We were to come back to him after our visits there to do a taped interview on the his-

tory of the *campesino* movement in Honduras.

Guanchias — A Model Co-operative

Because Guanchias is such a successful (and therefore unusual) cooperative, it provides a kind of model history of what landless peasants can accomplish if allowed to determine their own destiny without repression by the government and military — and in this case with support of INA.

The story began on a familiar note. Since the late 18th century the Honduran government had given hundreds of thousands of acres of the best land along the Atlantic Coast to two American-controlled companies: Standard Fruit and United Brands (of Chiquita fame), with the proviso that the land revert back to the government when and if the companies pulled out. Great banana plantations were established, and a system of railway lines built to connect the plantations with the Atlantic ports. By 1910, 80% of all banana lands were controlled by U.S. firms. Thus Honduras became the original Banana Republic of Central America, and these companies virtually ruled the area, along with the congresses and presidents. But when labour and other troubles became to bothersome, these companies, in true multinational fashion, began to diversify and pull out of the plantations where they were no longer profitable, leaving large sections uncultivated — and thousands of peasant workers unemployed.

This land theoretically belonged to the state, but in fact the local Honduran managers who had worked for the companies remained on the land as *vigilantes* (as they are called). They became virtual tenant farmers, renting land to the *campesinos* and kicking off those who could not pay. The desperate, landless peasants began to invade and occupy land, planting crops of corn and beans for survival. The *vigilantes*, often with the help of the military, would burn the crops, drive the people away and kill them if they resisted.

INA, the state agrarian reform agency, began to intervene in certain instances, negotiating with the peasants to cede

them land which belonged to the state. Thus was the Guanchias agricultural cooperative established in 1965 with a group of about 15 families and 1500 hectares. Though the government wanted them to divide up the land into smaller plots and grow basic grains, the cooperative insisted they wanted one big banana plantation (no doubt through experiencing years of watching the American companies they worked for grow rich). After many failures through inexperience with financing and marketing, the cooperative finally got on its feet.

A community leader, one of the few members of the original group left, took us around the plantation and the community, recounting the history as we went. One of the things that impressed me most in this and subsequent peasant communities we visited was the amazing tradition of maintaining an oral history. As this peasant showed us around, he recounted fine details, with dates and names, of their struggle and 15 year history: "On the morning of August 5, 1963, we met in the schoolhouse and decided... On the next day Jorge Jimenez came over from Progreso... The following day..." and so on. Time and again we were presented with a coherent, articulate history of a *campesino* group which would go on for 30 or 45 minutes.

The Guanchias Cooperative is now a prosperous banana plantation of thousands of hectares, with a processing and packing plant, rail service and a sophisticated irrigation system. Later a tour of the village (now about 1000 people) showed us the direct benefits of all this — 110 identical houses, each with 4 bedrooms, indoor plumbing and electricity — make up the community and along with one of the nicer schools I've seen in Central America, a clinic with a full-time nurse, who proudly showed us her stock of medicines, saying the cooperative provided them all without any assistance from the government. There is also a cooperative store, administration offices with the newest photocopying machine, an orange grove and 3000 chickens.

Filming and photographing all this took about two hours and by the end we had an escort of 30 or 40 curious children,

some of them pushing along new bicycles. This particularly struck us because it is a rare sight to see the child of a *campesino* with a bicycle — most often even the adults cannot afford to own one. And the children were tall, healthy and bright.

We were very impressed with this model community, and the man taking us around kept proudly pulling out more facts: the co-op pays for all medical care needed by its members outside the community and it helps pay for post secondary education (the son of our guide is in university). If the workers are sick and unable to work they are still paid a minimum daily wage. Sole beneficiaries of the orange grove were children from the school.

And on and on it went. I kept asking myself if I was really in Central America — particularly in Honduras — the poorest of all the countries. At the end of the day, when our guide is about to leave us, it occurs to me to ask what is the most serious problem of the community. Without hesitation, he gives his answer: too much lime in the drinking water.

Meeting a Mercenary

Tela is the company town of the Tela Railway, subsidiary of United Fruit. The company has long pulled out of the town, but its history is still there to be seen. Strictly 19th century architecture — the old, now abandoned, headquarters built in 1818 looks like a lonely Victorian hotel facing out to sea. The many company houses line the streets — those of the administrators are in a sort of protected compound; the workers' poorer homes are up on stilts around the edges.

The story of the Tela Railway is famous in Honduras. When the government originally ceded land to United Fruit to build the railway to service their plantations, it was in return for a promise to extend the railway over the mountains to Tegucigalpa, the capital. They didn't keep their promise, laying the tracks only from Tela, the main company port, to the plantations. Later, they not only discontinued what limited rail service there was, but pulled up the tracks after them. Tegucigalpa remains the only Central Ameri-

continued on page 2

can capital city without rail service.

While filming near the small Tela airstrip we are surprised to see an unmarked DC-3 sitting on the field. One of the members of our group, Jill, remembered that it belonged to an American who flies arms and supplies for the contras into Nicaragua — a sort of freelance mercenary cargo service. The guard at the airplane cheerfully gave me the name and address of the owner. He turned out to live in one of the old company houses — one of the nicer ones, but modest enough by American standards. An all-American looking, blond man of about 35 came out of the house as we pulled up, followed by a blond 2 year old. He greeted us politely and asked in a folksy way what he could do for us. Jill was a model of diplomacy and friendliness as she explained that we were a team of reporters and photographers doing a story on American involvement in Honduras and wondered if he would give us an interview. He answered just as nicely: no, he didn't think he wanted to do that. He had two other partners to think about, and anyway they were trying to sell the plane. He was very sorry to disappoint us after coming all this way, etc. "I'm only trying to make a living," he added. "I have three children and we want to stay in Honduras, but you know as well as I that 'they' aren't bringing stuff in anymore and there's not much work." This was a reference to the slow down of American aid to the contras, and the backing off of the Honduran president from allowing Honduras to act as a conduit for these arms and supplies. In his conversation this man was very circumspect, never once mentioning by name the United States, the contras, Nicaragua, or what the cargo might be. Like seeing the military convoy, I couldn't quite believe at first that I was witnessing this conversation. One hears things, and believes them. But to see this kind of open support for the contras in action, to see the actual machinery of it at work is something else.

Oral History of a Co-op Federation

The next day we visit Guaymas, a federation of 32 cooperatives with 23,000 hectares in African palms, supporting about 1800 families. Our first stop is at the house of Clemente Guterrez, a man between 60 and 70. When we say we want to hear the history of the Guaymas cooperatives, he at first protests that it would take too long, that he couldn't do it in one afternoon. He sends one of his family to bring a notebook, rifles the pages filled with pencilled text and says, "There's 29 pages here that tell the story. Maybe you'd like to read it." But then he sits with the notebook on his lap and begins to tell the story himself.

He is the sole survivor of a group of nine campesinos who began organizing peasant cooperatives after events on the banana plantations in 1949 which left thousands of peasant workers unemployed. Their leader was Lorenzo

Zalaya, now a famous folk hero in Honduras. By 1961 they had been driven into the mountains by the government forces which saw them as leaders of a peasant rebellion. In an ambush by the military they were all killed, but Clemente. He was saved because he had previously been arrested and was in jail, where he lived thirty-two days on bread and water.

As we sit in his poor house, having coffee, with his family all around and in and out, he carefully recounts every fact, date and event of their long struggle to gain control of government land, a struggle which saw them occupy land and plant crops only to have the vigilantes, with the help of the army, burn their houses and their crops. Seventeen people died and two hundred were jailed, but they continued to resist until they won. For Clemente, it has been a thirty-five year fight. And in the two hour telling he never once consulted his notebook.

The next morning he takes us to the cooperative plantation and the enormous processing plant. (African palm oil is used for everything from industrial lubricants to cooking oil.) He proudly shows us a large housing project, a school and a hospital, all under construction by the federation.

By that night we are deep into a region called Santa Barbara, where we hope to find a group of campesinos who are presently occupying land illegally. It is a very poor area, with no hotels or hostels, so we spend the night in the dormitory of a local church, in a place called Macuelizo. It is a rainy, cold, grey evening and the village has been without electricity for two months — the generator is broken. I wander around looking for someplace we could eat, noticing that at least the two crude pool halls in the village have bright catalytic lamps burning. Life goes on. We are directed to the house of Dona Sophia, where we have the standard meal of rice, beans, cheese and a coffee by candlelight, all tasting wonderful.

A Peasant Squat

The next morning we find our contact, Able Munoz, who does not seem very enthusiastic about guiding us over miles of muddy, almost impassable track to get to *Buen Ejemplo* (Good Example), the name the occupying peasants have given their village. He finally agrees though, and we drive through miles and miles of sugar cane plantation, through mud and water and places where the road runs out entirely, over a rickety suspension bridge (for which we had to pay a toll as it belonged to the plantation owner), through gates and fences and across fields. No one could find this place without a guide. We finally stop and Able points to a slippery thin log lying across a big irrigation ditch — the boundary and main "gate" to the village. Daniel, the sound man, just looks at it and shakes his head; there is no way he is going to risk thousands of dollars of expensive equipment by trying to cross this log. I, however, have only

my 35mm camera, so I chance it while a group of amused peasants watch. The jeep goes on further to find a crossing.

When we are introduced to a man from the village, our first question, of course, is why the name of *Buen Ejemplo*. He laughs and says, "Because we were the first to take the tiger by the balls." I loved that spirit, though the story of this group is a sad one, and certainly these people are the poorest I've seen anywhere. Again, they had been landless peasants who were starving, but in this case they have occupied land which is private, and therefore INA, the agrarian reform agency, can't or won't help them. They have perched their poor village of about 15-20 thatched huts on the very edge of a hilly, scraggly cornfield which is on the outskirts of the sugar cane plantation. The cornfield is theirs, planted on previously uncultivated land.

Jill sets up the camera under a kind of thatched-roof meeting place and a young man tells the story, now familiar while all the village gathers around. They invaded the land in 1980, planted crops, were driven off and came back. They had nothing and the first year two children died for lack of food and medical care. They are continuing to struggle, but barely surviving. I wasn't able to understand what is happening now between this group and the landowner and the government. Perhaps nothing. Perhaps they are simply being left alone to survive as best they can. There is, of course, no school, no medical care (the women have their babies in the thatched huts, helping one another), and no store. Usually even the poorest of villages will have a "pulperia", a house where a family sells basic things like soap, grain, etc. *Buen Ejemplo* has corn for tortillas and probably beans, but I saw no foodstuff other than corn. I photograph a woman grinding corn with a stone and making fat tortillas to cook on an open fire. It is the only place we visited where we are not offered even a cup of coffee — they probably have none for themselves.

As we drive back over the mountains into the capital, I think how extraordinary these people of *Buen Ejemplo* are. They are uneducated, poor peasants who have been brought together through desperation and live under the very poorest circumstances, and they have such a fine dignity and strong sense of themselves. Although we appeared in their midst, as if from outer space, in a big jeep with cameras, tripods, sound booms, flashes and more cameras, they responded as though it were an everyday occurrence. The young man, who faced Jill's camera and told the story of the village, was only 21, but he had the self-possession of an experienced story teller. As he talked, all the villagers — about 30 or 40 people — gathered around to listen. Occasionally one of the men would gently correct him on a date or name, or he would stop and consult them on a point. As we walked around the thatched huts filming, the woman making tortillas continued work-

ing at her open fire as though she was accustomed to having a video camera in her house. Of all the groups we visited, their future is the least secure, yet I could detect no sense of despair, helplessness or even anger, only determination to continue fighting for the right to own a bit of land. The contrast and inequality was stark as we drove back to the main road through hundreds of hectares of sugar cane plantation, owned by the same person on whose land the people of *Buen Ejemplo* are squatting.

Honduran Presidential Inauguration

In the meantime, we have learned that the new president of Honduras, Jose Azcona, is to be inaugurated on January 27, and vice-president Bush is coming. So, at Jill's urging, I get press credentials, using an expired American Society of Magazine Photographers' card that belonged to a friend from New York. We stick my picture on it and encase it in plastic though the other person's signature remains on the bottom line. No matter, it has PRESS in big red letters across the top, and it is enough to get me certified by the Honduran Armed Services Security Forces.

The first indication, however, that something *really serious* was coming up was seeing the U.S. Secret Service man in the lobby of a hotel where I was having breakfast. He would have looked the same wherever he was in the world — do they try hard to be so obvious? Blue blazer, of course, with gray pants, short hair, glinty eyes that see everything at once, a walkie-talkie in his hand, and a receiver in his ear. I am not even that close. But by his clothes, his air of complete command of the space he's in, and his voice which carries across the lobby ("OK Joe, let's bring in those things..."), you know he's from somewhere important, representing power and absolute authority. I am to see clones of this man several times in the next few days as they set up headquarters in this hotel, and later have a personal encounter with one of them. They are always dressed in blue, and they all have plastic tubes running from the receiver in their ears down their necks and under their collars. It is easy to imagine them as robots, connected to some master radio control in the basement of the hotel.

On the day of the inauguration, we fought our way into the national stadium. It took us over an hour even with our yellow press cards clipped to our clothes. That's because our entrance was the same as the visiting diplomats and local VIP's who all have printed invitations. It is a very cold and windy day, but everyone at our gate is dressed to the nines, the women all in extravagant, fashionable outfits with matching hats and shoes. As we enter the stadium and walk around the seating area to the field, there is a double line of young women making a corridor, dressed like prom queens with — yes — matching hats and shoes. These daughters of the bourgeoisie, younger versions

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of the women at the gate, are playing their special role, as representatives of Honduran feminine beauty, and, as ushers.

The rest of the stadium is filled with thousands of Hondurans who have been streaming into the city since 6 a.m. (the inauguration is scheduled for 8). A platform has been built on one side of the field, and, here, under a canopy the government functionaries sit — most noticeably a bishop and many men in fancy military dress. (There's no reason to beat around the bush about who controls things here.) Ornamental soldiers line the track around which the stars will make their entrance. On the field — at attention — are three groups in different military uniforms. There they stand for the entire 3-4 hour ceremony. We are on the field between the military groups and the stage, a gaggle of TV cameras, tripods, sound booms, telephoto lens, and photographers with 3-4 cameras around their necks. I feel rather understated with my small camera in my purse. It is very cold and windy and all the finely dressed women have to hold onto their hats.

In the very middle of the field is a small perfectly round platform covered by a ruffled white canopy, with a long red carpet leading up to it. The canopy is whipping precariously in the wind and it is hard to imagine what sort of event is going to take place here — a Jewish wedding, perhaps? But things finally get underway with a blare of a trumpet and a man with a voice like a carnival barker announcing the various diplomats, who enter the stadium, one by one, in a variety of vehicles, depending on their government position and degree of self-importance — the president of Ecuador in a white limo, the vice-president of Nicaragua in a Land Rover jeep, etc. They ride slowly around the field to the stand, get out, walk up the steps and greet the bishop before disappearing in the stands behind.

Then, at a timely moment — after the arrival of the old president but before the new president — the announcer's voice goes up an octave. "Y aqui...El Vice Presssssssssiddeeenntttee de los Estaaaaddddoooss Unnniiddooos, George Bush." Fanfare of trumpets. A stretch-limo enters the stadium with six secret-service men on foot, three on either side of the car. As the car slowly circles the stadium, the 6 men *run* beside the car the entire way. When it stops they fan out and four or five more get out of the car, creating a shield, while a gray head emerges followed by a thin tall body. The photographers and cameramen go crazy, trying to get a clear view through all the security, but finally Bush walks alone up the steps to greet the bishop and the outgoing president, Suazo. Finally, Jose Azcona, the incoming president, enters the stadium on foot, with his wife and three kids and vice-presidents with their wives and kids. All make a stately walk in the wind, the wives holding their hats on, to the cheers of the people, taking their places at the front of the platform with the men at the tables and the women arranged prettily along the sides with their hands on their heads.

Then the speeches begin and go on and on and on, as the mantle of power is handed over — a blue & white ribbon with a brooch. New president Azcona and his wife descend to an open army jeep and ride around the field, after which the bishop and two priests walk out to the now wildly blowing white-ruffled canopy. A lip-synched mass, followed by a helicopter salute of ten or so big army transports flying low over the field, takes place. It was scary.

The next day I go to a press conference

with George Bush, and ran into the very same secret servicemen, but now their piercing eyes are on me. I had lagged behind the group of journalists by about 20 yards when we moved from the National Palace to the National Bank, where the press conference was appropriately held. These men in blue blazers, with plastic tubes running down their necks insisted that I had not been right with the group and therefore have not had a security check. They insisted that I should go back to the Palace. I argued with them, and a woman from the U.S. embassy said she knew I was with the group, and that it was OK for me to go through. The secret serviceman said, "I'm the one in charge here, and I say she has to be checked." He turned to a Honduran "assistant" and snapped, "Check her tripod!" The guy, looking very puzzled, took it, wondering

aragua from every possible vantage point. It was fun watching the photographers who were, constantly, throughout the 30-minute conference flashing pictures, hoping for some decisive moment in a fairly limited repertoire of gestures. In the paper the next day there was a photograph of Bush pointing his finger authoritatively as though emphasizing a profound statement, but I knew he was only saying "Next question...."

U.S. Role in Honduras

I'm going to close with some straight history and facts on the U.S. presence in Honduras because I assume most of you are as uninformed about the real situation as I was when I arrived there. The military build-up of Honduras by the U.S. began in 1980 under the Carter Administra-

son, columnist for the *Washington Post*. The agreement included funds to train 43 Honduran officers in the United States, and 207 at the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Panama. The Honduran army was being transformed from the weakest in the area to the most formidable in Central America. It seemed surprising in view of the fact that Honduras has no armed guerrilla groups, nor is it being threatened by any of its neighbors. No matter, the U.S. had its own scheme which had little to do with the reality of Honduras. An infusion of economic aid quickly followed. During 1980 Honduras received \$41 million from AID, making it the second most-favoured country in all of Latin America.

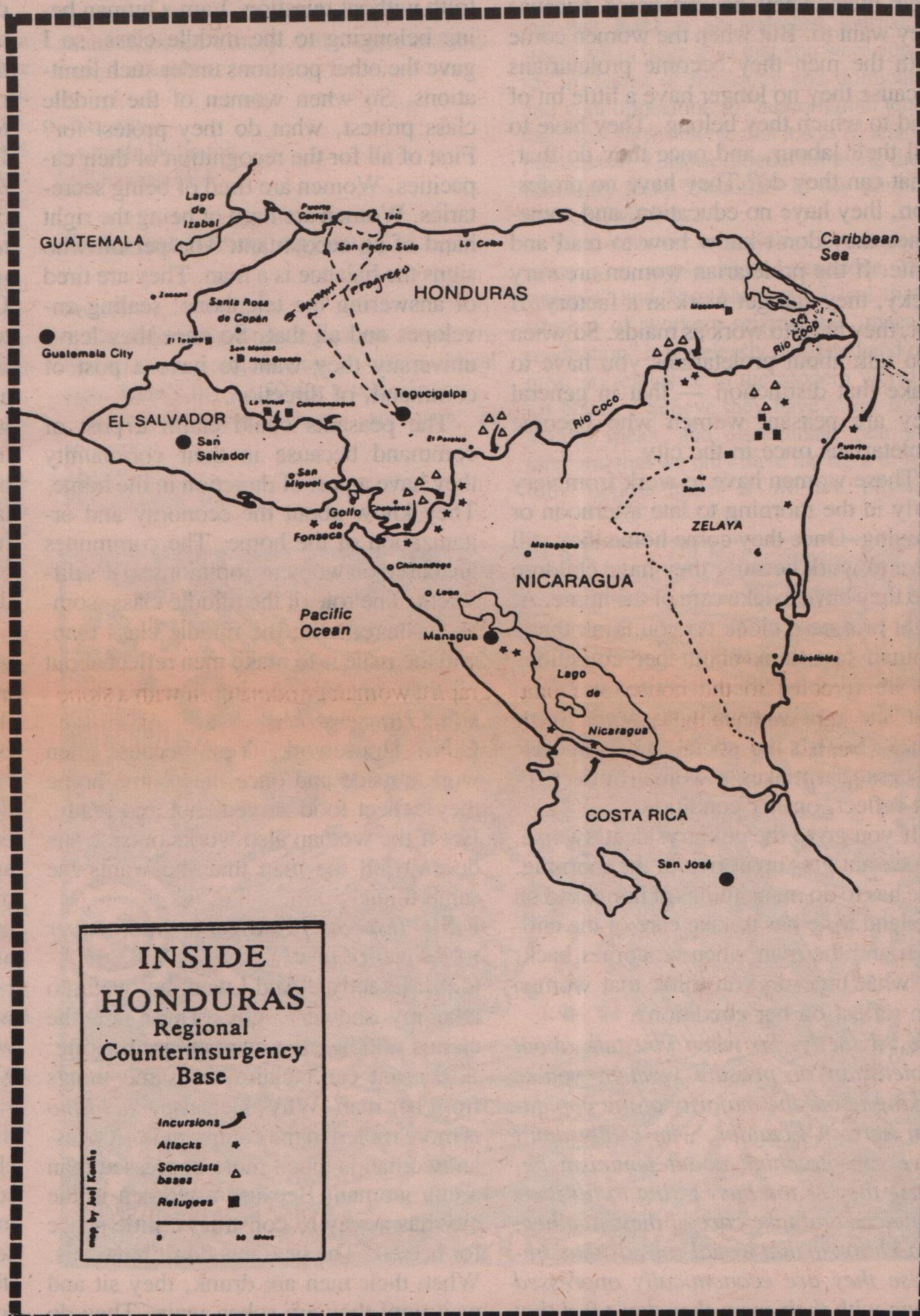
With the strengthening of the military, repression by the security forces increased, and the man held most responsible was Colonel Gustavo Alvarez, trained in Argentina and in charge of DIN, the secret police. Disappearances, illegal arrests, tortures and extra-judicial killing by security forces began to occur.

The victims included university students, members of opposition political parties, newspaper reporters, religious workers and refugees — especially those from El Salvador. Many were key leaders or outspoken members of popular organizations such as the National Union of Campesinos, the Teacher's Union of Honduras, the National Committee of Revolutionary Students, etc. In the space of 18 months, these political and popular organizations were virtually "decapitated" by selective repression and intimidation. It was at this time that CODEH, the Commission for Human Rights in Honduras, was created.

In 1984 U.S. military aid to Honduras was \$77.5 million, escalating yearly in direct proportion to Regan's rhetoric against Nicaragua. This infusion of money allowed the Honduran Armed Forces to develop from a young (30 year old), and improvised, institution to become the most powerful political force in the country (with the exception of the U.S. Embassy, as one journalist pointed out). This was certainly in evidence at the inauguration of Azcona. The other day I noticed in my slides that there is a military uniform beside Azcona in almost every shot...taking the oath of office, riding around the stadium in a military jeep and sitting at the head table between the outgoing and in-coming leaders.

From 1982 on, there has been an endless series of military maneuvers, with up to 10,000 American troops participating. These exercises go on for months and involve air, land and sea maneuvers, mock battles, beach landings, etc. The Honduran Army participates as part of the rationale that all this is training, but as a minor player. Basically, the U.S. is using Honduras for its war games, establishing a military base in Central America which will secure its hegemony in the region. An enormous contingent has been established at Palmerola, about 50 kilometers from the capitol. (It was here that Bush landed.) The American embassy also has more personnel than any other in the region — over 200 people. There are bars and restaurants in Tegucigalpa which could be in the middle of Iowa — baseball game on the TV screen, American bartender, and all-American customers. Not a word of Spanish anywhere. At one of these, I met some Peace Corps workers who said there were over 300 of them in Honduras, with more on the way. Even they said this seems excessive.

The author is a CUSO worker living in Costa Rica who passed through Honduras on a recent trip to the U.S.. □



where to look for hidden arms in a tripod. He turned it over in his hands and gave it back with a shrug. Meanwhile I muttered something to the nice women from the embassy, and the SS man, hearing me, fixed me with his steely eyes and said malevolently, "Well I didn't see you and therefore you weren't there..."

Eventually I got in, and Bush bounded up to the podium, looking tall, grey, fresh and ruggedly American, but the conference was downhill from there. It was a fairly small room, with TV cameras in back, all the American press in front and the Latin American press off to one side. To a thoughtful, critical question by an L.A. journalist about U.S. support of the contras and the role Honduras plays as a conduit for supplies and arms, Bush makes an almost flippant reply: "The answer to that is *no*! Next question?" But to fairly soft questions like whether or not the U.S. supports the *Contadora* initiative, he waxes eloquent — attacking Nic-

tion. With the Sandinista triumph in Nicaragua, the expansion of the war in El Salvador and the growing guerrilla movement in Guatemala, the Carter administration began to envision all of Central America being engulfed in revolutionary movements. Attention was turned to Honduras as the critical link, as the only possible place to set up a counter-insurgency force to prevent another liberation struggle from succeeding in the region. The strategy was to encourage democratic elections, using as the carrot the promise of military and economic support.

On April 20, 1980, the first elections in 18 years were held, with the Liberal Party winning. The same month, the Honduran army received \$3.5 million in U.S. military sales credit, which allowed them to expand their battalions, and buy high-tech war equipment, including ten helicopters. Although supposedly secret, the agreement was revealed by Jack Ander-

Interview with Ecuadorian Feminist

The following interview with Consuelo Navarro was conducted by Felicida Shanti, a friend of the **Kick It Over** collective, in Quito, Ecuador in February 1986. It has been edited by members of **Kick It Over**.

F.S.: Let's look at feminism from the perspective of an Ecuadorian woman. How would you say that the situation of women is different from that of men, recognizing that class differentiation is possibly more pronounced than in North America?

C.N.: As a sociologist I can't separate class from women's rights. For me, women's struggle is directly related to the social class to which they belong. Bourgeois women's struggles are not the same as middle class women's, just as proletarian and peasant women's struggles are both different.

Bourgeois women don't realize that they are objects, that they are decorations, a luxury their men — their husbands — permit themselves. I worked with women of the bourgeoisie when I taught literature courses and realized that there are very few women from the upper Ecuadorian class who are aware that they are objectified. They do not realize this because they have everything. They don't work. They have a car, a house, jewelry, they travel. They do what they want without working — which is quite convenient. But they don't realize what the marriage paper is, or what role they play. They find their situation nice, that it is very nice being a woman.

Bourgeois women are very careful about the couple relationship. The couple is viewed as a status symbol, not really a love but a status relationship. If the husband took a lover it would be ridiculous for them, and they don't want to be ridiculed by their society. So they take control of their body in order to be beautiful, in order to prevent the husband from taking a lover, thereby controlling the sex life of their husbands. They are dolls, nice dolls.

If we look at women of the middle class, the situation is different because they generally have access to education, to a university career. Or even if they do not have a university career they have good work. They are good secretaries. They are well paid. So they have money that they earn by themselves, or they have a career that they got by themselves. Even though they belong to a family whose father can afford to pay the price of their status, they still work.

A woman who works has another kind of mentality. She knows that if she's working she's capable, and if she's capable she needs to be respected. So once women of the middle class have the vital necessities covered they can think of themselves as human beings that need space and a form of expression.

So, in general, feminism in Ecuador is a movement led by women of the middle class; professionals in different careers. There is something interesting about this point. Feminist women are generally connected with social careers. Very seldom do you find a woman engineer connected with feminism. They just care about engineering and don't take the rest of the world into consideration. You find feminist sociologists, lawyers, philosophers and teachers. All these women belong to social work careers. Whereas when I talk with

architects and engineers I don't get the impression that I am talking with women. They don't care about feminism, about a personal space. They only care about being good students, earning a good salary — that's all.

F.S.: These women have often been called 'surrogate males', because what they have in fact become is male — daddy's good little girl.

C.N.: If you look at the proletariat, these women are not from the city. They are peasants who come to the city following their men. They do not come because they want to. But when the women come with the men they become proletarians because they no longer have a little bit of land to which they belong. They have to sell their labour, and once they do that, what can they do? They have no profession, they have no education, and sometimes they don't know how to read and write. If the proletarian women are very lucky, they can get work in a factory. If not, they have to work as maids. So when you talk about proletarians you have to make that distinction — that in general they are peasant women who become proletarians once in the city.

These women have to work from very early in the morning to late afternoon or evening. Once they come home they still have to work because they have children and they have to take care of the home. At eight or nine o'clock do you think that a woman can think about her condition? It's impossible. She's too tired to reflect that she is a woman who needs some space. So, it's the social and economic process that makes a woman reflect, or not reflect, on her condition.

If you go to the countryside it's worse. A peasant gets up at five in the morning. She has to do many things at home and on the land. She has to take care of the children and the man when he comes back. At what time do you think that woman can reflect on her condition?

F.S.: Exactly. So when you talk about proletarian or peasant women, you're talking about the majority of the population here in Ecuador, who really don't have time to think about feminism because they're too busy trying to fill their stomachs and take care of their families. In addition to that would you say that, because they are economically oppressed along with their men, they don't feel that they want to fight?

C.N.: Now I want to make something clear at this point. It is not because peasant women are absorbed by an economic process that they do nothing. Yes, they do things. But their conception is not like that of middle class women. You understand? The way a middle class woman can make a claim, or protest about her condition is very different from the way that a peasant or a proletarian woman can. So, if they start a movement, it is not a movement for the rights of women. No, they do not make a claim for the rights of women because they don't have time to think about it. But they make a claim for better salaries, and schools for children, health programs. A middle class woman does not make a claim for these things because she has them. She has a salary and social security. If she's sick she can go to social security. She has the salary to pay a doctor. A woman of the peasant sector of the proletarian class doesn't have that. That doesn't mean that nothing happens between proletarians or peasants. No, I

can't say that only middle class women protest. What I say is that their claims are different in kind.

F.S.: So middle class women are struggling more for the rights that the middle class men have, and the proletarian women are fighting more for the rights that middle class women have.

C.N.: There is a difference, and on such a point I want to be clear. What I'm going to state are my opinions. Maybe other women have different opinions than mine, and I don't want mine to be taken as truth without question. I am a human being belonging to the middle class, so I gave the other positions under such limitations. So when women of the middle class protest, what do they protest for? First of all for the recognition of their capacities. Women are tired of being secretaries. Women are tired of being the right hand of an accountant. The person who signs the balance is a man. They are tired of answering the telephone, sealing envelopes and all that. So once they leave university they want to have a post of command, of direction.

The peasants could claim a post of command because in their community they have a post of direction in the home. They know about the economy and organization of the home. The communes are based on women's opinions so it's different. The role of the middle class woman is shared with the middle class man, and the issue is to make men reflect about all that concerns sharing housework.

F.S.: Housework!

C.N.: Housework. Yes, because men work outside and once they come home they expect food served, hot and ready. But if the woman also works outside she doesn't tell the man that she wants the same thing.

F.S.: [Laughs.] And get my newspaper while you're at it!

C.N.: Exactly. "And I want hot water to take my shower". OK. These are the claims middle class women are making. A peasant can't claim the same things from her man. Why? Because *machismo* is more rooted in the countryside. A peasant woman is much more oppressed than a city woman. Because a woman in the city has a way to construct a little space for herself. The peasants don't have this. When their men are drunk, they sit and wait until they are sober again. They do not leave. You understand? In the city a middle class woman isn't going to sit around and wait for a man to sober up. Even if she only goes to the supermarket or something like that.

F.S.: Would you take it so far as to say that because the proletariat are all being oppressed, the men as well as the women, for women to fight for equality with men would be to fight for another type of oppression?

C.N.: The first fight must be for the right to receive an education. If you give education to both sexes you are contributing to less oppression. The percentage of men who finish primary school is higher than the percentage of women. With so little education women have less of a chance than men.

F.S.: And why is it that men finish?

C.N.: Because in the traditional conception of the role of parents, women are supposed to be at home and to have children. You don't need to go to school to do this. Men have to work to earn the food for the family. In order to do this you need

to know something.

F.S.: There's also the additional problem of families who need food and need everyone to work as well. So if you need all your children to work you can't send them to be educated. The problem of being educated is a step ahead of having enough money to send your children to be educated.

C.N.: Of course. When peasant women receive education they learn how to cook, sew, and to keep house. The principal things a woman must know. So they don't receive a good education because they don't go to school. They learn from their mothers who learned from their mothers, and so on. You have to go back to the beginning to understand such ideas.

F.S.: So we've spoken a lot about the differences that exist between the three classes in Ecuador. Would you like to try to find some sort of commonalities that all women share?

C.N.: No. I think it would be impossible to find something that all women share. Because as I told you from the beginning, all is related to the social class to which a woman belongs. I think that feminism in underdeveloped countries will never take hold as long as women have solidarity related to class and not related to sex. For feminism to be a strong movement women need solidarity with other women, independent of social class.

But what happens in reality? A bourgeois has solidarity with a bourgeois, not a proletarian. It's impossible if you understand the history of class struggle. If a bourgeois is in solidarity with the proletarian she loses all her privileges — and she doesn't want that! If not, there wouldn't be economic interests that condition men and women to have more power and money. No, I think it's impossible to find something that all women share because all is related to the social class of women. For feminism to be a strong movement, women need to be in solidarity with other women independent of the social class to which each woman belongs.

You can find in some sectors of the middle class, [women who] want to change society. I don't mean by changing society going to communism. I want to make that clear. I mean a change in society that allows justice for everybody (this is not exactly communism) — a new social, political and ideological order. For me the most difficult is the ideological fight. It is not only a fight between men and women [where both sexes have to change their thinking], but a fight overall for women to abandon their [class privilege] and get together with other women because they are women not because they have the same education or the same amount of money. What are we talking about when a bourgeois has solidarity with a bourgeois? It's useless! I don't want to be pessimistic but the moment the war is not fought on the basis of classes it will be different but if that continues what are we talking about?

F.S.: So you're saying that, in Ecuador, it would be very difficult for women of the different classes to unite. Let's put that onto a world wide scale. Is there any point in doing any kind of solidarity work? Can women in Canada help the struggle of women in Ecuador? Can we do anything together?

C.N.: I think that the middle class sector and proletarian sector can be together. (With the bourgeois you can not count on

them). That doesn't mean the whole society but some sections of it.

Relating this to Canadian women I think that women all over the world have a common fight. All women take in consideration the peculiarities of their country. Beyond the political, economic and social conditions of each country, I cannot personally be an enemy of an Ameri-

can woman because the U.S. is imperialistic. If a woman — American, Canadian, or Peruvian — is a reactionary, I will have problems, not because she is Peruvian, etc., but because she is reactionary. The nationality is not a problem.

F.S.: *So what do you think is the solution? You talked about education as being really important. Is awareness going to*

bring about unity?

C.N.: Awareness is the first step. But you can be aware and stay aware all of your life, but what's that important for? If you're aware that's all right, but it's only the beginning. When you begin, you have a moral obligation to continue. You can't remain a spectator. You have to act. The first thing is awareness. The second

step is action. Action depends on the way you think. If you want political action, you have a political fight to change the order of the world. If you have an ideological fight, you work for the change of mentality. Once you have decided to act, you have to choose the format in which to act. □



Black Feminism: Exploding the Myths

by Patrick Andrade

Patrick Andrade, an editor of Perhaps You Will Remember from which this article has been excerpted, presents a unique view of Black feminism from the perspective of an anti-sexist Black man. You can find out more about the magazine by contacting him at: 460 Buckland (Apt. 209), Kelowna, B.C. V1Y 5Z4.

The involvement of Black women with the feminist movement has been clouded and distorted by a number of myths. Barbara Smith is a Black feminist and co-founder of Kitchen Table: Women of Colour Press. In the Black feminist anthology *Home Girls*, she touches on some of the myths she feels that Black men, in collaboration with some Black women, have developed that divert Black women from their freedom.

Myth No. 1: The Black woman is already liberated

She feels that this myth confuses liberation with the fact that Black women have had to take on responsibilities that their oppression gives them no choice but to handle. Women of colour generally have had fewer choices about the circumstances of their lives. An ability to cope under worst conditions is not liberating. Underlying this myth is the assumption that Black women are towers of strength who neither feel or need what other human beings do, emotionally or materially.

Black men have not said anything about how poverty, unequal pay, no child care, violence of every kind including battering, rape and sterilization abuse, translated into "liberation".

Myth No. 2: Racism is the primary (or only) oppression Black women have to confront

The notion that struggling against or eliminating racism will completely alleviate Black women's problems doesn't take into account the way sexual oppression cuts across all racial, nationality, age, religious, ethnic and class groupings. A Black feminist perspective has no use for ranking oppression but instead demonstrates the similarity of oppressions as they affect third world women's lives.

Myth No. 3: Feminism is nothing but man hating (and) that men have never done anything that would legitimately inspire hatred

Barbara Smith feels that the distinction between being critically opposed to sexual oppression and attacking men as individuals is an important one that hasn't been totally understood. Women's desire for fairness and safety in our lives does not necessitate hating men: "trying to educate and inform men about how their feet are planted on our necks doesn't translate into hatred..."

Myth No. 4: Women's issues are narrow, apolitical concern.

This myth once again characterizes women's oppression as not particularly serious. Why is it that feminism is considered white-minded and narrow while Socialism or Marxism, from verifiably white origins, is legitimately embraced by third world male politicians without them having their identity credentials questioned for a minute.

Myth No. 5: Feminists are nothing but lesbians.

It is essential to understand that the distortion lies in the phrase "nothing but" which reduces lesbians to a category of being deserving of only the most violent attack, a category totally alien from "decent" Black folks, i.e. not our sisters, mothers, daughters, aunts and cousins but bizarre outsiders like none you know or ever knew.

Many of the most committed and outspoken feminists of colour have been and are lesbians. Black feminism and Black lesbianism is not interchangeable. Feminism is a political movement and many feminists are not lesbians. Although many Black feminists are not lesbians, this myth has acted as an accusation and a deterrent to keep non-lesbian Black feminists from manifesting themselves for fear it will be hurled against them.

Author Luisah Teish reflects on her experience during the Black power movement "Feminism was a 'white girl's thang'. We were beyond it. When the

revolution was won we would become queens of the Nile and the property of important men. Black men were men fighting for their right to stand as men among men. Yet the Black woman was denied her right to define her own 'femininity'. If she cried too much, laughed too much, or got too angry, she was accused of 'acting like a white girl'. Yet many of our Materialist, Nationalist, Pan Africanist, Revolutionary brothers sported white girls on their arms. Gays were counter-revolutionary since they were suffering from 'white disease' and the mentally and physically handicapped were considered 'useless'... Black women became third class citizens in the midst of a revolution. We must not forget this."

Black males may wish to consider this quotation from Marilyn French from her book *Beyond Power*.

Many people believe that men of colour, especially Black men, have been "castrated" by white culture — that is, they have been treated like women, and denied that special quality of male identity that is necessary for men to function within this society. That special quality... is rooted in a sense of difference from and superiority over women. If indeed Black men lack this sense of identity, they would seem to be prime candidates for working with women to create a broader human identity, that does not rest on superiority over nature (or other people) but on co-operation, community with both. □

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We have gone to computer this issue, so everything is slow and mixed up. Our current debt is astronomical, but the cost per issue is about 20% less. The nature of our circulation is changing. The number of subscribers are increasing while the number of copies going out to distributors is decreasing. Till next issue, ta ta. — Christopher Alice

(with special thanks to Catherine)

by Ron Hayley

The new (post-humous) John Lennon album (*John Lennon — Live in New York City*) is a collection of songs which, while not particularly strong when taken singly, together form a pleasant and significant body of work. Less complex, musically and lyrically, than much of his work with Beatles (only two songs on the album are of Beatle vintage) — and predating his slide into the trendy fluff represented by “Mind Games” — *John Lennon Live* captures the important “political” phase of Lennon’s career. Though Lennon later dismissed his political involvements as motivated by guilt, the vision of politics articulated here stands in striking contrast with the negativity of much of New Left politics during the late 1960’s and early 70’s.

Particularly noteworthy is Lennon’s humility and fearlessness in exploring his own personal hang-ups. One of the lines which sticks in my mind is “I couldn’t walk and I tried to run”. It is significant that the song co-authored with Yoko Ono, “Woman is the Nigger of the World”, addresses its audience as “we” rather than “you”, thus implying a sharing of guilt.

By contrast, Bruce Cockburn, though humble in person, is anything but humble on vinyl. On his new album *World of Wonders*, he opts for moral ‘superiority’. The two most strident songs, “Call It Democracy” and “People See Through You”, are...well, judge for yourself:

*International loan sharks....
who rob life of its quality
who render rage a necessity
by turning countries into labour camps
modern slavers in drag as champions
of freedom.*

Or on another note:

*sinister cynical instrument
who makes the gun into a sacrament
the only response to the deification
of tyranny by the so-called
“developed” nations’
idolatry of ideology*

Drek! Spare me the sermon.

Lennon, too, went through a phase of thinking he was Moses. But as is evidenced on *Live in New York*, he eventually got beyond it. In the fairly egotistical song “Come Together”, he changes the lyrics from “come together over me” to “come together over you”. In fact, throughout the concert, in the in-between song patter, he denigrates himself and tries to empower his audience. Lennon, unlike the recent Cockburn, is not afraid to reveal his pain and vulnerability, to express feelings of angst and inadequacy. On “Mother”, a song taken from the *Plastic Ono Band* album (his first solo effort after the Beatles), he sings of the pain of abandonment:

*Mother,
you had me
I never had you.
I wanted you
you didn’t want me...*

*Father,
you left me.
I never left you
I needed you so bad
you didn’t need me...*

In “Working Class Hero”, a song from the same album, he describes socialization and its crippling effects:

*As soon as you’re born
they make you feel small
by giving you no time
instead of it all
until the pain is so big
you feel nothing at all...*

*They hurt you at home
and they hit you at school
they hate you if you’re clever
and they despise a fool
’til you’re so fucking crazy
you can’t follow their rules...*

*When they’ve tortured and scared you
for twenty-odd years
then they expect you to pick a career
but you can’t really function
you’re so full of fear...*

Lennon’s songs integrate the personal and the political facets of experience, talking about oppression through a prism of self. His message, after he left the Beatles, was one of rely on yourself. In “I Found Out” on the *Plastic Ono* record, he writes: “there ain’t no guru who can see through your eyes — I FOUND OUT”. On that same album, he exhorted his listeners to stop treating him as a savior:



*I was the dreamweaver
But now I’m reborn
I was the walrus
But now I’m John
And so dear friends
You just have to carry on
The dream is over.*

Heart or Hype?

For Cockburn, it seems that his new album, *World of Wonders*, is one more chapter in the mythos he’s trying to create of the “rebel poet”. The black and white picture on the back of the album is redolent of Gabriel Garcia Lorca in the trenches of the Spanish Civil War. It’s interesting that the socialist critics I’ve read embrace Cockburn’s new politics, but are uncritical of Cockburn’s hype.

Apart from the synergistic work produced with the mid-to-late Beatles, Lennon’s song-writing (lyrically and musically) has never been comparable in complexity and nuance with that of Cockburn. The latter’s albums, like *The Trouble With Normal* (itself a highly political album), and songs like “Silver Wheels”, are masterpieces of song-writing. But as he’s felt himself possessed of a mission, his song-writing has lost some of its brilliance. On “Call It Democracy”, the words tumble out over a beat with no real sense of belonging. Moreover, there is a disturbing sense of Cockburn’s attempting to appeal to a “mass audience”.



Pulling A Springsteen

In his attempt to become the “common man’s best friend”, Bruce Springsteen has taken his music — which has always been eminently accessible — and turned it into a caricature of itself. Lost is the intelligence,

the sharp edges, replaced with demagoguery and simple-mindedness. Hopefully, Cockburn is too sharp a performer to fall into that trap, but there is definitely a slicker, more manipulatory feel to the music and a concomitant loss of subtlety. In “Lily of the Midnight Sky”, the chorus makes him sound like Springsteen, complete with the “Boss”’s own brand of echoey drums. “World of Wonders”, by contrast, the title track, is vintage Cockburn. “Berlin Tonight”, his description of traveling through East and West Germany, is overproduced, with the trumpets at the end sounding drippy and maudlin. The already mentioned “People See Through You” is a Top 40 beat cum political sermon. If people saw through “you”, we’d be a lot closer to social revolution, I suspect. “See How I Miss You” is a rollicking Trinidadian number with steel drum accompaniment. The tone, as the title would indicate, is a trifle self-conscious. “Santiago Dawn”, about the squatters’ struggle in Chile, is melodramatic, but then so is the subject (I don’t mean this in a negative sense). “Dancing in Paradise” is a mandolin-flavoured vignette about Jamaica. It has probably the strongest lyric on the album, but here again he strays into preachiness, and the music itself is repetitive. “Down Here Tonight” is a song of joy, a paean to life for which Cockburn is so justly famous.

Building An Anti-Sexist Male Culture

Although there is some anti-sexist content in Cockburn, it’s much more explicit in Lennon. Apart from the already cited “Woman is Nigger”, Lennon changes the lyrics on “Imagine” to “a brotherhood, a sisterhood of man”, and on the *Imagine* album he exhorts men to fight against their crippled emotional state.

Lennon was an extremely rich individual, and hence not necessarily an example of what a good radical should be, but his music offers a definition of politics which I find more useful than Cockburn’s recent vinyl. As a positive role model for men, better a humble, open, self-deprecating man than another political poseur who gets up on a soapbox and castigates the sinners. If men are to change, we need role models to give us support for our growth and development. Cockburn used to provide such a model. When I saw him in concert in 1984, I was impressed by his sensuality on stage, his gentle and open manner. He seemed for me — as a straight man — sexually attractive. But a friend of mine who went to his most recent show says that he seemed stiff, distant, not in touch with the rest of his musicians (and his programs were selling for nine bucks a piece!).

By including personal issues in his songs, Lennon broadens and integrates politics. Cockburn, who used to be so good at affirming life (in itself a political statement), tends to switch back and forth between political diatribes and love songs or ballads, revealing a schizophrenia between the private and public self which didn’t previously exist when he wrote the songs for *The Trouble with Normal*.

There was no such schizophrenia in Lennon. Moreover, Lennon was a great popularist. He could write in a language ordinary people could understand and still, at his best, produce great art. “Imagine” is an accessible description of communism, and “Woman is the Nigger” is an introduction to sexist ideology. While I was disappointed by the slide into middle-aged nostalgia on his *Double Fantasy* album, John Lennon remains for me (as does the not-so-recent Bruce Cockburn) a symbol of our worthwhile cultural heritage, one on which new and popular bands like Husker Du and the Violent Femmes are continuing to build, creating a vibrant sound reminiscent of — but not slavishly reproducing — the music of the 60’s. All this indicates to me that the era of John Lennon is an era of unfinished business. □

ANARCHISM AND THE THIRD WORLD

Anarchy for Beginners, Part 2

by Ron Hayley

This is Part 2 of *Anarchy For Beginners*. Part 1 was criticized for focusing almost exclusively on male white anarchists. Part 2 (on the Third World) and Part 3 (on women anarchists) are attempts to correct this. Part 3 will appear in issue 18. *Anarchism in Japan*, not part of the Third World, has been briefly addressed to give Part 2 the broadest possible scope.

Anarchy in Asia

Anarchism has been far more of a current in the non-European world than is generally acknowledged. Mao Tse-tung began his political career as an anarchist.¹ John Clark, in a chapter of *The Anarchist Moment*, has drawn attention to the affinities existing between anarchism and the thought of Lao Tse, the Chinese founder of Taoism.² Pa Chin, one of China's most celebrated writers, was an anarchist and met Emma Goldman at an international writers' conference. In fact, his name is taken from the Chinese contraction of Bakunin and Kropotkin (Pa/Chin). Anarchists were extremely influential amongst the "coolies" in major Chinese cities in the 1920's, particularly Canton, and played an important role in the ill-fated Cantonese insurrection.

In Japan, anarchism had its origins in the anti-militarism struggles which accompanied the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. By 1926, anarchists had helped in the formation of a National Association of Trade Unions which claimed 10,000 members. In the 30's, communists and anarchists alike fell on hard times as state repression became severe, extinguishing political opposition until after the war. One anarchist who escaped repression (she retreated into "scholarly" work) was Takamure Itsue who was politicized by the "Great Treason Incident" of 1910-11 in which 26 anarchists and left-wingers were arrested and almost half executed for a supposed plot to kill the Emperor. Anarchists and anarchist ideas also had some influence in the 50's and 60's in the emerging movements of students and workers against U.S. and Japanese militarism, and the holocaust occurring in Indochina.³

In India, anarchism has taken an indigenous form in the so-called "Sarvodaya Movement" (*Sarvodaya* meaning welfare of all, or non-violent socialism). In 1948, shortly after Gandhi's death, a conference of "constructive workers" (the title given to people committed to Gandhi's program of social reconstruction) was held. Out of this evolved an organization entitled *Sarva Seva Sangh* (or Association for the Service of All). The principal activity of this still-functioning organization is the promotion of *Bhoodan* (or voluntary distribution of surplus lands to landless peasants) and *Gramdan* — the

replacement of private ownership by village ownership. Successful or not, these activities are seen as the first steps towards a "total revolution" leading to *Ram Raj*, or the Kingdom of God on earth. Like Tolstoy, Gandhi was a religious anarchist.

Gandhi first developed his ideas in the context of South Africa where he was awakened to politics after being put off a train for riding in a first class ("for whites only") coach. His outrage at this led to the eventual launching of the "Satyagraha" movement. In 1894 he founded the Natal Indian Congress modelled after the Indian National Congress existing at that time in India. Gandhi's organization, in turn, became the inspiration for the African National Congress (ANC) founded in 1912, which for the first fifty years of its existence embraced non-violent methods of struggle.

It was in South Africa that Gandhi honed his philosophy of *Satyagraha* — using "truth as a weapon". It is this philosophy which has guided the Sarvodaya movement and its leader, Vinoba Bhave. Interestingly enough, some Sarvodayites believe that violence from a position of strength is preferable to non-violence undertaken for reasons of cowardice.⁴ Gandhi's anarchism is summed up in the following statement:

The power to control national life through national representatives is called political power. Representatives will become unnecessary if the national life becomes so perfect as to be self-controlled. It will then be a state of enlightened anarchy in which each person will become his own ruler....In an ideal State there will be no political institution and therefore no political power. That is why Thoreau has said in his classic statement that that government is best which governs least.⁵

A Sri Lankan Sarvodayan movement also exists, and which is deeply concerned with development issues. For them, *Sarvodaya* involves "refusing to do violence to a way of life, to avoid forms of change which disrupt communities and destroy or impair their capacity to organize the whole of their experience."⁶

Anarchy in Africa

According to anarchist anthropologist, Harold Barclay, Africa has long been the home to "dozens of...anarchic communities."⁷ One such society is the Lovedu of South Africa, profiled in Dorothy Lee's famous book, *Freedom and Culture*. According to Lee,

A corollary [amongst the Lovedu] to the respect for individual uniqueness and worth was that the indi-

vidual was held to be inviolate. The freedom of the individual was thus...guarded from encroachment. The exercise of force of any kind, except in dealing with the very young infant, was never approved. Even a court of law refrained from executing its decision, on the principle that to do so would be to coerce and was therefore to be avoided. The parties involved were expected to work out matters between them, aiming at a conciliatory solution, implementing the court decision through mutual agreement.⁸

As for anarchism as a political movement/philosophy, there is not much information available. In the first issue of the new English anarchist magazine, *Split*, the editors make allusions to the "anarcho-socialist" character of a group in Ethiopia called the Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement (EDPM): "The EDPM is a socialist, multi-national group which represents the claims for self-determination of all the various Ethiopian nationalities. It shares...a policy of popular participation through extensive networks of peasants and women's associations and health and education institutes, and operates a land reform programme in liberated areas."⁹ According to the authors of "South Africa 1985: The Organization of Power in Black and White", the early Black Consciousness Movement fostered by Steve Biko had non-hierarchical aspects in that it emphasized direct action in everyday life instead of waiting passively for political organizations to bring about one's salvation.¹⁰

North American anarchists recently sponsored a tour by Bonile Lawrence Tuluma, Co-ordinator of Workers' Education and former General-Secretary of the 80,000 member South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU). Tuluma is said to have been strongly influenced by the "Wobblies" — the anarcho-syndicalist International Workers of the World (IWW). Unfortunately, events in South Africa forced the early cancellation of the tour. In the last few years, four leading members of SAAWU have been charged with treason and face possible execution at the hands of the government.

Anarchy in "Latin" America

Anarchists have had an illustrious history in "Latin America", a term I prefer to avoid for its racist connotations.¹¹ Anarchist groups were founded in Mexico, Cuba, Argentina, and Uruguay in the 1860's and 70's and, until the 1920's, anarchists dominated most of the trade unions in Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Chile and Argentina. According to George Woodcock, the "largest and most militant of these...was the Federacion Obrera Regional Argentina (FORA), which was founded in 1901...It grew quickly to a

membership of nearly a quarter of a million, which dwarfed the rival social-democratic [Marxist] unions."¹² This influence of anarchist ideas stemmed largely from the influx of Italian immigrants (including Malatesta who lived in Argentina for a short time and organized the first bakers' union). In the film, "Official Story", the father of the upper-class flunky portrayed in the film is an anarchist and condemns his son for collaborating with the government and getting rich at the expense of the poor. Anarchists in Argentina endured many decades of repression and, in 1930, a reformist union movement emerged which took away support from the FORA. Anarchism began a slow decline and went completely underground with the rise to power of the popular demagogue, Juan Peron.

Anarchism in Uruguay evolved in a similar fashion, declining as a result of the influence developed by Marxism after the Russian Revolution. In 1956, anarchism experienced something of a revival. In that year, a nationwide congress was held, with the result that the Uruguayan Anarchist Federation (FAU) was established and began to undertake systematic work in all spheres of Uruguayan society. In 1967, the organization was banned, as were a number of others. This was a time of influence for the Tupamaros, named after a rebellious Inca Tupa Amaru who was executed in 1781 for leading an insurrection against Spanish colonial rule. The Tupamaros waged urban guerrilla warfare, and had anarchists in their ranks. The Costas-Gavras film "State of Siege", is about Tupamaro activity and its suppression. The FAU opposed this isolated armed struggle as "suicidal". Nonetheless, influenced by international developments, it moved closer to Marxism, arguing that anarchists should not refuse to participate in a "revolutionary" government after the seizure of power. It began to embrace Castro and Che, and increasingly cited the Cuban Revolution as its model.¹³ Meanwhile, in Montevideo, the country's capital, the *Comunidad del Sur* (Commune of the South) had taken root. A fully functioning anarchist commune of some forty people, the commune eventually transferred its operations to Sweden (to escape repression) and has continued its publishing efforts, including in the field of children's literature for which it has earned an international reputation.

Of particular interest is the role of anarchism in Mexico. In 1865, a Greek anarchist by the name of Rhodakanaty founded the *Club Socialista de Estudiantes* and began propaganda work amongst workers in Mexico City. This led to the first recorded strike in Mexican history. The following year Rhodakanaty moved to the town of Chalco where he began a school for peasants called the *Escuela Moderna y Libre*. In 1869, a former pupil of the school organized an uprising of peasants which spread into the surrounding states. The rebellion was suppressed, its inspirer executed, and Rhodakanaty himself was arrested and barely escaped

continued on page 8

execution. In 1871, he and a close associate, Francisco Zalacosta, organized a group *La Social* to combat the influence of Marxists in the labour movement. It expanded to 62 sections (5000 delegates attended its last meeting in 1879) and founded its own journal called *La Internacional*. In 1878, Zalacosta formed yet another organization the *Gran Comite Central Comunero* which inspired a large land revolt in Central Mexico which lasted for six years before being suppressed by Mexican president Porfirio Diaz.

Another anarchist, Ricardo Flores Magon, assisted by his brother Enrique, established the anarcho-syndicalist journal entitled *La Regeneracion* in 1900 which played an important role in radicalizing Mexican workers. In 1903, Ricardo and Enrique were forced to flee to the U.S. and Canada where they continued to carry out revolutionary propaganda. In 1905, they helped found the Organizing Junta of the Mexican Liberal Party (P.L.M.), which issued a very influential program and manifesto. A year later, they organized an ill-fated insurrection and yet another one in 1908. In January 1911, after the revolution had broken out, P.L.M. fighters were the first to seize a town from government forces, and actually ran parts of Baja California for a time, where the P.L.M. partisans were joined by large numbers of American Wobblies and Italian anarchists.

Betrayed by the new government of Francisco Madero, a representative of the liberal capitalists who offered himself as a "radical" alternative to Diaz, many P.L.M.ers were disarmed and executed. In the fall of 1911, Emiliano Zapata, peasant leader in the South, rose in rebellion against Madero and issued his *Plan de Ayala*, which some claim was modelled on a previous manifesto of Magon's. The two groups formed something of an alliance, and in 1913 Zapata adopted the P.L.M.'s slogan, "Land and Liberty!" In a letter to a friend, Ricardo's brother spelled out the affinities between Zapatismo and the P.L.M.: *...Thanks to our tribal traditions; thanks to us being mostly Indians and, therefore, close to nature — agricultural people, thanks to us being illiterate and hence unspoiled by the so-called education of the capitalist class, our national and racial soul and mind are apt to assimilate the modern ideas.*

Therefore, it should not be surprising to find that other rebels under different banners are more or less inclined towards anarchism, amongst them the Agrarians [as the Zapatistas were often called].

*These Agrarians and the Liberals work together owing to the fact that the former are direct actionists, although they still think a government is needed. They — the Agrarians — reason this way: "no government will help the poor come into their own; no authority will emancipate the masses; therefore let us take the social wealth ourselves, within the Revolution; let us emancipate ourselves, and afterwards we may have a government that would sanction and legalize our deeds."*¹⁴

Shortly after the emergence of Zapata, several more changes in regime took place resulting in the coming-to-power of technocrat and political manoeuvrer, Venustiano Carranza (nicknamed "the cockroach" whence comes "La Cucaracha", the song). Taking advantage of the narrow "workerist" sympathies of the anarcho-syndicalist *Casa del Obrero Mundial* (who saw Carranza as a friend and ally), Carranza was able to organize the so-called "Red Batallions"

of leftist workers who were sent out to fight and kill members of Zapata's and Pancho Villa's armies, thus anticipating by twenty years the treacherous International Brigades in Spain who helped carry out Stalin's pogrom against the anarchists. Except this time the perpetrators were anarchists! The crushing of the Zapatistas spelled the end of a genuine social revolution in Mexico, which entered a period of slow bureaucratic strangulation under the aegis of what later became known as the *Institutional Revolutionary Party* which (like the Bolshevik party in Russia) has been ruling in the revolution's name.

A full assessment of Zapata's "anarchism" cannot be offered here (see *Zapata of Mexico* by Peter E. Newell and other texts).¹⁵ Zapata, from a middle peasant family of Indian descent, was the only revolutionary leader (outside of Magon, who was murdered by U.S. authorities) not to sell out the Mexican people. While not above issuing orders and having people arrested and shot, Zapata was essentially an anti-authoritarian. He believed in the restoration of the Indian "ejidos" or village communes, and was in favour of people organizing their own livelihood free from interference. He never sought power or riches for himself, and believed in the self-coined maxim that "A Strong People Need No Leader". Zapata's insurgency disproves the Marxist notion that rootless proletarians, deprived of community and tradition, are the revolutionary class. Zapata's Indians, steeped in the Native communistic tradition, merely wanted to restore what had always existed — a communion with the land in which all people were relatively equal. To get a sense of this deeply organic outlook and how it clashed with the interests of capitalism, see the novel *The White Rose* by B. Traven. Traven, a novelist with anarchist sympathies, wrote extensively about Mexico in the 20's, 30's and 40's after escaping the aftermath of the disastrous German Revolution of 1918-19 in which he himself played a leading part.¹⁶ Since the time of Traven, anarchism has continued to play an important, if inconsistent, role in Mexican political life.¹⁷

Anarchy among Third world People in North America

In North America, anarchism has had a limited influence amongst people of Third World descent. One exception is Black Puerto Rican anarchist, Martin Sostre. Martin was arrested in his Afro-Asian Bookstore shortly after the ghetto rebellion in Buffalo in the summer of 1967. Since the state couldn't implicate him in any illegal political activity, he was booked on contrived dope charges and brought before a white judge and an all-white jury, where he was bound and gagged and sentenced to 30-41 years. The prosecution's chief witness later recanted his testimony and admitted his involvement in the police frame-up. The arresting officer was himself indicted for stealing over \$100,000 worth of heroin from the police laboratory. After nine years in prison, Sostre was released. In an interview in *Open Road*, Sostre said:

I don't care what ideology you have, it isn't good if it doesn't afford a person, first, personal freedom on its most basic...individual level. That is

my concept of the struggle or the war of liberation. It's not to replace one state with another; it's to liberate the individual. I have not seen any state or government or society, whether it's socialist or capitalist, where this freedom exists.

Speaking of the revolutionary process, Sostre noted:

I'm trying to make sure in my dealings, in anything I have something to do with, that it starts off right so it'll end up right. I want to start off with an anarchistic form of society rather than starting with a central headquarters and saying "well, eventually we'll get rid of the headquarters."

*That's what I'm striving for. And the fact that my defense committee, an anarchist structure, proved successful is evidenced by my being here. I have been trying to live an anarchist life on a personal level but it was never tested in a concrete form until this defense committee was organized. That was the only real test and it proved successful. But this is my intent and I intend to project anarchist philosophy through everything I do.*¹⁸

Anarchy and the Third World.

If anarchists haven't been more influential in relation to Third World movements, it is at least partially their own fault. Very few anarchists have addressed themselves to the issues of racism, imperialism, and national liberation; and, where they have, they have done so in an extremely dogmatic fashion. Alfredo Bonanno, in a pamphlet entitled "Anarchism and the National Liberation Struggle", quotes anarchist Rudolph Rocker (author of *Nationalism and Culture*) to the effect that "All nationalism is reactionary in its nature, for it strives to enforce on the separate parts of the great human family a definite character according to a preconceived idea."¹⁹

In opposition to this point of view, I would argue that any people that voluntarily relinquishes its identity — i.e. commits cultural suicide — is certainly not fit to make a revolution. That people should be free of regional or national identification smacks of the Marxist view that people must first be denatured of all regional and "parochial" ties before becoming fit subjects for the "revolution of the proletariat". It is not necessarily true that people with a strong sense of themselves are chauvinistically inclined. Native peoples have a strong tribal identification and yet approach other tribal cultures with a sense of respect. And while nation-states have been built on the backs of many separate ethnic groups, once national consciousness develops, it is not necessarily thoroughly reactionary. Any coming together of people into cultural and social units is almost always the product of historical accident, fraud, and coercion, but once this becomes an accomplished fact (as with North American Blacks who were drawn from a variety of African cultures to work here as slaves), it often becomes the basis for a progressive culture, so long as it remains only one of an infinite number of possible personal "tags" (i.e. Black, gay, radical, jazz musician, humanist, poet). What causes national consciousness to turn reactionary is when the people of a given nation are put into a position of power over those of another.

Fortunately, not all anarchists are as

dismissive as the above quote would indicate. For instance, in California, a publication called *No Middle Ground* published four issues on the subject of libertarian and anti-authoritarian influences in "Latin America" and the Caribbean. In their last issue (#3-4), they featured a review of a recent book by Cuban revolutionary Carlos Franqui. His book, *Diary of the Cuban Revolution*, exposes the historical falsifications undertaken by Castro in his rewriting of Cuban revolutionary history.²⁰ "Economic dependence, misery, hunger, monoculture, militarism, personality cults, heroics, the one-party system, bureaucracy, the monopoly of the economy, force, and ideology — if we could get rid of them all! Now that would be a real revolution." (Carlos Franqui)

A Different Perspective

I personally believe that the anarchist perspective has much to offer in an analysis of racism and imperialism, unlike Marxism, which tends to reduce everything to a one-dimensional analysis of the "super-profits/super-exploitation" to be gained from the labour of nationally oppressed peoples. When I was living in the U.S., I was attracted to Black culture because it embodied aspects of the human personality — sensuality, irreverence, emotiveness, a rebellious instinct for life — which white culture denied. I wasn't attracted to identify with Blacks because they were the vanguard of the struggle against imperialism or because Black workers were paid less than white workers. Just because we reject racism on a theoretical level doesn't mean we've rooted out the patriarchal assumptions underlying it. Racism comes in many guises.

I was told recently by a Marxist that dance "is not a form with much revolutionary potential", implying that the kind of celebratory dance that certain Black artists are doing is not as legitimate an avenue for political expression as "performance art". Anarchists believe that patriarchal, class, political, and "national" forms of oppression are all intimately related. If we put reason, self-control, and productivity on a pedestal (all Western values) and derogate the senses, the body, intuition and a true passionate commitment to celebration characteristic of many non-white cultures — then we're racists just the same as if we believe that Blacks are genetically inferior.

Reams of literature have been devoted to the problems which arise when nationalist revolutions fail to come to grips with the class privilege of various Third World elites. But there is a related problem of political authoritarianism and hierarchicalism. It is a basic "law" of politics that political power tends to become the private preserve of one or another nationality (or, conversely, religious or language group) which arrogates all privileges to itself. This has certainly been true in the case of India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, and Ethiopia, to cite only a few examples. But even if all the people are of the same nationality, "If 'Power to the people' means nothing more than power to the leaders of the people, then the people remain an undifferentiated, manipulatable mass, as powerless after the revolution as they were before. In the last analysis, the people can never have power until they disappear as a 'people'".²¹

But, apart from an insufficient critique of power, there is also in Marxism the

absence of what I would call a "culture positive" orientation. The culture of Third World peoples is not valued in itself (not that we should be uncritical of any culture), but as a means to an end. Marx said of Indian society that:

*...we must not forget that these idyllic village communities, inoffensive through they may appear, have always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism, that they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies....We must not forget that these little communities were contaminated by distinctions of caste and by slavery, that they subjugated man to external circumstances instead of elevating man to be the sovereign of circumstances, that they transformed a self-developing social state into never changing natural destiny, and thus brought about a brutalising worship of nature, exhibiting its degradation in the fact that man, the sovereign of nature, fell down on his knees in adoration of Hanuman, the monkey, and Sabbala, the cow."*²²

The same Marx said of the Slavs:

not one Slav people ... has a future for the simple reason that ... [they] ... lack the most elementary historical, geographical, political and industrial bases. Independence and vitality fail them. The conquerors of the various Slav nations have the advantage of en-

*ergy and vitality....The revolution can only be saved by putting into effect a decisive terror against the Slav peoples who for their perspective of their miserable "national independence" have sold out democracy and the revolution. Some day we shall take bloody revenge upon the Slavs for this vile and scandalous betrayal."*²³

Marx's attitude stemmed from his belief that the peasantry in pre-industrial societies was merely "holding back the wheel of history". But, as Murray Bookchin pointed out in **Kick It Over** #14, "...a rebellious peasantry is really staging all the revolutions in the third world. Irony of ironies! Bakunin should be alive today to mock the Marxist paradigm."²⁴

If we take the perspective that every culture has its communistic and anti-authoritarian traditions, then the goal becomes one of encouraging these trends in tribes, villages, communes, cities, regions, nations — in whatever cultural forms they may appear — rather than encouraging the domestication and proletarianization of people which only erodes their humanity and makes liberation that much harder to achieve. □

FOOTNOTES

1. Mao likely became an anarchist through an influential anarchist bi-weekly called **People's Voice** which was circulated at Peking University where Mao was going to school. It was ironically through the **People's Voice** that the Bolsheviks first made contact with Chinese intellectuals and eventually converted some of them to communism. My thanks to Alexander Bazarov of **Strike!** for this and other related bits of information.
2. **The Anarchist Moment** by John Clark, Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1984 — see Chapter 7.

3. "Anarchism in Japan" by Chushichi Tsuzuki in **Anarchism Today**, edited by David E. Apter and James Joll, Macmillan Press, London, 1971.

4. "Indian Anarchism: The Sarvodaya Movement" by Geoffrey Ostergaard in **ibid.**

5. quoted in "Gandhi on Socialism and Communism" by Raghavan Iyer in **Ghandi Marg** #79 (October 1985), p. 409; New Delhi, India.

6. **Survival With Integrity: Sarvodaya At the Crossroads** by Denis Goulet, Marga Institute, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 1981, p. xii.

7. **People Without Government** by Harold Barclay, Kahn and Averill with Cienfuegos Press, London, 1982, p. 51.

8. **Freedom and Culture** by Dorothy Lee, Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, p. 49.

9. **Split** #1, p. 6 (Arts Express, P.O. Box 633, London, England SE7 7HE).

10. "South Africa 1985: The Organization of Power in 'Black and White'" by S. Thompson and N. Abraham, c/o P.O. Box 4502, Berkeley, California, 94707, U.S.A., 1985, p. 12.

11. Calling Mexico, Central and South America "Latin" America is tantamount to calling the Indian subcontinent "British India". The Native peoples lived there long before the "Ladinos" came, and many, like the Miskitos of Nicaragua, are not "Ladino-identified". For those claiming that the word "America" refers to the indigenous inhabitants, remember that "America" comes from Amerigo Vespucci, one of the so-called "discoverers" of the New World.

12. **Anarchism** by George Woodcock, New American Library, New York, 1962, p. 427.

13. "Anarchism in Argentina and Uruguay" in **Anarchism Today**, edited by David E. Apter and James Joll, Macmillan Press, London, 1971.

14. This quote and the preceding material is taken from the "Introduction" to **Land and Liberty: Anarchist Influences in the Mexican Revolution**

by Ricardo Flores Magon (compiled and introduced by David Poole), Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1977, p. 25 and the rest of the "Introduction".

15. **Zapata of Mexico** by Peter E. Newell, Cienfuegos Press, Orkney, U.K., no date given.

16. **The White Rose** by B. Traven, Lawrence Hill and Co., Westport, Connecticut, 1979.

17. see "The Anarchist Movement in Mexico" by Octavio Alberola in **Anarchist Review** #6. For a copy of the article, write to **Kick It Over** (attn: Ron Hayley).

18. The material on Martin Sostre was taken verbatim from "The Open Road Interview with Martin Sostre" in **Open Road** #1 (Summer 1976). This issue is probably out of print. Send \$1.00 to K.I.O. and I'll send you a photocopy of the article. Kuwasi Balagoon, an imprisoned member of the armed struggle-oriented Black Liberation Army, is also said to be an anarchist.

19. "Anarchism and the National Liberation Struggle" by Alfredo M. Bonanno, Bratach Dubh Editions, 1981, p. 22.

20. **No Middle Ground**, Fall 1984- Winter 1985, published by the Information Network on Latin America, 495 Ellis St., #781, San Francisco, California, 94102, U.S.A. See also **Diary of the Cuban Revolution** by Carlos Franqui, Viking Press, New York, 1980.

21. **Post-Scarcity Anarchism** by Murray Bookchin, Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1977, p. 20.

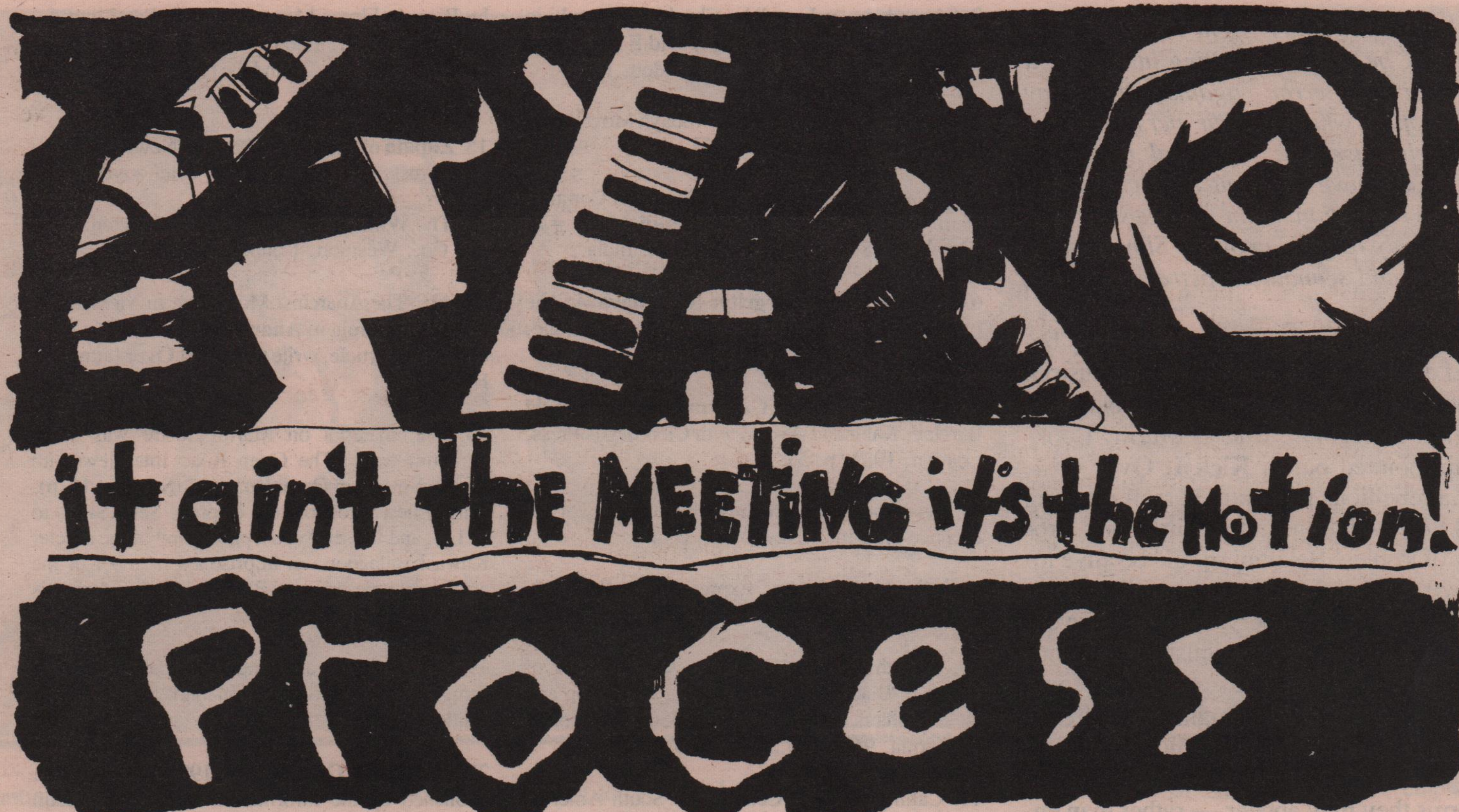
22. "The British Rule in India" by Karl Marx in the **Marx-Engels Reader**, edited by Robert C. Tucker (second edition), W.W. Norton and Co., New York, 1978, p. 658.

23. quoted in "Anarchism and the National Liberation Movement", pp. 14-15.

24. "Democratizing the Republic and Radicalizing Democracy": An Interview with Murray Bookchin (Part 2) in **Kick It Over** #14 (Winter '85/86).

Mercado Oriental-Nicaragua-Batik by Lisa Kokin from the Syracuse Cultural Workers "1986 Peace Calendar", available for \$7.40 frn SCW, Box 6367, Syracuse, NY 13217.





by Alexandra Devon

Have you ever been in any of the following situations?

You go to a meeting of a group for the first time because they're doing work around issues you've begun to be interested in. Everybody there seems to know everyone else already, and they're all so knowledgeable. No one even asks your name or why you have come. During the meeting you're too intimidated to say anything and no one seems to notice or care. You go home depressed.

Someone has called a meeting. It starts late. There's no agenda so the group wanders from topic to topic for what seems an eternity. People constantly interrupt each other. A few people dominate. The quieter people are ignored. You go home with a headache.

You've just broken up with your lover but you got to your meeting anyway. No one asks how you are. The agenda is set, typed and passed around. A decision has to be made on an important course of action. People are divided on it. After ten minutes of discussion a vote is taken before you've even expressed your point of view. The outcome is not what you hoped but you have to live with it — after all, majority rules. You go home and don't come back.

The above scenarios are common but not inevitable. Somewhere between Robert's Rules of Order and "tyranny of structurelessness" lies a method for working with people in groups which is not disempowering, painful and tedious and can even be affirming, creative and effective.

Learning about group "process" (or paying attention to how you interact with other people in a group setting) is, for many of us a trial and error thing. Unfortunately, because we get together in groups to get things done, we are often more interested in the end than the means of getting there, little realizing that the process would be much more enjoyable and the end product enriched if we're better able to harmonize means and ends.

In the early days of putting out this magazine, when our collective was larger, our meetings were such a shambles with people all talking at once that we half jokingly and half in desperation used to appoint a "dictator for the day" to try to keep us on track. A lot of wasted, fruitless time could have been saved if we had recognized a few simple things about human nature and how to accommodate it. Having been raised in a competitive, hierarchical society we retain the unpleasant skills needed to survive in that type of culture, which makes creating a new culture

based on different values, inherently difficult. (For an in depth discussion of this problem see "Anti-Mass" — see notes at the end of the article.)

Putting the Personal Into the Political

One of the most important allowances to make in setting up meetings or gatherings is to provide time for "personal sharing". People come to meetings or join groups, not simply to "get things done", but for companionship and the feeling that one's values and concerns are shared by other people. It is good to try to have a social time before the meeting, whether sharing a meal or a cup of tea and conversation. This allows for people to bond on more than just an intellectual level and sets a more relaxed atmosphere for the meeting especially if the one flows into the other. If new people have joined the group, it's a good time to make a special effort to connect with them, find out why they've come and make them feel their presence is valued.

Even if one doesn't have time for a socializing period, it's a good idea to have a "go-around" structured into the agenda. This can just be a minute or two for each person where they can say (if they are new) why they came and who they are or, for people who know each other, what type of day they've had and how they're feeling. A friend who first stressed the importance of this told me that meetings are much more efficient and less stressful as a result of this simple exercise. People often come to meetings with psychic baggage (positive or negative) and if they are not allowed to check it at the door, the room is soon crowded with it and by the end of the meeting you may have people stressed out not because of anything in the meeting but because of a personal misfortune or tragedy that has happened to them in the day or week before.

The Basics

To back-track a bit, it's been my experience that a facilitator (as opposed to a dictator) is necessary for a well-run meeting. This person is someone to whom the group has given the power and responsibility to shape the evening's tasks into an agenda and to gently keep people to the agreed upon format. This is a position of some power so it is important that the job be rotated from meeting to meeting. It's good to ask for a volunteer and trust people not to elect themselves more often than is warranted. A minute-taker should also be solicited at the same time.

Taking minutes is important for action groups because it is a record of what has transpired for those who weren't there and for those who have agreed to do things it serves as a reminder of what, in the heat of the moment, they have agreed to do. These can be elaborate or brief depending on the needs of the group. Another bonus of taking minutes is that you have a history of the development of the group.

Setting the Agenda

The facilitator (with pen and paper in hand or flip chart on wall) asks for items to be put on the agenda. This is a way of getting everyone's input into the planning of the meeting. After all the suggestions are written down, it's important to determine whether there is too much to cover in one meeting. If it's agreed that there is too much, the facilitator can ask (or the group can volunteer) what can be held over or left to the end. Next the facilitator, with input from the group, decides on the most reasonable order of events and allots time for each phase, determining first how long the overall meeting should be. Many groups also set aside time at the end to evaluate the meeting itself. This is a time to comment on frustrations with process or to compliment the facilitator and to sum how meetings could be improved. Remember that you should stick to the time frame as closely as possible because this is what the group has agreed to. The facilitator is responsible to renegotiating time when necessary, to everyone's satisfaction.

Once the agenda is set it is up to the facilitator to introduce each item (or have other group members do it) and ensure that everyone gets to speak to an issue who wants to. It's easiest if a group can be self-regulating and speak in turn but when this is not possible, it is the facilitator's responsibility to have people speak in the sequence in which they've raised their hands. A few rules of thumb which make for equitable discussion is that everyone should speak to an issue (who wants to) before people who've already spoken speak again. Extended discussions between two people should be discouraged as this can be alienating to the group. In larger groups, or if men are tending to dominate, it's good to alternate between women and men speakers.

Making Decisions

Many groups make decisions through discussing an issue (with greater or lesser degrees of thoroughness) and then vot-

ing. Unless you have unanimity (which is rare) some people are placed in the uncomfortable position of carrying out or living with decisions that they are not comfortable with. This is called *democracy*. I don't mean to denigrate this style of operating completely; it may have a place in certain situations but the small group or collective is not one of them. Consensus, on the other hand, allows each other person equal and complete power in the group. Everyone must be happy with a decision or at least not unhappy with it for the group to proceed. This is not based on an abstract principle of fairness but on the "belief that each person has part of the truth and no one has all of it...and on a respect for all persons involved in the decision that is being considered" (Carolyn Estes, "Consensus" in the spring issue of *Social Anarchism*).

This style of working requires trust between group members and more time than the democratic process. It also takes some getting used to because it requires that we express our views, explain them, listen to the views of others and modify our views when others make points which we might not have thought about. Although it is strange at first, for those of us who are used to defending our position to the death because it's ours and we want to be right, it allows for more give and take than one would normally think possible in a group situation. Once you get used to consensus it is frustrating and disempowering to go back to other methods.

Consensus is not new. It has been used for thousands of years by tribal peoples, early Jesuits in the 17th century (who called it "Communal Discernment"), Quakers, and more recently by some feminists and social change groups, to name a few. It is worth noting that the groups who most often use consensus are "communities" of some description; herein lies its greatest strength and possible limitations. Because of the high degree of trust and openness required and because each person should be allowed to contribute if they would like, I feel that size and shared values are important. For this reason, I am skeptical that a group of several thousand diverse people could effectively use this approach because there needs to be a degree of bonding and shared history for the conditions to be right. Carolyn Estes in a recent article on consensus in *Social Anarchism* argues the contrary.

The facilitator has a great deal of responsibility in seeing that the group is helped towards reaching consensus. S/he must make sure that everyone who wants to address the issue does so, state and restate suggestions, sum up the sense of the meeting and make sure that everyone is comfortable with the final decision. All this requires time and patience but the process can be quite enjoyable and interesting and teaches us to let go of our own preconceptions without sacrificing our individuality or autonomy and allows us to work effectively with a group.

When Consensus Breaks Down

When very strong differences of opinion recur (and they undoubtedly will), there are a number of things one can do depending on the resolvability of the situation. For example, during a Free University collective meeting, it was suggested that there be a women-only anarcha-feminism workshop. One of the women in the group was adamantly opposed to this as she felt that this was not appropriate for the Free University, which was supposed to be a forum for all. Tempers flared and an hour of solid debate seemed to take us no closer to a resolution.

Neither "side" would budge. Finally, a compromise by one of the other group members was suggested and after more discussion both "sides" agreed to it. Now we had a solution. There were no winners and no losers. Yet, in a way, the group "won" something. The integrity of the group in the face of a divisive issue was maintained and the ability of one individual (although she had support) to maintain an unpopular position without fear was proven. After the meeting (in spite of all the high emotion) we were able to join hands and sincerely say we respected each other's concerns.

Sometimes when a compromise is not possible, one or two people can "step aside", which means that while they don't necessarily agree to a particular proposal and don't wish to participate in it, they are not willing to block consensus or keep others from pursuing it.

If more than a few people "step aside" from a decision it can be a bad sign and may indicate that more time and discussion is needed.

Occasionally, a person in the group may feel at odds with the group most of the time. They may, for example, feel that the group is not doing the right things. If this seems to happen constantly, it's possible that the person is in the

wrong group and that they should seek out others who want to put their energies into projects they feel to be important.

To avoid coming to this realization after the group has been formed, it is well to go through a "clearness" process in the beginning. This is, of course, an ideal scenario and difficult to implement once a group is formed but might be helpful in admitting new members to a group where a high degree of trust has been established. The Quakers developed this process for helping members decide to embark on any major undertaking. To order a booklet which explains this process in more detail, write to New Society Publishers (address at the end of the article) and ask for **Clearness Processes for Supporting Individuals and Groups in Decision-making** by Peter Woodrow. Other articles which you might find useful are also listed.

This article is far from complete for considerations of space and because I'm still in the process of learning, but I wanted to begin the discussion. I feel that it's important for us to be conscious not simply of what we do but how we do it. Unfortunately, because of the culture in which most of us are raised, to be unconscious of process is to unconsciously duplicate the authoritarian, elitist, competitive, and

sexist, etc. models which we have passively learned since childhood. To choose new forms of interacting with people means that we must unlearn the powerlessness, competitiveness and fear of conflict that characterizes much of our experience with working in groups. Jane Mansbridge in **Workplace Democracy and Social Change** writes that "the main reason people tolerate hierarchy so well is that it buffers them from having to deal with people at a more authentic, conscious level of emotional depth." So, developing good process skills for those of us trying to change the world is not just a better way to get things done, but a conscious recognition that the world which needs changing is not just "out there", but within us and between us.

Thanks to Taylor, my women's group and the Free University collective for teaching and learning with me about different ways of being.

RESOURCES

"Anti-Mass — Some Points on Anarchist Organization" in **The Investigative Research Handbook**, ed. by Stuart Christie. BCM Refract. London, England WCIN 3XX.

Clearness — Process for Supporting Individuals and Groups in Decision-making by Peter Woodrow, New Society Publishers (4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA, 19143).

Meeting Facilitation: The No Magic Method by Berit Lakey, New Society Publishers.

No Bosses Here! A Manual On Working Collectively and Cooperatively by Karen Brandois, Jim McDonnell and Vocations for Social Change. New Society Publishers.

Some of these titles are available from **Books, Eh?**, Box 6248, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1P6. Write to them for a Catalogue. □

To order the new tape by Gerry Hannah (ex-Subhumans; member of the Vancouver 5), *Songs From the Underground* (recorded in the prison at Matsqui, B.C.), send a \$3.50 money order and enough money to cover postage to: **Connie, P.O. Box 34332, Station D, Vancouver, B.C.** (we might mention that as part of their effort to try to break Gerry's spirit, prison authorities have been denying him access to certain political publications — such as **Kick It Over** — which are sent to him).

Challenging Borders:

Interview with a Central American Peace Marcher

interview by Alexandra Devon and Ron Hayley

KIO: Describe how the idea of the peace march developed, how it came together, and what it was intended to accomplish.

D.M.: It was initiated by Torrilde Eade about two years ago. She's from Norway. She helped organize three previous all women's marches in Scandinavia, and one march that actually breached the "Iron Curtain." It was from Torrilde Eade's initiative that a call was sent out to committees in thirty different countries around the world, who all ended up sending delegates to Central America on Dec. 10th, 1985.

That was how the march was initiated and it was the organizing committee in the 30 different countries in the end that helped put together all the final touches of the march. The main purpose can be described through the three main mottos of the march: self-determination, solidarity, and human rights. Those are the main principles that the march meant to bolster. We wanted to bolster the local organizing peace and justice committees in each of the countries that we traveled through. Just through meeting them would bolster them because of the media attention and the credibility that they would gain through meeting with so many people from around the world. It also means a lot to them emotionally. It means a lot in terms of their constituencies. So that was one of the main goals.

A second concrete goal was to learn more about Central America ourselves though meeting with organizers, to learn more about their feelings and their daily and personal experiences.

The third major goal was to bring back word of what is going on in Central America to our friends, our peers, our communities in Canada, Scandinavia, and India etc.

KIO: What were the interpersonal dynamics like amongst the 300 marchers, who had never met before.

D.M.: It takes a lot to evaluate or to describe the group dynamics of the 300 to 400 people

that participated. There was a commitment in the early part of the march to consensus decision-making. At any one time there were 300 people. To try to make a decision with 299 other people, with dozens of different mother languages and several different decision-making styles depending on whether one came from the peace movement, the labour movement, the women's movement or the ecology movement can be frustrating.

There were extreme centrists there. There were extreme shouters. There were extreme sexist males. There were extremely different decision-makers. The diversity was great. But it was extremely frustrating too. We tired to make decisions, for instance, in Panama at the Costa Rican border, whether or not we should stay for three days or go to Costa Rica. We were given this choice because the Costa Rican government told us that we weren't going to be able to go and stay in San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica, for the three days that we were previously told we could. So there was quite a divergence of opinion within the 300 or so marchers at that time as to whether or not we should spend that three days in Panama, making a fuss about not being able to visit and speak, with Costa Rican citizens. Or take up the Costa Rican governments offer of being bused straight to the Nicaraguan border not stopping through Costa Rica — not even for bathrooms.

And oddly enough there was a very strong Canadian group that wanted to stay in Panama and make a fuss on the border for a day or two and actually try to walk across, despite the fact that we were told that there would be violent protesters to meet us. About half the other nations also wanted to stay in Panama, but when they sent their representatives to what is called "group 2" the representative council of the march they found they were goaded by three very aggressive American males who were members of the executive of the march. And these three American males — Peter and Blaise and somebody else, they pretty well dominated the decision-making in the representative council.

This was a very tough meeting because we were having it after five hours of waiting for the buses to come any minute when we could have been talking for five hours about whether or not we should be staying or going. Ultimately we were told in half an hour we had to make this big decision, and the bus drivers were leaving with or without us.

So it was a bad process from the beginning. The Canadian group, while all this flustered decision-making was taking place, was having a very calm "democratic" meeting. We started a round-robin and every person in the group was able to say whether he or she wanted to stay in Panama or not. Within six days we had become a very close group. We had very good meetings. Relaxed meetings. Everyone got a chance to speak. There was a real intense focus on trying to have non-sexist group behaviour, on having items on the agenda. So that by the time all the other nation groups had finished their meetings and had sent their representatives to the representative council; by the time the representative council had finished its process of being dominated by the three American males from the executive, with the whole march basically deciding to bus straight to Nicaragua, the Canadian group was still halfway through their first go-around when we found out that the representative council had already made its decision.

We were automatically struck by an intense degree of angst because everyone in the Canadian group was speaking in favour of staying in Panama, and we found out that the representative council of the march representing the other 270 or so people had decided to go. So we were faced with a second decision to make: do we abide by the representative council or do we go by our own decision? Previously, we had made a decision that we would abide by the representative council. Because we knew that, given twelve or so different nation groupings in the march, we can't have the march breaking off on this little adventure and that little excursion every second day because of the individual nation groups. So we had decided that we

had to work within this anti-democratic process of the peace march to try and get our voice in.

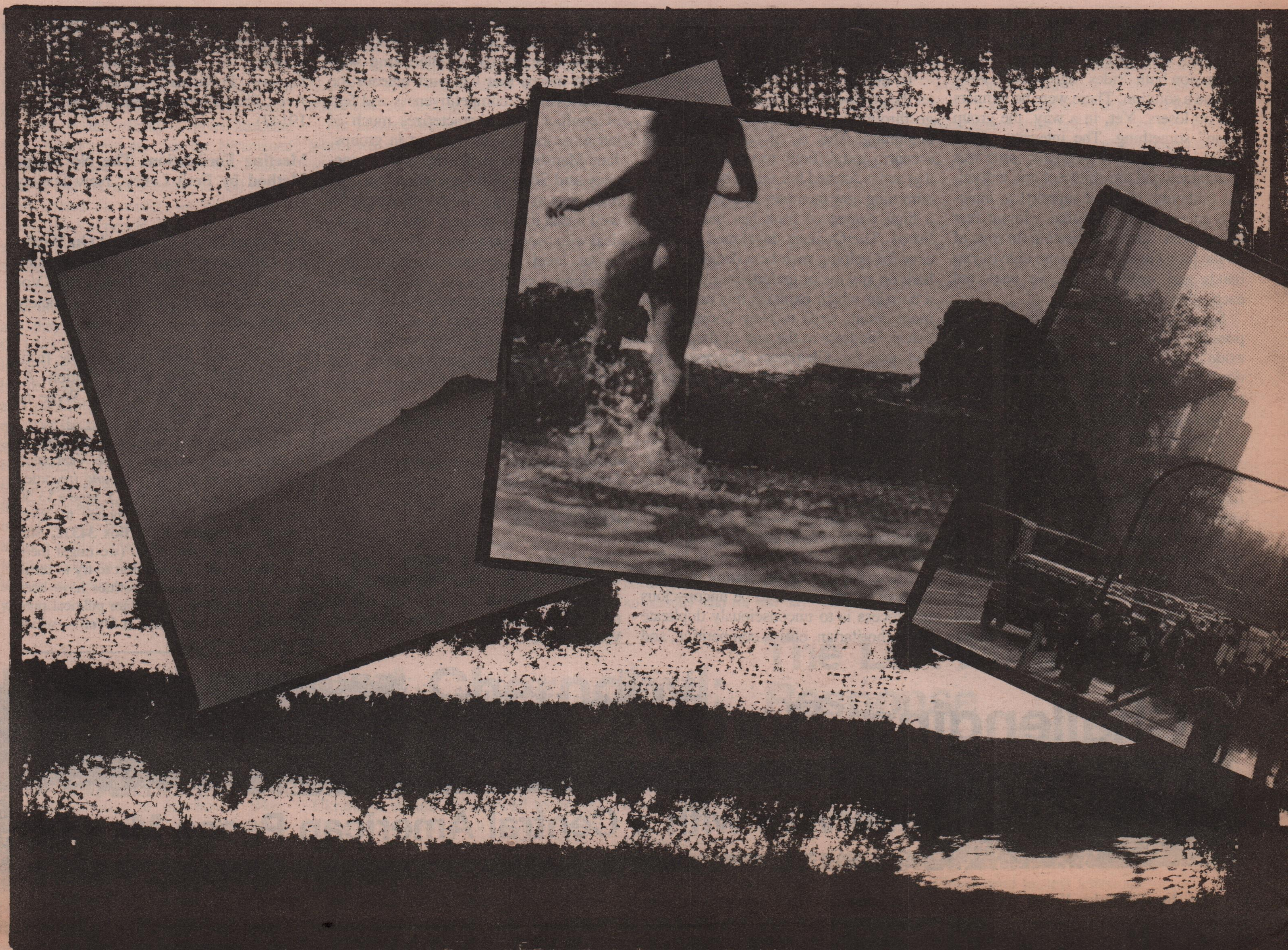
But because of the very bad process the very short decision-making time, and the fact that the representative council met without even finding out why the Canadians hadn't sent a representative, we decided to break our previous decision of abiding by the representative council and actually go with our feelings. And that meant staying in Panama when everyone else was clambering on the buses to be bused to Nicaragua.

I get tingles even whenever I talk about it because it was such an intense emotional experience to prepare to go to Central America for several months, learn a little Spanish, and get all the guides and whatnot, and then spend several days in workshops and organizing political theater, and helping out with a rally in Panama City, when poof! You find out that your conscience pulls you away from the rest of the march.

There were four Canadians out of twenty-six that decided that we were doing the wrong thing and every time one Canadian left our circle the circle broke apart for a while, and every time a person left it was like losing an arm or something because you were losing your consensus, you were losing your circle, you were losing the confidence that came from making such a rupturous and rapturous decision. But for every one Canadian that left there were three people from the other countries that jumped off the buses to join us and so we were balanced in that way in terms of the group dynamics at the time.

This is an example of how the group dynamics went in the march. It's an example of the extremely divergent interests as to why people went to Central America in the first place. How would we relate to some kind of a rule coming down upon us from a government that we don't like in Central America? This was an example of unity at the same time in this instance, of a mainly Canadian group and twelve other people from other nations,

continued on page 12



who joined us. And the spirit that flourished from that incident continued throughout the march. It was a test in some ways of some very interesting theoretical debates. How far do you go to preserve the unity of a certain action or of a certain movement, and when is it necessary to split off and form your own peace march?

KIO: Was there a lot of moral pressure not to break with it?

D.M.: Very much so, especially when you have all sorts of people waving out the windows of the buses yelling "what are you doing?". And other people coming up to our singing circle raising their voices and screaming "your're breaking the unity, you're ruining the peace march."

KIO: So what finally happened?

D.M.: Well I decided that despite the pressure the group that I most strongly identified with was my cell group. That's the reason why I also spoke in favour of staying and the whole group staying. So everyone else got on the buses and the buses left in the midst of a coastal Costa Rican downpour and we continued meeting for another twenty minutes or so and had a half an hour break because we were all wiped, and had small group meetings. And that was an interesting thing, too.

We had about thirty-six people after all the rest of the buses left, and many of those argued that since we've gone through this tremendous experience together of actually splitting away from the rest of the march, we didn't need to split into small groups. But I spoke strongly in favour of breaking into smaller groups and talking about the emotional experience that we had just gone through, and about the practicalities of what we were going to do that night and the next day.

We argued actually for about an hour or 45 minutes as to whether or not we should break into smaller groups. So we ended up breaking

into about five small groups to decide what we were going to do logistically. And a couple of hours passed, and then a Panamanian official came to us and told us we had done the right thing, and that they were really upset that the rest of the march left. This really bolstered us because one of the reasons that the three American males had used to dominate the decision-making in the representative council was that they didn't know whether the Panamanian community wanted us to stay or not.

The second announcement that came to us just after the Panamanian official had arrived was that the rest of the march was blocked — stopped at the highway two hundred meters down the road. Costa Rica wouldn't let them in. So about four hours after the actual rupture, after the split, we walked down the road singing and joined them. And we met with them for a while. It was quite late at night by this point, so some of us went to sleep. I took the time to mingle amongst the rest of the marchers — or whoever was still up talking or partying — and talked with them about why we had done what we had and why it was so important. And we talked about what would be necessary for us not to do that again or, in fact for us to join them since that's what so many of them wanted us to do.

The leadership of the march finally agreed that they would listen to our concerns, and the government of Costa Rica agreed to let us stay in San Jose for one night, and so we did get on the buses the next morning.

KIO: Did you feel at risk during any part of your trip?

D.M.: Well, there was the one incident in Costa Rica where, when we drove into San Jose — the one night we were allowed in San Jose — there were about 300 demonstrators on the right hand side of the street, and they were singing Spanish liberation songs and they were chanting loudly — very raucously —

I liked it a lot. They were singing and screaming and crowding the buses and sticking their faces in the window as we were driving in. It was great.

On the other side of the street there were 50 to 70 members of a group called *Costa Rica de libre* — Free Costa Rica. It was a group that was started by the Minister of the Interior of Costa Rica a couple of years ago. I compare it to a neo-nazi youth group. They had tear gas which they probably got from the government, and they had stones and they pelted us and the Costa Rican supporters, and they pelted the hostel that we were quickly escorted into. And there were 13 Costa Ricans that did get hurt badly. Their heads were split open with rocks. One of them lost an eye. And there were quite a few marchers and Costa Rican supporters who were keeled over because of the tear gas. It was very, very painful.

I was close friends with Lynn Jones who was a doctor on the march from Greenham Common in England. And I was in the hospital room for a little trying to help out. And I saw all the patients and the franticness of what was going on. It was quite startling, the whole event. That was certainly the event which frightened most people in the march and probably made most of the marchers feel threatened physically. Even at that point, however, I was willing to be dragged by the Costa Rican military if that was what was necessary for them to move us the next day.

KIO: What do you feel are some of the most valuable lessons you learned from being on the march?

D.M.: I think aside from Latin American politics and the beauty of the countryside in Latin America, what I learned most about was large group process. We're not used to trying to come to a consensus decision with 300 people. And that was quite a challenge going through the different stages. We started out with a clearly defined division of labour.

The nation groups were in charge of disseminating of information and mustering support, the representative council for coming to all crucial decisions, and the executive crisis decision-making body (made up of about nine or ten priests), march organizers, Central American "experts", lawyers, etc. Their duty was to make all the decisions in times of crisis, or if we had to come to a decision very quickly.

For the first four weeks of the march, that executive body dominated decision-making. And throughout that four weeks, and into the fifth week, there was a struggling of facilitators and process-oriented people in the march to figure out how to improve the process and make the representative council more sovereign. The representative council meetings were practically eliminated after the fifth week, and the executive was changed.

They ended up allowing the mass of the march to make the decisions, which may sound good to some people, but it was horrible from my own personal perspective because it was only the people who could stay at the meeting for more than two hours that ended up having any say in the decision-making. And it was usually males from Spain and Denmark especially — that completely dominated this process. And I think what made Denmark and Spain stand out was that they had a large contingent of members from the Communist Party. I found them to be fairly rigid, fairly dogmatic in not wanting to be more caring or listening to what other people had to say. It was extremely frustrating. So I've been thinking about it fairly intensely since the march, and how decision-making for such a large group of transient people could be different, and I was very much involved in trying to make the process better.

KIO: The march went through a total of four countries?

D.M.: Well, we went through Panama,



Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Mexico. Five countries. And we also sent delegations to El Salvador and Honduras. So seven countries in total. The last two countries, El Salvador and Honduras, we were only allowed to send small delegations of six to fifteen people.

KIO: And could you just briefly tell whether you encountered any hostility either at the official government level or on a level compared to what you experienced in Costa Rica in any of those countries?

D.M.: Well, in Guatemala there was exceptional circumstances because of the election of Venicio Servenza. He was being heralded as a new peace-lover president. Because of his inauguration the situation in Guatemala was somewhat different that it usually is, and so we weren't actually repressed or jailed or spoken strongly against by the Guatemalan press.

In El Salvador, certainly a lot of the articles and whatnot went against us because the media is owned by some fairly rich capitalists who are very unsympathetic to the majority of the people and to the guerrillas. We went into El Salvador very informally, very quietly. In fact we sneaked in. We actually went in as tourists in small groups so that we couldn't be conspicuous. We knew that in El Salvador we would be put out of the country very quickly, or we would be find or probably imprisoned for a day, or something like that, so we weren't very overt in El Salvador.

In Panama, the government welcomed us every step of the way, and they liked a lot of what we were doing. In Mexico, the government wasn't too keen on us, though they did have some government spokespersons speak at the rally in Mexico City. Mostly it was peasant organizations and labour organizations and student groups.

Honduras is the other government which was very violent against us verbally in

preaching all sorts of lies about the peace march, and they had fifty armed guards — armed to the hilt — meet us at the Honduran border. Every soldier had a machine gun and tear gas and helmets and uniforms, and they were all standing in a military formation on the border.

KIO: Did any small section of the march spend any time in Honduras?

D.M.: Yes, we did send a delegation to Honduras. I don't know very much about that delegation. They met with some priests and some organizations in Honduras and also lobbied Honduras to let us in. They contacted quite a few embassies. So yes, there was a small contingent of us in Honduras.

KIO: You mentioned earlier that one of the small groups which went into El Salvador demonstrated in front of Durate's house?

D.M.: Yes. There were two delegations that went to El Salvador. One was an official one before the march was ready to go into El Salvador. The second delegation did some very interesting things. I was a member of that delegation. When the last marchers arrived in Guatemala City from Nicaragua, the march started heading north the next morning to Mexico and we knew that if the Salvadoran government found out that the march was heading north from Guatemala City to Mexico — Guatemala being north of El Salvador — that the Salvadoran government would be relieving the border restrictions. They had cut off their border completely. In fact there were a lot of vehicles, a lot of aid groups, and people who were ordinary tourists that would not get into El Salvador because of the march being in Central America.

But once the rest of the march headed to Guatemala the government did relieve its border restrictions and thirteen of us sneaked in as tourists. We went in four small groups — the thirteen of us — that's how serious or apprehensive we were about not appearing as

a contingent. So we met at a hotel in San Salvador and joined the last day of thirteen day vigil.

The thirteen day vigil was organized by some Central American people who wanted to join together with us if we were allowed into El Salvador. In other words, if the Salvadoran government wasn't going to stop us from getting into El Salvador, then there would have been 300 of us getting around January 4th. There were something like 800 Salvadoran citizens prepared to join us at that time. When we weren't allowed into Honduras or El Salvador, those people started their own vigil for thirteen days. And they went to San Salvador and protested very openly at a Basilica and in front of the National Palace in downtown San Salvador. They actually took refuge in the Basilica for much of the time as a place to sleep and as a place they could feel secure, across from the National Palace.

So on the last day of their vigil we were able to get into San Salvador and we joined them. We were pleased to be able to give them that support, and it was right in front of president Durate's household that we demonstrated. There were about 300 of us at that time. Mostly women and children because its dangerous for men to demonstrate in El Salvador openly.

In fact, on the third day of that thirteen day vigil one Brigido Sanchez was captured by the El Salvadoran authorities. He was asked to get off the bus, and the others who were asked to get off the bus were allowed to get back on but he wasn't. He was taken away and he was put in prison without a trial and was subsequently tortured. He has been drugged and now after being drugged and tortured he's been forced to confess to 37 murders, which of course conflicts with anything his family or his lawyers are saying. And now his family has had to go into exile as well. Internal exile at this point. So that's an example

of the dangerousness of males demonstrating in El Salvador.

KIO: Are organizations in the countries you visited committed to non-violence? Is that seen by the people down there as a viable option? How much wide spread support is there for the guerrilla movements in the various countries?

D.M.: Well I'd have to say that most of the people in the countries of Central America — and this is a gross generalization — are not politicized and they want to continue with their present way of life — their rural way of life or their urban ghetto way of life.

The politicized core, as with here in Canada, are certainly very, very diverse in the way of the strategies and beliefs they have for achieving social change.

When we were in El Salvador we met with a priest — I wish I could remember his name. He spoke with us for about five hours about the importance of a non-violence movement in El Salvador. We also talked with a lawyer student, and a couple of their students, in the city of San Salvador about the importance of non-violent struggle in El Salvador. It is very interesting in a country so repressive that someone so strongly against the policies of the government would still commit themselves to a non-violent strategy.

On the other hand I personally think that the forces which are bringing El Salvador to a period where once again people will have a chance to find their own dignity and destiny are the armed guerrillas in the mountains. We weren't able to meet with them so it's impossible for me to contrast or compare the speech of the priest with that of a spokesperson for the FMLN/FDR. I don't think I can really comment on the different strategies or the political atmosphere in Central America after being there for just two months, or even after having studied it from afar.

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KIO: What were your impressions of Nicaragua and how would you characterize your reception there?

D.M.: The reception was very positive from the government and the people in Nicaragua. We were hosted warmly — given adequate food. And I must say that the Nicaraguan government and people were very patient with us and tolerant because, as 300 people from around the world, we were quite a mixed group of people. We were very insensitive in many ways to the cultural norms and the needs of the organizers in Nicaragua.

I wanted to add a couple of words of criticism though to the Nicaraguan government and they way that we were treated. The C.O.N.I.P.A.Z. organization which is a coalition of peace groups in Nicaragua — funded by the Sandanista government — treated us as a political tool in many ways. Although many of the hosts, many of the villages we stayed in were very warm to us and while the Nicaraguan government was extremely pleased that we were there, at the same time it felt like we were being used as a political tool in that we were being bused from city to city to listen to this political rally or to listen to that political rally, to boost a certain committee here or an organization there. One of the major reasons why we went to Central America

was certainly to boost various organizations throughout Nicaragua. At the same time we were not treated very fairly sometimes by the C.O.N.I.P.A.Z. organizations which were responsible for hosting us.

For instance we were given a time line when we entered Nicaragua. Where we would be when. Which city we would be in at a certain point three days or six days down the line. And C.O.N.I.P.A.Z. kept pushing us very very fast. We would have little time to shower, little time to launder, little time to eat, relax and talk with ordinary Nicaraguan citizens. This was disheartening. What was most disheartening was trying to talk them out of doing this. There were a lot of marchers getting sick because we were being pushed too fast, and there were a lot getting extremely frustrated because we weren't able to do what we wanted to do. They didn't even seem willing to compromise. It took a heck of a lot of bargaining and frustration to convince them to change their itinerary the least little bit, even though they were changing their itinerary fairly often. So that was very frustrating.

There were various points where the Nicaraguan authorities — either because of what they wanted us to do for them, or because they didn't trust us — caused a lot of

tensions in the march. And I think its not just something to do with the particular personalities in C.O.N.I.P.A.Z.. It also has to do with their assumption that we should be abiding by their authority. And that really rubbed against my grain quite strongly, and I was quite an ardent spokesperson that we should just ignore some of the things the Nicaraguan authorities wanted us to do. And we did in fact just go out and did our own march one day for the whole day and slept overnight at a certain place, which they didn't like at all. A good example of the conflict of interest between what the Nicaraguan authorities thought should happen and something which exposes their distrust of us is when we were approaching the Honduran border, they didn't want us to go into the no-persons land which is six kilometers wide.

The Nicaraguans have actually conceded six kilometers of territory along their whole northern border for the sake of peace. It's not the Hondurans who have back-tracked six kilometers, it's the Nicaraguans, to create a no persons zone. The Nicaraguan authorities didn't want us to go into that zone, but we did — all the marchers did. It wasn't even a point of contention within the march. So the Nicaraguan authorities finally let us into that no-persons land for one day. They let us go

up to the border and meet the fifty specially trained Honduran "Cobras" with their tear gas and machine guns. Then we were told we would have to bus back to Managua. We didn't want to, and so we negotiated with the Nicaraguans at the end of the first day, if we could stay for a second day. Previously they weren't going to allow us to do that and I was extremely critical of them. I felt it was important that we at least try to establish a presence on the border and to apply pressure as much as possible.

We had delegations going to the local towns of Estile and Somoto calling embassies around the world and the international media to bring attention to the fact that the Honduran government was not allowing us to get in to talk to ordinary Honduran citizens. So we met with the Nicaraguan authorities to try to convince them into letting us stay an extra day or two, and they weren't going to let us but they trusted us more after seeing that we weren't going to cause some kind of incident, that we were just going to be singing songs and maybe doing some theatre for the Honduran guards. The ended up letting us stay there for five days. I must credit them for the fact that once they did see us in action they did come to trust us, which is really good. □

Fallout Around Chernobyl: The Left-wing Response

by Bob McGlynn

Since the report on independent disarmament activities in the Soviet Bloc, (**KIO** #14) much has happened, Chernobyl being the obvious. The response of the U.S. government was predictable, i.e. "Let's take advantage of this for Cold War purposes." The response of the mainstream U.S. peace movement was also typical; they seemed to use the issue to advance their organizational position, as opposed to making positive use of the tragedy to advance grassroots unity between people and anti-nuclear movements of both blocs. For instance, a press conference of disarmament and environmental groups was called in Washington D.C. the day after the report of the accident. Why weren't exiled Soviet and Ukrainian activists, especially from the Moscow based anti-nuclear *Trust Group*, invited or asked for advice?

In N.Y.C. a planning meeting was called to organize around Chernobyl — no one bothered to invite *Trust Group* exiles. Luckily I found out about the meeting from a friend and members from the N.Y. *Trust Group* attended. That meeting went quite well with activists agreeing to have the *Trust Group* attend a demo at the Soviet mission the following day. The demands were sensible, i.e. stop the repression of Soviet peace activists. A second demo planned for the following week was when the crap started. Pro-

Soviet sorts manoeuvred things, while others let them get away with it, so that there was even a debate as to whether a Ukrainian should be allowed to speak. The end result was that a Ukrainian could speak but that the *Trust Group* could not. *Imagine organizing an event against racism and refusing to let a Black speak!*

Outside of a small circle of supporters, not one anti-nuclear or peace activist has called Sergei Batovrin (exiled spokesperson for the *Trust Group*) to suggest doing some joint activity around Chernobyl. Sergei himself frantically called groups and activists to get aid on a project to get suppressed information into the U.S.S.R. concerning radioactive hazards. *No one would help.* Nice, eh?

Consider what would have happened if there were an American-owned nuke in Puerto Rico that melted down. Immediately, many U.S. activists would have put themselves at the disposal of Puerto Rican organizations, accepting their leadership or acting in concert with them in organizing an offensive. There would be demands for the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners and for the independence of Puerto Rico. Let's remember that Ukraine is a country occupied by Russian imperialism — it's a colonized country. It's not "the" Ukraine. Calling it that is like saying "the" Russia, or "the" Peru, as if it's a section of a nation, like "the Midwest".

So where's the respect for Soviet acti-

vists? The elitism and chauvinism of the mainstream disarmament movement is a roadblock to rank-and-file "defense from below" and must be stopped.

In the U.S.S.R.

Repression against the *Trust Group* has continued unabated. The details would fill up this whole newspaper, but here's one example: In April, Kirill Popov was sentenced to six years of a labour camp regime and five years of internal exile. The positive side is that the *Trust Group* continues not only to exist, but to thrive.

It is often repeated that protests from Western activists aid the *Trust Group*. We have a recent example of this. *Trust* activist, Nina Kovalenko, was imprisoned this spring in a Moscow mental hospital and subjected to painful forced drug-ging. One member of the N.Y. *Trust Group* visited the hospital, tried to get in, and then talked to Nina through one of the ward's windows. Another member of the N.Y. *Trust Group* placed a phone call to the hospital to demand her release. In Europe, protests were held and twelve activists from the Moscow *Trust Group* went on a hunger strike for eight days. Guess what? She was soon released, along with Irina Pankrateva, 17, also a mental hospital *Trust* prisoner!

In Poland Wojtek Jankowski, one of the members of the anti-war *Freedom and Peace Group*, is also a member of the

anarchist *Movement for an Alternative Society*. In December 1985, he got three and a half years for refusing mandatory military service. Jacek Czaputowicz and Piotr Niemczyk of the *Freedom and Peace Group* were also imprisoned in February. □

Please send protest letters to:

**Minister of Justice, Lech Domeracki
Aleje Ujazdowski II
00 950 Warsaw, Poland.**

To protest *Trust Group* repression:

**Mikhail Gorbachev
Kremlin
Moscow, USSR**

Updates on the *Trust Group* are available for a SASE and \$1. Send a contribution for an annual subscription to:

**Bob McGlynn
528 5th St.
Brooklyn, NY
11215 USA
(718-499-7720)**

The *Trust Group* can be reached directly through:

**Sergei Batovrin
PO Box 1073,
NYC 10040, USA
(212-304-1943)**



THE TRUE STORY OF SANDINO

(Part 2)

by Jay Moore

The role of anarchism in the making of the Mexican Revolution, the 20th Century's first great social upheaval, is poorly known and little appreciated. But it was a significant one. An historian has described anarchists like the Flores Magon brothers, who founded the first political party to oppose the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship, as the Revolution's true "intellectual precursors".

The anarchists from this Liberal Party — many aligned with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) — spent long years, both in Mexico and from exile, agitating for Diaz's overthrow. They were also the first to take up arms against Diaz. In the Civil war which followed the Revolution, anarcho-syndicalists and anarcho-communists fought on all three sides — with Carranza, with Pancho Villa, and with Zapata. (Unfortunately they were unable to unite on a common strategy. The anarcho-syndicalists helped install Carranza who had made a few hollow promises to the workers.)

It was not until much later, in response to the Russian Revolution, that the economic ideas of Karl Marx or his followers appeared as a serious force in Mexico or elsewhere in Central America. The Mexican Communist Party was founded, with outside Communist help, in 1919. It tried immediately to insinuate itself into the strong Mexican labour movements and among the organizations of the peasants. Still, until the 1930's — aside from the official government unions — anarcho-syndicalism remained as the dominant labour philosophy, rather than the state-socialism advocated by the Communists.

As we have seen, Sandino spent what was for himself a very important formative period in Mexico from 1923-26. While there, he was educated in radical politics within a working class milieu around the Tampico oil-fields strongly influenced by the IWW and its emphasis of workers' control and direct action. Sandino was a member of an anarcho-syndicalist trade union. Upon returning to Nicaragua, he later adopted their red and black flag, and that is why these are the colours of the "Sandinistas" in Nicaragua today.

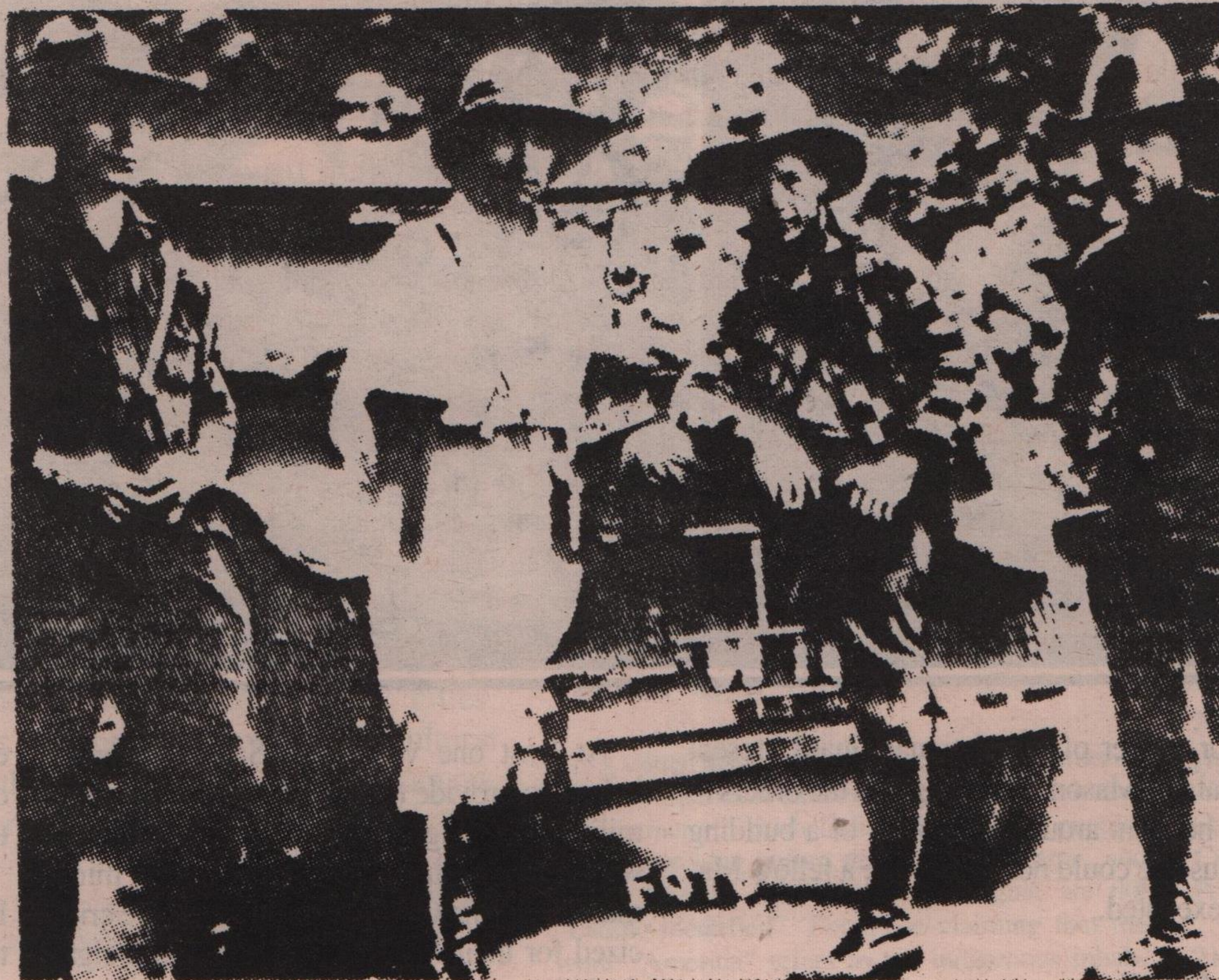
Sandino and the Communists

When Sandino began his war of national liberation in 1927, there were very few pro-Soviet Communists, if any at all, active in Nicaragua. However, agents of the Communist International moved quickly to try to annex Sandino under the Marxist-Leninist banner.

During the spring of 1928, the Anti-Imperialist League — a group founded by the communists in Central America — worked closely raising funds in Mexico city with Sandino's own representative, Dr. Pedro Jose Zepeda. In New York, a branch of the Anti-Imperialist League succeeded in recruiting Socrates Sandino, the guerrilla leader's own half-brother (they shared a common father). He was a carpenter who had been found living unobtrusively in Brooklyn.

The Anti-Imperialist League put him forward as a speaker at their public events, and Socrates' name was signed to a series of newspaper articles denouncing U.S. intervention in Nicaragua. Money was also collected in New York, ostensibly to be turned over to the Sandinistas. Sandino himself seems to have been pleased with the appearance of Communist support.

The 6th Congress of the Communist International convened in Moscow during the summer of 1928. It heralded a sharp turn to the Left in the Comintern's (short for the



Communist — or Third — International) rhetoric. The period of temporary capitalist stabilization was declared now to be at an end. A new analysis of the situation held that a triumphant upsurge for worldwide revolutionary movements was sure to be forthcoming.

Along with a barrage of other comradely messages, the assembled delegates forwarded their fraternal greetings "to the workers and peasants of Nicaragua and the heroic army of national emancipation of General Sandino."

Meanwhile, in Frankfurt, Germany, a Sandinista delegation was attending the first International Anti-Imperialist Congress. This meeting was organized by the Comintern but attracted such future Third World leaders as India's Nehru. Indications are that the Comintern paid the travel expenses of the visiting Nicaraguans.

Yet, the Congress served to reveal a crack within the nascent Sandinista-Communist alliance. When the Communists tried to unseat the delegation of Haya de la Torre's American Popular Revolutionary Alliance, a group with a non-Marxist revolutionary ideology, the Sandinistas refused to go along with it.

Faced with a powerful North American enemy killing his people, Sandino realized the necessity of accepting support from wherever it was available. His overall strategy was that of a broad united front, veering neither too much to the left nor too much to the right.

Nevertheless, in a 1929 letter, Sandino praised the organizations of the left. These "are the ones that can make us think — those of us who preach determined social doctrines." The same year, he sent a message of greetings to the founding congress of the *Confederation Syndical Latino Americana*, a Communist-backed labour organization.

Sandino's struggle drew numerous other radical Latin Americans who came to the Nicaraguan jungles to fight side by side against the hated Yankees. One of these was the Salvadorean Communist, Augustin Farabundo Marti. He became Sandino's personal secretary.

Marti tried hard to woo Sandino closer to the Communist's own particular doctrine. This stated that the salvation of the countries with a peasant majority was conceivable openly under working class leadership. Thus, Sandino, as an ex-oil worker, was no doubt seen as a likely convert — a man in whom the Communists would be willing to place a large-scale investment of their time and energy.

At the same time, the Communists worked hard to isolate Sandino from his field of other possible supporters. In Mexico, they formed a "Hands Off Nicaragua Committee" which competed with Dr. Zepeda in the department of Sandinista fundraising. They claimed falsely that their organization was the only one authorized by Sandino for this purpose.

In order to discredit Zepeda, they spread truthless rumours that he had misappropriated for his own use some of the Sandinista's money. When Zepeda raised money and sent it to Sandino, the new committee instead tried to take the credit for it. In actuality, the Communists could only raise by themselves a paltry \$1000 — most of which was eaten up by the Communists' "expenses".

By 1929, the military situation in Nicaragua had fallen into a stalemate. Sandino decided that the thing to do was to leave the country temporarily in order to solicit aid from Mexican President Portes Gil and to take his message directly to the outside. He and his advisors were able to reach Mexico in June. The Mexicans put him on hold, and Sandino was compelled to wait for an audience at an isolated villa on the Yucatan Peninsula.

Time began to drag on with no appearance in sight by the Mexicans. Under these circumstances, a struggle took place as the various factions in Sandino's camp, including the Communists, vied for his allegiance.

The Communists in particular had opposed the idea of Sandino's trip in the first place. Now, they tried their utmost to sabotage it. But Sandino, as one biographer reports, "steadfastly refused to submit to communist dictation".

In December 1929, the Communist-backed "Hands Off Nicaragua Committee" turned openly against Sandino. They charged the General with an act of betrayal — "specifically, of accepting their money to carry on the fight in Nicaragua and then taking a \$60,000 bribe from the United States to exile himself in Mexico."

Angered by this off-the-wall accusation, Sandino wrote the Secretary General of the Mexican Communist Party, Hernan Laborde, pleading his innocence and demanding an investigation. "An investigation ordered by Laborde cleared Sandino of the bribe-taking charge, but the inference that Sandino has somehow betrayed the communist movement remained." After this incident, Sandino ceased to put any real trust in the Communists.

At last, in January 1930, after a wait of more than six months, a meeting was arranged for Sandino with the Mexican officials.

Marti — as a last ditch effort to stop the meeting from happening — alleged that the Mexicans had agreed to it only because they wanted to poison him. Sandino refused to believe this. Instead, fed up with the Communists' constant machinations and their extreme sectarianism, he dismissed Marti as his secretary and told him to leave his company forever. Sandino was able to fool his Mexican hosts — with whom he was also disappointed — and sneaked away from them to return to the fight in Nicaragua. For the next two and a half years he and his army waged an unremitting struggle against the Yankee invaders and their local collaborators.

The break with the Communists was final. After April 1930, Sandino had no further dealings with them. For their part, they never treated Sandino with anything but personal hostility. According to a statement by the Mexican Communist Party, Sandino had gone back to Nicaragua only "to sell out to the highest bidder".

It was said later that Marti had left Sandino's camp for reasons of health. Yet, Marti himself made clear in a letter in 1931 that the differences between the two men were deeply political: "My break with Sandino was not brought on, as has been said, by differences on moral points, or by different standards of conduct. I refused to join him again in the Segovias because he wanted no part of the Communist program I had been defending."

Marti praised Sandino's patriotism. This was a blow to Communist propaganda elsewhere. Yet, Marti seems to have been one of the initiators at this time of the subsequent myth that Sandino's "banner was only that of national independence..." — in other words that he somehow lacked broader social vision for Nicaragua's future.

Sandino's own philosophy

Following his return to Nicaragua and the final parting of company with the Communists, Sandino seems to have felt a compelling need to articulate his own philosophical ideas. He did this in the interesting form of a cosmology or creation story of the universe.

First, there came a test of it on his acquaintances. Then, on February 15, 1931, he felt bold enough to issue a manifesto, "**Luz y verdad**" (Light and Truth) to his army. "Well, good brothers", he addressed them. "Many have wanted to take on the opportunity to explain these beautiful things. In the beginning — even before the aether and matter — existed a great universal principle which some know by the name, 'God'. This is Love, and the only daughter of Love is Divine Justice."

"Often we have heard of the Final Judgment of the World. For the Final Judgment, we ought to understand the destruction of injustice." The remaining years of the 20th Century is when this long-awaited event will occur. Then, Divine Justice will have her own reign, and the oppressed will break the bonds of their past humiliations at the hands of the imperialists. Sandino, a Mason, suggested that his men should henceforth call each other "brothers", and the Manifesto has overtones of a Masonic ritual. (Theosophy may have been another influence.)

Meanwhile, Sandino's war with the sell-out Liberal Nicaraguan President, General Moncada, and his 5,000 U.S. Marine backers went on in the mountains and jungles. The Americans employed their most advanced weapons, including the newly invented helicopter and the vertical take-off airplane. They spent a great deal of money training the Nicaraguan national Guard to do the fighting for them. Still, by the end, 136 U.S. Marines had died — 32 of them killed in action, and Sandino's resistance was no closer to being ended. □



Mounting opposition at home caused the Hoover administration to decide on pulling out from the unending quagmire after the 1932 Nicaraguan elections. A deal was worked out whereby the two feuding political parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals, would share power whatever happened. The United States would continue its leading role in the country's affairs but from behind the scenes.

Sandino, who preferred the departure of the Marines first and the naming of a provisional nonpolitical president, urged an electoral boycott. Nevertheless, the Liberal Dr. Sacasa, whom Sandino had returned from Mexico to defend in 1926 was elected President. He was inaugurated on January 1, 1933, and the next day the last of the Marines departed from the country.

Sandino decided to open peace negotiations.² He demanded from Sacasa the creation of a new Department in the wild, unsettled area along with the Coco River. (Since the realignment of the border part of this now falls in Honduras.) This would be called, "Luz y Verdad".

There, those of his soldiers who wished to remain with him would begin to build the cooperative agricultural experiment he had laid out years earlier in his interview with Carlton Beals. One hundred of his men would be allowed to keep their arms as a force for their defense.

He also pushed for an international conference to discuss the future of a Nicaraguan canal — another old idea.

Sacasa, who wished to use Sandino as a counterweight to the growing power of the head of the National Guard, Anastasio Somoza, agreed to the new department. Sandino's army was officially disbanded on February 22. He retired to his project. Centered around Guiguili, it had an area of over 36,800 square kilometers — the size of a small principality.

As Sandino's biographer, Neil McCaulay has said, Sandino "saw the key to Nicaragua's advancement in the colonization of the republics vast wilderness areas. Such an undertaking, Sandino believed, required great cooperative efforts, and for this he favored the communal organization of his Indian ancestors; at Guiguili he could set the example." Here Sandino remained for the next year and considered the possibility of forming a new political party.

On February 16, 1934, General Sandino arrived in Managua for a set of further discussions with President Sacasa. On the 21st, a banquet was held at the Presidential palace. Afterwards, Sandino's war was stopped and he was pulled out by members of the National Guard. Somoza had decided that he needed to have his principal armed rival murdered.

That night, Sandino, his brother Socrates, and two Sandinista generals were machine-gunned to death on the runway at the Managua airport. According to the story, the

senior officer of the National Guard present was also a Mason. Having given the orders to fire, he went around the corner of a building because he could not bear to see a fellow Mason executed.

The FSLN

After Sandino's death, one or two of his surviving lieutenants tried on their own to keep the movement from becoming extinguished. But they, too, were eventually driven from the country or killed. Yet, the spirit of Sandinismo — and the magic of Sandino's name — remained alive within many Nicaraguan breasts.

The Nicaraguan Communist Party (called the Nicaraguan Socialist Party or PSN) was founded in 1937. By this time, the Comintern's policy had veered sharply to the right. After the 7th Congress of the Communist International in 1935, local Communist organizations were ordered to form Popular Fronts in order to gain influence. These were to be long-term, strategic alliances essentially with whomever would have them.

Previously, the Communists had criticized Sandino for seeking aid from the Mexican government and for negotiating with Dr. Sacasa. Now incredibly, in Nicaragua, they tried to form an alliance with Anastasio Somoza — the man responsible for Sandino's murder. Having pushed Dr. Sacasa aside, Somoza was the Nicaraguan strongman, and the Liberal Party by this time had become his personal political vehicle.

As a payment for their support, Somoza allowed the PSN to organize extensively within the Nicaraguan labour movement. They also pushed Somoza for government jobs and seats in the Congress but fell from grace when they mistakenly backed the electoral candidacy of the wrong Somoza crony.

The PSN's cowardly behavior and its penchant for electoral deal-making disgusted the rising young generation of revolutionary activists who wanted to free Nicaragua from the domination of the Somozas. As a student, Carlos Fonseca Amador, the founder of the FSLN, was associated with the PSN. They sponsored a trip by him to attend a youth and student festival in the Soviet Union. But he was later expelled from their organization for rejecting the concept of a peaceful transition to socialism.

The Cuban Revolution provided an alternative model for young Nicaraguans — as it did for many others throughout Latin America. The *Frente Sandino de Liberacion Nacional* (FSLN) was founded in 1961 and began guerrilla operations in 1963. For the first years of its existence, it followed strictly the so-called "foco model" of roving armed propaganda developed by Che Guevara and Castro. (The Cuban Communist Party had discredited itself by its association with the dictator, Batista.)

At least one veteran of Sandino's army helped to provide the new "Sandinistas" with military training. Otherwise, the continuity with the old Sandinista movement was minimal. While the Communists of old were criticized for their left deviations and their right deviations, the way that Sandino was seen was still very much filtered through the goggles of Marxist analysis. He was a great symbol of national resistance. At best, though, his ideas were somewhere only "close to socialism". He lacked the necessary revolutionary science attributed to Marxism.³

Marxism or Communitarianism

Marx believed, of course, that a scientific study of economics demonstrated that the socialist revolution would occur in those countries where modern industry and capitalist social relations were the most highly developed. Elsewhere, capitalism and colonialism could play a progressive role against "feudalism". In the case of India, Marx extolled the actions of the British in India in breaking down the fabric of the ancient village communities. ("Future Results of British Rule in India")

The first revolution where the Marxists were able to seize power took place, contrary to expectations, in Russia. Russia's population was predominantly peasant. Outside a few major cities, industrial capitalism was virtually nonexistent.

It was the belief of Lenin that the Russian bourgeoisie was too lazy to carry through the historical modernizing role. Thus, the Communist Party which understood the laws of historical necessity needed to act as its surrogate.

The most important structure in the Russian countryside was the *mir* — the traditional village community. The anarchists, Bakunin and Kropotkin, had dreamed that the *mir* divested of its patriarchal characteristics — might serve as the decentralist basis for a post-revolutionary reconstruction of Russian society.

Lenin saw it instead as an obstacle to large-scale collectivization and control by the state. Under him, the work of destroying the *mir* begun by the Czarist minister, Stolypin, was completed. This was accomplished in a subtle and highly sinister fashion: he offered support to the peasants.

Orthodox Marxists criticized Lenin for upholding the popular slogan "Land to the Tiller", instead of pushing for immediate state collectivization. They did not understand him. In the final analysis, there was no difference.

It is clear from Lenin's defense ("The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky") that he saw his method as the best way to gain popular support, to co-opt or liquidate the peasants' own forms of organization and to pave the way for what would eventually be the same orthodox Marxist "solution" — i.e. to turn peasants into

employees of the state. (This last was carried on after Lenin's death by Stalin against tremendous peasant resistance.)

It was thought at first by Lenin that the Russian Revolution would serve as the spark to ignite revolutions in the more advanced countries of Western Europe. When these prospects failed to materialize, Lenin turned his attention to the more incendiary East. He realized that the same masterful technique of "uniting" with the peasants — so successful in Russia — might also prove its worth for the cause of state-socialism elsewhere. This approach became a cornerstone policy of the Communist International founded by Lenin — the so-called "worker-peasant alliance".

While capturing the leadership of the fight against colonialism — as they have since done — the Marxist-Leninists in this way have become the most sophisticated instruments themselves for the uprooting and destruction of traditional cooperative peasant communities.

In Central America, the equivalent of the Russian *mir* was the *ejidos*. This was the descendant of the indigenous Amerindian village. In many places, its communal system of land tenure was left alone by the Spanish and protected to some degree by the Church.

After independence from Spain, the liberal bourgeoisie of the 19th century attacked it. They believed that only individual private property ownership could be the guarantee of modern liberty and an expanding national economy. To them, the *ejidos* was a vile symbol of backwardness. (Here they certainly were doing the work Marx saw cut out for them.)

In Mexico, the *ejidos* was abolished by Juarez's "Reform" of 1856. Stripped of communal protection, their land was gobbled up rapidly by wealthy individuals, and the peasants were reduced to peonage or to the status of wage-laborers. This precipitated a long series of peasant rebellions, of which the Mexican Revolution of 1911 was partly the culmination.

These movements were essentially conservative. Anarchism provided a unique methodology which could bring together the Enlightenment goals of individual liberty with traditional patterns of community, both on the land and in workshops. This explains its early popularity with intellectuals and activists in threatened peasant societies like Mexico.

In Nicaragua, the same process took place at the end of the century under the Liberal dictator, Zelaya. Many of Sandino's soldiers were displaced peasants who had lost their land as a result of this process.

It is stupid to think of Sandino as some kind of incomplete Marxist. He must be put in his own context — a worker with a keen sense of the broader world horizons who still felt strongly his connection with the peasant village of his birth. He was a man enormously proud of his Indian ancestry. In background

and politics, he resembled the Mexican Zapata — who was also influenced by Mexican anarchism. (Sandino differed because he did not advocate breaking up large land estates. He preferred settlement on new land.)

After the break with the Communists, Sandino was asked by a letter-writer to define his own relationship with communism. Yes, he was a communist, said Sandino, but a "rational communist", a communist of the commune — i.e. a decentralist communist. This is his closest statement to describing an open anarchist position.

Today, in Nicaragua, the world wants to know what kind of communists are these new

Sandinistas. The new Nicaragua being designed by them has numerous peasant and worker cooperatives. At the same time, the role of state-owned enterprises is large — one-third of the economy, and the "Sandinista" state seems determined to orchestrate and control all mass organizations. This seems far from Sandino's own intentions — seen freed of FSLN hagiography.

Like their deceased founder, Carlos Fonseca Amador, many of the FSLN leaders are trained Marxist-Leninists. They have been strangely quiet about their long-range intentions. Will they follow the path of Lenin exploiting the mass movements (and Sandino) for the sake of scientific socialism

and become another wasted dead end like Russia, China, Vietnam, and Cuba? Or will Nicaragua, after so many years, finally fulfill Sandino's wish that Nicaragua become in the century's last years an exemplary communist role-model? This the question of Sandino is not one of mere historical interest. It is a question of Nicaragua's future. □

FOOTNOTES

1. Marti became a principal leader of the abortive 1932 revolt in El Salvador — the hemisphere's first attempt by Communists to seize power. Captured during its early stages, he was executed. His martyred name lives on today in the *Frente Farabundo Marti de Liberacion Nacional* (FMLN), the unified guerrilla front in El Salvador's current war of na-

tional liberation.

2. Imprecor, the press organ of the Communist International, on April 13, 1933, denounced what it called Sandino's vacillating character and his betrayal of the struggle. Already, the Communists had pointed out, it said, that "he had no program for a radical improvement of the conditions of the workers"

3. Since the 1979 Revolution, the PSN has split into two parts. One faction merged with the FSLN. The other continues to maintain a separate, if friendly, relationship. In the 1984 presidential election, the PSN candidate, Domingo Sanchez Salgado, defended the free press and criticized the FSLN's haste in regimenting the Nicaraguan economy.

the layabouts

MAYBE THE LAW DOES
FAIL TO DELIVER JUSTICE
SOME TIMES.. BUT THAT'S
ALL THAT STANDS BETWEEN
US AND ANARCHY!

The poker up your collar isn.
Stiff upper lip, give them a kick, work t
Get those old school blues right off you.
That's how they do it...

The album cover, a visual pun on the old RCA Victor "his Master's Voice" logo, and the liner notes, which combine all the lyrics with a great photo/cartoon/graphic montage, deserve special mention. Reading this record is almost as much fun as playing it.

The band itself is an intriguing mixture of cultures and styles (British, American and Black and Latin Caribbean). The friend who gave me the record said there is a core group of five to seven members, then proceeded to name eight. These, however, are frequently joined on stage, and on this record, by assorted musical friends.

Since their beginning five years ago, the Layabouts have been, in the best anarchist tradition, a strongly community-oriented group. Their roots are in Detroit's Cass Corridor, an inner city neighborhood which seems to be a cultural breeding ground, and much of their energy has been returned to that community, in the form of benefits, block party gigs, and ongoing political involvement. True to that spirit, a large share of the proceeds from record sales will be turned over to Cass Corridor neighborhood organizations. □

To order a copy of the Layabouts' album, send \$8.50 U.S., made payable to: The Daily Barbarian, Box 02455, Detroit, MI 48202.

THE LAYABOUTS - NO MASTERS

by Bob Melcombe

What can you say about a record that starts with a song called "Fuckalot" and closes with "I want my life to be a B-Movie"? What can you say? Lots!

No Masters! is the first album by the Detroit band, The Layabouts. This is solid dance-oriented political music, rock'n'roll'n third world rhythms that'll make your toes, and your mind, sit up and take notice. The songs, well-written and well-produced, are a balanced mixture that will make you laugh and cheer and feel good about life, and ultimately make you angry or frustrated or wonder what can be done. "Seven Minutes" is the latter kind ("Seven minutes before impact we patiently wait for the bomb"), as is "School-boys" ("That's how they do it/they show you in school/there's nothing to it/you just follow all the rules"). "Police Reaction" starts out in the same vein ("You will find police reaction/when you're out walking the streets"), but moves into hope ("If there's gonna be police reaction/We will be there on the streets/We will be our own protection/Moving to the sound of freedom's beat").

On a happier note is Johannesburg — "What is that word crying out, out for freedom?" — which starts out with one voice asking, builds into a multi-voiced anthem to ask, then answer, the question with "Johannesburg", then becoming a great polyrhythmic percussion piece. "Funk Governments" (aka "Governments Lie!") tells us "Governments lie! Well I'm not talking only 'bout some of 'em...I mean every single one of 'em" and "Governments kill!", but promises "Ah, but there's hope yet... 'Cause governments die!" The aforementioned "Fuckalot" and "B-Movie" are joyful, bouncy reggae tunes; the one advocating that we "laugh/dance/fuck/love/fight a lot if the world is to survive", the other a hilarious ode to the actor in his finest (swinest?) performance.

B MOVIE

I want my life, to be a B movie
I want the story to be happy in the end
It's nice to be, the hero of the story
I could be president, on that you can depend

I could be the cop on the street, that fight all the criminals
I could be the billionaire, that own all the companies
I could be the cowboy, that fight all the indians
I could be the general, that orders the big armies

I come home from work all the day, turn on my TV
B movies aren't the truth, but I don't care anyway
Just want to be entertained, kick the shoes off my feet
In this film the bad is the good, even the CIA, so...

I want my life...

I've learned from the movies, to place my trust in leaders
Some may think I'm crazy but a lot of people think my way
Our leader's a class B hero, and he can do no wrong
If we'd get in a war sometime, he'd come right through and save the day

Intellectuals discuss what they're thinking, I'd rather discuss what I'm drinking
And to be on the silver screen has always been my scheme
Well I don't care!!! that the truth is stranger than fiction
'Cause I don't know what that means, I go right ahead and dream

I want my life...

I choose to be conservative, though I've nothing to conserve
On paper this system works, but I'm no better off than before
I'll choose my movie world, and sit right back and dream
Let someone else take care of me, and I won't have to think no more

I want to be the tough good guy, that everybody fears and loves
You get in my way, you pay, better watch what you say
Think twice before you shoot me down, strike me I get you too
Before you know, in a very short time, we both be blown away, so...

I want my life...

I am going
to make history!

I am

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is the quarterly magazine of the Creative Anarchist Network—a collective of Anti-Authority minded individuals with various perspectives on Anarchy (attaining a Stateless society). In issue Six: Leonard Peltier, Move, Ireland, Dora-Agains, Guatemala, Genocide in USA & Canada today, S. Africa, Native American news, Punk in Mexico, Anti-War Art, Animal Rights, CIA Assassins, Big Mountain, Poetry, letters, film reviews, Network publication listings, and more. Upcoming Fall issue seven includes: Liberation of Quebec, Behavior Control, building alternative economies, squating, Nicaragua and more. Reprints of issues 1-5 are now available upon request. Sub. Rate: \$5.00 a yr. 4 issues. 1728 W. Ball, 4, Anaheim, CA. 92804

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A BACK BARBER PUBLICATION OF THE CREATIVE ANARCHISTS NETWORKS

Peltier
★ As We See It
★ Ireland

Genocide
★ CIA Assassins
★ Move

Emma Goldman 1869-1940
American anarchist, born in Russia. Her speeches attracted wide attention; imprisoned for advocating birth control—1916, & for obstructing the draft—1917, then deported to Russia; left in '21.

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“They Call it Democracy...” Hotspots of U.S. Intervention

by Gary Moffatt

This is a summary of a longer history in the author's monograph *"The Eagle and the Jackal: U.S. and Canadian Third World Intervention"* available for \$3 by writing to **Community Switchboard** c/o **Kick It Over**. It is printed to dispel the impression that American attacks on weaker countries are peculiar to the present Reagan administration.

The following is a list of U.S. interventions in the affairs of other countries from the early period in American history up to the present.

AFGHANISTAN — USA funds right wing Daoud government 1973-78 in return for anti-Communist policies. After Russian invasion, CIA allows large quantities of opium grown by rebel Pathan tribes to enter USA, renewing large scale addiction there.

ANGOLA — USA supplies Portugal with planes, bullets and napalm to use against Angolan and Mozambican freedom fighters 1961-74; supports South African attacks on Angola from 1979.

ALBANIA — USA actively supports unsuccessful guerrilla movements in 1949.

ALGERIA — USA helps finance 7½ year French war against Algerian independence which costs 1 million lives.

AUSTRIA — USA prevents communists from forming government in 1920's by threatening to suspend U.S. food aid.

ARGENTINA — Armed U.S. landings in 1833, 1852-53, 1890; CIA helps rightists murder some 2,000 people prior to 1976 military coup; USA supports murderous Videla dictatorship 1976-83.

AUSTRALIA — USA establishes secret spy-satellite base at Pine Gap in 1966; in 1975 pressures Governor-General into dismissing government which threatened to reveal it. CIA importation of drugs into Australia exposed during 1980 Merchant Bank scandal.

BAHRAIN — USA has helped maintain right wing dictatorship since British withdrew in 1971.

BANGLADESH — Because Bangladesh has



sold jute to Cuba, USA cancels crucial grain shipments in 1974; 27,000 — 100,000 die in "man made famine". Massive U.S. aid program benefits rich, hurts poor.

BATAAN — In 1981 U.S. and Philippine marines terrorize protesters against nuclear power plant being built by Westinghouse here.

BELIZE — USA establishes military, financial presence after independence from Britain in 1981.

BOLIVIA — Since WW2 the USA has kept Bolivia impoverished by controlling tin prices and oil reserves, use of a massive aid program to destroy Bolivian food self-sufficiency and CIA backing of right wing coups in 1966 and 1980, both followed by intense repression.

BURMA — USA has supported Nationalist Chinese troops trafficking in opium and launching occasional raids on Chinese hinterland from Burma.

BURUNDI — In 1972 the USA continues buying 80% of Burundi coffee while the government systematically murders 250,000 Hutu tribespeople.

BRAZIL — USA maintains control of Brazilian industry, displaying naval force during the 1894

civil war and sponsoring a right wing coup in 1964 followed by widespread murder and torture. Reforms were rescinded; since then over half the population has been malnourished. Indians have been exterminated, usually to benefit U.S. corporations.

CANADA — USA invades during Revolutionary War, and War of 1812; seizes Alaska Panhandle in 1902; exerts economic domination from 1900, and political from WW2.

CAMEROONS — \$650,000 U.S. aid helps affluent rather than landless rural poor.

CHAD — USA enlarges 1980 famine by canceling aid to punish Chad for alliance with Libya; in 1982 helps unpopular Habre regime take power; in 1983 pressures France into blocking liberation army's advance.

CHILE — USA stages armed landing in 1891, forces Chile to sell its copper much below world prices; sponsors right wing military coup in 1973 with 30,000 tortured to death.

CHINA — USA forces Chinese trade concessions in 1844 and stages military invasions to protect its "rights" in 1854, 1855, 1856, 1858, 1866, 1867, 1894-95, 1899; helps suppress Boxer

Rebellion in 1900; maintains continuous military presence 1911-1948; helps Chiang seize Formosa in 1948 to set up military dictatorship; sponsors invasions of China 1949-1952.

COLOMBIA — U.S. military landings 1860, 1868, 1873, 1895, 1899, 1902; throughout this century has exploited economy and bolstered rightist regimes while people starve.

COSTA RICA — USA sponsors rightist coup in 1948; since then has pressured governments into following right wing policies resulting in widespread starvation.

CUBA — U.S. military landings in 1822-25; passes Platt Amendment 1901 giving itself right to intervene in Cuba and establish military bases; occupies Cuba 1898-1902; intervenes 1906, 1912, 1917-22, 1933; helps right wing Batista take power 1933; controls economy until Castro takes power in 1959; sponsors Bay of Pigs invasion 1962; since then has waged germ warfare, tried to assassinate Castro, and sponsored terrorization of Cuban refugees.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA — U.S. denial of needed food aid paves way for Russian takeover in 1947.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC — U.S. military interventions in 1903 and 1914 are followed by proclamation of American military government 1916-24; U.S. corporate interests help Trujillo stage rightist coup in 1930 followed by 31 years of repression; USA backs another coup in 1963 and lands Marines to prevent a counter-coup two years later; since then the people have starved and thousands have been murdered by para-military forces.

ECUADOR — USA backs Peru's invasion of disputed territory in 1942; stages coups in 1961, 1963 and 1966; widespread starvation since.

EGYPT — U.S. military intervention 1882, 1887; withdraws sponsorship of Aswan dam 1953 because Egypt refuses to break economic ties with USSR; threatens in 1956 to nuke USSR if it becomes involved in "Suez Crisis". Since 1975 a massive U.S. foreign aid program has benefited wealthy at expense of poor.

EL SALVADOR — Since 1932 the USA has given military support to a variety of right wing dictators who murder dissenters and Indians; poverty has increased.

ETHIOPIA — The USA regarded Ethiopia as a client state from 1903 (when a most favoured nation treaty was signed) to 1974 when death by starvation of 100,000 Ethiopians due to government policies led to the replacement of Haile Selassie with a pro-Russian regime. However it made no attempt to protect Ethiopia from Italy's Mussolini in the 30's.

FALKLAND ISLANDS — U.S. intervention 1931-32.

FIJI ISLANDS — U.S. military raids 1840, 1855, 1858, 1859; civilians murdered each time.

FRANCE — In 1950 USA hires thugs to murder unionists in Marseilles refusing to unload U.S. arms for use in Indo-China; AFL-CIO encourages formation of right wing dockers' union to expedite arms shipments.

GERMANY — By agreeing to force Germany to pay reparations for WW1, the USA paves the way for Hitler's rise and WW2. In the 50's USA blocks German reunification making West Germany a tool in its war against Communism.

GHANA — USA destabilizes economy to encourage rightist coup against Nkrumah in 1966, since then it has seized the Upper Volta's cheap hydroelectric power for its own companies' smelters while Ghana must import electric power from the Ivory Coast.

GREAT BRITAIN — During and after WW2, USA uses terms of lend-lease agreement to force British industries to the wall; many sell to U.S. multinationals. In 1976, IMF imposition of drastic conditions on a loan to Britain force Labour government to apply unpopular rightist policies. CIA helps finance Thatcher's election.

GREECE — In 1827, U.S. fleet destroys town of Mykonos after pirates attack American shipping. In 1944, USA flies two British divisions into Greece to prevent election of popular leftist liberation movement; following years it helps rightist regime maintain power and kill opponents. USA forces Greece to sign neo-colonial agreement in 1954, sponsors rightist coup in 1967.

GRENADA — USA invades in 1983 to overthrow regime it has destabilized since 1979.

GUATEMALA — The USA has sponsored various right wing regimes since 1900 and overthrown the popular Arbenz government in 1954, as well as a further right-wing army coup in 1963. Starvation and murder of dissenters (directed by the CIA) have since been commonplace, and a full scale campaign to murder the Indians began in 1979.

GUINEA — CIA sponsors unsuccessful coup in 1976.

GUINEA BISSAU — USA supplied Portugal with napalm and anti-personnel bombs during colonial wars.

GUYANA — USA helps establish rightist regime in 1964, and has maintained it ever since.

HAITI — U.S. Marine occupation 1913-34, support of rightist regimes since then.

HAWAII — U.S. Marine landings 1870, 1874, 1891; in 1893 USA participated in military coup and five years later annexes Hawaii.

HUNGARY — In 1919 USA leads Allies in refusing Hungary relief supplies until Horthy's right wing government is established. It murdered 5,000, and ruled until 1944.

HONDURAS — USA lands forces 1903, 1907, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1925; stages military coups 1910, 1931; uses Honduras for attacks on Nicaragua from 1980.

INDIA — During WW2, US and Britain force India to give up essential food crops to grow jute for military supplies; five million Indians die of starvation when USA and UK refuse to send food. After the war, India is forced to assume \$178.5 million worth of lend-lease debts to USA, which has exerted considerable economic control since. Green Revolution: IMF policies help wealthier farmers, increase poverty of others.

INDONESIA — USA sacks town of Kuala Batu in 1832 killing 100 civilians. CIA backs abortive military coup against Sukarno in 1957 and successful one in 1965, overseeing the massacre of up to one million Communists. USA gives diplomatic support to Indonesia's occupation of West Papua in 1963 and invasion of East Timor in 1975 as well as repressive domestic policies, (in East Timor, 300,000 have been killed with US supplied weapons, the remainder confined to starve in concentration camps).

IRAN — USA forces evacuation of Soviet troops in 1946 by threatening to nuke Iran; sponsors coup against popular Mossadeq regime in 1953, supports Shah's repressive policies until 1979,

carries on guerrilla operations in northern Iran against Khomeni.

IRAQ — USA arms reactionary regime, helps it kill 700,000 Kurds in early 1970s.

ISRAEL — Since 1948 the USA has consistently supplied Israel with diplomatic support and weapons as it seized more and more Arab land; it has also used Israel to send arms and money to South Africa, Zaire and other right wing countries.

ITALY — Since WW2 the USA has given massive support and funding to right wing political parties in Italy, in return for unlimited access to military facilities in Sicily. The CIA has also funded right wing factions in the Vatican and engineered the present Pope's election.

IVORY COAST — Military landings in 1843; presently controls oil and gas resources and imposes austerity against poor through IMF.

JAMAICA — Increasing US economic domination after WW2; US destabilization of Manley government in mid 1970's leads to its replacement by reactionary Seaga government.

JAPAN — U.S. Navy forces "open door" trading policy in 1854; in 1863 USA helps overthrow Shogunate and restore power of pro-western Emperor. Military landings in 1868. USA constantly blocks Japanese attempts to expand trade up to 1941. After WW2, USA uses occupation and subsequent influence to force right wing policies, increasing militarization in Japan.

JORDAN — USA helps Hussein establish military dictatorship in 1957, massacre Palestinians in 1970. Economic policies benefit rich at expense of poor.

KAMPUCHEA — Unsuccessful US attempts to undermine independence in the 1950's followed by massive bombing by the USA 1969-75; CIA sponsored right wing coup in 1970; in 1983 the USA works with China to arm Pol Pot's guerrilla forces.

KOREA — U.S. Marine landings 1871, 1882-87, 1885, 1894, 1904; leftist People's Republic formed when Japanese rule collapses in 1945, replaced by USA with military dictatorship; USA partitions Korea rather than risk Communist electoral victory; sends in one million troops when North Korea attempts to reunite the country in 1950. Stalemate in Korean War leads to permanent partition; since then US policies have preserved widespread poverty and helped suppress a popular uprising in 1980.

LAOS — USA sets off civil war after leftist Pathet Lao guerrillas defeat French and win 1958 elections; supports right-wing forces with widespread bombing, napalming and herbicide dumping during Vietnam war period.

LEBANON — U.S. military intervention in 1958 to support Chamoun government; USA approves Israeli invasion in 1982 and participates in fighting during 1983.

LIBERIA — USA removes freed Black slaves to Liberia in 1828, causing many to die of privation; USA controls economy, military forces in 20th century.

LIBYA — USA wages naval war 1801-05, extorts money 1815, tries to murder Khaddafy and destabilize his regime from late 1970's; invades Libyan waters 1983, 1986; bombs Libya killing many civilians 1986.

MADAGASCAR — IMF imposes economic austerity from 1981; consequent military repression.

MALAYSIA — U.S. aid program encourages government seizure of poor farmers' land.

MARQUESSA ISLANDS — USA occupies islands 1813-14, killing numerous native tribal peoples.

MALAGASY REPUBLIC (MADAGASCAR) — President accuses US ambassador of plotting coup in 1971.

MARSHALL ISLANDS (MICRONESIA) — From 1945 USA uses U.N. trusteeship to establish military bases and test nuclear weapons, depriving many islanders of their property and health.

MAURITIUS — Having leased the island of Diego Garcia from Britain, (before Britain gave Mauritius independence), the USA turns it into a huge air base in 1971 against the wishes of the Mauritian people.

MEXICO — USA invades Mexico several times 1836-46, ultimately seizing lands that are now Texas, California, New Mexico, Colorado, Arizona, Nevada, Utah and turning the Mexicans into second class citizens. US raids on Mexico in 1858, 1866, 1870, 1873, 1876, 1916, 1918; controls Mexican economy and imposes poverty on most of its citizens.

MOROCCO — U.S. landing 1904; since 1978 the USA has armed and supported Morocco's

attack on the Western Sahara, which Morocco wishes to annex.

MOZAMBIQUE — Same situation as Angola.

NEW ZEALAND — USA currently attempting to destabilize country until it receives US warships with nuclear weapons.

NICARAGUA — USA coerces Britain into surrendering Nicaraguan holdings in 1853; armed landings and intervention 1854, 1857, 1896, 1898, 1899, 1910; USA backs 1909 insurrection; occupies Nicaragua 1912-25; invades again 1927; helps Somoza murder Sandino 1934 and take power 1936; supports Somoza's repressive regime until its fall in 1979, and Honduran attacks on Nicaragua since then. In 1918 the Central American Court of Justice folded after the USA rejected its pronouncements against US policy in Nicaragua.

NIGERIA — Active US slave trade until 1865; USA and USSR send Nigeria arms to crush Ibo independence movement 1979.

NORWAY — Since WW2 US military and intelligence have used Norway for spying operations transporting nuclear weapons, often without knowledge of parliament and always without public awareness.

OMAN — USA helps autocratic regime suppress insurgent movement in 1980's.

PAKISTAN — Heavy US arming of Pakistan has enabled it to massacre supporters of the Bengal liberation war, massacre the rebellious Baluchi in the mid 1970's, and supply Afghanistan guerrillas. CIA helps Zia take power and maintain military dictatorship; populace starves.

PANAMA — U.S. military intervention 1856, 1865, 1885; in 1903 USA helps Panama gain independence from Colombia in exchange for canal rights; US intervention 1904, 1908, 1912, 1918, 1920, 1925.

PARAGUAY — Oil companies force Paraguay and Bolivia to war ("war of the naked soldiers"), 1932-35. Since 1940 the USA has supported Nazi style police techniques in Paraguay despite absence of any significant guerrilla activity; widespread starvation and torture.

PERU — U.S. intervention 1835-36; CIA has backed government terror since 1960; starvation, torture common.

PHILIPPINES — After "liberating" the Philippines from Spain in 1898 the USA took over, murdered thousands who resisted and remained in control (except during WW2) until 1946. Maintained economic control until 1986, with the usual results: the populace is malnourished.

POLAND — USA forces Pilsudski, who took power after independence, to turn over control to Paderewski in 1919 by threatening to cut off US food aid.

PUERTO RICO — USA invades and makes Puerto Rico a US colony in 1898; imposes compulsory military service and US citizenship in 1917; massacres striking workers and peasants in 1937; crushes popular uprising to proclaim independence in 1950, (thousands killed, 10,000 in concentration camps); kills many more as conscripts in Korean and Vietnam war, and keeps 90% of the populace in extreme poverty.

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA — Continuous US military and diplomatic support for apartheid policies since 1960's, including invasions of neighboring countries.

SAMOA — U.S. intervention in 1841, 1889, 1899; takes over Tutuila in 1900, Manu islands 1904.

SAUDI ARABIA — USA has exerted economic and political control since 1943, protecting the monarchy and its repressive policies. Poverty and torture common.

SIERRE LEONE — U.S. slave trade active until 1865.

SPAIN — USA seizes Spanish territory between Baton Rouge and Florida 1806-1819; prevents Bolivar from sending an army to free Cuba or Puerto Rico from Spain in 1825; takes over Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines in 1898; arms Franco in 1936, and overtly arms Franco regime from 1953 to its collapse.

SUDAN — USA supplies massive military aid from 1976 in return for repressive foreign and domestic policies.

SUMATRA — U.S. raids 1832, 1838.

SYRIA — U.S. intervention 1903, helps plan unsuccessful coup 1956 and rebellion 1957.

TANZANIA — USA supports repressive policies of Nyerere regime, but twice has cut aid to punish him for diplomatic opposition.

THAILAND — USA helps military establish full control of Thailand 1946-49, since then has aided military elite at expense of poor. US gives military support to right-wing coup in 1976; since

then repression, poverty, torture widespread.

TIBET — USA trains Dalai Lama troops to harass Tibet regime in 1959.

TUNISIA — The USA opposed Tunisian independence from France at the U.N. in the 1950's, but in the '80's sent aid to crush the Gafsha uprising.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO — Domination of US oil companies means poverty for the masses; USA helps suppress popular revolt in 1970.

TURKEY — USA extorts trade concessions 1830; landings 1853, 1912-13, 1919, 1922; USA bolsters repressive right-wing regimes since 1950; sponsors military coup 1971 and right-wing assassination squads since 1975; widespread hunger, torture, repression.

UGANDA — Israel, Britain, CIA help Idi Amin take over in 1971 and train his police to torture prisoners.

USSR — USA takes part in invasion to support right-wing forces 1918-22 which prolongs a bloody civil conflict; in 1945 US demands for control of Poland, in violation of Yalta agreement, lead to start of Cold War.

UPPER VOLTA — USA sends massive relief during 1976 drought even though it goes to urban dwellers rather than starving peasants.

URUGUAY — U.S. landings in 1855, 1868; USA supports repressive governments consistently and helps train police to torture prisoners.

VENEZUELA — USA supports oil interests at peoples' expense from 1920's, backs army coup 1948; poverty and military repression common.

VIETNAM — USA tries to persuade France to nuke Vietnam in 1954; supports partition and repressive Diem regime 1955-62, then wages war against Vietnamese people until 1975—killing 400,000, wounding 900,000 and turning 6.4 million into refugees, (according to conservative estimates).

VIRGIN ISLANDS — USA bullies Denmark into selling it the islands in 1916.

YUGOSLAVIA — USA threatens to use A-bomb against Yugoslavia in 1946.

ZAIRE — USA dominates U.N. "peacekeeping force" and participates in the overthrow and murder of Lumumba in 1960, then helps Mobutu establish military dictatorship. Since then he has consistently repressed the people with US arms; after he murdered 1,000 Bandundu villagers in 1978, Carter called his regime "a moderate government".

ZANZIBAR — U.S. intervention 1851.

ZIMBABWE — After keeping the racist Smith regime viable by buffering its trade and supply routes through South African and Portuguese colonies and supplying arms, the USA tried to pave the way for transfer of power to Muzowera, a pro-West black with no popular support.

Concluding note: Imperial crimes of course have been committed by the USSR, the British, French and historically older Empires. Whereas all these empires have created their share of atrocities, only the USA has done so on a worldwide basis with complete impunity and is now threatening world peace to continue these policies.

Readers wishing to pursue this subject further are referred to the works of Noam Chomsky, Edward S. Herman and Susan George. A more complete bibliography can be supplied on request.

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LETTERS

Anarchists and Third World Revolution

Two years ago after returning from Central America, **Open Road** and **Overthrow** published a letter from me about my impressions of Nicaragua titled "Vanguard Leadership and Direct Democracy". Among some anarchist circles, it caused a lot of anger, probably because I legitimized some non-anarchist directions of the revolution.

This and the growing anti-authoritarian debate on Central America has provoked me to think about the dilemma of what position anti-authoritarians should take regarding these Third World revolutions. Moreover, the lessons of Nicaragua challenge some purist anarchist dogmas. It polarizes the positions of struggling for realistic lesser goals vs. advocating utopia.

There are scores of white North American anti-authoritarians who are trashing the Nicaraguan revolution from their 'Yanqui' perspective. Most have never stepped foot in Nicaragua, never mind have they any substantial experience in a Third World country.

I've spent twice as many years in the Third World as I have lived in the U.S., and two of the three months I spent in Central America were in Nicaragua. I will arrogantly insist that most of these anti-authoritarians don't have a coherent understanding of the Nicaraguan situation. Oh sure, they know lots of facts that may or may not be true. They probably have a worked-out preconception of what a revolution should be, but, this isn't enough. Then these people deliver supposedly authoritative (but de facto authoritarian) analysis and critiques.

This is common with many other issues besides the Third World, but the result is often the same. What analysis and critique do we get too often? Depending on the author's literary skills, they may paint an exquisite and lavish portrait of a Third World revolution (or any other particular issue they aren't involved in). And it will seem so real — except to the people who are involved in the issue. This isn't critical analysis, this is the fine art of armchair babbling. Any anthropologist knows that you can't critically study a culture without directly experiencing that culture.

It's not that these critiques are always useless. Some are right on target, and many offer valuable perspectives. But generally only those involved in the experience are able to judge.

A good example of this is **No Middle Ground**, an anti-authoritarian magazine on Latin America. Of the five authors who have published articles on Nicaragua in NMG only one, Caitlin Manning who is fluent in Spanish, have visited the country since the revolution. I don't know if the others have ever visited Nicaragua. Caitlin's report does give a good flavor of the country.

I thought Tom Wetzel's articles were accurate when I was able to verify the facts. Tom attempts to provide explanations of some of the failures of the revolution that are outside of the ruling Sandinistas' responsibility. Although, some anti-Sandinistas interpret Tom as blaming the Sandinistas for essentially all the major problems.

However, the articles by Sally Frye and Keith Sorel blasting Sandinistas were incredibly facile. Their attempts to judge the contradictions in Nicaragua unveil their self-righteous, anarcho-cynicism perspective.

No Middle Ground could generate a useful analysis on Latin America for its white North American readers if it had: 1) more critical and less facile articles on Nicaragua; and, 2) more writing from the perspective of Latin Americans in the struggle; rather than from *Yanquis* alienated from the world outside of *Gringolandia* (U.S.A.).

Mass movements and revolutions are plagued with contradictions. Even small circles of anarchists often have more contradictions than they can handle. How can we take seriously a North American writer who might be part of an anarchist organization that can't manage to grow beyond a dozen or so activists at the most, trashing the inevitable contradictions within a Third World mass revolution s/he has no experience with?

This is the dilemma North American anti-authoritarians have to confront between their ideals and world reality.

For instance, anti-authoritarians are too quick to blame the failings of revolutions on the vanguards. Suddenly, the activity of 'the people' is ignored. It's an anarchist principle that anarchy can only be realized from the struggle by the people themselves.

When 'the people' don't have an anarchist revolution as we would like, it's misleading to then analyze them only as impotent victims, manipulated by an elite regime. In Nicaragua, there is much more grass-roots power than North American rightists and anarchists alike acknowledge. The Sandinistas didn't magically appear. To a large extent, they were developed and are supported by the population who have not come up with a viable alternative.

Concerning human rights abuses, it's clear that the Sandinistas are committing them — although much less severely and frequently than their neighbors at war.

Even the Miskito Indian conflict with the Sandinistas defies the simplistic analysis anarchists often deliver. If we are to support the Miskitos' aspirations to live autonomously, how are we to express it when the Miskitos themselves are divided? Some are aligned with the CIA and the ex-Somocistas. Some Miskitos are unaligned, fighting the Sandinistas for autonomy. Some are aligned with the Sandinistas because they feel that's the best option. And many are caught in the middle, afraid to take sides. Even the most progressive militants within the American Indian Movement and the Indian Treaty Council are split on this issue.



Susan Meiselas

Isn't the position of "reform or revolution" or "no middle ground" dogmatic? It is politically naive to believe that people from an oppressed and hierarchical country will be able to have a successful anarchist revolution in isolation.

First of all, the imperialist empires will not permit it. Secondly, the preconditions for such a revolution are that a majority of the people share an anarchist perspective, and are united in their desires and commitment to achieve an anarchist society. Since this is nowhere the case, then the only revolutionary change possible these days is somewhere in between reform and complete social revolution. In other words, a middle ground.

In Nicaragua, the Nicaraguans were never unified in their desires, nor in their commitment to change. The essential concepts of anarchism were not in the popular consciousness, let alone passion. Due to the continuing war, their economy, technology and military defense can't even begin to provide for a sovereign, self-sufficient, anarchist society.

It's not surprising that Nicaragua has to enter the capitalist world market in order to buy needed health supplies, weapons, machines and parts. The alternative is reverting to a pre-industrial society that would be quickly overrun by the U.S.'s *contras*.

To what extent is the state solely responsible for human rights abuses? For example, the Sandinistas came out on the more humanitarian side than the population, when they outlawed the death penalty. This angered many citizens who were victims of the defunct National Guard. Within Nicaragua, the *contra* groups, including the Miskito MISURA, are guilty of more documented acts of violence against civilians than the Sandinistas.

The few North American anarchists in existence fighting amongst themselves, prove that they won't need a state to commit human rights abuses. Yet anarchists conveniently maintain that the Sandinistas commit abuses only because they are a state.

It's hard to be optimistic that anarchists would be different. The Bob Black/**Processed World** conflict provoked an incredible amount of authoritarian behavior and positions among anti-authoritarians. Black was caught trying to burn down the **PW** office with people living upstairs. **PW** was said to have beaten up Black. Anti-authoritarians all over have been enlisted by the various sides to sling their own arrows. Even if only a few were directly involved, it's revealing to note that other anti-authoritarians were unable to constructively help out.

Remember that several years ago, some anarchists also opted for the censorship route to solve a conflict by wrecking the anarchist Wooden Shoe Bookshop.

Just as the Sandinistas have labeled some critics as *contras* in order to discredit and justify repressing them, so have anarchists maliciously labeled other anarchists as police agents, authoritarians, or the worst: Marxists. For example, **Strike** accused Direct Action of being all three; or read the rotating denunciations in the **SRAF Bulletin**. (Actually, I don't read **SRAF**, but my friends tell me the juicy dirt in it now and then).

Naturally, I'm not saying that we should be apologists for regimes like the Sandinistas as are so many in the Left. They have good and bad points that are invaluable to learn from. The bottom line is that if it wasn't for the Sandinista guerrillas, Nicaragua would still be under the U.S./Somoza dictatorship.

The clearest expression of First World alienation is trivializing revolutionary gains that overcome a system of endemic starvation, child mortality, illiteracy and colonialism. Only someone from our bloated society, like Keith Sorel, can cynically dismiss that as "small changes", granted by the Sandinistas to exploit more productivity from wage slaves. Taken to its logical conclusion, this argument devalues any change. Even anarchist collectives become merely 'self-managed exploitation'.

Within anti-imperialist activity, there is a middle ground between grovelling support of Leftist regimes, and ultra pure positions that refuse to act because it is useless to support any change that is "less than" anarchist. Its like some people are hanging around waiting for an anarchist revolution to fall out of the sky. They'll have better luck getting hit by space shuttle debris.

Even if we feel that the Sandinistas are becoming the "New Boss", let's not lose perspective that the number one authoritarian Boss in global politics is U.S. imperialism. (The USSR runs a distant second.) The U.S.'s main opponents are not any domestic opposition force, but are the Third World national liberation movements. None of those movements that I know of identify with anarchism.

North American anarchists can't have it both ways. Sure they can be purists, ignore the national liberation struggles, and maybe just deal with U.S. imperialism at home. However, a clear focal point of the cruelty of imperialism is when it battles against the national liberation movements. To some degree, these movements should be supported because it is they who do the fighting and horrible suffering. In that sense, we maintain a very privileged position.

If it wasn't for the large amount of international aid going to Vietnam or Nicaragua for instance, U.S. imperialism would have wiped out the revolutions and proven itself undefeatable. Our anti-imperialist activity here benefits because of that direct aid to national liberation struggles.

Anti-authoritarians can benefit with a more vigorous, rather than vacuous, analysis of the changing world. If anti-authoritarians really want to propagate their ideals in regard to Third World revolutions, they need to get away from armchair purist positions that condemn everything that doesn't correspond to textbook anarchism. Stepping out of the gilded cage into the real world and getting dirty hands is the only way to keep our theory credible.

To those clinging to the "no middle ground" position, I strongly recommend that you live and struggle for a time in a Third World country. Maybe you can come up with some libertarian, creative and practical solutions to the damage inflicted by international imperialism, and the numerous internal contradictions which frustrate all revolutionary goals.

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LETTERS



A Thank You

Dear Friends and Comrades,

It has been a long and difficult two and a half years since I was charged on September 27, 1983 with threatened assault against an internationally protected person, to wit, half-wit Margaret Thatcher. In November of 1984 I was found not guilty of that charge but was found guilty of two "assault police" charges and was sentenced to six months plus two months concurrent.

Since I was first charged there have been many people who have supported me. I wish to thank those people who were part of the defense committee. I thank the people and bands who helped in fundraising as well as those people who provided us with their space.

I extend my appreciation to the collectives of **Bulldozer**, **STRIKE!**, **Reality Now**, **Kick It Over**, and the others who publicized my situation. Further, I appreciate the support shown throughout the trial; the people who sat in the court listening to the lies/bullshit, and to the persons who took on the task of caring for our child August outside the courtroom. I really appreciate the time people spent in court or in helping out.

To Art Bartell goes my warmest appreciation and thanks. You permitted me to spend the last 14 months on the street which allowed me to share in the birth of our second child, Adrienne.

On March 18, 1986 the presiding judge of the Ontario Supreme Court refused to grant a retrial despite the fact that there was sufficient evidence in the transcript from the original trial that Judge Locke incorrectly instructed the jury. My sentence appeal was also turned down.

My appreciation and heartfelt thanks is given to those who have supported me in the past two and a half years. To future years together,
In solidarity,

Ken Deyarmond
East Detention Center
Toronto, ON

Waiting for Anarchat

Dear People,

I buy **Kick It Over** from my food co-op where it is prominently displayed. Good articles, the kind of point of view with which I agree -- BUT...

Whatever happened to Anarchat? This is one of the funniest cartoons I've ever seen, witty and anti-Establishment. I do hope he'll make a return shortly. Perhaps he had to go into temporary hiding (on the run) or maybe he's working out some fine new strategy to the troops. Were I ever to have the good fortune to meet up with him, I would never ask "Who is that Masked Cat?", for I'd know he was one of the ALF gang (Animal Liberation Front) happily breaking into some laboratory hellhole.

This letter may appear to be frivolous in the extreme, but if we can't have a laugh occasionally, where the hell are we going, and what the hell do we think we are up to? Laughter, as the reformers of old knew very well, is a weapon in the armory of dissenters, and we do ill to ignore its power.

Meanwhile, all good wishes, see you on the barricades as they say (at least Anarchat might!)

Yrs,
Merlin Andrew
Toronto, ON

Viva Sandino

Hello Friends,

I'd like to thank you for sending **Kick It Over** to me. I was fascinated by many of the articles in the December issue; the interview with Murray Bookchin is enlightening, and "From Utopia to Community" filled in some gaps for me.

But I was most happy reading "The True Story of Sandino". I am a historian and Central American history is not something one sees every day. Oh, the mainstream press has lots of articles about Central America, but they are incapable of an honest appraisal or a straightforward history. Let's see more historical essays!

Sincerely,
Kenneth Williams
Stillacoom, WA

Well, not boring anyway...

People:

Great little newspaper you got there, unlike all those smug, boring, so-called radical rags. Here's my \$7.50 for a subscription...

Keep up your eclectic approach in solidarity,

Sherry
Philadelphia, PA



More Goopy Fan Mail

Hey Folx,

No. 15 was the best issue of a great rag. You're probably being swamped with this goopy fan mail, but you'll just have to endure it.

You have opened a number of debates I've wanted to see:

Youth Liberation — it's about time! I thought I was the only person on the planet who used the word "gerontocracy". Please read my piece in the latest **Utne Reader**.

Why did the 60's fail? — I was 4 yrs old when Chicago happened. The movements of the 80's (especially youth!) must assess this period. Scarf up copies of Kirkpatrick Sales **SDS** at your used book store kidz.

Violence vs. Non-Violence — I'm a non-violent revolutionary but I'm tired of the sanctification of M.L.K. and Gandhi and vilification of nameless third world guerrillas. We can not equate smashing imperialism with the totality of a nonviolent social revolution. Anti-Authoritarians will have a much easier time dealing with National Liberation Movements once we understand that they are nothing more or less than self-defense organizations. By virtue of being armed and mass

oriented they are authoritarian. We should not create a hierarchy of revolutionaries being more advanced than armed resistance organizations. Non-Violent revolutionaries shouldn't waste their breath on the authoritarian Sandinistas. Rather we should struggle to create a situation in which Non-violence is credible to Nicaraguans — i.e. the withdrawal of imperialism from Central America.

I could go on. And will, but at another time. Keep it up.
In Coherence,
Chris Gunderson
Minneapolis, MN

A Clarification

Dear Mr. Hayley:

I'd like to make a few comments concerning your reply to my letter in the Spring '86 issue of **KIO**.

First off, I'll admit I was wrong in assuming that **KIO** is an anarchist journal; the statement in issue #11 that you were opposed to "all forms of hierarchy and domination" and your opposition to "authoritarian tendencies" led me to believe that it was an anarchist publication. I also apologize for using the unnecessary term "bastards" in my denunciation of CMRWL.

You, however, also jump to conclusions when you imply that I condone "class struggle" and Nazi-bashing". I feel that the concept of workers seizing the "means of production" is hopelessly out-dated and of almost no relevance in the modern world. As for Nazis, I believe they have every right to march, speak, and disseminate their literature: and that we only have the right to forcefully oppose them if we are physically

attacked. (Perhaps I'm wrong again, but I assume by "bashing" you mean initiating an attack rather than defending against one.)

Finally, as far as hypocrisy is concerned, I feel that CMRWL should take first prize for including the words "without law" in their name and then calling for "legal representation" against porn.

Sincerely
Al Medwin
Farmingdale, NJ

Ottawa Youth Update

Dear People,

Your latest little note, and your latest issue, have finally motivated me to send a bit of money. I know \$1.00 is a paltry amount, but it's all I can afford at this precise moment in time. My financial situation should improve within the next month or so, and I will send a more substantial contribution then. I really have appreciated receiving **Kick It Over**. I hadn't been expecting to receive them, since I originally only sent \$1.00 for a back issue.

A few comments on your latest issue (Spring 1986, #15): re Gary Moffatt's "Minding

the Generation Gap" and his comments on the situation in Ottawa. Being, I suppose part of the "remainder" who "lacked the perspective of long-term social change work to sustain it [the movement] through short-term disappointments", I would like to relate my experience.

I only became involved in the "youth movement" in late 1984 — actually didn't attend a meeting 'till Jan. '85. The only involvement I had with **Scream** was to distribute copies in my high school (with difficulty, since it was in upper-middle-class suburbia and filled with apathy). I couldn't give it away to some people: it was "too radical". My attempts to form a very conservative "peace group" in the school was thwarted by this apathy and lack of support, as well as by my own inexperience in organizing and the disinterest and often antagonism shown by the administration.). I later contributed some poems which would have been published in the fall issue, if it had come out; I was also planning to write articles for future issues. The "Youth Festival" held in Ottawa in early August went well, taking into account the relative haste with which it was put together. One problem was disorganization, with regard to schedules (for instance, a "workshop" I did on street theater was rescheduled twice and almost didn't go ahead).

I attended my last Youth Information Network meeting in September. There was a good turnout, lots of ideas were discussed, there appeared to be no money problems, and I was looking forward to contributing to **Scream**.

So what happened? To be honest, I really don't know. I was (and am) not part of the "radical community". I live with my parents in a distant suburb, and so I rely on telephone messages of meetings, etc. (by the way, I also had to deal with my conservative parents' opposition to my involvement with "radical people" — also referred to as "communists" and "scum". At the same time I also suffered from feelings that I was "not radical enough", in the eyes of others in the youth movement — perhaps an inaccurate assumption.)

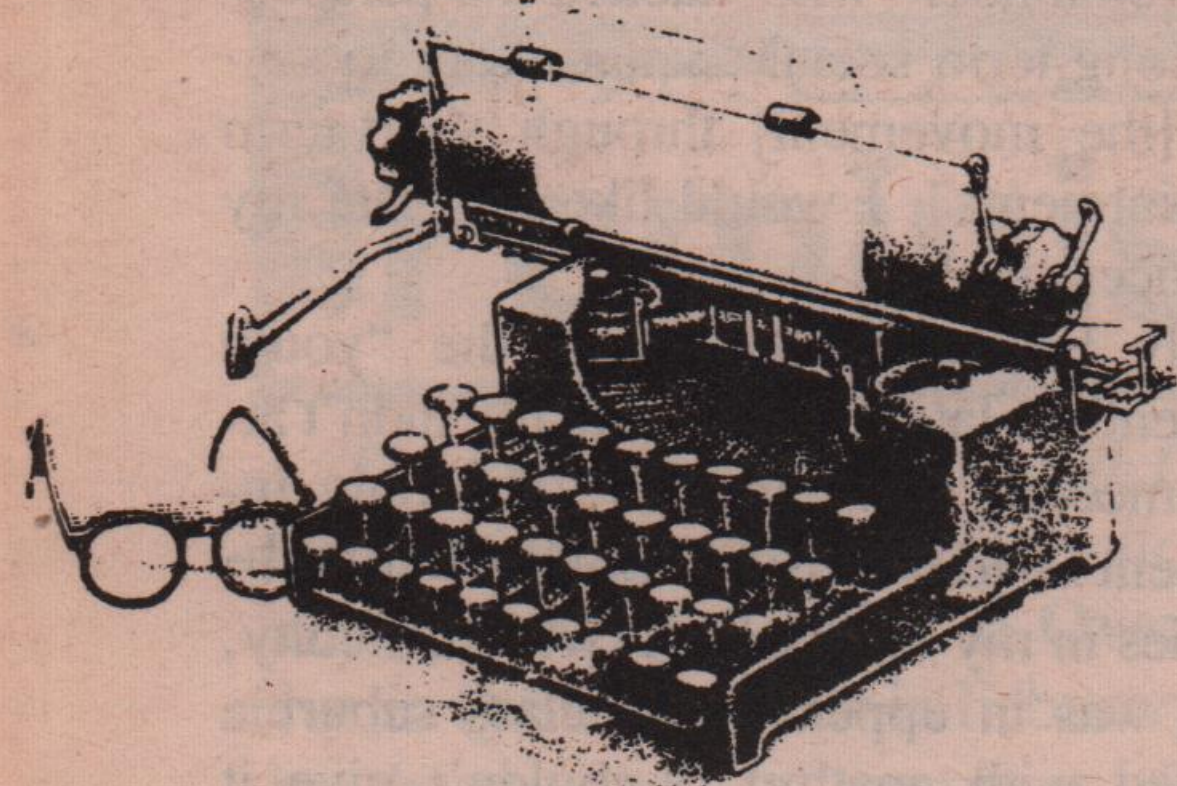
As Gary Moffatt mentioned in his article, several key members did leave the city — including those most likely to do "phoning-around". At first I did phone one Y.I.N. person I knew, but I couldn't attend the one meeting that had been scheduled. At the same time I was starting university and getting involved with (more institutionalized, of course) groups on campus (some problems with ageism, but the feminist's center was a help in dealing with sexism, and coming to terms with my spirituality and sexuality). I assumed that if there was work to be done on **Scream**, I would be phoned. In one case, I met some Y.I.N. people at a benefit and was informed of a meeting; when I went to their residence — where the meeting was to be held — (spending \$1.10 and an hour on the bus), I was told that "we didn't get our stuff together". Earlier in this year (1986), a uranium-mining/native rights action group formed — I didn't attend two of the three meetings I was informed of because, to be honest, I couldn't afford the bus fare to get downtown.

As the months passed and I realized **Scream** wasn't coming out, I phoned the only Y.I.N. person I had a number for and asked what was going on (this was a couple of weeks ago). He said that it had died; there weren't enough people (only two, at that time) willing to work on it, no-one was interested.



Did I lack a long-term perspective or vision? I know I was willing to work on projects. I know that the movement members I knew best (since they made a big effort on outreach) have left. I know I am isolated (this

LETTERS



problem is still a big one with regard to university as well. I should add that university has many faults, it is definitely less oppressive and more interesting than high school, in my experience). I also know I have a lot of things to work out in my life before I can expend all my energy on a movement that at present is fairly disappointing. That's all the comments I can think of, and have time to make, right now.

Thanx, peace, and other good things,
Shannon E. Ash
Ottawa, ON

p.s. I hope this letter isn't politically incorrect since I only wrote on one side of the paper. Oh well.

Fighting Sexism on the Inside

Dear Lynna,

Hi there. I read your article "Jerk Off Politics" in **KIO**. I wanted to write to express my fascination with some of the thoughts you expressed.

I really agree that if we must choose, we should focus on the individuals' responsibility for the sexist attitudes that are manifested in some anarchists. Blaming "the system" seems to be too pat too; I don't know. Just doesn't make sense to me.

I am a prisoner of the state and having been incarcerated for nine years now. I have been exposed to the violent macho-image that is fostered here. While I've tried to try to express the negative aspects of sexism to some of my fellow convicts, on the whole it hasn't been well-received. In their eyes women are for fucking and little else.

So when I came across a person who, like yourself, opened my eyes to some of the things that I lose sight of here, I am very glad.

I am writing you personally because I was/am intrigued by your freshness and open way of expression.

I don't think you'd be interested in writing a convict here in the U.S.A., but who knows. If you feel like it, drop me a line.

Well take care of yourself and thanks again for the article.

Paul Borroni 36090
Box 7
Moberley, MO

Holier Than Thou

EDITORS' NOTE:

We received this letter before the deadline of #15, but for reasons of space decided to hold it over until this issue. We are printing a slightly edited version. Please note that we do not have time to respond to all letters we receive, nor do we have space to print them all.

To the KIO Collective,

Your winter 85/86 issue is probably your worst. Why an anarchist (self-described or otherwise) would waste space with such an un-(anti?)anarchistic topic as the Greens is beyond me. The Greens are an exclusively German phenomenon (i.e. it can't happen here — North America); where else can you find ex-NATO generals and worn out hippies in common cause? In other words, it is a freakish thing that should be relegated to the "curiosities of history" section of a book of useless knowledge.

I learned nothing, and actually got bored with "Sexual Anarchy", a subject that should generate anything but boredom. Murray Bookchin should be ostracized for his acceptance and praise of the Greens; his falsi-

fications of history; his participation in elections; his close relationship with the Anarchos Institute and Black Rose Books. His (and others') enchantment with decentralization for the sake of decentralization is goofy. There is nothing inherently liberatory about it (while it is true that more healthy social relationships can take place at a face-to-face level, there is no reason to think that by decentralizing everything people will naturally then relate at such a liberatory level); feudalism was a very decentralized social system. It should not be inferred that I am in favor of centralization, however; rather I think this is a case of the method of being considered the goal.

Ron Hayley's tone in describing the "Psychology of Leadership" is pretty paternalistic. Having read other things he's written, coupled with the fact that he was a Leninist, I think his tone cannot be avoided. Too bad, for readers.

So Sandino was an anarcho-syndicalist, huh? Before 1937 that may have been impressive, but in 1986 it's embarrassing. Syndicalism (prefixed or not) stands (should I say "sits"?) on the left side of capital; calling for self-managed industrialism is hopelessly obsolete, not to mention discredited. Avoiding the question of Sandino's alleged anarcho-syndicalism, the thing I want to know is "If he was, so what?" If a historical connection was attempted, in order to show that there is indeed some sort of libertarian tradition (and therefore an alternative) in Central America, fine; but this wasn't attempted, so again your readers are presented with a historical curiosity.

To Lynna Landstreet....Your article "Jerk-Off Politics" is silly. I don't know who you've been hanging out with, but it's not with anyone (or any type of person) I know! Here in San Francisco, I know some macho dudes who are (maybe) anarchists, but they don't behave like your "John Waynes of the anarchist movement (sic)". I also don't know anyone who is an anarchist who believes that the "revolution will be brought about...by them and their friends getting enough guns and explosives". Maybe you've been hanging out with too many Leninists (ex- or not). I think you have the "martyr-like or self-sacrificing" thing ass-backwards; the guerrilla-types are the ones I see as pushing for martyrdom through the ultimate self-sacrifice. Civil disobedience and hunger strikes when in jail for CD actions are neither, although their practitioners would like to see themselves that way. Interestingly enough, some of your criticisms of guerrilla-types are the same ones I have of pacifists (making themselves feel importantly subversive, measured by their jail terms or the durations of their hunger strikes).

Violence is not an idea; it is a condition of existence as well as a social relation. The necessity for violence as a component in destroying capital is obvious if one accepts that this destruction is to be brought about through class struggle (in the traditional sense of a civil war between those who possess and those who don't, augmented with the additional conflict between those who dictate to others and those who are compelled to follow their orders). This acceptance does not glorify that violence, nor should it. I consider myself non-violent (not the same as a pacifist) and I would hope that a social revolution could be accomplished with no violence, but I further recognize that people will fight when their class interests (or their desired class interests) are threatened. I don't believe that an anarchist society and culture can be created when enough of the class enemy are "put up against the wall". Your portrayal of the violence-prone revolutionary's analysis of pacifism is offensive to me as someone with a critique of pacifism; should I therefore be considered as a "John Wayne"?

When I read your statement that "violent revolution doesn't even work!", I almost fell off the toilet. As your nemesis, Bob Black once said: "That's not an argument against [violent revolution], it's an argument against work." Does your rejection of "violent revolution" have anything to do with the predominance of M-L parties in "revolutionary movements"? If this is the case, I think it's grossly unfair; to dismiss the concept of revolution because of historical blunders (not

the monopoly of M-L's either) is narrow and unthinking. Should people condemn everyone who "smashed the state" in Russian in 1917 for the screw-ups of the Bolsheviks? In Spain in '36 people's thinking *did* change, as can be seen by reading such works as **Homage to Catalonia**, **Collectives in the Spanish Revolution**, and **Blood of Spain**. In fact, the failure of the revolution in Spain was due precisely to the fact that no one bothered to "smash the state". The state is a major obstacle to people exercising independent thought (through state control of education and corporate control of media) so if it is not destroyed with all institutions which perpetuate it, revolutionaries are doomed to a cycle of confrontation and repression.



"Our culture"?! What about white North American male culture makes it "ours"; who is "we"? Doesn't being an anarchist imply having a desire for a change of culture? Wouldn't a good first step be to cut off one's identification with the dominant culture as well as the dominant ideology? "We've grown up with the concept" of instant gratification, and this is what makes revolutionaries want "Revolution NOW"?! What? And why does wanting a revolution now implicitly point to one's desire for "violent revolution"? Aside from these statements of broad acceptance of components of "Western Civilization", that "we" shit has got to go!

I do not look forward to Part 2 of "Jerk-Off Politics"; I have never been so annoyed reading an essay by a "comrade" as I was while reading Part 1. Why not just stick to being a "nasty man-hater" instead of attempting to be a political theorist? You are much better as the former since it seems your conclusions are too tempered with your opinions of others, and too void of historical investigation. Your lack of a historical perspective and analysis make it easy for you to dismiss "violent revolution" as well as the concept of man-loving.

for a world without fear,
blueberry
San Francisco, CA

Imprisoned Writer

Letters to the Editor:

Until recently, my literary attention dwelt within the circular of uninteresting limitations, in which, my thoughts were so intense-

ly assimilated with putrid words of a stale structure, that I felt it was about this time yesterday, when my instincts should have compelled me to search in another direction. Almost as if I had been granted the privilege of enabling my mind the best possible choice of literature, I discovered **K.I.O.**. It was great man. Quite original and it didn't consist of the average garbage that usually corrupts the image of so many minority magazines.

I'm in a federal joint called Warkworth and I don't have the access I require to an appropriate publisher, but now that I've obtained the type of literature herein, I think that statement false. The material which consisted in #13 edition wasn't necessarily, "the best of **K.I.O.**", but did contain a sufficient amount of interest which evoked me to write in and give you people credit. Doing time down under, sort of separates the individual from all the necessities of reading a good, organized magazine. Now that I've located a suitable existence, I think it's only right that I give you an open letter of how I feel. I'm serious, it was fuckin' great. Keep up the good quality and I'm sure you'll prosper even further.

D. Hogan

Here is the ad I hope you'll place for me:

ATTENTION Any ladies interested in corresponding with an 18 year old inmate who is an experienced writer and needs literary affection, should drop me a line. **Feel Free** to write. I'm open for any suggestions or topics you wish to discuss. I'm in for a stretch and would be more than eager to hear from you.

Mr. D.C.Hogan,
P.O.Box 760
Campbellford, ON
K0L 1L0 Canada

Thoughts on Ageism

Dear Comrades,

....I liked the Youth Liberation article a lot and spoke about the tactics listed at a workshop in Chicago.... I just felt bad about one or two things in it and of course maybe you'll feel I'm just being over critical — but... The first few paragraphs in the article culminate in the sentence, "she just turned eighteen". Well I admit this woman sounds like a rare person and part of the fascination is that there aren't many young anarchists out there. But, is the fact the woman is young more fascinating than what she does, or is it a reasonable combination of both. Would the other be equally important if this woman was say 30 years old? (This is not implying that he wouldn't, I'm just interested in a well thought out answer).

This reverse ageism is as offensive to me as reverse sexism, and, being both young and female I've noticed both. Granted, it's nowhere near as badly as I feel when I sense someone treating me differently or acting awkwardly around me because of my age and gender. But when someone said to me years ago that they were really glad to see me in the movement especially because I was a young female, something was set off in me. Previously I guess my ego loved being fed and I

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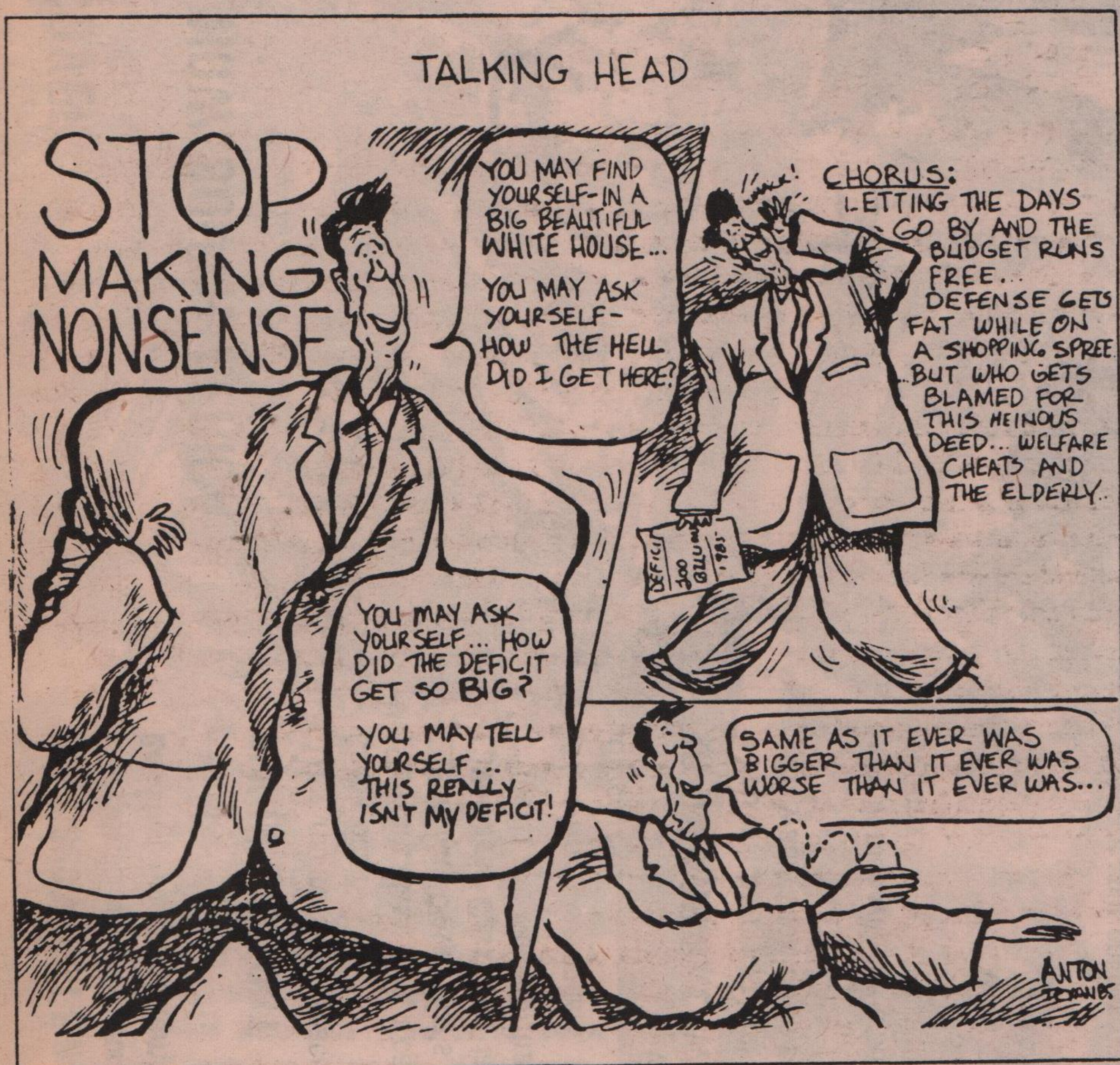
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LETTERS



really got off on being the youngest person around. I didn't feel uncomfortable. I felt good that I got along in an "adult" world and more awfully I felt a little superior to my peers and even my comrades that didn't get off to such an early start as I did. Undoubtedly they didn't know this until now — sorry guys, we can all be shitheads. Then I began hearing something different when people were talking to me, even if they weren't saying it. I began hearing in my mind that "I'm not happy because I'd sincerely be happy to see more young people and females in the movement (in N.Y. there's a definite shortage of both), but rather I'm glad that you can go ahead and disprove a stereotype for me; that is that young people and women are less capable of politicizing themselves than others." Well that would even be O.K. in my mind if I didn't have the overwhelming feeling that these people were convinced that I would be the only or only one of a few exceptions to that rule that they would meet.

Unfortunately, this feeling which maybe only people in my situation would feel, involves a strong gut feeling which is hard to explain, as most are. I wish I could make myself more clear; I thought about it a long time to make sure that it wasn't a product of some unjustifiable paranoia and now I'm sure it's not. Basically I just feel that's bad to think that somebody who becomes an **A** or whatever at ————teen is better than someone that becomes one at twice or three times the age. The important thing of course is to get your head together straight and in some cases, the extra time involved is beneficial to this process (in some not). To me it re-affirms the idea than an 18 yr. old shouldn't know what he or she is about but it's perfectly reasonable to expect that of a 30 yr. old...

Lane,
New York, N.Y.

Greening A Southern Town

From April 17-20, the University of Florida town of Gainesville began seeing glimmers of green. In total, hundreds of folk, from establishment liberals to punk-rockers, gathered to discuss the prospects of a green movement. The following are some impressionistic conclusions taken from a single lens.

The Green Party in Germany has some advantages that we don't have. If they receive a certain percentage of the vote, they get money from the state to finance future campaigns. If they get at least 5% of the vote, they get proportional representation in the legislature. Needless to say, that's not how it works here. In fact, under our rules, even the Demopubli-

cans couldn't qualify as a third party.

One lesson from this is that building a U.S. Green Party at the national electoral level would be futile. (Remember the Citizens Party?) Local electoral politics are another story. Rotation, instant recall, etc. are techniques designed to help assure that issues predominate over candidates. The most important lesson is that obstacles at the electoral level make direct action an even stronger alternative.

Mere talk of direct action scared away many environmental liberals. Privately, they would admit the need of a radical voice and direct action since environmental problems are so urgent, and in order to make their own compromise positions look attractive. Publicly, they would not give their whole-hearted support to even the most benign direct actions. An 80-year old farmer, John Simpson, had over 250 trees leveled in the interests of highway improvement. We ended the conference by replanting about half of those trees with little environmental group endorsement.

This helped us to see the wide gulf between the reform politics of environmentalism and the radical stance of deep ecology. However, deep ecology seems to gain most of its strength from its opposition to environmentalism. When deep ecology is taken on its own terms, unravelling just what it is becomes a formidable task. Deep ecology seems to encompass everything from quantitative systems analysis to symbolic nature mysticism with some tints of eco-fascism in between. In contrast, the most sanely politicized version approach to ecology is social ecology, stemming from the anarchist work of Murray Bookchin and John Clark.

Social ecology, working to overcome all forms of domination, proved a good rallying point for showing the interconnections between ecology and other social movements. These interconnections are crucial to preventing ecological actions from being and becoming white, middle-class hobbies. Inmates from a local prison came to tell us their perceptions of ecological problems. Feminists showed us the macho errors of some of our direct action ways and opened our hearts up to more feminized versions of action. Latin American activists reminded us of the dilemmas facing third and fourth world people.

Overall, we found that greening is no single process, but despite the obstacles the greening process is an imperative. Locally, we daily uncover new ecological disasters: a shopping plaza sits atop a superfund site, gas station tanks leak into local wells, polluting waste incineration is adopted, developers in collusion with the university take control of

SOCIAL ANARCHISM


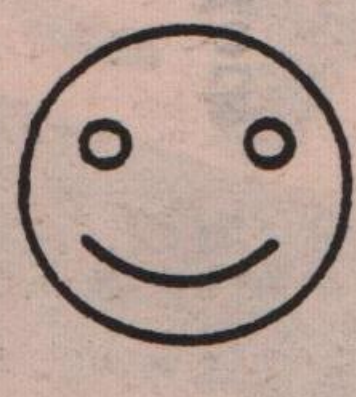
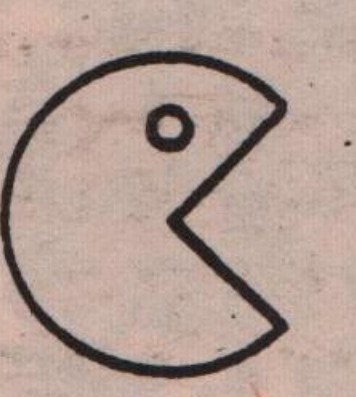
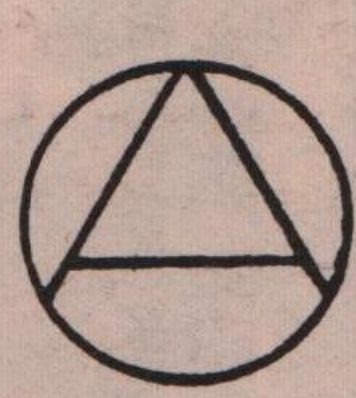
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local politics, etc. Sound familiar? Gainesville is far away from Greenville, so let's be practical and do the impossible.

Thomas W. Simon
Gainesville, FLA

More on "How-To"

Dearest KIO,

Sabotage/rip off scheme #1 in hopefully a series. This is kinda obvious and panders to materialism but it's also easy and fun.

Write fake complaint letters to companies. You don't need a receipt, packaging, anything. Say you bought something in some chain store, although it still works if you're more specific. Say you lost the slip, the clerk was obnoxious, whatever (don't be too specific as you don't want to get some poor shitworker in hot water). The more indignant you are the better. Say this has never happened to you before. Try to be simplistic but detailed in your imagined problem. This works almost always. If you can get a lot of

people to write the same complaint it's even better. In this case, going to a store and writing down lot numbers or serial numbers of a certain product is a good idea. Even small screwups for a big company are better than nothing; so **badger badger badger** them. Try especially to contact the real bastards. For instance Union Carbide makes Duracell and I just got a huge box of AA batteries for my sister's walkman. This thing is a pretty good alternative to shoplifting for the faint of heart.

A suggestion — could you start a column, or maybe just one big article on sabotage/direct action/ripping off government, big business, etc. You know, everything from spraypainting to phoning **Jerry Falwell's Toll Free number**. Beginners and experts can always use suggestions and how-tos. For instance, I was greatly helped along with my spray painting by a zine that carried an article on it (esp. the part about **the nozzle-clogging problem**.)

Well Love,
S. Morgan
Halifax, NS

