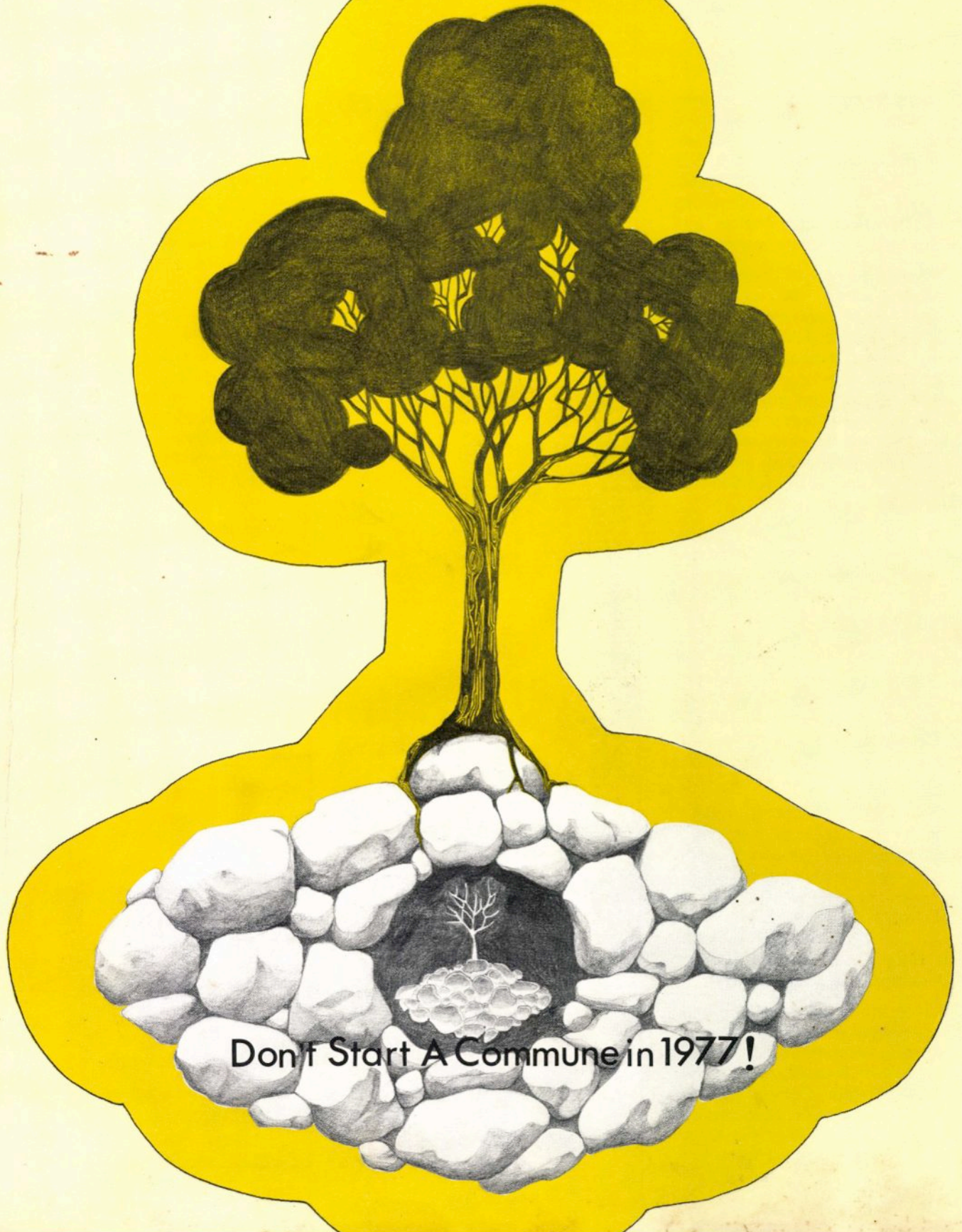


COMMUNITIES

No. 25

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Don't Start A Commune in 1977!



COMMUNITIES

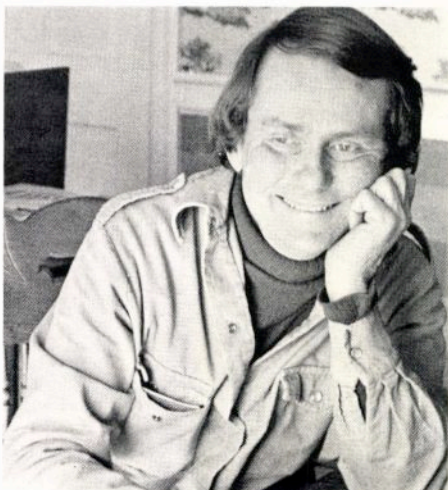
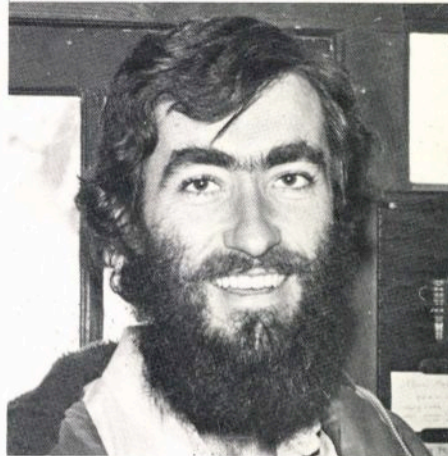
The emphasis in this issue returns to communal/utopian thought and practices, reflecting the fact that Twin Oaks is editing and producing it. We have managed, though to include some important material about the broader forms of cooperative and neighborhood community as well.

One gets a sense of diversity and controversy within the communal movement from several of these articles. Kat Kinkade, herself a founder of 2 successful secular communes, calls for a halt to starting more new groups. Based on the inherent difficulties in building community, and on her perceptions of the diminished mass appeal of communal living, she urges the consolidation and expansion of existing communities.

From another direction, *George W. Clark* offers a strong critique of behaviorist communal ideology and advocates a more spiritual foundation for meaningful personal and social change. *Pat Conover*, a founder of Shalom Community, points up the dynamics of leadership in establishing community, and suggests a slow, organic process for building the smaller groups which he believes to be more stable than the larger kibbutz-like groups that Kat advocates.

Vince Zager, another veteran communitarian, outlines his world travels through different communities, and expresses his ultimate disillusionment with communal life as an approach to social change. His article revives our International Column, which Vince hopes to make a consistent department of *Communities*.

All of the above authors speak from a strongly personal perspective: Kat and Vince each from their 10 years' experience with the nitty-gritty hassles of communal life; George from his search for community after years of social change work; Pat from his experiences as organizer and leader.

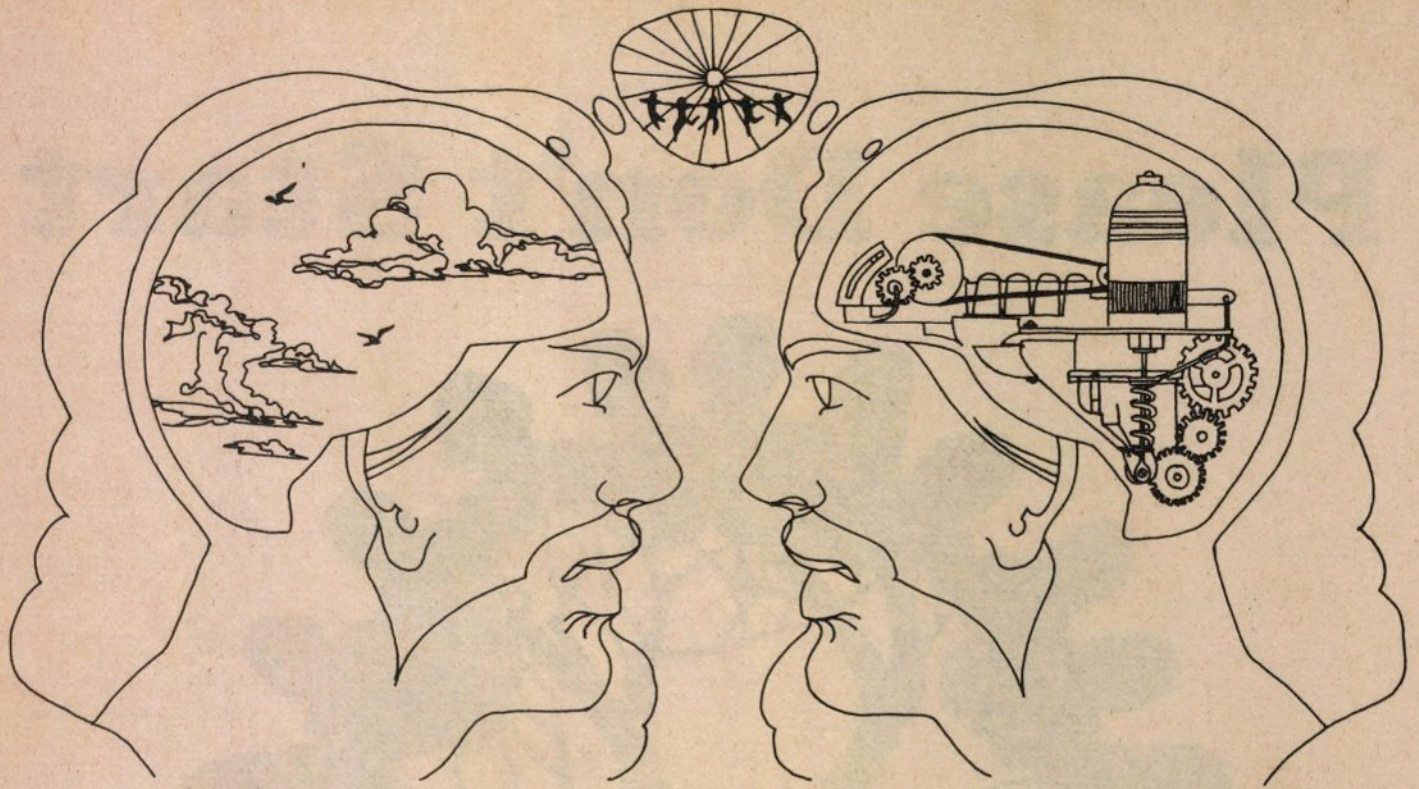


Cynthia Arvio and Rachel Bedard of the Philadelphia Life Center effectively combine personal experience with the politics of feminism. Their article suggests that egalitarian cooperative living is not, in itself, a solution to sexism, but can be a better structure within which to work on our feminist consciousness.

In an important statement about the role of ideology in community, *David* of Twin Oaks in his Social Science column suggests that communes evolve from the narrow utopian philosophy of being the ideal social model. He believes it may be time to link out ideology to that of the much broader "New Localism" movement described by David Morris and Karl Hess (see *Bookshelf*, page 56).

Neil Seldman of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance describes this same "common sense radicalism" in practice. The grassroots governance of the D.C. neighborhood Planning Councils not only is more effective and efficient in administering a crucial youth program; it is also an important experience in decentralized participatory democracy.

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PLEASE DON'T START A COMMUNE IN 1977, by Kat Kinkade	2
Why a founder of 2 successful groups thinks that now is not the time	
WOMEN IN COMMUNITY, by Rachel Bedard and Diane MacLeod	8
Sex roles don't just disappear with community living	
WHY I DON'T LIVE IN COMMUNITY, by George W. Clark	16
Part 1 of FROM COMMUNITY TO COMMUNION, a 2 part article	
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COUNCILS, by Neil Seldman	22
An important experiment in the democratic self-governance of DC neighborhoods	
FEDERATION: THE FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY, by Sierra Aloe	27
The egalitarian communities movement starts to take itself seriously	
CHARISMA IN COMMUNITY, by Pat Conover	32
The dynamics of leadership in small communities	

departments

INTERNATIONAL	36
SOCIAL SCIENCE	40
REACH	43
RESOURCES	55
BOOKSHELF	56

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Please Don't Start



Starting a community is harder than it was when we did it. You may fail precisely because we succeeded!

A Commune in 1977

by kat kinkade

I know that title sounds like just another provocative, attention-getting come-on, and the knowledgeable reader will guess at the conclusion of the article the warning will be only for the timid, that red-blooded radicals should step right out and build new groups for the new federation. That's a pretty good guess, considering that I've helped to start two groups myself, am well-known to favor expansion of the community movement, and take a sincere interest in the young developing groups that now exist.

But the guess is wrong. I mean just what the title says. In my opinion this is a terrible time to start new groups; the chances for success of such ventures is minimal; the cost of failure is high—and is not borne solely by the initiators of the doomed groups.

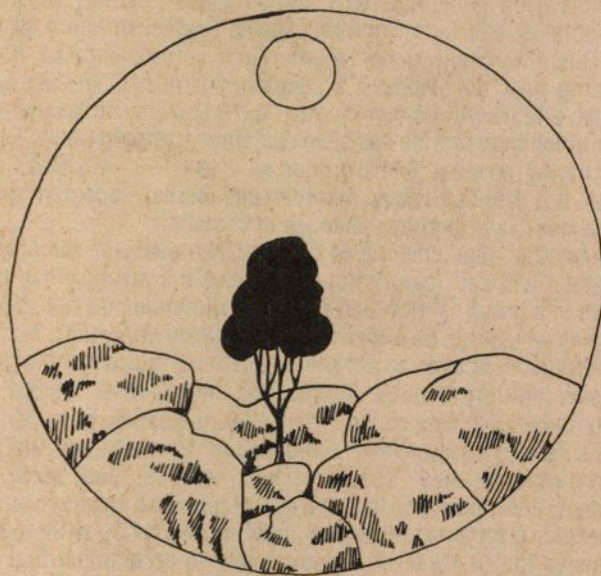
I am not pessimistic by nature, and this is not a pessimistic stand. It is different from the message I put out in 1972, when I thought that anybody with a piece of land, a source of income, and a lot of determination could bring a community into being. I have retreated from that confidence because my observations since that time have shown it to have been ill-founded. But I am not speaking with bitterness or discouragement. Rather, I am reevaluating what it takes to create a viable commune.

It is difficult to convey the hardships of the first two years. I tried to do so in a book I wrote, but the impact of my description was overshadowed by the community's eventual success, and one can easily draw the moral "Stick to the job and you'll make it." There are, however, a lot of communes nobody wrote books about that never made it past the starting struggles. There are groups whose leaders really tried to stick to it—but they couldn't find other people to stick with them. The reason is that the first couple of years are really very hard, much harder than the founders expect.

Anybody can have imagination enough to envision a time when money will be short. But soybeans are cheap, and there are books telling one how to survive on practically no money. As long as the people in the group love and trust one another, beginners reason, those physical difficulties are trivial. They can be endured.

This should be true, but there are two things wrong with it. The first is that physical hardship takes a heavy toll on the spirit. Take the matter of health and medicine. An American commune is usually made up of suburb-bred middle-class people who don't expect to have to tolerate illness. The sickness that may come in from bad nutrition, inadequate sanitation, or new sex norms and

then spread through the community takes a toll not only in health but also in morale. I have known small communes to lose members because of a bad case of diarrhea. A rational approach to community health is to get good food, keep things clean, and keep tabs on sexual contacts, meanwhile paying a few doctor bills here and there, but money and labor shortages make this simple formula complicated. Community love and trust don't enter into this. The problem attacks basic faith in the communal idea. The shaky member thinks "This thing can't work — I can't even keep well here."



Health isn't the only thing that can go bad, of course. Automobiles that break down just when needed to get someone to work to bring in needed cash, construction that drags on and on because of lack of such simple things as a power saw, anxieties caused by an unaccustomed lack of things formerly considered necessities, such as dental checkups, insurance, and orange juice — all these break the spirit of young communitarians. It is **3**

possible to keep morale up in spite of these things, but it is very difficult, and many people crumble under states of unaccustomed poverty.

Some groups have tried to skirt the physical hardships by locating in the city where salaries are available, or starting a business before building a communal membership, so that

Something has to give. Shall it be the garden? Shall the group sell the goats? . . . abandon the methane generator project?

annoying personal sacrifices of a financial kind do not have to be made. In such groups smokers don't roll their own smokes but buy "real" cigarets without bankrupting the group; nobody shits in an outhouse unless for ideological reasons; and there's no such thing as lacking a warm, quiet, and private place to sleep. But such groups have a hard time in their first years, too, because not all the hardships of a beginning group are financial. Working out the agreements of leadership and government is rarely a smooth process, and more than one group has failed to survive it. Agreeing peaceably on the arrangements between high-income earners and people who "just" keep house may be another issue.

The groups that are very poor and do not spend money on much of anything in their first year sometimes have a sense of comradeship generated by common understanding of common problems, and for a while this makes them seem more solid and viable than their richer counterparts, but this is an illusion. Being poor but happy is a persistent fantasy. One can act out such a fantasy for a few months, but I know of no secular group in which high morale has been sustained throughout two years of irritating poverty. Some groups survive it — Twin Oaks did — but not without heavy membership losses, repeated discouragement, and perhaps changes of direction.

Another phenomenon of the first two years of community is what I will call (baldly but accurately) the struggle for power. When a group is little and weak, its directions do not appear to the newcomer to be either very firm or very important. For a new member — or even an old one — to attempt to switch the group's goals entirely around during this initial weak period is so common as to be a cliché. This is not disgusting dirty politics; it is a serious struggle over the question: to what ends shall these resources be used? The group has, perhaps, land, some equipment, and (most important) a group gathered together and committed to some extent to stay together. Anybody with any sense knows that it takes time and trouble to accomplish that much, and once it is accomplished, will want that land, equipment and people to work toward goals which he believes are important. Some groups never talk about fundamental goals until the conflicts start (an almost fatal error); others write elaborate bylaws, but this doesn't stop a challenger, who can sense the weaknesses of the stated goals (they haven't produced happiness yet, have they?) and believes that he has a better set to offer. In the case of Twin Oaks, the original goals were held to, and the challengers during that early period left the community. In other groups I know about, it was the other way around. Whichever

way it goes, it costs the group heavily in morale, resources, and general progress. It is virtually impossible for a secular group to avoid this struggle. That's why I talk of the "inevitable" hardships of the first years. I think they're inevitable because I haven't seen any exceptions.

As these events occur and multiply, the new communitarian asks himself "What am I doing here? I expected to make sacrifices, but what am I making them for?" It is a blow to find that the most exacting sacrifices, the severest trials of patience, are not on the physical plane at all. It is precisely in the areas from which comfort was expected that the worst blows come. The members do not, alas, love each other easily, nor is trust to be acquired in a few months. The precious feeling of unity, common action toward a common goal, disappears precisely at the rate at which the members get to know one another's less elevated motives. The kind of mutual trust, love despite disagreement, understanding in spite of exasperation, communication without a lot of talk — all these things that are idealized by communitarians and in fact are both possible and likely — come after years of living together, and not within the first few months.

People who have it in their heads that they want to start their own communes are not very frightened by tales of hardship. I wasn't, certainly. I studied stories of the failures of communes in the last century and decided that they had done everything wrong and that I could do better. This kind of conceit is almost a prerequisite for founding a community, so I don't expect to dissuade anybody by the last few paragraphs, however dismaying

There is no statement that makes me feel quite so old as the bright and confident "Our group won't have any turnover".

they seem to me as I review them. You're too confident for that. You can see where we went wrong, and you can do better. Your case is special. God help you!

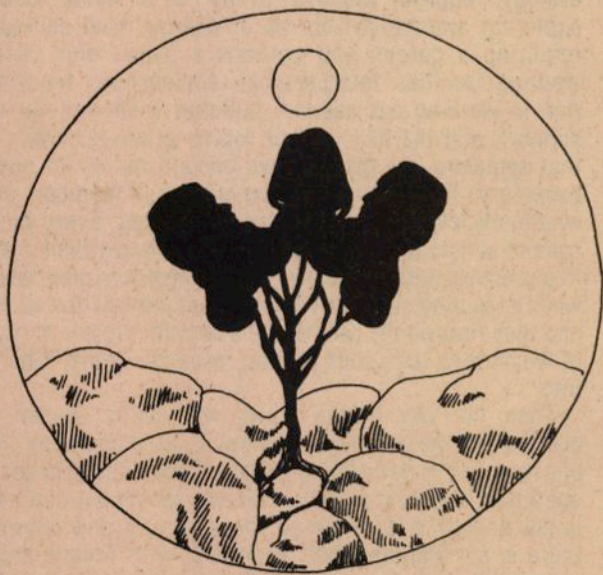
Why you will want to start another commune is obvious. For one thing, none of the communes now in existence will suit you. Twin Oaks is too middle class; East Wind is too crassly materialistic (or too spiritual, depending on whom you talk to); Aloe is too poor or too emotional; North Mountain too agricultural, or too small; Dandelion is in the wrong country; The Farm is too religious and too vegetarian, and so forth. You have a special idea, and it's never been tried before. Your idea, you feel, is so powerful that it will attract people who agree with you, all of whom have presumably been as frustrated as you in not finding the ideal community. Your brand of psychology, or therapy, or yoga, or religion, will prevent conflicts and struggles of the kind I speak of so knowledgeably. In fact, you can see right away that the major problems are not economic but (a. psychological) (b. spiritual) (c. emotional) (d. sexual) (e. sociological) (f. anthropological) (g. nutritional) (h. several of the above). Now your idea is . . . (fill in the blank), and it has a high potential for success because it combines the (.) with the (.) and eliminates the undesirable (.), which has been the major problem all along. So your idea is going to create a

commune which, you modestly submit, will fill a much-needed gap in the present scene and provide a communal home for people who have heretofore not found what they needed.

I'll say it as plainly as I can: No, it won't. No, you can't. No, your theory is not sufficient to deal with the multiple problems of community. No, the solutions you've thought up are not essentially new. And no, another twist in the long tail of communal complications will not help more people to find community. In fact, it will do the opposite. Unless you're a true guru, or unless exterior conditions change drastically and suddenly in some unforeseen way, or unless you know more about community than I do (which I doubt) or unless you have incredible luck, your community is going to fail, and when it fails, we all lose.

Well, you wonder, how come I figure you can't do something as well as I did. After all, I didn't have any particular experience or wisdom when I started! True enough, and the reason I'm trying to discourage you is not that I think I had more innate talent for the job than you do. The point is that the job is harder to do now than it was then.

For one thing, there aren't as many people interested as there used to be. The national attention given to the commune movement through **Life Magazine**, **Psych Today**, **Time**, **New**



York Times, and even the **Wall Street Journal** is a phenomenon of the past. Other than local newspapers doing articles about communes in their areas, publicity of this kind has not come to my attention since 1973. I know of four communes (including Twin Oaks and East Wind) who have recently resorted to advertising in national magazines in order to increase the flow of prospective members, whereas in former times so many people were writing about us and filming us for television that we never had to spend a penny on ads.

Some superficial journalists have recently printed obituaries of the commune movement. These are mistaken. The movement is a long ways from dead. However, it is no longer fashionable.

it was a shock to me to find out that national excitement about communal living was just another intellectual fashion, like psychic seers or macrobiotic diets or the Power of Positive Thinking. To me community is an all-encompassing idea, fundamental in its importance, sweeping in its implications, far-reaching in its potential. But to the public in the sixties it was just

It is a blow to find that the most exacting sacrifices, the severest trials of patience, are not on the physical plane at all.

another titillating idea, to be played with, considered, fantasized about. People in the seventies presumably still like that kind of stimulation, but they find it somewhere else. The parade of casual drop-ins has almost stopped. What this means to the new commune is that it is not safe to assume that there will be a flow of people among whom to select a compatible group.

There is, nevertheless, a fair number of people who are dissatisfied with their lives where they are now and are prepared to choose communal living as an alternative. There are probably as many serious applicants as there ever were — maybe more. But there's a catch. These days there are lots of groups ready to admit them.

Furthermore, among the open groups are some that are quite obviously viable and pleasant. Every established commune offers regular and nutritious meals. Medical care is always adequate and in some groups excellent. Housing varies a lot, as does sewage and sanitation, but (and this is part of my point) the older and better established communities have more adequate housing and sewage than the newer ones, along with a hundred other amenities. Bigger groups offer greater variety of social contact, greater privacy, more varied activities, better developed agriculture, or maintenance, or industry, greater choice of work — or even all of these at once.

The prospective communitarian becomes a sort of shopper, going from one group to another asking the question "in which of these groups can I best develop my interests?" We have a kind of buyer's market, where the supply is greater than the demand.

At this point it would be romantic to report that whereas the established groups have better physical conditions, the newer ones have more to offer spiritually or psychologically. It is my opinion and observation that the opposite is the case. The older and bigger groups are more, not less, likely to have their shit together on other fronts. This can be vigorously argued (and is, all the time) but I rest my case on the following solid fact: During 1976 the bigger and older groups held their own or grew slightly; the small and new groups all lost members they have not been able to replace. I believe this is the direct result of the existence of too many community options for too small a number of

applicants, coupled with the frightful and unavoidable hardships of the first years.

The multiplicity of communal options means that fewer people take risks with new ventures. Founders of new groups have to depend on geographical accidents, personal friends, and people who have not fit in well with other groups. In short, you will have trouble finding members. Once you attract a few members, the ordinary strains of communal living (either the ones I've mentioned or a hundred more I could detail if I wanted to take up the whole magazine) will cause turnover. There is no statement that makes me feel quite so old as the bright and confident "Our group won't have any turnover." Don't even spend time dreaming of that sort of stability. You will have turn-over, and in the current climate you will be lucky if you can keep enough new

There was a time when I thought that the failure of a small commune didn't damage the movement as a whole.

people coming in to replace the ones who leave. Sometimes "turnover" isn't even that. It's just loss. The faster it happens, the sooner the group fails.

There was a time when I thought that the failure of a small commune didn't damage the movement as a whole, because the people from a group that didn't make it could always go and join a stabler group. Their experience would be of value, and their sorrow would have mellowed them. I thought this because I read about the phenomena in communities of the past. People excluded from the Rappite group happily went and joined the Mormons, I read. I figured the same would happen to us, and this is not entirely wrong. East Wind currently has three members, for example, who came and joined us after a heartbreaking failure of another commune. However, the number of such cases, compared to the number of people who are lost to the movement permanently, is small. Most of the core members who watch their group crumble under them lose interest in community entirely and do not even consider trying again. Individuals among them quite often, ironically enough, consider trying to start over, this time with themselves as the core, with their ideas and their choice of members. I cannot report any success stories coming from such beginnings.

Unwillingness to join another community is not just a matter of loss of faith or discouragement, although these must certainly be major factors. I have been repeatedly dismayed by the discovery that members of a small, poor, but proud group develop an attachment to their own experiment so profound that they find it impossible to live in another community. While their commune lasts, they help boost one another's morale by pointing out the virtues of their own system and the evident inferiority of the systems that other groups use, or their own group feeling or commitment or (again, fill in the blank) that other groups haven't even begun to match. Then, when for one reason or another their own commune fails, they have so convinced themselves that other communities are worthless that they cannot imagine themselves living there. Thus, a group that lasts two or three years and in that time goes through thirty members and eventually loses them all has unintentionally done both those people

and the movement as a whole a disservice. If those same 30 people had happened to join a commune that had better survival potential, presumably some of them would have stayed.

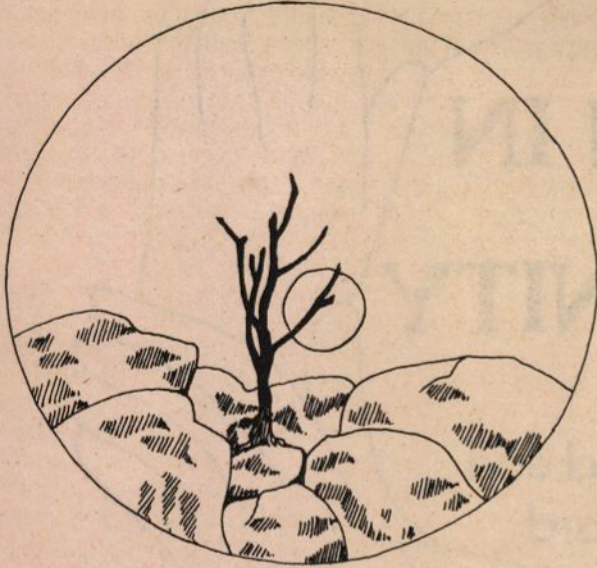
For the same reasons that 1977 is a poor year to start a new community, it is a good time to join an existing one. You are needed there, and you can gain knowledge and experience there that will help you later if you eventually do try to pioneer. Consider:

(1) A community over two years old is already experiencing the phenomenon of overextension. That means that the members of the community have thought of a lot more interesting or necessary things to do than they have time, labor, and money to accomplish. A few years ago I thought that this was an error that new communities should avoid, but since I've seen it develop in my second community just the way it did in the first, I have tentatively concluded that it is inevitable. In order to build a community at all, it is necessary to gather together people with dreams, and people will not stay unless they see the seeds of their dreams planted and some progress toward them. In a group of, say, twenty people there will be at least four or five categories of dreams, with their subcategories numbering more than twenty—for who is so narrow as to have only one little dream? Not communitarians! New groups discard the most expensive (the airstrip) and the most premature (the trucking network) but are still left with a handful of important priorities that require at least symbolic attention. Some common ones these days are: ecology, requiring attention to the use of waste materials and exploring alternative sources of energy; food self-sufficiency, requiring a garden and perhaps a dairy, plus canning and freezing facilities; interpersonal relationships, requiring attention to working out hassles, building trust, mutual emotional support, and the like; and of course group survival, requiring that somehow the group make enough money to buy what is necessary. The list grows as the number of members grows, but eventually levels off as the areas get covered. Every young group tries to satisfy its basic ideals, or aim toward their satisfaction, in a practical and sensible way. The members plan their coming week or coming summer with as much information as they have, and they figure they can handle a certain number of projects, all of which they then start putting resources (time, labor, money) into.

Then the van breaks down, the septic system becomes overloaded, the group that thought it would be happy sleeping in one room starts demanding private space, Fulano needs a kidney operation, and Sultano breaks his hip falling out of a tree. There is not enough money for all these repairs and improvements; there is not enough labor, especially with Fulano and Sultano temporarily out of the labor supply. Something has to give. Shall it be the garden? Shall the group sell the goats and drink reconstituted powdered milk? Shall it abandon the methane generator project? Whoever makes decisions in little groups puzzles over these alternatives and knows that none of them will work. Giving up the garden, with all its symbolic as well as real benefits, means making a certain group of people very unhappy with community. They will be likely to leave, and that would not help the resource supply at all! The methane has been using money and producing nothing for many months, but the person whose passion it is also repairs automobiles, and nobody else knows how. How can you take away his biggest source of happiness? And so forth. Predictably the decision will be "We won't stop doing anything; we'll just work harder." A few people work harder, but most people can't really do so. What happens is that the hospital gets paid eventually; the methane generator languishes when its creator leaves over an unhappy love affair; the garden is smothered with weeds but still absorbs a lot of labor in the high-hope season of early spring; the sewage is

postponed; the car situation is really bad until (Heaven must be watching out for us!) a new member comes who is a really competent mechanic! Hooray! There is only one catch. The new member has a passion for photography, and is pushing to get a small corner of the public room set up as a darkroom.

If this hypothetical group survives (and it may. We did.), by the time it presents an attractive alternative to newcomers, it has



gathered a hundred projects that are legitimate, interesting, even feasible, if there were only enough energy to go around.

New members supply that energy. New members find themselves surrounded by dozens of things they have never done before, and they get involved in learning to milk, or to garden, or to preserve foods, or to help in production or sales or business management. This takes a little of the burden off everybody and leaves a little surplus energy to devote to some of those other interests. Things that seemed (deceptively) practical the first months of the community's existence now become really practical for the first time in the community's third, fifth, or tenth year*

Ecology, self-sufficiency, art and music, concern for exterior politics, good interpersonal relations, even advanced technology — all are serious concerns worthy of the energy of decent human beings and high-minded groups. But in the absence of the resources to devote to them, they become nothing more than dreams and symbols, and our efforts toward them little more than games. If we are to grow beyond the game stage, we have to put real energy into these ideals of ours, and this can only be done if the energy is freed from the basic needs of survival. The group that has its fundamental survival well in hand is in a position to put serious energy into its big dreams. The more people pool their efforts (especially able people like you who are

*My visit to the Kibbutzim of Israel confirmed that this is not just a phenomenon of the first dozen years, either. Groups forty years old still have lots of unfinished dreams for new people to work on. I talked to one new immigrant who was very proud of helping his kibbutz re-establish its children's farm, a project that had been hanging around waiting for the right person to come and push it into being.

capable, in better times, of founding a community), the sooner it will be possible to make a genuine contribution to ecology (or whatever). You, added to the base that is already there, can accomplish much more than you having to create that base all over again. Remember, in an established group, much has already been done that need not be repeated.

(2) The older community has accumulated knowledge that you can really use if you want to start your own group. I'm not talking about how to milk a cow or make cottage cheese (although everything helps). I mean the fundamental problems of communal living — central decision-making versus personal autonomy, efficiency of group use versus higher quality in personal use; the advantages and disadvantages of group intimacy, group commitment, unity versus diversity, the place of the artist in a worker's society, and so forth. These issues are old. You can read about them in both the literature of community and the anti-communal writings. You can conjecture and theorize, but the real tradeoffs don't become clear until you live them. If you are a communitarian at all, you are prepared to make some of the sacrifices involved in group living, in order to get some of the satisfactions. But until you have experience, you are necessarily naive and probably either exaggerate or underestimate their seriousness. A year or two of experience will tell you a lot about your theories. You might even get a chance to experiment with them in the group you join.

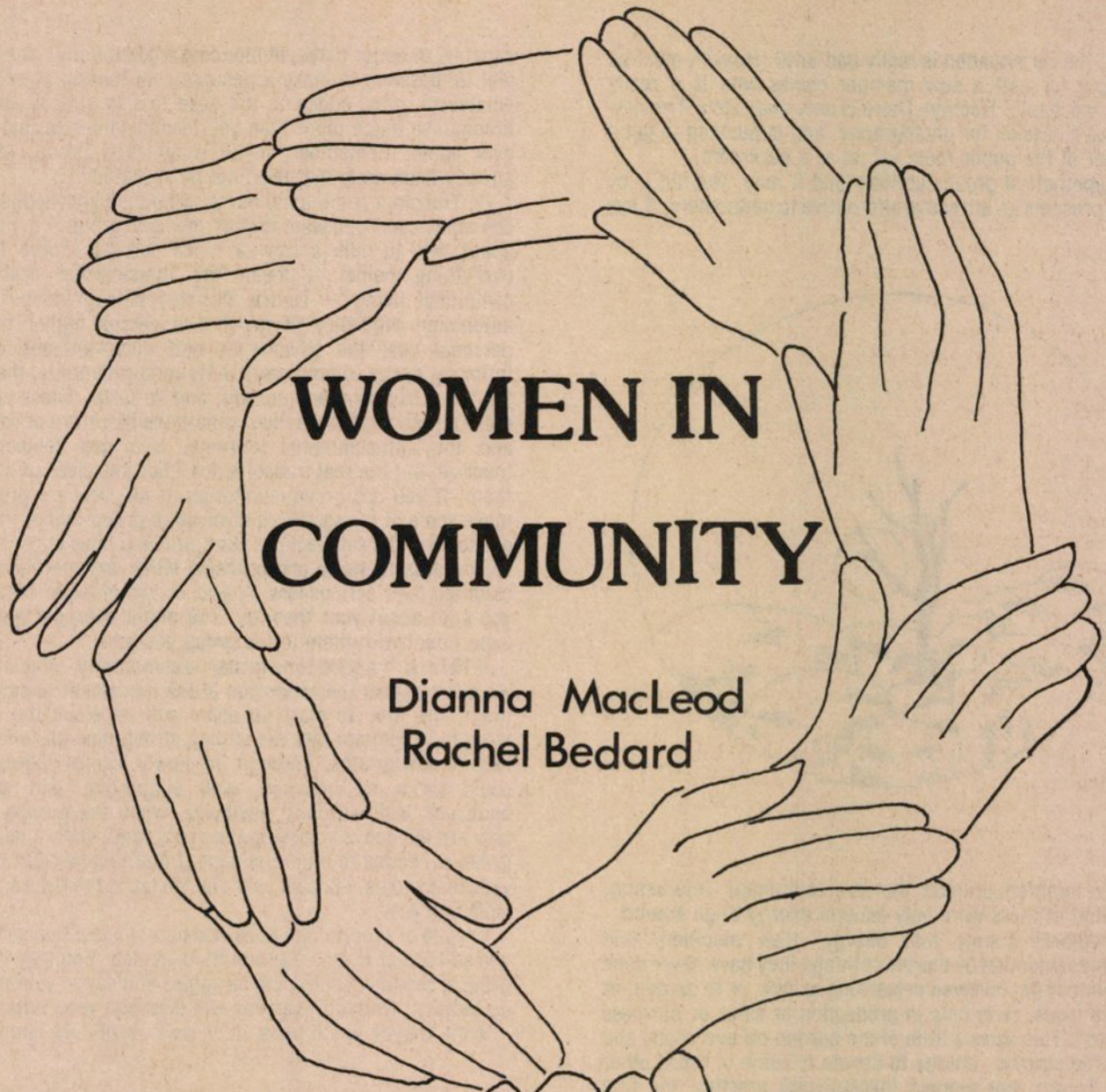
If 1977 isn't a good time to start a community, when is? Surely we don't expect the expansion of the movement to stop. To my mind, the time to start up again will be when the currently struggling communities are strong, strong enough to lend some help to new groups. Through the newly formed federation this could be a well-planned, well supported, and successful endeavor. We will do it, obviously, when the groups we have now are not actively seeking members, and when a new kind of group is needed to fill in the gaps. I don't know right now what year that will be. I hope it won't be too far in the future. I know it isn't this year.

In spite of everything I have said here, I know that some of you will still prefer to start a group from scratch. You may visit other groups, see their continuing struggles and say to yourself "I can do better." Nothing I can say will dissuade you. What then?

Well, maybe you'll make it. It isn't absolutely impossible —

For the same reasons that 1977 is a poor year to start a new community, it is a good time to join an existing one.

just unlikely. If you have to do this, and if you're on the wavelength of the "egalitarian" communities, I hope you will federate with us. I hope you'll ask us for help in labor exchange. We're not going to turn our backs on you just because you're stubborn. You won't get any hassle from us, or need any. Heaven knows there's plenty of that where you're going! There is an outside chance that you may be suited to this pioneer work, may know how to gather and inspire a group, even in these difficult times. If so, I'd like to talk to you in a couple of years. We'll have a lot to talk about. □ 7



WOMEN IN COMMUNITY

Dianna MacLeod
Rachel Bedard

come to community

Most women who move into community want to leave sex roles and other cultural conditioning behind. We are disenchanted with many societal values and the pressures and competition of capitalism. We may go out to the country or start a commune in the city. We may be consciously political or we may not be. We may see ourselves unplugging from the system or setting up an alternative to it. We gather together, identify the old, unaware ways of behaving and try to change them in our everyday lives. But we cannot completely free ourselves of the training we received as children.

Even as people in a community setting create the space for themselves to become whole human beings, we frequently bring our old habits, patterns, and responses into community as we attempt to make the cultural transition. Sexism affects all people in (and out) of community by influencing: 1) relationships between women, 2) relationships between women and men, 3) the worldview of women, and 4) roles and work. And so we stand with one foot in the new society and the other entrenched in the old.

WOMEN AND WOMEN

Because of the societal myths women have swallowed about themselves, and about other women, we often remain isolated by our reactions to living in a community that continues to oppress women. We deny ourselves the emotional energy, caring, and love of fully half the human race. We imagine that we are alone with the frustration and anger at finding ourselves the prime emotional support for men. We try to minimize the pain that comes with being taken less seriously than we know we are.

Living in or "dropping out" of society, we are still subject to cultural programming. (When we think about women in community, we must not ignore the dynamics that generally affect women "on the outside.") Some of the most common of these dynamics are jealousy, competition and mistrust. Coming out of the expectations of nuclear families, or at least nuclear couples, one of our strongest impulses is toward possessiveness and pairing. In reaction to this, many community people jump from one relationship to another; others refuse to have any close relationships at all; still others have several relationships simultaneously.

Community can be a place where new forms of isolation and alienation occur for women. This isolation, combined with reinforcement of our "feminine" selves in community, may mean that we are blind to the fact that we are now doing the laundry of three men instead of one.

In moving out or away from a nuclear family to a communal lifestyle, the biggest advantage to women is everyday contact with other women. The stifling effects of the culture become more obvious when we run up against others who, like us, have been expected to look, act, and be certain ways. Women together in community are more likely to become aware of each other's voices, concerns, and insecurities. A woman alone in a "nuclear" situation may get lots of love from a man but still end up cooking the dinners or changing the baby's diapers. A woman in community can be encouraged by other women as she does less of that work herself, or be lovingly challenged not to lose herself in a house-wife role.



WOMEN AND MEN

Based on our gender we do a great deal of unconscious channeling of our needs for support to the "right" people. Men go to women for a certain kind of emotional support (bolstering), whereas they seek another kind of emotional support (recognition) from other men. (Recognition from the powerful is certainly worth more than from the powerless.) Because in our society vulnerability is equated with weakness, especially by male standards, most men do not ask other men for loving attention. Men have been taught it is not safe for them to go to other men with their emotional needs. Consequently, women spend an enormous amount of time as caretakers for the egos of the men they live and work with and use much of their energy uncovering, monitoring, and responding to the emotional states of men.

We sometimes confuse the directions that our male friends would have us take with what we need to do to make ourselves independent people.

Most often it is men who initiate relationships with women, rather than the reverse, and often initiate them with a sexual agenda in mind. In this way men continue to relate to women along standard societal lines; i.e. if a woman is "cute" and "attentive" (to the man), then he becomes interested in her sexually. This reinforces a woman to act cute and attentive rather than going on to do her own thinking. It is much easier for women and men to get and give this kind of attention, because it is what society teaches; it has a momentum of its own. We as women know how to play the game, and when we act concerned and intelligently interested we can gain flattery, a sexual relationship, and perhaps some extras: presents, dinners out, warm, loving notes, etc. etc.

Sometimes, the familiar validation we get from men feels safer than the more self-affirming energy we give to each other as women.

WOMEN'S WORLDVIEW

Because of our traditional isolation and competitiveness, women are kept from developing an understanding of our condition which stems from our own experiences. All women have lived, for at least a part of their lives, in a woman-hating world. Our female sexist patterns are mechanisms we have developed to survive the experience. When we share feelings on the personal effects of this kind of hate and oppression, and discover its origin, nature and function, we are by turns disoriented and empowered. When we come to see what (or who) has shaped our worldview, and why, and we begin to nourish a self-image based on a conscious, shared exploration of who we are and how we define ourselves, we move towards politicizing what were formerly our individual, unrelated lives and herstories. Our self-hate ends where our analysis begins.

There do seem to be qualitative differences in the structure of community life that make it freeing for women. The following is a personal herstory illustrating many of the changes that community allows:

I began living in the Philadelphia Life Center community in September of 1973. I came with "social change" concerns and very little money, one personal connection, and a lot of hope. I had no idea what to expect. Before this time I had lived with my family, in college dorms, and in an apartment with my husband.

Like many people who join communities, I was looking for both an expedient way to live on meager financial resources and a "better" way to use my personal resources than simply plugging into an inhumane economic system. Also, I was vaguely searching for a way out of the expectations of the nuclear family. Such expectations had cropped up around me and my husband in spite of our tremendous efforts to the contrary: being quietly married by a justice of the peace; hyphenating our maiden and bachelor names; verbally supporting women's rights and so on. Still, people began to ask me, "What does your husband want to do?" and to drop hints about children.

I immediately felt some financial relief within the community setting. Our shared rent was low. Food costs were also low, thanks to group buying and a "Life Center" food coop. By working two days a week at a cerebral palsy school as a "housemother", I could manage to cover my costs.

After two or three months I began to feel the empowerment of such low cost living. I was able to say that I would keep my own finances and not depend on my husband for financial support or income sharing. This was one kind of independence I had not had before, in school or at home with my family. I began to get a sense of myself in a totally new way, as a full person, not an adjunct of father or husband.

My social sphere also broadened tremendously. I had feared that I would enter this totally unknown city and find that I knew one person - my husband. All around me would be grim and terrifyingly unfamiliar faces. Instead, because there were two houses that who wanted new tenants, I found a dozen people interested in me personally, and easily thirty who soon wanted to know who I was, what I thought and what I wanted to do. In spite of being known as a partner in a somewhat strained marriage relationship, I found myself getting my share of the attention. It was an exhilarating experience.

Although there were two children in the first house I lived in, child care was not shared by the adults. The parents did not trust the other adults to shape their children's lives because of personal disagreements, differences of style, and fear of a house member who was coming out as a lesbian. This distrust kept the house members from becoming closely knit, and kept the parents in fixed mother and father roles.

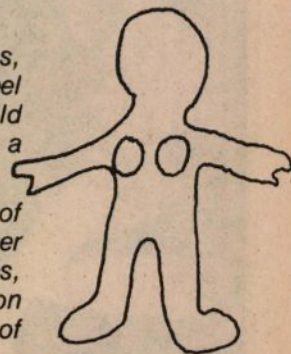
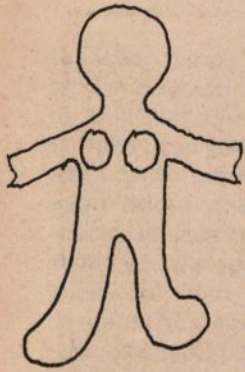
There has been quite a lot of progress in child care sharing since I came to Philadelphia. In many houses, child nurturing and child financial support are group responsibilities, and both adults and children learn to relate in loving ways beyond strict blood ties. The children have several adult role models as they grow and ideally have as many sources of love and attention. Adults who don't have children of their own can participate in the growth of younger people.

Weekly house meetings helped to manage the details of household life that could not be settled over dinner. They also gave me time to share my hopes and personal goals with others. Just getting my ideas out to more than one person was helpful. We spent significant portions of housemeeting time sharing recent excitements, fantasies, and hopes. In this setting, it was possible to start pushing myself to share my poetry and to say I wanted to work on a plumbing or roofing job.

All of these mechanisms, and others like women's sharing and study groups, combined to give me a psychic space that I had never before experienced. I began to feel as though I could be all the things I wanted to be: writer, social change worker, child care person, friend and theoretician. I felt empowered by not being expected to be a housewife and could give attention more fully to all that I did.

This is the start of my fourth year of living communally. Under the auspices of Movement for a New Society and a communications collective of which I was a member for 2 2years, I have spoken to and corresponded with women in dozens of communities, and many women who are not in communal situations. In writing a theory paper on sexism and patriarchy, I came to see that women's position--whether in or out of community--was in many ways that of a second class citizen.

I hope that by sharing our experiences and the struggles of this community, other women will experience the empowerment that we here have begun to feel.



Most of us in communities with an intentional focus realize that by calling ourselves "intentional" we mean to be building an alternative to some condition in our society which we find intolerable. The oppression of women by a patriarchal system which profits from our labor by keeping us ignorant of the forces that shape us is such a condition. As we construct our own analysis, we deliberately remove the blinders that keep us from realizing ourselves as radical women determined to control our own minds, our own bodies, our own destinies.

ROLES/WORK

No matter what kind of intentional community we choose to live in, an enormous amount of community time is spent in "maintenance"; ensuring the physical well-being (food, shelter, clothing) and emotional health (openness and honesty, resolving conflict) of community members. This kind of maintenance work (like housework in our more traditional, middle-American communities) tends to be low status, unrecognized, and non-paying. And, (in communities with a low consciousness about sexism, the members who perform this kind of service are women.) Because women have had such excellent training in role-determined jobs like cooking, baking, cleaning, clotheswashing, gardening, and child care, it is difficult to move beyond these limited chores. Men have essentially been maintained in this way by their mothers, lovers, and wives; and have been encouraged to acquire other skills like carpentry, construction, stonemasonry, and animal/machine use and care. Men feel free and confident to assume these tasks.

Men are often seen as the primary intellectual, decision-making, strategizing force in a community: they make the speeches, draw up the groundplans, write the theory papers, and issue the statements. They perform the creative, mind-engaging work of the community. When men do strictly one kind of upkeep while women continue to care for the physical and emotional state of the community, neither sex gets experience outside its traditional role-determined area of expertise. Consistent with our lack of experience and our self-image, women tend not to take an equal share in the leadership of small groups (often the nuts and bolts of community life.)



Despite the lack of support for learning skills outside their traditional spheres, when women do pursue their determination to learn a skill denied to them as girl-children, they almost always learn from and work with men rather than women. (Men usually have the tools as well as the information for fixing things.)

Once a woman is onto the fact that she is playing out roles, she needs support in moving out of them. Community is a good place for this to happen, because a woman does not have to fling all her unwanted duties onto the one other person she is living with. She can think with the community about sharing responsibilities among many. Community in this way acts as a buffer, a place to think out our goals and how we can achieve them in ways that allow everyone to grow.

If women break these patterns and seek out that "whole person" inside ourselves, the result is much more unpredictable. We have to develop the woman we've never known, or only knew back in childhood. We have to find new ways of getting support as we emerge. We have to learn to think of ourselves first, and of our time and creativity as valuable, not to be siphoned off in support of a number of men. We have to start thinking of the warmth and touching we get from other women as equally satisfying as hugs from a man. (Sometimes, the familiar validation we get from men feels safer than the more self-affirming energy we give to each other as women.)

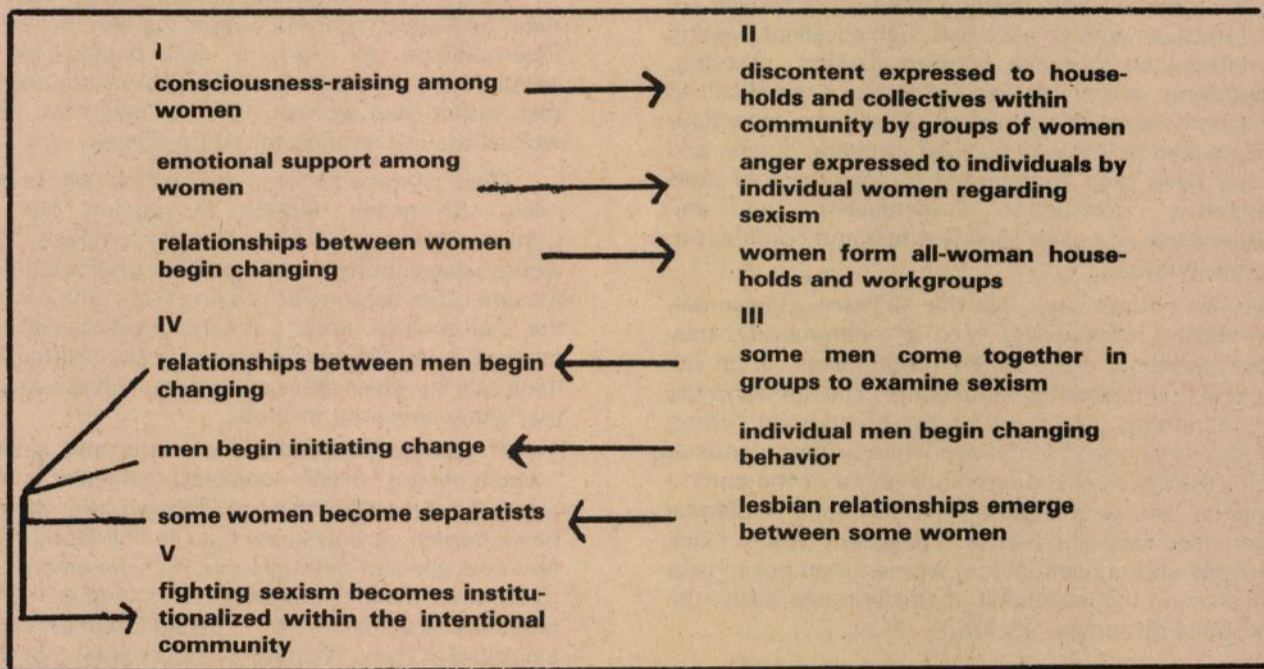
This experience of change from insular couple or individual to collective or community person is a gradual one. It isn't easy to lay relationships open to comment or criticism. It isn't easy to admit that we carry vestiges of a culture we have tried to leave behind.

MNS AS A MODEL FOR CHANGE

Over the past five years the Life Center Community has moved through several stages in its recognition of feminism as a priority life-style and political issue. The following model helps to explain the stages of change in the community:

i,ii) Solidarity among women and education for men occurs via "formal" avenues like position/theory papers, forums, and speakouts on feminism, as well as "informally" by women who live and work with men. (Some of the most important consciousness-raising occurs when women usurp the personal power and male privilege exercised by men in the daily business of everyday living.) Women, out of their frustration with men and their newly-borne trust and affection for each other, come together in all-woman houses. As women feel increasingly free from "taking care" of the men in the community and continue to feel the love and strength they share among each other, women's workgroups and workshops become common. During the first year in the herstory of the Life Center, the feminist collective emerged. In the last year or so, women have begun working together in a musician's support group, a direct action group, several study groups (covering class and feminism, socialism and feminism); a dream analysis group; as well as collaborating to produce several articles ("Sexism Theory Paper", "Liberating Sexuality"). Such collectives continue to provide the impetus for a feminist analysis of our culture, political system, and community.

iii) When both women and men begin to understand the nuclear family, sexism, and patriarchy as a personal as well as political issue (one that affects the community in its day-to-day functioning, in its self-definition, in its influence as a model for its children and for other intentional communities) some men in the community begin to "pull their own weight" by working to effect institutional and individual change. Men get together in groups to help each other recognize behavior that is oppressive to women and to understand the effects of growing up male in America. In the Life Center, as everywhere, individuals grow most quickly when they are pushed to change by people who assume the individual is making an effort to become their most loving and sensitive self. When men form consciousness-raising groups, they are able to provide this kind of support network for each other. Networks begin to grow among men, fostered by the most aware men in the community. These men frequently take on the responsibility of pushing other men on their sexism, realizing that for women to continue to do this follows the old society dictates of male dependence on women to call attention to dynamics and feelings.



iv) Frequently, men who have taken the lead in exploring sexism and feminism feel responsible to continue educating their brothers. In the Life Center such a collective ("Men Against Patriarchy") has emerged which sponsors workshops for men on sexism, classism, and gayness, as well as thinking about the Life Center men's community as an entity. Men discover, as women did, that they have been prevented from seeing the full range of feelings they are capable of experiencing with each other.

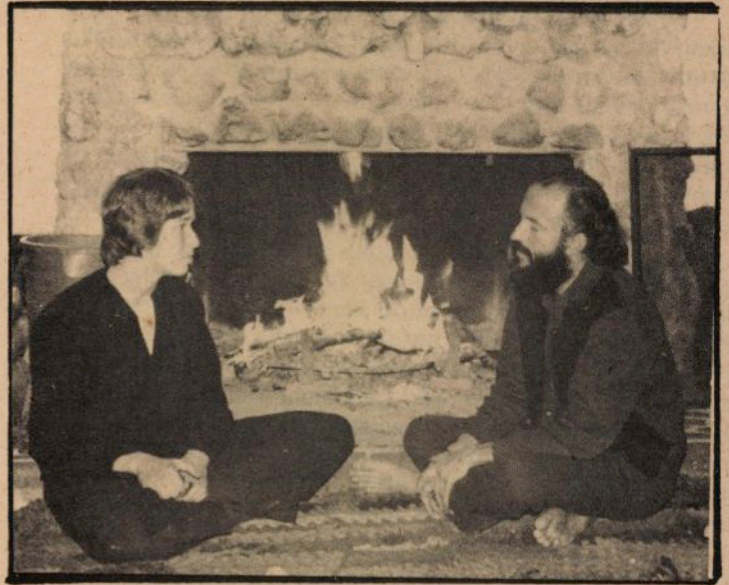
As women give more and different kinds of support to one another, they frequently form primary commitments to each other. Many women-identified women feel better equipped to work with men in the community because they have gained some measure of emotional "space" and are more willing to help men struggle with sexism. Other lesbians refuse to live or work with men, feeling that the energy required to hassle through sexism is too great, and that working with women on women's issues is their political and personal priority.

v) As all the members of the Life Center have become committed to reaching beyond role-definitions, fostering tender feelings between members of the same sex, and understanding exploitation and oppression, the community has evolved a number of mechanisms for continued growth: 1) Separate men's and women's cultural events supply people with information on their respective histories/herstories, 2) women's and men's training collectives go outside the intentional community to share skills in group process and growth tools with other women's/men's workgroups, 3) gay, bisexual, and heterosexual community members caucus to develop strategies for clear communication and support, 4) different women's groups continue to develop to serve newly-emerging needs, and 5) identity groups spring up to examine other kinds of systematic oppression operating within the community.

THE FAMILY

Community can be a launching point for women. It gives power equally to each adult member, regardless of the person's status in the "outside world." It is as safe a place as exists for mother to stop being housewife and father to stop being lord and (alienated) master, because it provides adult support for the transition. It helps us to share the responsibilities of paid work, upkeep and maintenance of the household, so that adults as well as young people can play and celebrate together and feel secure.

The family is a literal breeding-ground for children who classify and polarize sexual characteristics: we pass on attitudes and taboos that make it difficult for girls to look to women when they need a source of strength, and boys to men when they need to be held.



TOOLS FOR CHANGE

In developing a consciousness about the ways community life can liberate us or hold us back, we in this community have employed such tools as re-evaluation counselling, third-party participation, speakouts, and many group process techniques. These do not add up to the magic formula for achieving nirvana, but they do give us ways to move past areas of hurt, inequality or personal conflict.

Re-evaluation counselling

Re-evaluation counselling (RC) is a personal-growth tool we use for separating fact from feeling and for working out conflicts. In a safe situation with a "counsellor" (listener) a person is encouraged to 1) release feelings around an issue or conflict (cry, laugh, shake), 2) try to recall any similar situations of the past that contribute to feelings in the present situation, 3) think again about the present situation and how s/he wants to handle it. In this theory feelings are seen as healthy and valid information. They are not looked upon as weapons to use in conflict. (This is a nutshell summary of a much more complex theory.)

Third-party participation

While we try not to throw bad feelings back and forth, still it is crucial for people to give each other feedback. This is certainly true in the close confines of community. Sometimes we call in another person to be an objective listener to people in conflict. This third party listens for undertones in a conversation, keeps an argument from getting muddled, and encourages people to say what they need to say and to restate what they think they've heard the other person say. All of these things, and the actual presence of the other person, make it safer to bring out what needs to be said.

Speakouts

When a mixed group is trying to confront its own sexism in a conscious way, the speakout is a valuable tool. In a speakout on

sexism, women speak one by one to a group of men about what it feels like to be treated as a sex object and baby machine by society. The men listen and do not respond to what they hear. When the women have finished, they leave the room. Women and men, in separate groups, share what they felt and thought during the session and how they want to act on what they have learned. This kind of exercise can be done in response to any kind of oppression.

Confronting societal conditioning in ourselves can trigger a whole series of reactions. Men may want to "explain" situations, or say they are sorry, or be angry because they feel misunderstood. Women may be terrified that they will lose their best friend or biggest support, and so want to say, "It's not your fault," or "I didn't really mean it." But the reactions of guilt and fear shouldn't be allowed to rule as we contradict a myth that has been presented to us as truth all of our lives. Women and men must trust themselves enough to realize that it is the lies, not us, which imprison. Although they are **in** us, they are **not** us, and we can learn to make the distinction between our conditioned deeds of the past (and present) and the full, non-oppressive selves we strive to become.

Process

In Philadelphia and other Movement for a New Society communities we are making a shift in expectation from product to process. Not that we are giving up wanting to achieve goals of social change. Far from it! But we try to pay as much attention to **how** we do things as to **what** we do in the belief that we must build a "new" society now. Definitely, this makes us move more slowly.

Process is a tool. The advantages to watching group process and moving slowly are several: first, we don't snatch up any pat solution that some "great (male) thinker" proposes, and follow it blindly. Men can stop competing for the most power or the best idea and relax their (conditioned) goal-oriented thinking. In less pressured situations, women's voices are more easily heard.

Secondly, where attention is paid to process, it is legitimate to say, "Two-thirds of the people who spoke tonight were men," or "The only ideas that were built on were those of men," or "No one has responded to the need for child care. We can't go on until we find someone." This is very different from the meetings of most leftist organizations, where the most vocal men get listened to while the women serve refreshments.

A third advantage of process-awareness is that we can chart our collective progress. We can periodically say: How have we grown? How do we want to be growing? (We can give ourselves a pat on the back or a kick in the pants and get on with our work.) We can see that we have made improvements in our behavior. Perhaps we will always be working against sexism, but gradually we will confront the more subtle manifestations, instead of the obvious signs. Always, we affirm the progress we have made and set new goals for the future.

SEPARATION OR SEPARATISM?

Women's space is essential for positive community life. There must be some place for women to come together regularly and communicate about what it means to be women. Are women still doing most of the housework? Are they still doing most of the child care or thinking about the children's needs? Are they feeling inferior intellectually to men? or to one particular man in the community?



As women begin to demand that the community in which we live and the men in our lives respond in an intelligent and compassionate way to our demands for social justice, the growth and change process intensifies. Sharing our common experience as women gives us strength to confront oppressive situations.

Anger is an emotion that women are taught to repress. The anger of individual women is often viewed as an aberration or eccentricity, rather than a justifiable state. We don't advocate that we turn all our pent-up fury on a man who slips and does something sexist, but we do affirm that anger must be expressed. We can channel our anger constructively once we learn what it means to be angry. Women's groups are a valuable learning space. Working together, we build trust and solidarity. This is probably the most powerful thing women can do toward our own liberation.

Women who take the lead in ending sexist oppression

may find themselves pulled in two directions as they work for change. Women who begin to flex their collective muscle frequently feel they have to reassure men that they are still cared for. Women must point out sexism within living and working groups, and simultaneously support the men they want to change, so that men will eventually turn around and support women and each other. Until nonsexist behavior becomes a community concern, these women must work with other women with the help of a few feminist-oriented men. A woman must have a clear and strong sense of herself as well as solidarity with other women to survive the struggle.

As a community begins to recognize, sanctify, and encourage relationships between woman-identified women and male-loving men, the community can also begin to develop a more cogent and universal definition of itself as a political force. Its framework and prescription for social change can then expand accordingly. Women can develop their ideas and bring them forward more assertively in the group.

WOMEN'S and LESBIAN HOUSES

Some of us have found a whole world in women's space and have formalized that by living together. Women's sounds, women's music, women's awareness of rhythms -- of the earth and moon, and of our own bodies -- affirm our emerging selves. Having the space to be without men, is liberating.

It is not without problems, though. Roles tend to be set up in any group situation; we are not freed of them by being women. Some women in our house are much more forceful about their needs than others and when our ideas (about food or how frequently men visit) clash, the forceful women often overrule because of their style. We are beginning to understand that while it is good to be clear about one's own needs, it is equally valuable to be concerned for other people's. Forcefulness should not be valued over generosity simply because it is a "male" characteristic and not common to women. Now we are using our "women's" skills of awareness, loving firmness, and personal support in our own situation with women.

MEN CAN HELP US - AND EACH OTHER

Men in a community are important, as friends and allies. To allow an absence of men is to leave a vacuum of male models that John Wayne and Richard Nixon and Reverent Moon will fill. Children need models of gentle, nurturing, stable men to counteract the distant, cold, and competitive cultural male image. And men can gain tremendously by daily contact and interaction with children. A movement for a New Society person in Chicago, when asked what his occupation is, says, "I'm a father and househusband." Only later, when that has sunk in, does he say, "And, I'm a printer."

Support groups are crucial for men who want to foster a positive image of maleness which adds cooperation to strength, caring to intellect. In groups men can begin to uncover the fears that keep them from trusting each other. They can learn to help each other evaluate how much or how often they really need to speak or take charge of a situation in a group. They can express their warmth, affection, and caring in a physical way. They can help each other become the full human people they want to be.

Because there is so much to cover under the subject "Women in Community" and because we are interested in seeing women push their communities in the direction they want them to go, we have brainstormed a checklist of questions for women to use to evaluate their own intentional communities. We welcome your responses or questions, which can be addressed to us care of this publication.



DIANNA



RACHEL

1. Who are your closest friends in the community-- women or men?
2. Whom do you ask for information? a) about mechanical problems, b) about the kitchen, c) about the children's activities.
3. How frequently are you asked to deal with a crisis? a) of an emotional nature, b) of a practical nature?
4. If you find yourself competing with other women, is it for a) group attention, b) one person's attention, c) sex.
5. What was it that caused the community to come together? Who structured the community you're living in? Do women have a herstory of actively organizing and speaking out within the community? Do you identify women as leaders within your community?
6. How much has liberating women from sex roles been a focus of your community?
7. Who ends up doing the extra jobs of the household (like straightening up rooms or making food for parties or standing in during an emergency).
8. Do you feel that your voice is heard and has equal weight with the voices of men in the community?
9. Do you feel that if you publically disagree with a man you're close to, you'll have to "pay for it" later. Do you feel that you win an equal number of arguments?
10. If a man is withdrawn and hurting during a meeting, who deals with that? Other men? Or women?
11. If a man talks too much in a meeting, not letting others speak, who tells him to be quiet.
12. If overparticipation by men in a meeting is pointed out, is the reaction likely to be a) gratitude, b) tension, c) anger at the person who pointed it out.
13. If you raise issues of sexism at meetings, are you likely to be a) supported and thanked, b) joined by others who want to make the meetings run differently, c) labelled a loudmouth feminist.
14. Do your physical surroundings (group space) reflect a) simplicity, b) scatteredness, lack of attention, c) neglect. Do men and women jointly maintain the kind of physical space the household desires?
15. Who would you trust a) to help you deal with a lawyer, b) to fill out the tax forms for your community, c) to find a school for the children.
16. If you were in a multiple relationship with one man and one woman, would you go to the woman or the man to try to work out your feelings and come to a resolution.
17. Is feminism seen as a priority within the community? a) Is the concern evident in the community policy? b) practice?
18. What kind of spaces for women exist in your community? a) emotionally (groups of women) b) physically (spaces for women)
19. How many of the solutions to the problems of sexism are initiated by men? How do men support other men in the community? How do men reinforce each other's sexist patterns?
20. When the community examines its oppressive ways of behaving, what kind of identity groups emerge? (class, sex, sexual preference, race, age, etc.)
21. Do women express themselves culturally within the community? Do the music makers, group sing leaders, etc., tend to be women or men?
22. What kind of personal growth tools does the community use? (And who tends to use them?)
23. Do women tend to go outside the community to meet their needs for emotional support, relationships with other women, social activities, work on woman-related projects?
24. If you were to make a primary commitment to another woman, would people in your community react to both of you with a) fear, b) avoidance c) annoyance d) anger
25. Would you leave your community permanently a) to live with a woman? b) to live with a man?

(Thanks to new society woman Cynthia Arvio for her editing talents and Terry Huppick for her graphic arts contributions.

The Philadelphia Life Center is an intentional community of the Movement for a New Society. It is located in West Philadelphia and has grown over the past 5 1/2 years to include nineteen cooperative houses scattered through a ten block area. The houses are autonomous. They decide on their own membership and set up their own living patterns or lifestyles, but they share a radical and non-exploitative perspective.

For more information about the Life Center, see Cynthia Arvio's article, "Take Heart, All Those in the Struggle", in the #19 issue of COMMUNITIES.

I say beware of all enterprises that require new clothes, and not rather a new wearer of clothes. If there is not a new man, how can the new clothes be made to fit? If you have any enterprise before you, try it in your old clothes . . . Our moulting season, like that of the fowls, must be a crisis in our lives.

—Thoreau, *Walden*

FROM COMMUNITY TO COMMUNION

Part 1: why i don't live in community

by GEORGE W CLARK

Like most people around the world and through time, I long for a better, more peaceful and harmonious world. I also long for something I call "community." For some years it has seemed to me that the two go together, complement each other. On one level I feel that only a shared sense of community among the peoples of the world can lead to the peace and harmony we all crave. On another, more functional level, I think that this is only likely to come about as we break our social and economic worlds down into smaller, more human-sized pieces. I think that the corporate state and the political and economic "megamachine" chew up the earth and its inhabitants, and so I am a believer in radical decentralization of every kind, and in the learning of personal and local self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

Living in a small community therefore makes every kind of sense to me: living closer to other people, living more lightly on the land, using less, wasting less, becoming more attuned to the earth's rhythms, learning to be less dependent on the dominant society's economic institutions and so less attached by necessity to its values and demands — all these things taken together begin to form a picture for me of what life is supposed to be all about.

A few communities have chosen to believe that we are all natural lovers, instant angels, noble savages — if only we are given the proper environment.

Or almost. For the fact is that although I have visited a number of small communities, have a number of command friends, and have spent the last few years soaking up and being other people's ears with ideas and theories on community — in spite of all this I still do not live "in community." I live in — or on the outskirts of — a small town in rural Virginia. I am a transplanted Northerner, a "foreigner"; and although I participate in some of the town's activities, I do not think of myself as part of its community, nor do I even tend to think of it

as a community at all. In this, however, I have come to believe I am wrong. I think that this little town is a community of sorts — as I now understand the word. And I think the reason I have not entered more deeply into its activities and social relationships is not because I do not experience it as a community. Rather, it is for the same reason that has kept me from joining a commune, namely that I am looking for something more, or at least other, than community.

For most of my life I have felt that my personal happiness and well-being was intimately bound up with the general state of the world. It seemed to me that my lot was not likely to get much better unless that of others improved too. And so I spent a good deal of my energy working "to make the world a better place," as I liked to think of it. This was to be accomplished, I believed, first by studying a given social problem and determining its solution, and then by "educating" others to recognize the importance of both the problem and my solution to it; and finally by getting these people to follow the course which would correct it. And so I involved myself in a succession of social causes, in electoral politics, and eventually in community organizing in an urban ghetto.

In time, however, certain realities started to become clear to me. First, that big problems have small beginnings: if you can't solve a problem on a neighborhood level it is probably unrealistic to think you can solve it at a national or world level. Secondly, that the difficulty lies, on the whole, not with institutions but with people — institutions being, after all, the creations of human beings with all their ego problems and crazinesses. Thirdly, that politicians and social leaders are also people, with their own share of craziness — perhaps more, since such people are generally more concerned than most with the pursuit of power — and so are not likely to lead us to anyplace worth getting to. And, lastly, that people don't learn or change much from being talked at or "educated," or even by being "helped" in the sense that people or agencies in the "helping professions" use that word. People learn by experience, by doing, and by following the example of those who lead simply by being models of a better way of being in the world.

I was beginning to understand that my idea of changing the world so it would be a better place for me to live in was upside down. Slowly it was beginning to dawn on me that it was I and my little corner of the world that had to change if the larger world was to have a chance. I had been going around telling everyone how to clean up his or her game instead of cleaning up my own. Cleaning up other people's games is one of the

cleverest ways there is to avoid noticing your own, let alone doing anything about it. The problem is always "out there" somewhere. One remains the eternal victim of other people's follies and anti-social behavior, of injustice, bad laws and institutions. It is the ultimate cop-out. Who, **me?**

And so I came to the idea of community — of living lightly on the land, and all the rest, with a small group of my brothers and sisters, helping each other to clean up our own games, both individual and collective, both psychological and socio-economic. Becoming models of a better way to go.

I began spending time at communes and meeting with groups of people with similar concerns, values and dreams. And began to experience another level of awakening. I was forced to face the fact that when I was with these people, I was not, for the most part, experiencing them as my brothers and sisters. Nor, it appeared, were most of them experiencing each other that way. There were lots of shared values and beliefs; the pleasures of shared work and planning; a generally more gentle and receptive way of being with one another than I was used to in the straight world. But there was still little understanding of the

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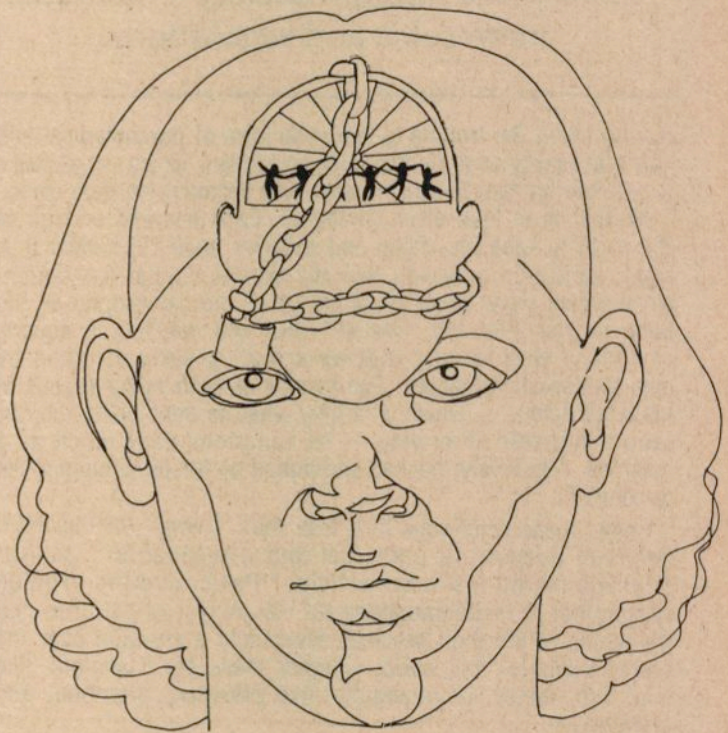
need or possibilities for cleaning up those personal psychological and emotional games which were creating all the interpersonal tensions and conflicts which drain both the individual's and the group's energies.

I saw that, as a result, most communities were having to "cope" with human nature in a variety of ways, none of which seemed to me a vast improvement over the methods already tested in the larger society. A few communities have taken an idealistic view of human nature, thought of themselves as anarchistic or "utopian," and, borrowing indiscriminately from some of the sacred traditions, have chosen to believe that we are all natural lovers, instant angels, noble savages — if only we are given the proper environment in which to let our true light shine forth. They have had little understanding of the lifetime (or lifetimes) of self-purification which the various spiritual paths have taught us is necessary to reach such a state of lovingness; and their members have been unwilling or unable to exercise the kind of personal responsibility and self-discipline which alone could compensate for the lack of external, institutional controls which the idealists so abhor. It was inevitable that most of these communities should tend to collapse under the weight of their own romantic dreams, or to sink into a condition in which everything is permitted but nothing much is possible, in the absence of either an internal or an external discipline, or of the kind of energy which is generated by a loving togetherness which they have hoped but failed to create.

Most small communities, however, taking a less sentimental view of human nature, find themselves eventually having to adopt more and more of the straight society's methods of social

control: more rules and regulations, more work incentives, penalties, governmental structures. Or they may take the indirect route of imposing sanctions of one sort or another on those who break the unwritten laws of the community, such as "no gossiping," or "no pairing," or even "no jealousy." Or they may advocate and practice certain social or behavioral principles, such as the downgrading of biological parents and the communal rearing of children.

Whatever the form of social or behavioral control, however, all these "solutions" to the problems of human cussedness share a common belief: that the problem lies "out there" in the society and its forms and structures, or at least that the most that can be hoped for is the containment of crazy behavior, or its modification through those structures. Implicit in such a belief, of course, is the hidden image of the human being as a complex combination of animal and machine that must be trained or programmed, coaxed or prodded, manipulated from



the outside in various ways so as to be "socialized" in a manner which will be compatible with the particular community's vision of the Good Society. It is ironic that many of the communities which engage in this kind of behavioral control or "social engineering" do so in the name of personal freedom. But it is an irony which is inevitable, given the basic view of human nature from which it springs.

It is worth noting that although the idealist takes a very different view of human nature, he too, in the absence of any mature conception of the nature of the human psyche, has to rely on environmental or behavioral factors to keep his community members in a loving or brotherly state. He is caught in a kind of vicious semi-circle in which it takes a good society to create good people, but the good society itself has in some way to be created by people who are already naturally good — or who are at least more "rational" than their fellows — since **17**

there is no apparent way that people can **become** good except through favorable conditioning.

Where the "realist" reduces man to his lowest and most mechanical attributes, then, the idealist tends to elevate him to a position he has not yet earned. Each pay the price of his illusions: the realist by creating a community which, as a reflection of his environmental and behaviorist views, ends by being in its basic spiritual and emotional aspects not nearly so different from the larger society as he had hoped; and the idealist by creating a community which can't work because he has aspired to build a heavenly kingdom right now before

Most small communities find themselves eventually having to adopt more and more of the straight society's methods; more rules and regulations.

having taken the trouble to learn the laws of psychological and spiritual reality or to do the work on himself which could make it possible for him to live in peace and harmony here on earth.

Neither is in total error, of course. Each has just enough of the truth to keep his vision and theories alive. The idealist is right, surely, in believing that the human psyche has dimensions which were never dreamed of in the philosophy of the behaviorists. And the "realist" (like the idealist) is equally correct in maintaining that we are all greatly affected by environmental influences. For insofar as man operates out of his unconscious — which is largely what he does unless he has taught himself otherwise — he functions very much as a machine, reflexively, pushed and pulled by forces he cannot see or control.

Under these conditions it is true that "Power relationships between people are universal and inescapable," as Kat Kinkade maintains in her article, "Power and the Utopian Assumption," in **Communities** No. 18. And it is also true that the whole of life then becomes essentially a struggle over the scarce things of this world, whether these are "tangible, like land and money, or intangible, like affection, attention, and prestige."

No question but what this is a reasonably accurate picture of the world we see around us. The tragic flaw in it is the assumption that this is all there is to the world or to the human psyche. It assumes that man is **nothing but** the helpless victim of his unconscious and unchangeable needs and desires, and of his conditioning; that his personality and his behavior are all there is to him; and that we live in a zero-sum material world in which love is in as short supply as crude oil, so that what is given to you is taken away from me. It is the Utilitarian vision of the world as marketplace in which pleasure and pain are traded off as so many goods and "bads," forms of profit and loss. It is a vision also derived from the Newtonian mechanics of the physical sciences of another age, a vision of the world and of man as elaborate machines whose functions can be charted and whose future can be directed by the cunning computations of the rational mind — a vision which the physicists of our day have themselves long since abandoned. It is a conception which says that what you see is what you get, and that if you can't see it or count it or measure it, it can't exist. It tells us that matters

and in the same way as the material things of the world; and that my present behavior and personality define me in my totality — are all I or the world can ever aspire to. It is in fact the ultimate illusory and "utopian" image of the world as a contrivance which can be tinkered with and repaired and improved by human ingenuity. In its essentials, it is the vision which has given us the world we live in.

"Some scarcities," Kat writes, "(money, for instance) are artificial and can be done away with by good social design; others, like prestige, cannot." There is, to begin with, the curious assumption here that money — a valid, if imperfect medium of exchange — is more "artificial" than prestige, which is, after all, only a trick of the ego, its way of trying to convert **respect** into some sort of power advantage. But more important is the belief, here made so clear, that what is "out there" (Money) can be changed ("done away with") through external manipulation ("good social design"), while what is "in here," in the heart and mind (the desire for prestige) is immutable, presumably because it can be neither counted nor legislated against. Throughout there is the implicit image of man as a more or less mechanical contraption which is to be cajoled and bullied (Behaviorism's positive and negative reinforcements) into the social forms and relationships which the "social engineers" or "planners" have convinced themselves will be good for him and his community.

Where the "realist" reduces man to his lowest and most mechanical attributes, the idealist tends to elevate him to a position he has not yet earned.

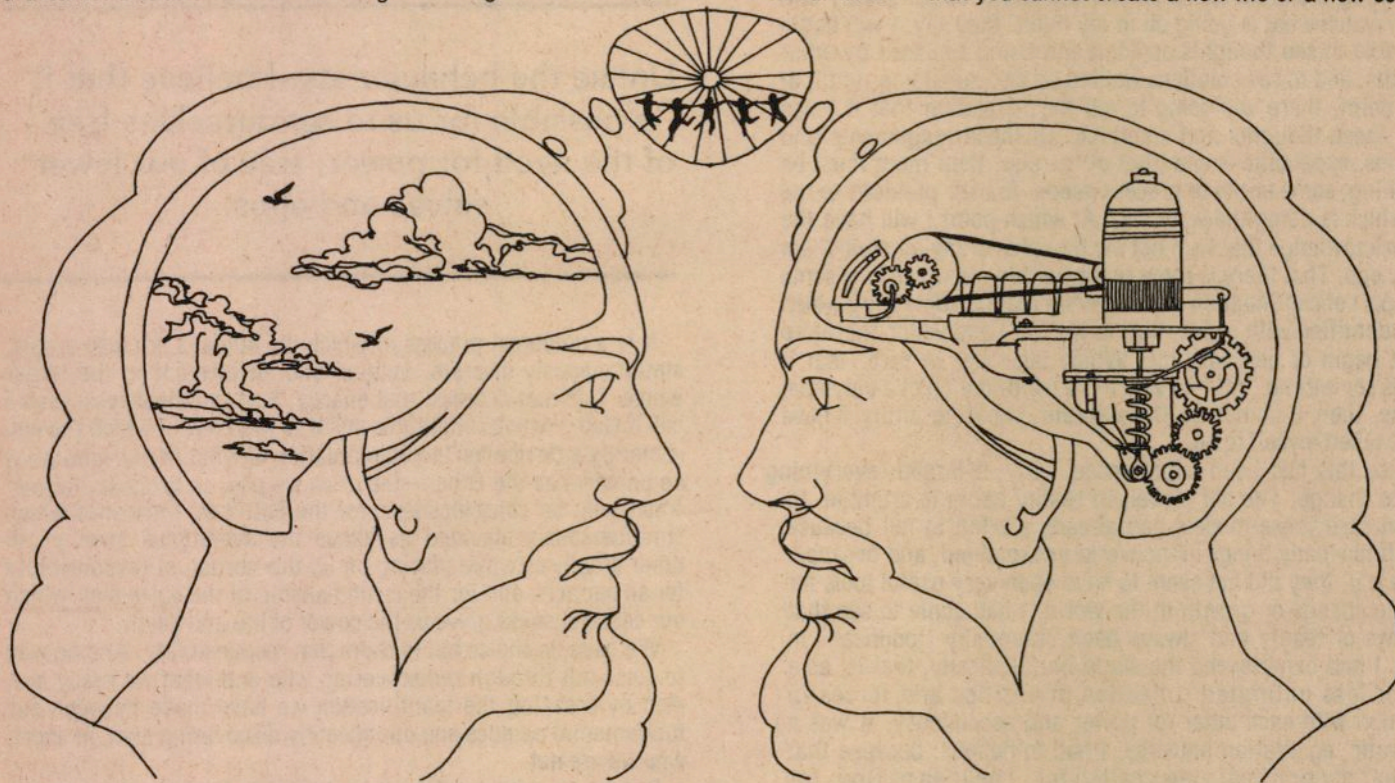
Later in her article Kat comments on a visit to Stephen Gaskin's Farm, during which she noticed that "there is almost no hierarchy needed to keep that large group (500 people) in line." In the end, that is what the realist's version comes to: keeping people "in line" so that the master plan for the good society won't get screwed up. To the planners — and these may in fact be the democratically chosen true representatives of "the people": there is no law against people deciding to manipulate themselves as well as their peers — to the planners the "social design" becomes more real and lovable than the people it was created to "help." Parents are separated from their children so as to reduce dependency or Oedipal problems, for instance; coupling is frowned upon because it can lead to jealousy or exclusivity; all power is spread as thin as possible so that it will not be abused. Always it is the **symptoms** of social dis-ease which are treated, while the real causes, which lie hidden in the individual psyche, are assumed to be beyond reach or hope. And so nothing ever really changes or gets any better. It is all a complicated kind of holding action in which people are kept from doing much damage to one another at the cost of abandoning the search for who they really are and what they can become.

And it doesn't work even on its own terms. Look at all the "alternative" communities which are born and die with such alarming rapidity, unable to keep their members for very long or to survive for much longer: communities which offer a different lifestyle and different social values than the dominant society, but which follow a model of the world and of human psychology

which is much closer to that society's than they would like to believe.

Why do so many small communities collapse and why do so many of their members leave them? In part perhaps because many of those joining communes are unconsciously trying to gratify desires which have been left unfulfilled in their lives. They may be searching, for instance, for the kind of family life they feel they were denied by their parents. Or they may be acting out some sort of only partially acknowledged rebellion against the values and practices of their parents or of the straight society which they represent. And so for a time a new community member will be happy with the family-like atmosphere of his new home and with the new friends who share his values, his beliefs and dreams. But after a while the edge will begin to wear off,

consciousness or with new ways of being in the world. That he, like most of us, has gotten trapped in the illusion that somehow we can change our lives and indeed our very being and natures by manipulating the external components and forms of our existence, rather than facing the truth that while the symptoms of our dis-ease may appear in the society or in the community, the disease itself is in the mind, and that each of us brings this disease into the communities we join; and that it is we, each one of us, who must be held responsible for this and who must purify ourselves if the community is to endure, the society to be transformed, and our lives to be the expressions of joy and love we so much yearn for. He will begin to learn, in short—if he is open to radical learning, and not many of us really are, short of a "crisis in our lives"—that you cannot create a new life or a new society



mostly because the truth of the matter is that the individual's problems — his unconscious needs and unfulfilled desires — are inside him, have been internalized, so that no change of the theater in which he plays out his life melodramas is going to have much effect on the script he is performing. But also because the community, not being a true family with either its bonds of kinship and tradition reaching back through generations, or its ties of selfless, nurturing love, is simply not in a position to give him what he craves.

For whatever the person's conscious or unconscious motives for joining a community, chief among them will certainly be a desire to enter into a loving relationship with those around him — a desire which is again likely to be frustrated by mistaking the forms and ideology of closeness, which are common to most small communities, with the actual experience of unselfish love. And so he will be dismayed to find himself caught up once again in old conflicts of interest, inter-personal frictions and tensions, power struggles, ego trips and all the other symptoms of an emotional life he had hoped to leave behind him. What he will come to realize, if he is open to new truths, is that he has confused alternative social structures with new modes of

with the same old mentality, the same people, the same old "wearers of clothes."

Or so I have finally come to believe. I can no longer accept the idea that "new clothes" can change my life or the world in any significant way. Change, like charity, I now see, begins at home: within my own mind and heart. What you and I become is what the world will become and what our communities will become, neither more nor less. There is only one thing that is going to save us or our world and that is learning to love one another, to love the earth and all of creation as we love—or would like to love—ourselves. And this is different from **believing in** non-violence or equality or sharing. It means learning to **be** non-violent, to **feel** equal, to find joy in giving and sharing. It is the difference between living lightly on the land because it is sound ecological practice, or in order to preserve our resources or protect people from pollution or starvation, and treating it tenderly, reverently, as an act of love, because the earth's pain—or an animal's or a fellow human's—will be felt as our own.

And we **can** learn to feel in this way. Some of us are able to now from time to time. But most of the time most of us are caught up in the demands of our egos for power and attention **19**

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how to clean up his or her game instead
of cleaning up my own.

and prestige and the rest. So caught up that we come to think we are our egos—the mistake the “realists” and behaviorists keep making.

And yet the sacred traditions, various spiritual paths, have for centuries been insisting otherwise. They have been telling us that our egos are only the social manipulators within us, that they are not our true selves. And that we can prove this by performing a simple exercise. If I can learn to sit quietly and simply watch what is going on in my mind, they say, I will begin to be able to see thoughts arriving and being replaced by other thoughts, and to see emotions welling up and subsiding, until, at some point, there will come to me the revelation that if I can watch these thoughts and emotions, all these judgements and anxieties, expectations and lusts of the ego, then there must be something, some entity or process deeper than or previous to the ego, which is doing the watching. At which point I will have the certain knowledge that I am **not** my thoughts or my emotions, am not my ego. That there is some reality within me which is in some way a part of continuation of a universal reality, something which is not identified with or identical to my “I,” and which therefore cannot begin or end with me. Which tells me, in turn, that if there is something “in” me which is a continuation of a universal process, then I cannot be the discrete, separate entity I have always taken myself to be.

Once this has been experienced, fully absorbed, everything starts to change. The old models of reality begin to crumble. In my own case these models had already started to fall because they left too many things in the world unexplained, and because, empirically, they did not seem to have been very useful tools for affecting change or growth in the world. I had come to see that my views of reality had always been essentially “political” in nature. I had experienced the world pluralistically, that is, as a more or less unlimited collection of entities and forces in contention with each other for power and ascendancy. It was a democratic, egalitarian universe, I had to believe, because that was what my political views called for. The idea of God, for instance, had always been anathema to me: the ultimate Authority Figure, when everyone knows that Authoritarianism is the enemy. I thought in these terms of the good guys and the bad guys. And Authority of any kind was bad because we all know what people do with authority: they abuse it. We are all on ego trips, including God (especially), and so all power (which is what I had really meant by “authority”) had to be dispersed, diffused. Hierarchies of any kind were Out, although the biologists kept telling me that the whole of the natural world was an endless succession of hierarches, entities struggling to evolve toward more complex and in some way “better” or “higher” states.

What I had done, I came to see, was to anthropomorphize the whole universe (I who had always ridiculed the image of a white-bearded God), interpreting it in the light of my political experience. Or, rather, I had been determined to see the natural world in a certain way so as to justify my political views, relating them to some kind of universal laws. Like the mystics I had the sense that the world was somehow all of a piece. Only I couldn't look at it as it was; but had to try to make it conform to my prejudices and distortions of physical and psychological reality.

It is now my understanding—and occasionally even my experience—that the material world as we know it is simply a physical manifestation of some more fundamental substance or process, a process which is eternal and infinite—call it God or Consciousness, Energy or Truth (“In the beginning was the Word...”). That what we experience through our senses is merely that process, that energy at points where it has “slowed down” enough to be perceptible to the human sensory apparatus. Thus what we **see** is a table, when what we are really looking at is a bunch of molecules chasing each other around in a certain configuration. Just as the image on our television screen is “in reality” simply the physical manifestation of a certain band of electrical impulses passing through the medium of another part of the process which we call air.

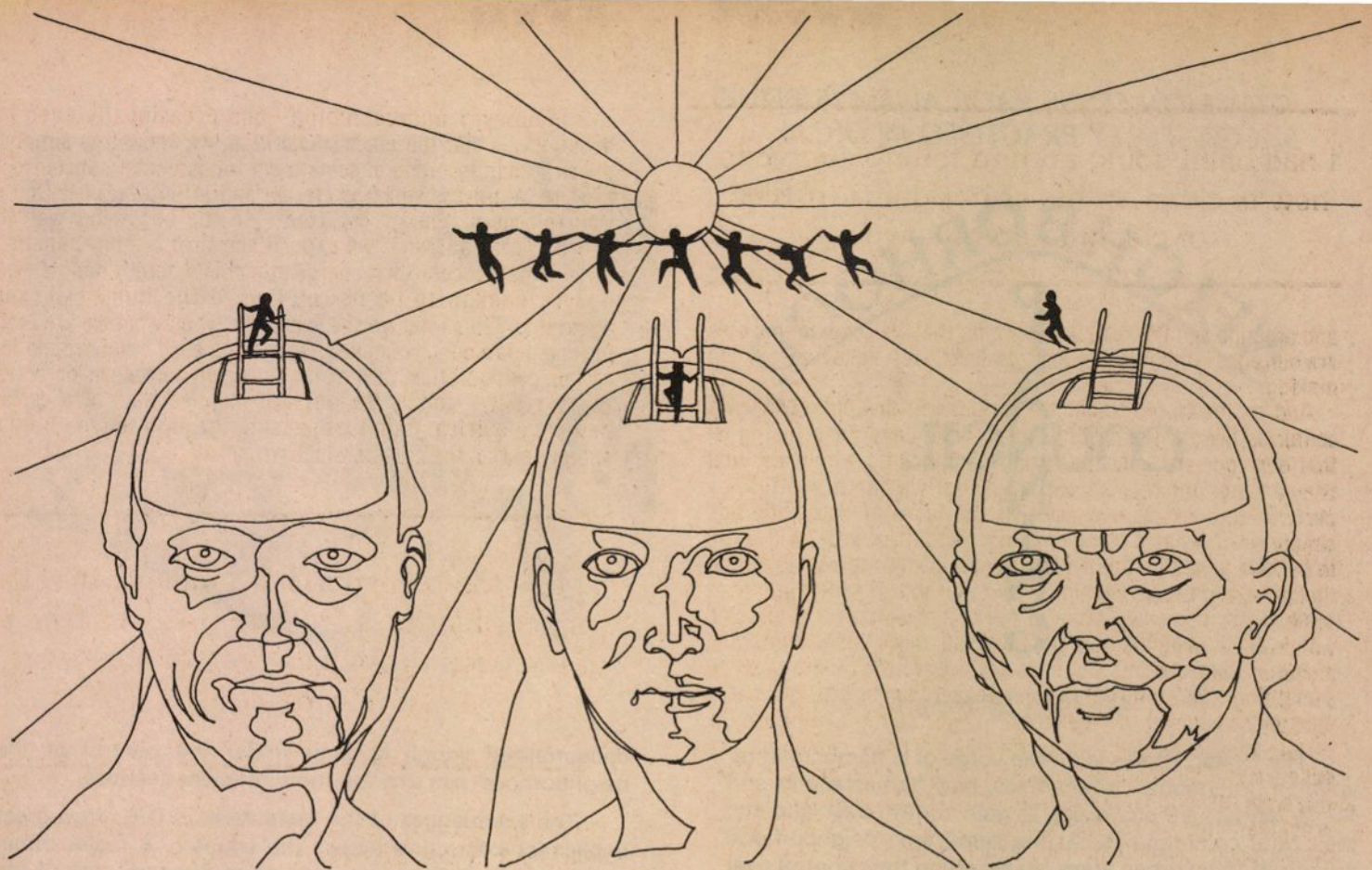
Unlike the behaviorists, I believe that it
is possible for us to set ourselves free
of the need for power; free of our lower
selves and egos.

It is a universal process of which we humans are also a part, simultaneously discrete, unique, and an element in the larger whole. It is that process, that energy, that consciousness—some call it God—which constitutes our true identity, of which the ego is merely a device for the manipulation of what in our ignorance we perceive as the Other—the price we pay, so to speak, for our free-will, for consciousness, for the Fall from innocence which simultaneously elevated us above the evolutionary level of all other creatures while placing on us the burden of responsibility for all our acts, and for the custodianship of the earth over which our consciousness gives us the power of life and death.

We have no choice but to claim that responsibility. And no way to do so but through rediscovering who and what we really are. And by breaking the identification we have made between our fundamental essence and our egos: by discovering also, in short, who we are **not**.

But we must be careful not to oversimplify, not to fall into the dualistic fallacy of either/or. For if we are not our egos, our egos are nonetheless a part of us. And if we are manifestations of energy, that energy, like electricity, contains both positive and negative charges. There is no contradiction here: the universal One contains the many, contains opposition and complementarity, Yin and Yang, forces of good and evil. We have our higher and our lower selves, our creative, loving aspects, and our destructive, hating, power-hungry aspects, manifested chiefly through the ego. And until we have made the separation between our true selves and our egos, and have recognized and taken responsibility for the destructiveness of our lower selves, a large share of our energy **will** be of a negative nature, concerned above all with the accumulation of power in all of its various forms.

And so Kat is right in her belief that power relationships are universal. They are as universal and as ascendent as the egos which create them. And I respect and admire her refusal to sweep them under the rug or give them another name in the interests of trying to create a falsely virtuous self-image—another trick of the ego's. But she is wrong, I think, in believing that power relationships are “inescapable,” or that “the



phenomenon of power (is) universal, permanent, and necessary." Wrong, I also believe, when she maintains that "Our job is not to escape it but to control it." Escape it we certainly can't. But neither, I believe, should we seek to control the "phenomenon of power." For all "control," whether imposed from without or self-imposed, is a form of coercion which without exception breeds resistance, hostility, and countermeasures. And when imposed from outside through "good social design" or other forms of external manipulation, as is surely Kat's meaning, it does nothing but drive the negative energy underground or into other channels. Not only does such an attempt at control treat only the symptoms of the disease rather than its cause, so that there can never be any "cure"; it invariably creates a tension between forces—itsself another "phenomenon of power—in which the controls themselves end by becoming "universal, permanent, and necessary." It is to flirt with the old Rousseauian paradox of creating a police state in the benign attempt to "force people to be free."

This then is the crux of my argument with the behaviorists and the social designers. I no longer believe that people can be forced or controlled, or even "helped" except in very limited ways, to any useful social purpose. And I certainly do not believe it is possible for anyone to set a man free except that man himself. I do believe, on the other hand, unlike the behaviorists, that it is possible for us to set ourselves free—free of the need for power, of the desire to control, free of our lower selves and our egos. Indeed I now believe that that is the work we are put here to perform—our role in the cosmic scheme, if you will. At the least I am convinced that it is the only tenable road to individual or social survival, let alone salvation.

If we insist on helping others then let us help them to set themselves free. Before which, of course, we must set ourselves free, for it is only the example of those who are themselves free which can be a teaching of any worth to others. To set oneself free is, of course, the most difficult work there is, far more difficult than controlling others or creating good social designs.

It does however have a singular advantage over these other methods: it can actually lead to change, enable us to create a social world which is a truer reflection of the reality of our own essential natures and of the nature of the universe in which we live. And if the work is difficult, it offers in its own process the cohesive force which can bind us together in love and a common endeavor as we climb the steep and winding path toward a better world.

It is because I have come to believe that my own psychological liberation—and that of my friends on the path, insofar as I can be of any assistance to them is my most important personal and social task, then, that I have chosen not to live in any kinds of community I have been describing. It is also the reason that I have only just now begun to help create a different sort of community, one which I believe can only come about through some such process as the one to which I am now committed; one which can at the same time, I think, lend to that process the element of mutual aid and support which can contribute so much to it. This is a kind of community which sometimes goes by the name of "communion."

It is that kind of community, and the process which can at once create it and be nourished by it, that I will discuss in the second part of this article. □

I have been, at various times a composer, a theatrical producer, a filmmaker and film distributor, a manager of political campaigns, a community organizer on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in New York City. Currently I am living in Brightwood, Va., in an old farmhouse. I am working on a book on the relationship of individual spiritual and psychological development of social structures and problems, tentatively called From Politics to Paradox. A good deal of my energy these days is going into my own spiritual path and into my efforts to help create a spiritual/therapeutic community [or communion] at Sevenoaks in Madison, Va. — a communion whose members are devoted to a process known as the The Path.

"COMMON SENSE RADICALISM" IS BEING SUCCESSFULLY PRACTISED IN D.C.'S

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COUNCIL

BY Neil Seldman

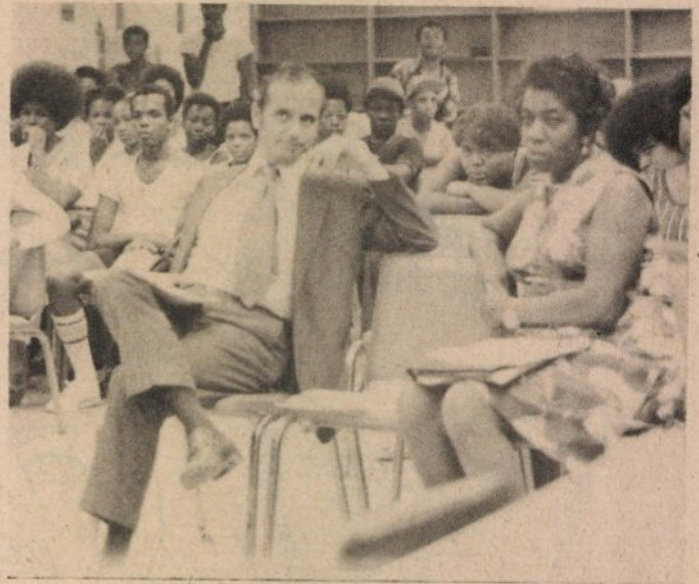
The United States is on the verge of a democratic revolution. Intentional communities, new homesteaders and family farmers are organizing to gain control over land and their rural communities. At the same time neighborhood organizations in urban areas are asserting their control over planning and zoning, banking, housing, highways, economic development, and service delivery systems. Local issues have been raised to national dimensions over land use policies, water rights, mortgage disclosure and environmental concerns; and are supported by national public interest law, food, health, labor and environment groups.

The consistent theme through these levels of activity is that decision-making authority over every aspect of our lives belongs at the community and neighborhood level, where people live. This fundamentally democratic theme is consistent with American political culture. Its reawakening has been inspired by both our early history and the direct threat to the social fabric of our communities from the centralized political and economic system which has come to control the present form of American democracy.

The movement for democratic local controls holds out not only the promise of an ample and self-reliant life for citizens, but also incorporates the process through which its goals can be realized. During the process of organizing for and asserting political power Americans are being trained for participatory democratic life in which citizenship is a duty to both help make and administer decisions.

GRASSROOTS GOVERNMENT

The recent history of the Neighborhood Planning Councils in Washington, D.C. is one example of the diverse nature of the movement for local control in the country. The Councils form an innovative and evolving city-wide network of community assemblies which are tackling head on the critical problem of inner-city poverty youth. To date the experience of the NPCs has proved them to be workable in integrating youth into effective participatory planning programs and demonstrating that



decentralized youth services under the control of the neighborhood can provide more efficient services.

The experiences of the assemblies in D.C. have great implications for cities across the country. A major urban problem is that inner-city youth form the hard core of the nation's unemployed and underemployed. And that no less than 50% of all violent crimes in the country are committed by youth between the ages of 10 and 17.

The Neighborhood Planning Councils (N.P.C.s) were established as part of a broader youth advocacy agency, the Office of Youth Opportunity Services (O.Y.O.S.), by DC Mayor Walter Washington in the period immediately following the riots stemming from Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination in 1968. OYOS elected to allocate a portion of its funds through neighborhood assemblies rather than through traditional bureaucratic channels. Thus, NPCs appeared as the first and only neighborhood forum that allocates funds for poverty youth services. In the nine years since their inception, over \$10 million in city and federal grants has been allocated through the NPC structure.

Job skills training and cultural programs are funded and continuously evaluated by Neighborhood assemblies, which entitle all residents above 13 years of age to participate and vote.

There are 20 NPCs throughout the city. Each year an adult and youth chairperson is elected by residents, along with nine other adults and nine other youth officers who combine to form the NPC board. A city-wide Council of NPC Chairpersons (C.O.R.) meets monthly. Its role is to coordinate NPC activities and lobby on behalf of the NPCs. The COC establishes its own by-laws and model by-laws for each NPC. The latter can be and often are modified by individual NPCs. NPC elections are hotly contested, frequently leading to law suits, injunctions and political demonstrations. The COC hears grievances and administers settlements.

The NPCs have shown themselves to be innovative, and have designed and/or contracted out for garbage recycling systems, community gardens, community historical magazines, area-sensitive employment services, youth and family counseling, Latin-oriented multi-media cultural programs, day care, and communications and computer training. Most of these programs could not get funded by centralized traditional city line agencies. The NPCs allow diverse programs a chance to prove themselves. Successful programs are often copied by neighboring NPCs or are simply expanded to include several NPCs under one administration, with participating councils sharing the budget.

A STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENT AUTHORITY

The political power of the NPCs, which employ 15,000 youths, was shown by the support of 10,000 voters in the 1975 elections; an impressive showing in a city well known for its voting apathy. City politicians, some of whom had gotten their starts in the NPCs, had seemed mindful of this strength. During the year, COC meetings were regularly visited by representatives of the mayor and City Council, respectively, each seeking to defend their actions related to NPC welfare.

But in early 1976 NPC activities received a shock. The City Council voted to transfer the NPC structure from OYOS, which had developed a good track record in providing flexible and responsible service to NPC programs, to the Department of Recreation, whose past record in administering the NPCs and in responding to community needs had led to bitter struggles with the local activists. The maneuver came as part of "higher politics" involving the Mayor and OYOS Director James Jones on the one side and the City Council on the other. The Council vote was announced just after annual NPC hearings were completed.

The reaction on the part of the NPCs was swift and unified. The COC unanimously adopted a resolution to the City Council demanding that the NPCs and the youth not be the battleground for their political struggle with the

The NPCs have designed or contracted out for garbage recycling systems, community gardens, employment services, counseling, day care, cultural programs . . .

Mayor. Barring a resolution of the Jones-City Council dispute, the COC called for the establishment of an independent NPC agency, with adequate support personnel and technical staff assigned to the COC.

A combined publicity and lobbying and negotiating effort ensued, and was frustrated by City Council committee/COC agreements which were not lived up to when the final legislation was passed in September. When OYOS was dismantled, its NPC structure was indeed transferred to the Recreation Department, at the cost of a month's delay in the program, and the loss of some funds.

While the NPC campaign lost its main objective, the subsequent legislation provided legal status to the NPCs for the first time; and a division of NPC affairs was established within the Recreation Department, thus protecting NPC funds from encroachment. NPC activists came away from the struggle with a new awareness of both their present capabilities and the tasks necessary for realizing their political potential. Voter registration among adults and pre-registration mobilizing among pre-18 year old NPC youth were begun as part of the 1976 tactics. An NPC party or candidate for City Council is in the offing as part of the strategy for the next years.

NECESSARY DECENTRALIST REFORMS

The NPC and Council of Chairpersons structure could be a self-contained bureaucracy independent of OYOs supervision; thus differing from traditional bureaucracies in that it would be directly controlled from the grassroots. A shift to such a bureaucratic model through the following changes would mean a transformation of the NPCs:

(1) The nine-person staff of field technical assistants would be placed under COC authority; not OYOS. The staff would thereby become directly responsible to the neighborhoods for their administration of the hundreds of diverse programs, and in preparation of proposals made to NPC assemblies.

(2) Currently NPCs have no legal power. Elections are supervised by contracted private companies who have not answered serious questions about ballot counting and electioneering practices. OYOS cancelled elections scheduled for last April; there was no recourse to that administrative action. Clearly, more respect should be paid to the NPC as a neighborhood government institution. Elections must be carried out by the DC Board of Elections, and they must be no more susceptible to cancellation than any other democratic election.



West End/Adams-Morgan Area: A Case History

The NPC process not only gives power to citizens in the area of youth services, but also more broadly in their self-evaluation as common people and citizens. The developments in one NPC between 1975-6 serves as a useful example.

NPC 13 is a multi-racial, multi-income area generally referred to as the West-End/Adams-Morgan area, running east of Rock Creek Park to the 14th Street Corridor in the downtown section, and extending from the Federal complex along Constitution Avenue north to the Dupont Circle area. Recent migration patterns have brought a large influx of Latino citizens. The area is far from stable as real estate speculation is rampant and the West End Plan approved by an appointed lame-duck City Council is bringing a "Georgetown look", office buildings, and high rise apartments — all of which are driving out middle and low income long time residents. The area also includes George Washington University, whose expansion has also cut into available low and moderate-cost housing.

In the past the Adams-Morgan NPC had been dominated by strong personalities and by the opposing "contractors" (those individuals or groups who receive funds to run programs, designed to promote local and even national organization). Recently, a contractor served

The new chairperson and his administrative officer fought a losing battle against both the Board and an assembly dominated by contractors who were well entrenched with a small but sufficient number of local youth and adults. The new minority administration could do nothing in the immediate situation but began to organize in the community and recruit independent parents, citizens and youth; and to defend the legally established by-laws which dictated that the NPC Board was authorized only to recommend policies and funding priorities to the assembly, and then carry out the decision of the assembly.

The strategy of recruitment proceeded slowly, but received an unexpected breathing spell when the April 1976 elections were cancelled by OYOS and the terms of incumbent chairpeople were extended, eventually through January 1977. In September, however, a special election was needed to elect a new chairperson and board due to boundary shifts which threw former officers out of the official area. The elections coincided with a funding cycle that would commit \$95,000 setting the stage for intensive organizing, politicking and theoretical discussions focusing on questions of conflict of interest, assembly or Board authority, and neighborhood autonomy.

A series of critical meetings was attended by 50-70 residents drawn from parents, organizers, youth, youth workers, Advisory Neighborhood Council members, senior citizens and private recreation groups. The size and breadth of attendance predetermined that a popular board and chairperson would be elected. The assembly overruled the older board's recommendation for chairperson, and subsequently overruled the new board's recommendations for priorities after hearing hours of debate and bargaining over specific proposals.

The new board and chairperson came away from the grueling three week initiation in direct democracy a strong, unified and now seasoned executive body capable of both leading and accepting corrective criticism. Long range planning and coordination of priorities and procedure are the immediate agenda items for the upcoming, presumably calmer monthly meetings. The recent victory has whet the appetite for more effective administration and more power over local affairs.

This process of direct control over youth services has been repeated in NPCs throughout the city, sometimes with more drama and tension than in NPC 13, sometimes less. In some the steps toward ending Board or small group domination has hardly begun. But, to date, the NPCs have proved that democratic assemblies have the potential to effectively deal the problems that plague ghettoized youth and threaten the fabric of urban life. They have shown that minority groups and youth can become active, participating citizens; and that common people can wrestle with complex budgeting and federal and city program guidelines in order to achieve a desired priority in the allocation of scarce funds. NPCs indicate that the ideal democratic process can work, and that the psychological as well as material benefits of participatory democracy are at hand.



as chairperson, while another was running for the position. However, in a very close and subsequently contested election an independent candidate won the election.

The enthusiasm aroused by the campaign and the political demonstrations that ensued brought considerable attention to the NPC. The initial assemblies during the new term were attended by over 50 residents and revisions in the by-laws were enacted which established a funding review committee on which no contractors or Board members whose organizations benefited from NPC funding could serve. These changes would have had great significance in the future, but brought no immediate improvement as attendance at meetings fell off quickly and the old pattern of contractor predominance over funding, hiring of adult staffs and placement of youth jobs re-emerged.

(3) The by-laws or constitution of the NPCs should be changed to correct a serious problem of conflict of interest. Currently, NPC Board members and even Chairpersons can make proposals for NPC-funded programs. While Board members cannot vote on their own programs, fair funding procedures cannot be assured with their presence on the Board. Board members should not be allowed to earn salaries from funded programs, nor should they be allowed to sit on the Board while their organizations receive NPC contracts. If NPCs are to be respected, they must not only be honest, but appear to be honest as well

...compare the costs of this NPC youth program to the costs of having just one youth arrested and placed on the juvenile justice treadmill.

Once these changes are made, the NPCs will have to work even harder to involve people. With self-interest no longer a motive for being on the board, NPCs must make an all-out effort to interest neighborhood parents and others in NPC decision-making. In one area, efforts to increase involvement have succeeded in improving attendance at meetings. The growing status of NPCs, and the heightened general interest in neighborhood government will also generate involvement. Moreover, NPC chair-people could receive modest stipends, as do the NPC staff people already.

Increased attendance at NPC meetings would solve yet another problem plaguing many NPCs. Because of low adult participation, power is concentrated in the hands of a few organized people, who have with relative ease been able to appropriate the lion's share of NPC budgets in some areas. Wider participation would eliminate this. Local groups contending for limited funds — that is, local politics — would of course be a permanent part of the NPCs, as it should be. But by having to convince a wider audience of the merits of one group's program, the power of a few highly organized groups would be neutralized.

The NPCs thus could take their place alongside the newly formed D.C. Advisory Neighborhood Councils in making the participatory democracy a reality.

CUTTING THE RED TAPE

NPCs can reduce the high cost of bureaucratic youth oriented programs. Programs that do get funded operate on trimmed bare-essential budgets. Community members scrutinize and eliminate any "fat" in proposed budgets, and approve program contracts which dictate what services will be performed. Often a program is told to share resources or personnel with other programs with overlapping jurisdictions.

Rarely can or will municipal bureaucrats so closely monitor contracted-out programs or even programs administered by in-house staff.

Recently two experiences have underscored the potentially superior overall efficiency of NPCs when compared to centralized bureaucracies. NPC jobs, and Washington Youth Corps jobs which are administered by the NPCs, must be allocated to poverty youth. These participants must be "certified" and assigned to jobs. This is a painful and cumbersome process which means long lines at mini-employment centers located at area high schools. The budget for this certification is formidable and is administered by the DC Department of Manpower. Yet NPC administrative unit personnel prepare the forms as part of their regular duties, and could certify participants in the process. If local NPC personnel assigned jobs, it would also have avoided massive problems created this past summer when manpower personnel assigned youth to jobs in distant communities. Youth lost time and money commuting and could not fully participate in local council planning activities; thus defeating a major goal of the jobs programs.

This year, NPCs also administered a city-wide Youth Courtesy Patrol program designed to provide added safety for area citizens. The program was highly popular, as it recruited from a high-crime age group (recent statistics showed that 50% of all violent crimes are committed by youth between the ages of 10 and 17). It is unclear whether the locally administered courtesy patrols reduce overall crime, but the employment of crime-prone youth was an important benefit. In one NPC, 9 of 15 job slots were filled by youth who had previous police records. Through the summer months not one of these youths got into trouble with the police; several were commended for their assistance in halting crime. When a cut in budgeted funds threatened the continuation of the local program, the community made sure that the Youth Courtesy Patrol program was among those given full funding. It would be interesting to compare the costs of this NPC program to the costs of having just one youth arrested and placed on the juvenile justice treadmill.

A full analysis of youth services in DC is necessary to determine which form of administration — centralized bureaucracy or neighborhood assembly — provides the most efficient use of available resources. Part of that study must identify those variables that affect democratic participation. Through the increased direct responsibility for planning, deciding, administering and evaluating local programs, citizens can eliminate many of the social problems that require costly services, which rarely are effective in the first place. The neighborhood assembly serves two simultaneous functions: it reduces tax outlays while it improves upon and enhances the quality of urban life. In fact many NPC programs are designed to reduce income needs without reducing the standard of living. Garden and garbage recycling projects are one set of examples. Job slots funded by NPC programs are assigned to community-controlled food stores, warehouses and production facilities.



COMMON SENSE RADICALISM

While NCPs specialize in youth affairs, other models of community government and economic development, both urban and rural, are reclaiming power and resources originally belonging to local people. These are being reinvested into sources of permanent wealth — banks, rural coops, organic farms, urban food systems, land trusts, insulation and solar equipped living units, waste recycling operations, and community and/or worker-managed factories and businesses.

The rapidly expanding local initiatives are reflected in, and stimulated by, a newly emerging political dialogue tending toward a new political theory for Americans of our time. This theory is propelled by the alarming facts of rapid environmental, social and economic degradation of the past decade; and the fundamental insight that our government is not responsive to the dire needs of its citizens and is at best neutral against the assault on the basic rights of Americans on the part of the major corporations. This emerging theory combines with these facts and insight a commitment to the common-sense political values which assert that in a national economy capable of providing material abundance for all, each community should have sufficient resources to assure that all people have jobs and workplaces that allow for the creative development of our inherent artistic talents; that all people will be cared for when they are sick, elderly, or young; that all kids have proper diets and appropriate educational facilities; that all

families have decent homes and supportive communities to reside in, safe from both crime and environmental pollution.

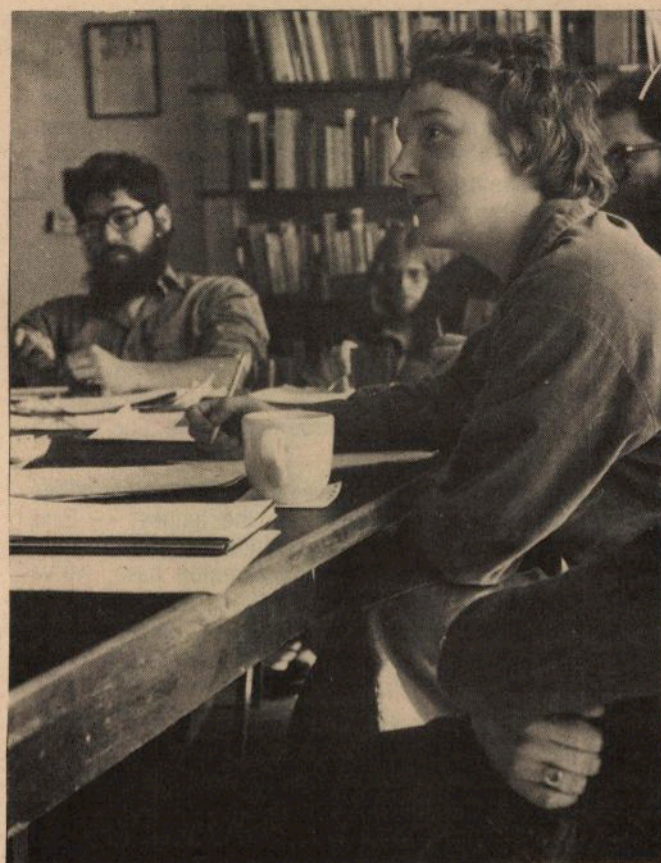
We have called the emerging theory "common sense radicalism", as it is based on obvious truths which go to the root of the current dilemmas that face us. It provides direction, yet at the same time is open to change and adjustment based on local differences and on continued learning from practical activity.

Within its framework, common sense radicalism allows us to rediscover the appropriate relationship between individual and community, and among the mutual responsibilities of community life. This developing theory replaces the obsolete notions of liberalism's private property rights and the dysfunctional welfare state created to guarantee these rights. It unmasks the arbitrary and selective decentralization of the Federal government demanded by contemporary conservative theory. And it replaces the empty formulas of libertarian theory by placing within the grasp of local groups the resources to counter the power and influence of both large corporations and large government.

The political movement and theory of local control asks us in our time to find the modified and practical answers to Jean Jacques Rousseau's challenge to establish society so that no one is poor enough to have to sell their labor under such unequal circumstances. □

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150 adults from five different communities is a pretty small start for a formal, international (Dandelion is in Canada) organization. Yet the kibbutz federations started from similarly humble beginnings, and now constitute a strong social and economic network that's an inspiring model to those of us in the kibbutz-like egalitarian communes. Sierra, who wrote of the federation concept in COMMUNITIES #22, reports on the painstaking but exciting progress of organization building that was begun last November.



The author in conference

THE FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY

by sierra aloe

I remember arriving at East Wind. Ira Cordi and I had driven straight through from Aloe, arriving about five in the morning. I drove the last stretch up through Arkansas and through Missouri, because I'd been there before and knew the roads. Everyone else was asleep. The moon was just past full and the sky was clear, so I could see the road and the countryside. Going over the mountains I could see the valleys shading off into darkness, and from the valleys I could see the trees looming above me as I rounded curves. The dirt road in from the highway was exactly as I remembered it: a long view over the hills and then down into the hollow, the road jarring the car so that I wondered how East Wind does with auto maintenance. Aloe's road throws our cars out of alignment faster than I care to think. The same thing must happen at East Wind.

I had been in East Wind last May, and lots of things had happened there since then. The visible changes were in the buildings. The Enterprise, the industrial building, was only part of a slab when I was there before. Now it was finished, and we would be holding our meetings in it. The construction crew was laying block for Anarres, a new dormitory building. Everything was growing and expanding.

The other delegates came in throughout the day: Henry and Wayne and Chip from Twin Oaks, Bill from North Mountain,

and Jane from Dandelion. There were also six people from the Society for Human Development in Ypsilanti, Michigan, who were interested in the federation. They had read Malon's article in the last issue of COMMUNITIES, and had written a paper about themselves and their reactions to the federation proposal. About half of the community had come down to see if they wanted to join with us.

Wednesday morning we got up to a huge breakfast. It was the first of many amazing meals. East Wind was out to feed us well, and we were impressed. The morning was warm, much warmer than the weather we had left in North Carolina. At the Enterprise Scott had set up microphones to record the meetings. I thought about transcribing all of that, and decided that it will never be done, at least not until the federation is a huge organization and the meeting becomes an historic occasion.

Not much business went on that day. Twin Oaks and East Wind had hammock business to talk about, but the rest of us were catching up on the news of the different communities. We were all wondering what would happen with the federation. Some of the small communities were a little apprehensive about how much we could afford to do with the federation, and some of the larger communities wanted to be sure they weren't going to be ripped off because they were richer than we were.

There were one or two delegates from each community. There was a big table, big enough for the delegates but not for everyone. So the first decision was to allow only the delegates to speak. A chair was reserved as a "hot seat", and anyone who wanted to say something could sit there and be recognized. The procedure worked well in practice. We had quite a bit of input from non-delegates over the three day period, and I don't think anybody felt left out.

We began by introducing ourselves. The five communities who had been known to each other for the longest — East Wind, Twin Oaks, North Mountain, Dandelion and Aloe — spoke first. Although we come from a common base, we've evolved very differently. We know most of our similarities and differences, and we were waiting to hear from the Society for Human Development representatives. They had distributed a statement about themselves, including their concerns for federation. We found that although they share a lot of our vision, they don't practice total income sharing, which is one of the most basic agreements that we have. They argued that income sharing results in taking away an individual's freedom to use his free time as he desires, and can easily be turned into

a totalitarian system, where people's free time is coopted by the government. In the end, that disagreement meant that the Society for Human Development didn't participate in the assembly. They stayed for an extra day and watched, a little bit baffled, I felt, by our unwillingness to address the issues that seemed so important to them. We were caught up in the complexities of trying to reach agreements beyond the basic ones we already share, and it was obvious that we weren't going to be able to write a constitution in the time we had available if we had to reach agreement on what we meant by "freedom" and "equality".

During that first morning we talked in general about our hopes and fears for this assembly, about the structure of the constitution we wanted to generate, about the structure of the assembly, and about our ultimate goals. The two largest issues became apparent; representation and taxation, and we realized that there was an even more basic underlying issue: whether we trusted each other as communities to make decisions in our interests as separate communities and in our interest as a whole. That trust will only come from working together and watching each other over the next months and years. I listened to the arguments on both sides and wondered what the first constitutional convention of the United States had been like. Surely many of the issues had been the same, and just as surely much of the process must have also been the same — some people wanting to move rapidly and not waste time on trivia, others wanting to slow down and consider the implications of every issue carefully.

That afternoon we got down to business, going over the

Participants from the 5 communities review their notes.

L-R: Gordy and Sierra of Aloe; Jane, Dandelion; Malon, East Wind; Goldie and Henry of Twin Oaks; Bill, North Mountain; and Jerri Aloe



constitution to see what we liked about it and what we wanted to change. The discussion was long and tedious, and we soon realized that we wouldn't be able to come up with the perfect document. We would consider as many issues as we could, and the delegates would take this revised constitution home to be ratified, feeling comfortable that all of the important issues have been considered, even if we haven't solved them to our satisfaction.

I wondered what the first constitutional convention of the U.S. had been like...

I remember a long discussion centering around the question of equality among the communities. Do we want to have diversity among the member communities in terms of standards of living? Yes, we agreed that we do, but what level of differences will we tolerate? And what counts when we evaluate standards of living? Acres of land? Cash flow? Hammock inventories? We will probably be asking these questions for years.

Another discussion revolved around whether we want to have the federation apply for tax exempt status, so that we can have more flexibility in applying for funding from foundations and government agencies. Some communities want to take advantage of financial assistance wherever they can, so they'll be able to experiment with the technologies we want to employ now rather than waiting until we can capitalize these projects ourselves. Other communities want to avoid dependence on federal assistance, and model the kind of steady-state economy we are ultimately working towards. We decided to write the constitution so that we can apply for tax exempt status, so that individual communities would have the option of applying for grants if they want to.

Still another discussion concerned our commitment to ecology. Different communities put different priorities on the use of renewable technologies such as solar energy, recycling, the use of renewable resources, and organic gardening and farming. Ecology often requires money and time, two resources which communities usually lack. We decided that ecology concerns us enough to make sure it appears in the constitution, so we added a sentence to the beginning.

That evening, Michael Frishberg, the US representative for the Kibbutz federation Artzi in Israel, arrived to speak with us. He had come to the U.S. for a 2-year stint as a contact person and fund-raiser for the Jewish National Fund, which provides financial support for the kibbutzim federations.

Michael traced the history of the federation development in Israel, from the small-scale, uncertain beginnings (similar to our situation now) to the sophisticated political, economic, and social network of today.

The next morning we woke up to snow. Inside the Enterprise it was cold. The electric baseboard heaters hadn't been installed yet but were hooked up and leaning against the posts around the table. We huddled in jackets and stamped the snow off our feet.

We forgot the cold pretty quickly, though, as Michael resumed his response to our questions about the kibbutzim federation experience. He gave us an important sense of the possibilities for the movement here, as he outlined the alternative systems developed in Israel; cooperative industrial development and marketing networks; a national political arm of major significance; joint research and development and other support systems.

The nitty-gritty of federation structure, representation, and taxation was discussed in detail. Their federation government is of course more elaborate than our's need be at this stage; but some of the principles involved are relevant to us. For example, the concept of their National Council, Secretariat, and Action Committees was useful, as well as their system for labor and money taxation.

The rotation of work every 2 years at both the kibbutz and federation levels is an idea that may take root among us. Michael himself will be in this country for 2 years, after which he'll return to Israel and perhaps work in the kitchen for a year or so. Rotation through these offices helps prevent a top-heavy bureaucracy. I was reminded of the Chinese cultural revolution. We're not developed enough to worry about rotation just yet; everybody is already doing a variety of maintenance jobs.

We asked Michael for advice, and he suggested fund-raising. If we could find a base of people who have money and want to support its ideals, we'd have a financial base for all sorts of projects.

Michael had to leave at noon. He wished us well saying that it takes young people who are willing to make sacrifices and work hard to take a kibbutz through its first few years. Of course in Israel a new kibbutz can draw on the labor and expertise of the older kibbutzim, and that's what we are trying to do with our federation. He was encouraging, and said that we could come to New York and talk to him and he'd give us more specific answers to our questions. We were sorry to see him go.

ADVISE AND CONSENT

After lunch we went back to the constitution. The discussion centered around the issue of representation. We had anticipated the arguments; Twin Oaks wanted proportional representation, Aloe wanted equal representation. We argued back and forth and seemed to get nowhere. Then Henry came up with a compromise: give each community votes equal to the number of members plus a constant per cent of the total federation membership. The formula would mean that while there are a few communities, the larger communities will have proportionally more votes, but as the number of communities increases the votes available to each community will become more and more equal. Everybody was pleased, and we adopted the formula. The compromise allows more power right now than they would get from straight proportional representation, but the small communities are looking to the way in which the votes will change as the number of communities in the federation increases.

By Friday morning we were all exhausted. The current revisions in the constitution had been typed and approved, and we moved on to the sections of the Assembly. The largest issue on Friday was how the federation would make decisions. What kinds of mandates will the delegates have from their communities to make decisions in the Assembly? We recognize that

The Israeli kibbutzim offer us a model for organizing a federation as well as for building individual communities. From their experience we can grasp the broad range of possibilities - and the decades of work necessary to realize them.

There are important parallels in the sequence of kibbutz federation development, and in the central issues raised. Many of the statements below could apply almost verbatim to the American situation; statements about the needs for federation; the split between spiritually oriented and political groups; the question of strong central authority versus looser association.

The following is excerpted from background material prepared for the federation assembly by Avram Yassour and Joseph Blasi of the Kibbutz Research Project of Harvard.

OUTLINE OF THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF KIBBUTZ FEDERATIONS

The kibbutz movement has about 250 member villages, divided into four federations (one of which is religiously oriented). The four federations form a looser Association of Kibbutz Movements.

This outline summarizes the stages of the kibbutz movement to show how the cooperative activities of the federations developed over time, and the problems and crises that occurred. Each stage and cooperative acts at that stage are summarized.

From these beginnings the federations have evolved into a complex industrial and marketing system, and have come to also coordinate cultural, health care, educational, and youth-related activities. One of the most surprising developments is the increasing lack of difference between the federations and their member communities. The logic of consolidating the separate federation activities has led to meetings today on total unification — which, however, is far off.

Stage I — Separate Growth of Individual Communities

The first kibbutz, Degania, was founded in 1910. Many communities developed from then until about 1925. Only after about 15-20 years of separate development did the need for a federation become clear. It was based on: (a) the realization that all communities were dealing with the same kind of social form and experimenting with hit-and-miss ways of achieving cooperation and community. (b) the fact that some communities were selling goods to the marketplace and not to other communities, thus threatening the economic stability of all.

Cooperative Acts: formation of HaMashbir HaMerkazi; a cooperative holding company that member-communities sold their goods to, which distributed them to members based on the principles of cooperative business. Today, this is one of Israel's largest chains of stores and warehouses, and kibbutzim buy most of their goods from it. No federation formed.

Stage II — An Unformed Desire To Federate [about 1924]

Many meetings were held to discuss what the communities could do together and a basic split emerged between those emphasizing spiritual and countercultural values, and those more tied to the leftist, socialist workers movements. Many discussions; little substance.

Stage III — Separate Federations Develop [late 1920s, early 1930s]

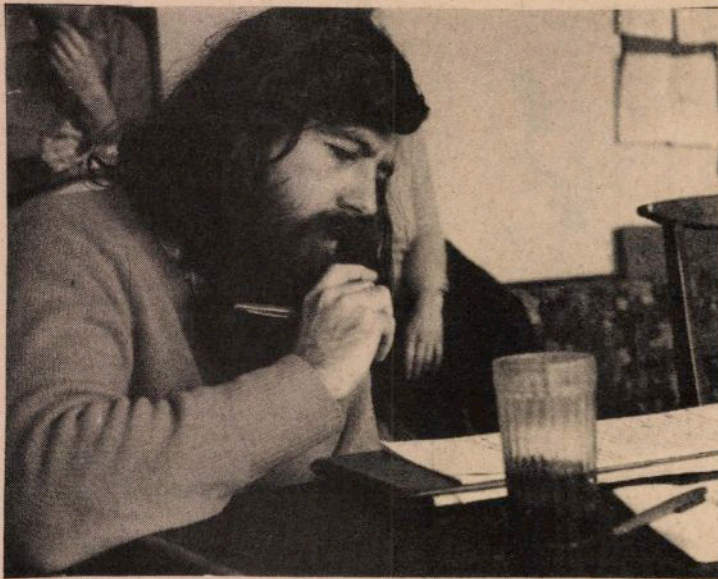
Three separate federations developed. **First** was Kibbutz HaMeuched (the United Kibbutz) which emphasized larger kibbutzim, and a more centralized federation which would strongly advise on where new kibbutz should be settled. It saw the federation as coordinating the spread of a social reformist battalion throughout the country and organizing the development of the movement. Member communities were seen mainly as part of the means to achieve a large movement. **Second** — Chever Hakvutzot (The Network of Communes) was a weaker "association" of smaller communes emphasizing that the kibbutz community is basically the social end of its own members; de-emphasizing the movement qualities and seeing the association as mainly oriented to mutual aid optional united activities. This association was opposed to centralized decisions about economic planning or settlement. **Third** (developing much later) was Kibbutz Shomer HaZair (The Young Guard), which tried to put together a middle path between these two ideas, emphasizing both the small organized unit of each community AND the need for a federation with authority.

Cooperative Acts: In this stage each federation stressed a different activity:

The first: a federation with strong economic centralization; making settlement and development decisions, credit through a common fund, inter-community trading and management. But there was little emphasis as yet on cultural, ideological, or educational unity.

The second: less organized mutual aid and advice.

The third: economic planning and monitoring of member communities. All education planning, structure, and training of workers was made cooperative. Political and ideological cooperation; this federation began to actively support candidates and put forth political position papers nationally.



Henry pauses to consider

some communities will want to exercise strict control over the delegates, making sure that they approve every vote. For example, Bill from North Mountain said that he would not have the power to make any decisions, but would have to go back to the community every time so they could have a part in the decision. We discussed Proxy votes and quorum. It's hard to get everybody together when we live so far apart, and we can't expect communities to be able to send delegates 1000 miles every few months to make decisions. But on the other hand it's difficult to get a feel for the issues, especially ones that are important to all of us, when we try to make decisions by phone or through the mails. So we recognized the need to make quick decisions in some cases, and the importance of having time to talk over issues that have long range implications for us in other cases, and we came up with another compromise. We included a provision allowing a community to change its delegates' votes within two weeks after the end of the Assembly. We also made provisions for non-assembled decision-making, under the assumption that there might be emergencies, such as a fire in one community, where we wouldn't need to have everybody get together just to decide to allocate resources to meet the crisis. But we stipulated that decisions made under these circumstances must be unanimous, to encourage decision-making in the Assembly, where discussion can be public and arguments will be heard and discussed.

When we were finished it was clear that we didn't have a polished document. Rather than approve the constitution as written, we approved a "statement of intent to federate." The object of this was to give us time to work on the constitution in committee, making sure that it does what we want it to do. Also the member communities will have time to go over the document and make any changes they feel will be necessary. We also agreed to schedule a meeting of the Assembly in February. Our final piece of business was to divide up the travel expenses, using the formula we had agreed on for voting. It worked to everyone's satisfaction, and gave us hope that we have arrived at a formula which will be useful in many contexts.

We had also discussed briefly the possibility of organizing a federation construction crew, which would go around and put up buildings at the different communities. Aloe has a house which needs to be finished and sold, and I wanted to see whether the federation was interested in taking it on.

I started talking with Jane Dandelion and Shadow East Wind about the possibilities of joint recruitment efforts. Dandelion, East Wind and Aloe have talked about placing joint ads in magazines, and about developing a federation level brochure that would describe all of the communities, thereby saving the duplication of time and money that results when people write to more than one of us. We also talked about having regional conferences next year, perhaps one at East Wind, one at Dandelion, and one either at Twin Oaks or at Aloe. These discussions will form the groundwork for a committee to be formed at the first meeting of the Assembly in January.

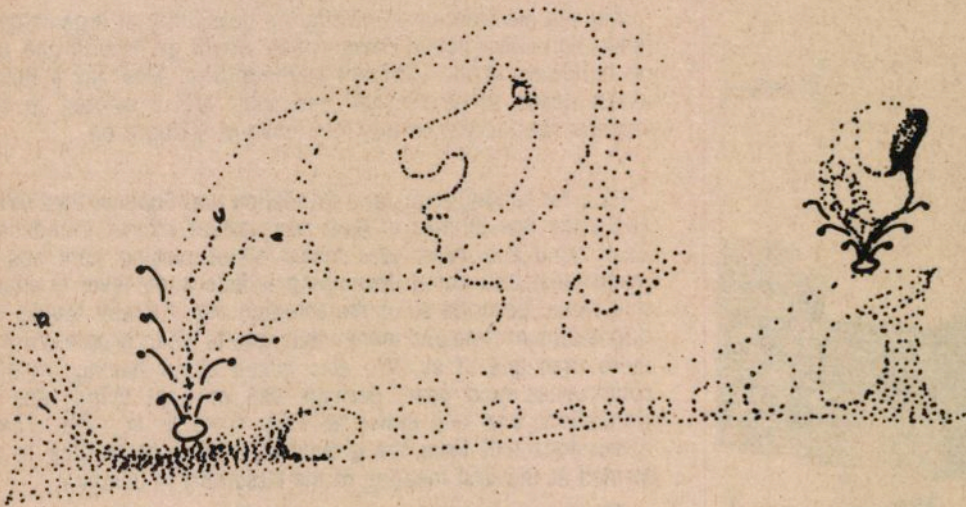
The assembly had lots of unanticipated consequences. People at East Wind were made aware of the politics of the federation simply by having the issues discussed around them all the time. The delegates got a chance to visit another community, and for some of us it was the beginnings of being able to trust another community on the same level that we trust our own community members. We have established personal as well as community relationships. We are reminded that we are not a series of isolated communities, but part of a larger movement.

we realized that there was an even more basic underlying issue than taxation and representation; whether we trusted each other as communities

The assembly was a success. People I spoke with from East Wind said they had been apprehensive, wondering what it would be like to have a lot of visitors in. But it didn't feel like visitors, they said. It felt like a family reunion. Certainly the food was fit for a celebration. Sometimes we seemed to get caught in the petty arguments, but just as often we would remember that despite our differences we're all working for a world where we can live happily and at peace with each other and our environment.

Henry and Wayne and I drove home Monday, arriving at Aloe at 2:00 am. The trip didn't seem long. I kept thinking about all that we've accomplished in the past years. Three years ago Aloe didn't exist and I hadn't even heard of Twin Oaks. Two years ago Aloe had just gotten together in a half-finished house near Chapel Hill. One year ago we had just moved to the farm, with no running water, no heat, virtually no money, and certainly no idea that East Wind, Dandelion, and North Mountain could help us in more than minimal ways. Now we are talking about federating with these communities, and it looks as though we will be able to use the resources of all of the communities to help each of us.

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Charisma in Community

Pat sheds some light on a difficult topic in egalitarian communes: the role of charismatic leadership. He expresses a concept of "charisma" as a basic social process that leaders and followers alike must own. At the personal level, Pat comes to terms with his own role change from leader to fellow member in Shalom Community.

pat conover

A lot of people who are committed to equalitarian communities are appropriately sceptical of charismatic leaders and correctly note that most communities run by charismatic leaders are far from equalitarian. This article is about the conscious use of charisma to found an equalitarian community. Charisma may be a powerful stimulus to the process of gathering a community. If those who are handling the power know what they are doing the community can become equalitarian. In fact, in terms of basic orientation, it can be equalitarian from the very beginning. In addition, a leader who handles charisma can even retain a place in the community after co has no special charismatic function. Not only is this possible in theory but it has been successfully put into practice in at least one community, Shalom Community, a small but highly stable intentional contemporary Christian community.

ORGANIC BEGINNING

Shalom grew out of a temporary college intentional community and a network of friendships that had been built up over the years. The Open Door was a community gathered around a coffee house which operated within a denominational center in Tallahassee, Florida. I brought a rather simple message to the people who had originally gathered around the idea of running a coffee house; that a basic problem in a big university was that many students felt isolated and lonely. I then suggested that the mission of the coffee house was to do something about that. That drew a positive response and then came the question of what to do. We focused on dealing with our own alienation and as a result we had something to offer those who came to the coffee house. We showed our togetherness but kept a posture of openness to others.

We went through a sequence of exercises and retreats aimed at various aspects of discovering ourselves and each other. There was very little spoken Christian ideology, but it was an important background factor that many of us believed that Christianity as a way of living, included a lot of love and concern for each other.

The Open Door was necessarily a transitory experience, though it was an important thing for as many as thirty people. When I moved to Greensboro I invited some people from the Open Door to follow me and several did. The lure was the possibility of working out a non-temporary community based on our love for each other. Again, a contemporary conception of Christianity has served us as a guiding context for working out our common lives.

It took Shalom a couple of years, and one aborted start, to come fully together. But we did find a core of seven adults, with seven children, who made a lifetime covenant to be together in May of 1974. That core has remained solid since then.

My charismatic role was one of communicating a belief that we could come together and escape the divisive and alienating effects of an establishmentarian life. Sometimes this was communicated in words. More often it was communicated by the fact that I took responsibility and risked the vision in every day interaction.

It hurts a lot when you pour out a lot of love and attention and a big share fails to bloom in ongoing relationships. But love is a very scary thing, and many become afraid when they recognize the vulnerability associated with accepting love's deepest present. Anyhow, it was my experience that many came close and backed off. It is enough that many will work out the implications of what we shared in other contexts.

CHARISMA AS A GATHERING PROCESS

The first key to the use of charisma is to understand that it is a social process which is more dependent on group resources than upon the character, insight, or strengths of the person playing the charismatic role. This crucial understanding was developed in theory by Max Weber and is important as a key because it sets the stage for transferring from the gathering period to a more mature equalitarian period. It is also basic to helping a person figure out how to become a charismatic leader. Finally, it is crucial to helping a charismatic leader keep co's performance in perspective, a hedge against becoming a "true

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believer." Any charismatic leaders reading this who are finding themselves becoming more inflexible, more narrowly focused, would do well to pay close attention at this point.

Within the Open Door and again within the gathering period, I unashamedly tried to speak and be the word of love with people whom I saw as hungry for this kind of engagement. But I never believed that the love simply existed in me and was really mine to give away. I kept in mind that what I was hungry for myself was unmanipulated love rather than praise or dependency, which are often the first responses of people who face up to love.

A statement by a leader draws a charismatic response if it speaks to an important and previously inadequately articulated need or desire in a listening individual. Because a message becomes charismatic by speaking to deeply felt unmet needs, and because such needs are often below conscious awareness, and an individual's response is typically accompanied by strong feelings, this often gives the charismatic leader an almost magical aura of power. In our establishment America there are many such deep needs, such as love, friendship, trust, deep meeting, and trans-materialism, which are created by our mechanistic, bureaucratic, control-oriented, social structure. There will continually be an audience for the charismatic lures of the alternate culture. I am never surprised at how easy it is to raise a response by telling the truth about things that matter.

I once tried to serve as a consultant to a better-than-average standard institutional church. Again, I got a good response to my message. But they couldn't figure out how to capture the truth in their institutional sieve and it quickly leaked away. I have concluded that it is easy to be charismatic if co will risk co self in existential courage. What is hard is to continue the conversation in a way that bears fruit.

Some become charismatic leaders because they become sufficiently in touch with their own needs so that co can articulate them in a way that others with the same needs can hear. But that level of awareness is not enough to prevent the "true believer" syndrome because this awareness can feel like magical revelation, a bubbling out of strongly felt statements not under rational direction. Without more awareness these symbols bursting free from the subconscious may be felt to be coming from outside the self and a new round of magical mystification sets in, as disorienting to the leader as to co's followers.

I have found it easy to kill the flow by being analytic or abstract in the delivery of a charismatic message. The message becomes believable when they see it as representing a personal reality rather than an academic possibility. But I remember to reflect about what I have said and to hold myself accountable. I know that no one needs the promise of love more than myself.

When one merely recognizes that one's needs are the same as the needs of other people there is no immediate sense of magic or power. Indeed, one may feel overwhelmed and powerless because of the sheer immensity of the needs. A person may feel that co has nothing to offer precisely because co is aware of co's own weakness exactly at the point of greatest need in others. But taking a posture of existential and spiritual courage at this point can work charismatic "wonders." It takes such courage to say a deep and open-ended hello, to risk misunderstanding and rejection. But when such a hello is heard

it is a start toward the relationships out of which genuine community can be built.

If one recognizes that charisma is a group possession — however much it seems to be focused on a single individual — it follows that the leader who speaks out of more than co's own gut feelings must listen carefully as well as speak courageously.

I have used my academic training to speak in several specialized languages; humanistic psychology, existentialism, Tillichian philosophy, and sociology. But the important thing is to use symbols the way your hearers use them. If you insist on precision, you put the pride of yourself as message-giver in the way of the message. It is enough to work out the imprecision in the continuing conversation. The crucial thing is the deep meeting that transcends symbols and gives a base for wanting the conversation.

In addressing the general establishment, one can simply seek a large audience, speak boldly, and hope for a small percentage of followers out of which a beginning base can be built. Kat Kinkade (a founder of Twin Oaks Community) and Stephen Gaskin (spiritual teacher of The Farm) have been successful with this sort of broadcast effort. But when building organically, starting with one's near network and acquaintance, it is crucial to listen carefully so that one's speaking takes the listener with full seriousness, using the listener's symbols, keeping in touch with the listener's reference points, and waiting to speak until the others are ready to hear. The approach of Kat and Stephen is valuable but it tends to lock them in more tightly to a specific charismatic role. As a result, in an equalitarian community, like Twin Oaks, Kat became uncomfortable and has appropriately moved on to starting a

Charisma is a group possession

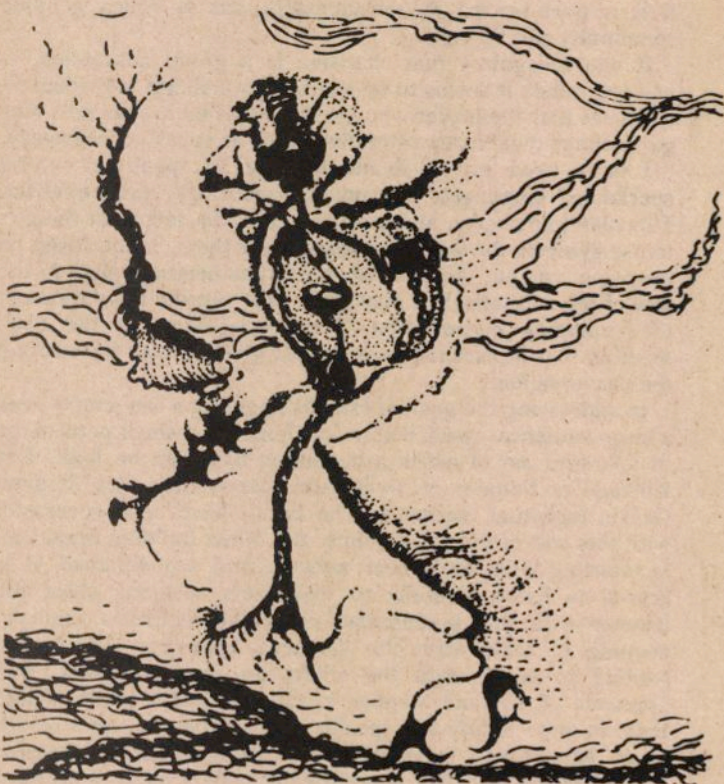
new community. Stephen has been stabilizing The Farm as a community which retains need for him as an ongoing charismatic leader.

On a basis of careful listening, the charismatic message can be delivered with full power but in terms that the hearer can appropriate without mystification, or at least without more mystification than exists in co's own symbolic base. In some cases high dependence on the leader may develop but a base is laid so that the hearer may become increasingly strengthened and independent, able to claim the truth for co self and thus emerge as an independent voice in the conversation.

My joy grew as the principles I care about spread out and I could count on being challenged by others to grow in terms of the principles I was committed to embodying and sharing.

The cost of developing charisma within an organic context, based in large part on the listening capacity of the leader and the patience to speak only when another person is ready to listen, is that the initial gathering process may be more slow than with a simplistic charismatic gathering approach. It did take time to draw Shalom together. We needed to experience the love we promised each other before we could offer deep commitment. We had the depth of relationship that draws other communities together at an early stage in our development, but we waited, probed each other, cared for each other, and completed some personal changes before we finally met in full covenant

The simplistic approach, while faster, is more likely to have high turnover, especially in the beginning. Both approaches should be about equal in the time it takes to get to a stable stage. But in the organic approach, fewer people will have had



the failure experience of trying out a community and finding it doesn't work for them. Perhaps the biggest danger in the broadcast approach is that the fear of high turnover may inhibit people from taking the kinds of risks that create relationships of deep trust.

Whether a broadcast or an organic approach is used, there will be ongoing success only if the charismatic message continues to address felt needs and serve as a basis, direct or indirect, for felt resolutions. One of the great disorganizing dangers for charismatic groups is success. When a need is resolvable, such as a specific civil rights victory, achievement may serve to disband the group because there is no longer a felt need to draw participants together. Such a group can continue only if a new need is articulated quickly and a new organizing focus emerges which appeals to enough members.

When I worked in the Woodlawn Organization, a powerful black community organization in Chicago based on the organizing principles of Saul Alinsky, we lived from crisis to crisis — schools, housing, jobs, politics, etc. Because of the ghetto conditions, there were always crises available, but it was an incredibly wearing process. In the alternate culture we are already living in the new age without having to forever repeat the revolution with all the attendant guilt, anger, and alienation. The basic charisma of the alternate culture is that we are free right now, as is.

At the individual level, a community may serve to help an individual through a particular growth process, such as breaking away from home. But unless the community is flexible enough to address the newly emerging personal agendas, then it will be natural for the individual to want to move on. The careful charismatic leader who listens has a much better chance of keeping his messages relevant to changing, hopefully growing, members. A charismatic leader who only speaks relative to a single or a few dimensions of an insight will only retain charismatic power as long as followers do not grow beyond the leader's limited vision.

Some felt needs are not resolvable but, because they flow from the deepest springs of the human condition, they can serve as an ongoing base for unity. A spiritual base for

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confronting loneliness, meaninglessness, guilt, and death, is such a need and this is why spiritual communities have tended to endure longer than secular ones. Of course such a spiritual base need not be articulated in religious-sounding terms if the participants are able to work out a common stance which addresses such issues and communicate it effectively.

If a charismatic leader wants to create an equalitarian community, the discipline of listening keeps co in a posture of respect and equality from the beginning, even if co is receiving a lot of deference and is called on to meet many dependency needs. The serious listening communicates a mutuality of respect which lures others gently out of a dependent posture. Most importantly, the listening allows the leader to grow and to refine and extend co's intrinsic vision. Listening is also a strong engine of leader humility because it helps the leader remember that co is also coming to the interaction out of a sense of need.

I was, and am, far from sainthood. My pride and ego has been a burden to my community. But they have loved me and given me the gift of challenging my pretensions and other weaknesses. We are blessed to have a community with many strong and independent people in it. We have been able to prize our multiple strengths because we were neither Edenic nor Utopian, but kept on the emergent course of following love where it has led us.

TRANSITION AND CRISIS

Humility is crucial to the process of moving from charisma-centered to equalitarian stages of community. I'm talking about real humility, not a sense of false modesty. Humility can be real because any significant sensitivity to reality and the overwhelming needs and tragedies which abound tells even the strongest leader how inadequate co is. No matter how strong a leader becomes, co always needs all the help co can get to address the full complexity and demands of life. Listening out of a stance of humility prepares us for genuine thankfulness and celebration of the strengths that all individuals bring to community and for all the growth that occurs within the community. I am not talking about the listening which is only a part of the calculating of where to fit someone into a preconceived plan. That kind of listening blocks the deeper attentiveness with the leader's ego or preconceptions.

It seems likely that no matter how good one may be about using the above guidelines, that as a part of the process of changing from a charismatic to an equalitarian stage there will be one or more crises in leadership through which the listeners build confidence, if things work well, in their ability to lead without reference to or dependence upon the charismatic figure. Part of the crisis is a test whether the charismatic figure really is trusting and is willing to move to a shared leadership process.

We had such a crisis in Shalom in the summer of 1975 — with some leftovers following us for awhile. There was plenty of frustration, misunderstanding, and tears, but we had built well and our foundation held so that we were able to muddle through. At one point we used Carl Ostrom as a group facilitator to help us. Now there seems no doubt that leadership is multi-centered and we are moving into a more mature stage of our process.

If the charismatic leader really does want an equalitarian community, if he hasn't become addicted to the power and status which charismatic leaders are accorded, then the emergence and challenge of new leadership will be welcomed, will be viewed as evidence that the empowering aspects of co's leadership has been effective.

One severe problem is that the more effective co has been at the process of listening and patience, the more subtle co's leadership will have become and the more searching the challenge may become as others worry about the possibility of subtle manipulation. The mere fact that the leader approves of the challenge may sharpen the challenging process because the listeners may want to feel that their reactions make a difference and that the leader doesn't subtly have things under control. It is quite likely that unfairness and misunderstanding may emerge. Real limitations in the leader may be overemphasized and blown out of proportion. If so, the capacity and willingness of the leader to admit hurts and vulnerability can do a lot to bring co's image back to lifesize.

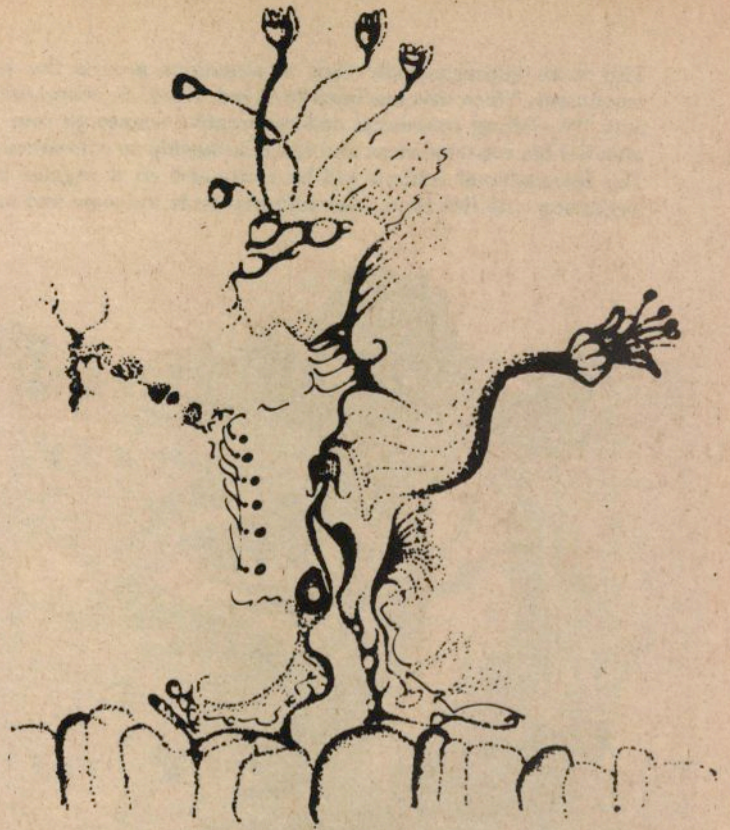
I can think of no neat tricks to get smoothly through the transition process. There is no substitute for the leader's trust in and covenant with the listeners. If that is adequately communicated then there is hope that a way can be found through the jungle of tensions and challenges.

If the leader is genuinely humble, in touch with co's own needs from which the drive for community emerge, and if co has listened so that he has a real basis for trust and hope, the change process will be less painful, though probably never painless.

Using a charismatic approach to gathering an equalitarian community may now be seen as necessarily involving a variety of risks. Ego problems in the leader are deadly. Overcommitment to guiding symbols rather than real people can empty the symbols and demean the listeners. Patience may be transformed into avoidance or escape through fear. Listeners may try to cop out by letting the leader "do it." Sensitivity to the timing of support and challenge is indispensable. But continuing reference to the mutuality of need and hope provides an intrinsic equality so that one and then another can risk the projection of vision and the reaching out for each other that begins the positive process of creating community, then enriches and deepens emergent community life.

From the point of view of the initial listeners the appropriate response to a charismatic leader is thankfulness and a willingness to take responsibility for one's response. If you have listened well and if what you've heard is good stuff, then claim it for yourself and start to make it work. As you feel yourself growing stronger look for opportunities to take initiatives that make sense to you and give the leader the gift of remembering co's humanity, that co shares your needs. Adulation is a cop out that denies the liberating impact of the leader's message. A charismatic leader who is past ego trips doesn't really want your adulation but rather wants you to embody the truth so that y'all can be more deeply and truly together. Without this a leader can become abysmally lonely in the midst of a community that is functioning just as co wants it to.

It may be asked, "If charisma in an organic process is slow and has to go through a dangerous transition process, is it really a good gathering process?" One answer is that it can be short cut to the degree that the initial group or potential group contains a large number of people who possess a fully developed common vision and personal awareness and readiness. That is, if you can start with a group ready for full leadership sharing, then enjoy it and go with it. But the principles still apply to bringing in, and bringing to full participation, those who have only a partial self-understanding and readiness for community. Breaking with the establishment



is often accompanied by a period of confusion, anxiety, self-negation, accompanied by a variety of establishment bad habits. The primary orientation of a lot of potential communitarians is only rejection of the establishment. To move to positive affirmations needs a period of personal transition in which the individual tries out and feels through an option. During this period it is simply not realistic to perceive the changing individual as a mature member. It is appropriate during the transition process to be a pilgrim or a disciple. One needs to respond to charisma for a while before co can own it.

For the movement as a whole there is a continuing need for general charismatic leaders who stir up the establishment, plant seeds of awareness, awaken sensitivity to unmet needs, challenge the big lies, and lure people towards alternatives. I am thankful for the few leaders of this type that we have. We all profit from their efforts even when we come out in somewhat different places than they do. Within the communities movement we need many alternatives and we desperately need mutual respect and whatever cooperation is practically useful. It is the breaking through, the flowering, of some deep alternative themes which serve for the reorientation of our lives that, when recognized, provide that basis for respect. Even though I clearly prefer an equalitarian community process, I recognize, and am appreciative of, the authenticity of some charismatic leaders in communities where their leadership is institutionalized.

I believe we are in a time of kairos, a cusp of history. Many people are hungry for the hopes that are becoming actualized in the successful new communities and other alternate institutions. As we become strengthened we must not hide our lights. We must bear the risks of charisma. There was a period of a lot of talk when a lot of communities were just formed. We have been quiet lately while we have struggled to live up to brave new words. Now that we are more seasoned, more aware of the costs as well as the hopes, we may begin to emerge with a refined message. But our charisma will come, not merely from increased confidence, but from the still unmet needs of those who can hear.

This is an impressionistic view of situations around the world many of which are related to the international cooperative movement. Vince who has been involved with U.S. communities for a number of years did some traveling between May '75 and July '76 visiting communal and cooperative scenes on four continents. In this column he relates how some of this traveling affected his consciousness and his relationship to communal alternatives.

The International column will be continued on a regular basis with news from cooperative situations on either continents beginning with this issue. Any information is welcome and may be sent to Vince, Rt. 4, Bx 169, Louisa, VA. 23093. Thank you.



INTERNATIONAL

on

the

road

by VINCE

Traveling may be viewed as something that one does when there's nothing better to do, or as an escape from emotional trials, or as a joyride to avoid difficult responsibilities. Before the lengthy journey that began a sixteen month voyage to many lands, I had never considered traveling, sensing that there were more important things to do in helping shape a just social system in the U.S. and consequently the world. My involvement in community stemmed from a social-political commitment which was aroused as a result of feelings of helplessness and hopelessness about U.S.A. circa 1967. This led to social action and experiencing the failures of political organizing in 1968 in California. Realizing the pitfalls in organizing around electoral politics, led to action for me thru developing social structures and creating humane forms in the context of community and intercommunity federation. . . the long haul.

After six years of often frustrating experiences (often labeled learning situations), it just didn't seem as tho much had been accomplished. With that, a second serious attempt to implement a grandiose communal model ended with deep-set feelings of being tired and little desire or energy for getting involved again. Still, there was the ever present optimism which was being renewed by a spiritual view that had been evolving over the last five years — one that precludes worrying about the future. And too, there was little patience left for being involved with determining the right path to building alternative structures. In a way, the great expectations of the 60's had faded and with those an emptiness was left. Part of the problem was those great expectations — who needs them? That realization became a door, so to speak, to the next stage of consciousness. . . few expectations were left. I had been involved with a continuing series of ups and downs living within community and all the

myths were destroyed in the process.) Now, it was time to follow a message in a dream about traveling to far away lands; plus, there was a curiosity aroused from hearing about experiments in other countries.

Upon leaving LimeSaddle, Communities magazine, friends and six years of California communes, I journeyed along the east coast thru assorted communal environments and discovered that what I really needed was a sabbatical. Given an opportunity and some money and minimal reasons for a jaunt, (experiencing all the learning situations involved with overseas travel could be an exciting, consciousness expanding and important in introducing the aspect of living with few attachments.) In writing this, difficulty arises with relating personal experience, i.e., in clearly recalling changes of my consciousness before, during and after the series of experiences. Here goes tho.

In writing of these travels thru Africa, Asia and Europe, it doesn't seem too important to emphasize the variations in cultures, as India and Tanzania; the remarkable structures that exist in the old world, like the Taj Mahal and the Pyramids; the beauty that is everywhere in the world; and also, the social problems which exist everywhere, whether Kenya, Switzerland or Afghanistan. Some reasons for venturing into Africa and Asia were to experience the communal environment in Tanzania, the kibbutzim of Israel, the land trust movement in India, the religious and spiritual atmosphere of India, Israel, and the Moslem countries. Finally, a leftover from political activity attracted me to a socialist country with some history like Yugoslavia, which didn't have an agrarian based economy.

The communal movement in Europe is not very large and not easy to penetrate. The four possibilities for meeting communarians and visiting European communities never connected;

plus, writing to existing rural communities brought no replies. For me, this meant that Europe was not going to be much of a learning environment, and hastily I transferred to Israel, a Westernized country which is interesting because of the influences of Asian cultural patterns. Plus, the chance to visit kibbutzim over a 45 day stay was "living the fantasy" of the past seven years during which two attempts to implement cooperative villages on the West coast failed.

Each kibbutz is different, so describing a typical kibbutz environment is impossible. Givat Brenner, the largest kibbutz, with 1600 residents, was overwhelming in a sense — two factories, a theatre, huge dining areas, a discotheque for teenagers, acres of orchards, an old age home, a fantastic high school and a beautiful oasis surrounded by the Middle East desert topography. After visiting and staying at three other kibbutzim, within the left wing Artzi federation, it felt like a community with less than five hundred people was personally appealing. Givat Brenner and Kibbutz Hazorea (800 residents), where our friend Hanna Nehab resides (see C #23), have many brilliant and interesting people, but it seems as tho the communities are BIG. The bigness factor is most apparent at dinner time when the meal situation begins to resemble a production line at Ford Motor with all the folks streaming in and out, hurried conversations and a necessity for moving to make room for the next shift.

There are so many fantastic things about kibbutzim that it's marvelous such wonderful living communities exist. Outstanding is the child care situation. For Artzi Kibbutzim the youngsters live in peer groups from the age of six weeks to seventeen years. The children have well designed houses, well educated care-takers and a well integrated educational structure that is



continually being updated with a variety of new advances which are developed in western educational systems and modified to kibbutz needs. (It's encouraging to witness that people who knew very little about child education before arriving in Israel have been able to do so well.) The teenagers whom I talked with were very satisfied and happy people; their questions and concerns indicated that they were intelligent and sensitive people.

Two factors which did not make me feel comfortable were the sense of community which was lacking when people walked past one another without exchanging eye contact or a greeting and the presence of the plastics factories or related questionable ecologically damaging industries. Similar situations continue in our North American communities, where spontaneous exhibition of community is not the norm and where industries like polypropylene hammocks support the communities. Of course, these point to two rather obvious socio-economic factors. First, that we as humans have had socialization that isn't conducive to healthy communal interactions, secondly, that possible industries which can be developed quickly at a low initial investment and which can be expanded with a labor intensive orientation often limit the communities to questionable sound practices. But remember, kibbutzim have existed for 65 years, and are economically viable and constantly expanding, yet are not shying away from plastics businesses but rather being more involved. Is that good? There are always reasons for justifying such activities, but when do we as humans, or specifically as cooperating humans in community change? When do we consciously take steps to modify our behaviors? Will we be another unconscious environmental hazard while meeting income needs.

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Another aspect of the complexity of the kibbutzim is the variances in approaches to important practical matters of daily life within their movement: child care, level of consumerism, hiring labor and the political position of the kibbutz within the capitalistic Israeli economy. In some ways the kibbutzim have failed: the socialistic society will not be present in Israel for many generations, the cities are becoming slum areas for the African and Asian Jew, and the kibbutzim are in danger of becoming isolated land masses functioning as deviant communistic enclaves. As the government becomes more right wing, the position of the kibbutz becomes more in tension with the political environment in the country. From all this, one might conclude that kibbutz life is quite different from the U.S. communal scene. For us tho, the kibbutzim present an existing learning environment, with a fantastic history, that is stimulating and genuinely helpful to others. (We'll cover the Artzi situation in future International columns).

With all this we utopians in the West have an experiment to examine, a social laboratory, and can watch its continual development, its organic growth and its probability of being applicable to us. (Acknowledging applicability is another part of the learning experience that is valuable when traveling) through many countries — what seems so beautiful and functions in one culture may not be transferable to another due to idiosyncrasies in history, religion, distribution of resources and political struc-

tures. The unique position of kibbutz federation, as a successful microculture in a nation that has existed as one on the defensive militarily, leads to questioning its applicability for other areas of the world.

Israel is a compact and exciting country. Its spiritual vibrations are very powerful and greatly contrast the constant movement of the soldiers with their rifles and the jet fighters on their daily missions. The Arab influence around Jerusalem was inviting and comfortable — it was a minor first glimpse of Asian tribal life. This was further heightened while being in Cairo the concentrated center of Arab activity for North Africa.

If you don't have the energy to experience Asian lifestyles, try Cairo. The crowds, Egyptian Architecture and street life are fascinating. About this time too, it was becoming quite obvious that each country has its problems, and some aren't good at hiding them over in the corner of the sprawling cities. Tensions are existent everywhere and may stem from poverty, discrimination iniquities of many forms.

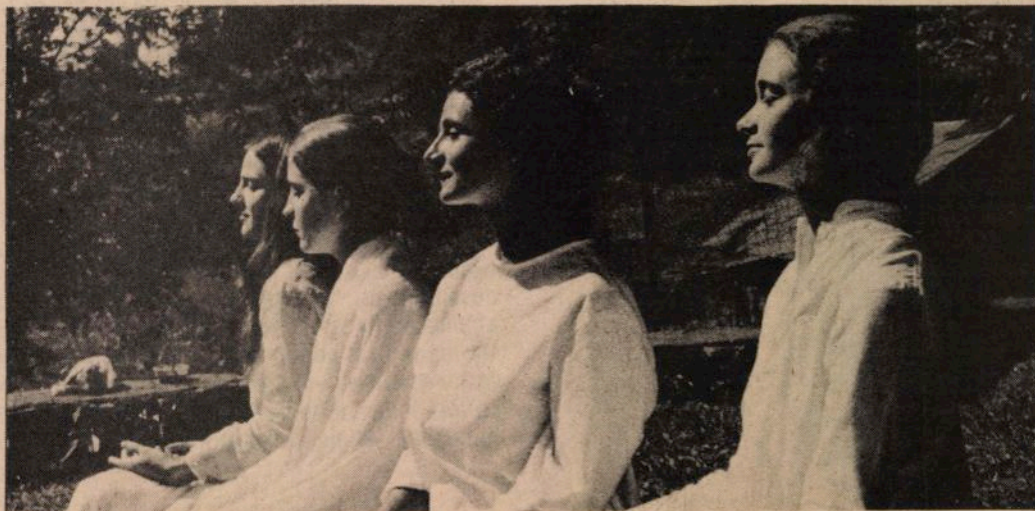
East Africa presents some great contrasts: from Amin's totalitarianism in Uganda to advancing capitalistic Kenya to struggling socialistic Tanzania. The grand experiment in Tanzania with attempting to build a communal farm based economy similar to China isn't going great guns. Unfortunately, it's not so easy to visit the farms that have been in existence for as long as nine years. In addition writings about the experiments are few, and it generally is difficult to obtain information. This would lead to a conclusion that much doesn't exist. But realize, government bureaucrats are protective and don't encourage North Americans judging African situations given their western backgrounds and higher standards of living. Consequently, it's difficult telling what's developing with the communal farms and how that effects the economy.

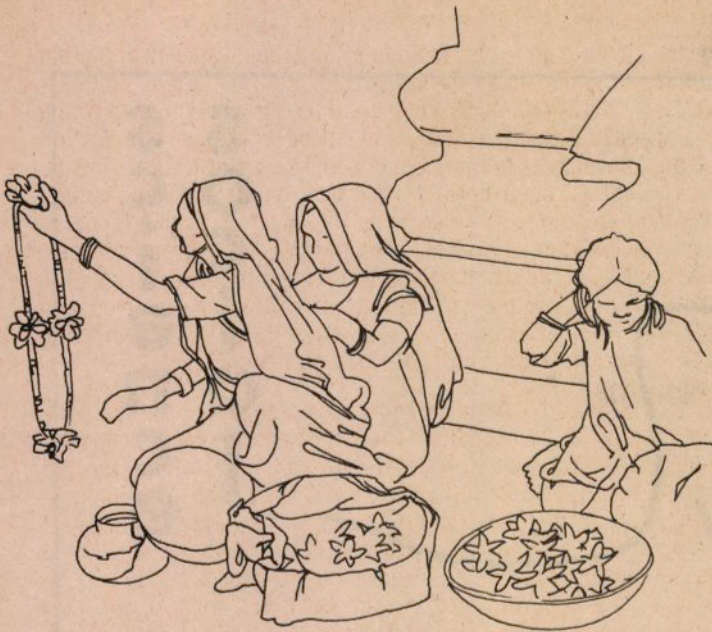
Tanzania doesn't have the crime and discrimination of Kenya, but it has a high level of poverty. There has been progress, since liberation in 1964, but the economy was very poor due to an agrarian based situation with extremely low level technology and with few skilled people. The people I talked with seemed to support the leadership of the country and it's communal direction. Tanzania's leadership is strongly influenced by religion, Islam and Catholicism, making it a different social experiment from China, melding ideas of Hegelian thinkers and religious influences. It was valuable talking with the people in their early twenties, gaining some sense of the spirit of the struggle in the nation and some understanding of their depth of perceiving the directions and steps necessary to increase the standard of living and implement a communistic structure. It seems that the basics, educating youth and training skillful workers, are the key for strengthening tanzania.

The next big jump was to Bombay and the mysticism of a great culture, Mother India. Third world cultures are a sidewalk variety. There is so much going on in the streets with everything in the open. In Bombay, the jet set city of India, the contrasts are so unbelievable as to remind me of the worst of New York City. Everywhere street people live their lives on the sidewalk: eating, sleeping, begging and defecating. The olfactory assault in the air can't be avoided: the smells, the heat and the Ocean breezes. The poverty of the street people existing on the sidewalks before the high rise apartments, where the wealthy Indians live, is in part the story of India. . . a land of extremes where anything goes, and where you can't help being affected.

Two important experiments that are on-going are the Auroville community in southeast India since 1967 and the land movement which is wide spread since 1950. Auroville is a future city that now is home for about 375 people living in diverse groupings, numbering from a few people in a family to a large commune of 140 people — about thirty different living units in all. It's a social-spiritual mixture influenced by the gurus of the inhabitants. It's unique in that there are members from all over the world cooperating loosely to build a new age city. In reality, it's another series of trial and error communal ventures where people are groping, looking for viable structures to help create a better life. To offset their divine inspiration, are the great difficulties with intercommunication in a multilingual community and poor relations with the neighboring tribal people, the Tamils. As with most experiments and everything in life, there are the good and the bad features. My initial attraction to the Aurovillians, the Tammils, the climate, the ocean winds and the spiritual orientation gradually faded as travels throughout India made me realize that Indians generally regard Auroville as some freak situation not contributing to the mainstream culture. Again, realizing how little communal living is understood by the majority of people led to a conclusion that most people will not benefit from it. Before the majority of people on this planet are adequately clothed, fed, sheltered and given work opportunities, better education must evolve, and many years will pass.

These conclusions were reinforced when checking the land trust movement of Vinoba Bhave's, a saint who spent 25 years walking thru India obtaining land from the rich and distributing it to the homeless via a network of worker-organizers. In the north, in a poverty stricken area around where Buddha became enlightened, is an ashram where one of the more successful organizers of the Gramdan land movement lives. Dwarko gave many insights into the work which has been done since the early fifties with redistributing the land in India without the aid of the government. Seeing first hand, people living tribally who eat the





weeds a good portion of the year and have no view of escaping futile existences, was quite a jolt. Dwarko has learned that the only way to help poverty stricken people is to educate the youngsters before they are confused and thwarted by their cultural barriers. Bringing them to a school away from their parents, they learn to read and write, garden, sew and work with tools and equipment. Teaching youngsters a new way and then giving them land, equipment, tools and continued support is a way for breaking the chains of poverty.

Usually poverty is a result of little education, minimal personal discipline and inadequate organization in a country. (Wherever land trusts are pictured as a panacea for poverty, there is short-sightedness about the depth of the problem.) Giving land to landless peasants only increases the problems bringing them greater frustrations. Land trusts must provide in-depth programs of education if the government cannot be relied upon. Dwarko sees little hope for rural India in the near future. With this my myths for land trusts were balanced by the reality of rural poverty. Somewhere the religious influence of Hinduism and Islam corrupted the Indian lifestyle leaving most people excluded from a just existence. As a result the extreme poverty is ever present.

The religious fervor and the tensions from Ms. Ghandi's programs is another example of the contrasts that make this country so appealing and yet so devastatingly repulsive. My ambivalent feelings about India were a result of an attraction one moment while enjoying some cultural aspect contrasted the next moment with experiencing the filth, poverty and iniquities that are appalling. The gorgeous temples and ashrams and mosques have beggars sitting outside along their walls. These extremes led to a love/hate polarity after awhile which began to subtly affect my consciousness. The spiritual influences of Tibetan Buddhism and the yoga schools of the north offset the tragic daily encounters with the beggar dynamic in the streets.

In the end I remained in India as long as possible given the visa situation, experiencing illness and pain, spiritual peaks, delight and disgust — rarely are there dull moments being in India. After six months, those subtle affects seemed to colour my perception and have a lasting influence on me: bringing patience and low expectation levels and some humility with a relaxed view of lifestyles and for enjoying everyday existence. (The spiritual

flavor of the strolling sadhus (wandering monks and nuns) and "holy" people gradually made me feel that there is a way of life which can be practiced bringing joy and relaxation with little material comforts or high level technology.) And, you don't need to live in the forest to have it. It's an outcome of an optimistic world view that sees humanity as gradually evolving to expanded levels of consciousness with greater understanding and wisdom.

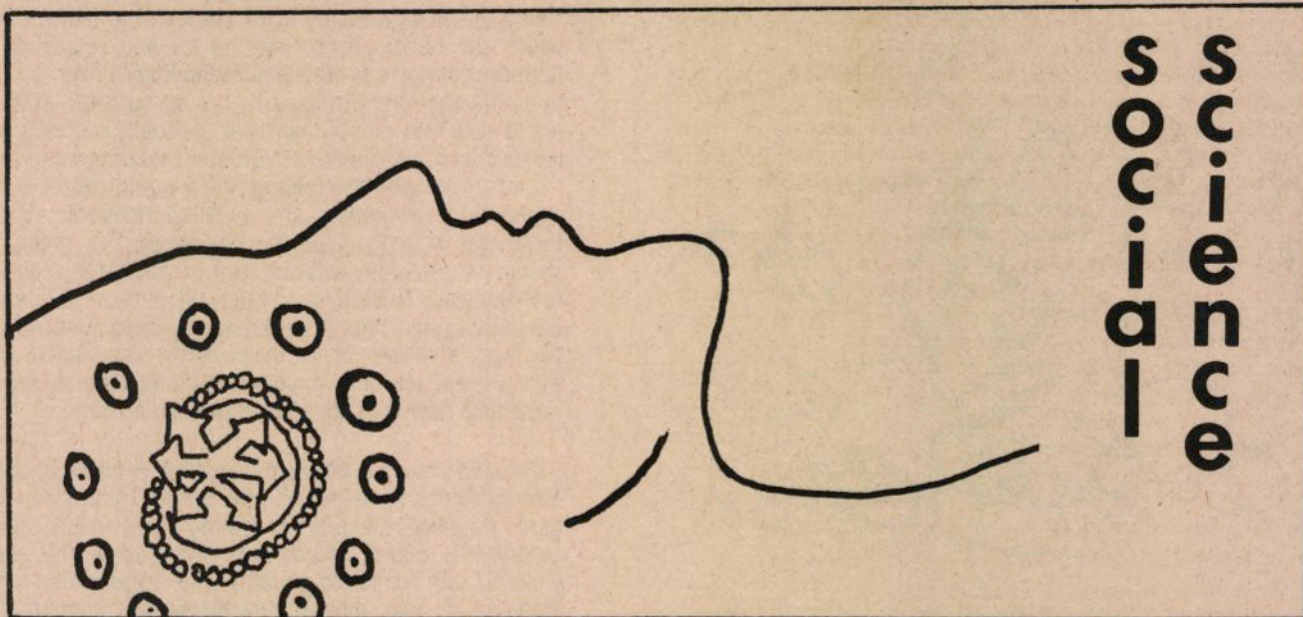
I left India with the feeling that I would return because of its enchanting uniqueness and spiritual richness. While leaving, there was a sense that the old perception mechanisms that spawn judgmental views and lead to reactionary conclusions had melted away. This traveling really gave me an ability to deal with the daily insecurities of not knowing where a place to rest would be, food, a shower or company might next appear. It certainly was a great learning experience being able to move through India and flow with the events as they arose.

Passing thru the Moslem countries witnessing the unbelievable extremes upon crossing the border from one country to the next, renewed the intense feelings that much time will pass before this planet makes real progress in the social realm, yielding fair economic equality and opportunity for her great majority. A brief look at Yugoslavia was enough to make me realize that one country is really progressing. The absence of crime and obvious discrimination combined with an economy that is expanding and a reasonable standard of living is quite a contrast to Asian and African countries. With the people in their early twenties seeing the value of Western cultural patterns, socialism and Eastern spiritual approaches, Yugoslavia seems to be doing well. Some people pointed to the shortcomings in the country while noting that the government is widely supported. With its centralized government taking steps toward greater representation, Yugoslavia may become an interesting model for the world.

*Indians generally regard Auroville as
some freak situation not contributing to
the mainstream culture.*

I wasn't anxious to return to the States, but once being involved in the July 4th festivities at the Jefferson Memorial and throughout the day, I began to appreciate the U.S. for the first time in years. That was an unexpected realization that stemmed from seeing tremendous difficulties elsewhere. Only in northern Yugoslavia does there seem to be reasonable progress in creating nationwide structures that benefit most of the people.

Finally visiting Twin Oaks again, I began to realize that a community with a friendly atmosphere and diversity was important. Meeting old friends and renewing communal experiences again was enjoyable. This time living communally became an involvement with friends in creating a better home that may attract some people but certainly is limiting to most people. Community isn't applicable worldwide at this time and has few implications for North America. However those of us living in community can relax and do our best and hopefully enjoy our lives. Others will find different ways.



The New Localism—an ideology for our age? Part 1

by david

Recently we received a letter from B. F. Skinner. (1) In the letter he said, "Twin Oaks could be one of the great experiments of the twentieth century, but if its members are merely content to see a good way of life for themselves, that is the end. I wish some of you people could go to the Chicago meeting of the Midwestern Association for Behavioral Analysis. . . There they would see a couple of thousand young people really excited about what can be done with the ways in which people live together — which I think is after all the heart of education and counseling as well as the broader design of a culture."

Earlier this year we'd heard from John Friedmann, a social planner whose writings have inspired my greatest respect. (2) Friedmann, though he eschewed extensive knowledge about intentional communities, said, "One thing I do know is that a community, if it is to prosper, must have goals which reach beyond itself." Calvin Redekop (3) and others too numerous to mention have made the same point; that a community must develop an effective ideological core, one that gives to the lives of its members a significance that goes beyond their own search for the "good life."

Now, an ideology must provide two things: first, it must explain the social arrangements of a society in a way that gains intellectual acceptance of the inevitable suffering it entails. (Our capitalist democracy explains its incredibly unequal distribution of power and wealth in terms of the need for an incentive system, and it has until recently succeeded in convincing those on the bottom that they just haven't pursued their opportunities with enough effort to make it in that system.) Second, an ideology must provide uplifting goals like the U.S.'s vanishing ideal of providing freedom and democracy to the oppressed of the world.) It is only goals which reach far beyond self (that is, goals which touch that place in all of us that knows we are all ultimately responsible for each other) that can provide the emotional and spiritual energy for our acceptance of suffering. An effective ideology combines intellectual attractiveness — a seemingly sensible explanation for why things are as they are — with emotional and spiritual

attractiveness. And there is little doubt that a community's survival hinges greatly on its ability to develop an effective ideology.

These ideas are, as I've mentioned, not new. In fact, the need of a community for a strong ideological core has been repeated by nearly every respected observer of the communal scene. Each time I've heard these ideas, though, I've come away puzzled. "O.K., so there's a real need for ideological agreement," I'd say to myself (and to anyone else who'd listen), "but what do you do if you are part of a group of people who seem to have rejected as inapplicable all of the dominant theological and political ideologies of our age? What do you do if you are part of a group who seem to have rejected as isolating and limiting the sectarian ideologies of our age? And what do I do, as a writer who's trying to help in the development of ideology, when I'm skeptical of even the 'new age' theologies (theologies which seem to demand an intellectual surrender to the 'revealed'), and when I'm convinced that even the leftist ideas of the last decade have proved too limited — (limited perhaps by the revolutionary violence their logic demands?)"

A community's survival hinges greatly on its ability to develop an effective ideology.

And finally, how do we balance the need to create an explicit and inspiring ideology with the fact that it is most often that very explicitness that isolates a community; for explicitness must be seen as narrowness by those not inspired, and narrowness limits the community's relevance to the world at large. (Think what others would say about Twin Oaks if we created a 'good life' that was attractive to only the most ardent of behaviorists.)

I've asked these most difficult questions quite often in the last few years — and I've yet to get an answer that doesn't translate into, "Well, keep plugging away."

Then, a couple of days ago, we received a letter from people at the **Christian Science Monitor**. They are planning a series of articles on what they termed "The New Localism." (4) Their plan is to spotlight in ten articles the ways in which people in ten different communities are working toward local political and economic autonomy. They were seeking information from us about Twin Oaks and other intentional communities, thinking that perhaps one of the spotlighted communities would be an 'alternative' such as ours. As I contemplated my answer to the **Monitor** letter I began thinking about the work of the people at the Institute for Policy Studies, particularly their efforts to increase communication among all the former radicals and would-be radicals who are now working on alternative policy design at the local level (5) I thought also about the Institute for Local Self Reliance, (6) and about the Cambridge based Center for Community Economic Development. (7) All of these groups have been working on developing, on a practical level, the tools needed to foster self-sufficiency among the nation's smaller political units (neighborhoods, towns, counties).

Our experience and thinking must stand in a complementary relationship with the development of ideology on a much grander scale.

As I reflected further, some of the significance of much of my other more theoretical readings began to come into focus—readings from the radical fringes of social planning and policy science theory, from the fringes of community psychology and organizational development, of sociology and social psychology. What I began to realize was that up until now, at least, I'd been pursuing the problem of an ideology from an entirely inadequate perspective. While others were developing the intellectual and experimental roots of The New Localism, I'd been concentrating on the old 'demonstration' ideology ("We intend to show the world that people can live together harmoniously by. . ." or "Our community is the testing ground for the theory that. . ."). The point I was missing was that if we are to attain anything more than sectarian significance, then our experience and thinking must stand in a complementary relationship with the development of ideology on a much grander scale. What is really needed at this stage is an ideology for our age; for a community to create its own guiding ideology in advance of the creation of an overall ideology for our generation would be both premature and isolating.

Let me come at this same point from another direction. There is something about the term 'intentional community' (as well as something about the original pretensions of our slogans) which has caused me and other theorists to think of the present communal experiments primarily within the utopian historical and philosophical context. We've thought about our communities as being discontinuous with the rest of the world; as 'alternative' structures set apart and against the traditional structures. We've emphasized the differences between our "relatively self-sufficient" utopias and the outside world, often pointing out the difficulties that come at the interface between "us and them."

Intentional communities reflect both the best and the worst of all that is reacting to the institutionalized oppression of our day.

Now, this utopian perspective is undoubtedly a quite useful sociological one to take — that is, it can give us insights into the functional similarities of all utopian adventures — but I think that it has blinded many of us to the ways in which our actions are grounded in our particular historical situation. It has blinded us to the fact that our intentional communities can be seen as organized responses to the problems of our time, organized responses that are in many ways similar, say, to those of the Organizational Development (O.D.) wing of business management thinking. Both the members of intentional communities and the O.D. theorist can be seen as responding to the oppressive corporate hierarchies that drain humanity from human interaction. Both are continually experimenting with the apparent trade-offs between rational efficiency and collective control. Both can be seen as trying to develop ways of organizing ourselves which point toward "a positive and confirming view of people as whole persons in process; toward encouraging the effective expression of feelings, authenticity, risk, confrontation and collaboration." (8)

This same sort of emphasis on the face-to-face participation of "equals" is happening in social planning theory, a discipline that was so thoroughly shaken by the events of the 1960s that its most progressive thinkers have been questioning the basic concept of "planning" as necessarily elitist and therefore oppressive. (9)

The point is that intentional communities are not isolated examples of a quaint sort of utopian thinking, but rather are just particular instances of widespread attempts to restructure the oppressiveness out of our lives (oppressiveness that is being felt because the dominant ideology of democratic capitalism is dying.) Intentional communities reflect both the best and the worst of all that is reacting to the institutionalized oppression — the institutionalized violence — of our day. They reflect, for example, both the insight that power inequities lie behind the perpetration of violence, and the confusion we all feel about the limits to the egalitarian distribution of power.

These reflections, though, are partial. The singular experience of any community is at the same time unique and universal, but the unique cries loudly for attention, and the universal emerges only in dialogue with all the others who are experimenting with options to oppression. This is what I earlier called the complementary relationship between our particular experience and the experiences of our generation. The articulation of an ideology apart from that which emerges from this complementary relationship would necessarily be isolating; it would be a premature closure that would make little sense to those not a part of the process from which the ideology sprang.

What the **Christian Science Monitor** letter did for me was to jolt me into awareness (perhaps a couple of years later than the folks at the Institute for Local Self Reliance) that the dominant radical ideology of the 1970's may now be emerging. It is emerging from the search for smaller scale technologies and a smaller scale economics; from the experiences of the former radicals who are now mayors and sheriffs learning the realities of political life; from the experiences of the wildcat labor

The dominant radical ideology of the 1970s may now be emerging.

organizers who encounter in raw form the violence from which most of us are insulated; and from that of workers who run factories and find themselves under the thumbs of their 'elected' managers. It's emerging from all of the collective

efforts of people who are discovering the incredible amount of energy and trust it takes to make decisions collaboratively. (Here I'm thinking of worker's collectives, food co-ops, neighborhood governments, as well as of intentional communities.) And finally, it's emerging from the thoughts of intellectual renegades who wear their values on their sleeves, proclaiming the right to advocate a sane society.

In this column next issue I will expand upon the intellectual and experimental roots of that emerging ideology in the hopes of adding some small amount to the ongoing clarification process. I will also look at what I see as the most powerful argument against the fruitful development of such an ideology, the Marxist position that equates the New Localism with the New Reformism. (10)

1. Skinner is a prominent behavioral psychologist whose novel, *Walden Two*, served as the original inspiration for Twin Oaks and a number of other egalitarian, secular, intentional communities. The letter was written soon after his first visit to Twin Oaks last fall.

2. Friedmann, a former chairperson of the Department of Planning at M.I.T. is probably best known for his book, *Retracking America: A Theory of Transactive Planning*. In the second part of this essay I'll be mentioning ideas from his latest work, an unpublished manuscript called *The Good Society: a primer of its practice*.

3. Redekop, Calvin. "The State of the Communion: Contemporary Religious Communes." *Communal Studies Newsletter*, Vol. III (1), Jan., 1976, (pp. 3-8).

4. I first noticed this slogan, The New Localism, in the subtitle of Morris and Hess's *Neighborhood Power* (Beacon Press, 1975)

5. See Paul Freundlich's interview with Barabar Rick in *Communities* #24, (pp. 36-43).

6. See David Morris's article on the Institute for Local Self Reliance in *Communities* #19, (pp. 2-25).

7. Barry Stein's *Size, Efficiency, and Community Enterprise*, which I've mentioned before in this column, is a good example of their work.

8. Friedlander, Frank and Brown, Dave L. "Organization Development" *Annual Review of Psychology*, Vol 25, 1974, (pp. 313-341).

9. In my article on social planning in *COMMUNITIES* #21, (pp. 23-28).

10. The October and November 1976 issues of *The Monthly Review* contain interesting presentations of this argument.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP AND CIRCULATION

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copies distributed to news agents, but not sold		
Total distribution		
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Total	5000	5000

How does a person meet & make new friends? Find the right people to live communally with? Connect with people who share the same dreams?

One way is to leave it all to chance, & passively "await your fate"... but another way that works better is to join the Utopian Society. The Utopian Society provides a personal crossmatching service, linking up people all over with common ideas, interests, goals, visions & ideals. Dues are just \$5.00 a year. Members also receive "The Storefront Classroom" newspaper bimonthly, & "Utopian Eyes & Communal Living Directory" (magazine) quarterly.

Send dues (or \$1 for sample publications & more info.) to: **STOREFRONT CLASSROOM**, Box 1174-C, S.F., CA 94101. (415) 566-6502.





CONFERENCE.

KOINONIA ORGANIC GARDEN PROGRAM

Winter

Pruning
Starting Seedlings
Planning a garden
Seed Ordering

Spring

Plowing
rototilling
Planting
Transplanting
wildcrafting

Summer

Cultivation using
Troybilt/Planet Jr.
Fall crops
Homestead irrigation
Wildcrafting

Fall

Green Manure crop
Harvesting
Root Cellars
Starting a cold
frame crop
Next year's garden

In addition to the seasonal topics listed above, each season will also offer Composting, Soil Analysis (kit provided), The meaning of Organic Gardening (book provided), Natural Insecticides, Honey Bees, and The Story of Findhorn. As well as the classes, there will be thirty hours of getting one's hands dirty each week.

Since we cannot control the weather, please bring a pair of good boots and some rain gear. Bed linens and towels are provided.

April 17 - May 8
July 17 - August 7
September 18 - October 2

Cost: \$50/week including a room and wholesome foods (of course!). The fee for the resident program at Koinonia is \$800 a semester, which would also cover any organic gardening seminar.

COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

A three-day conference for people interested in communal living will be held at Dandelion Community near Enterprise, Ontario, June 2-8.

This conference will be similar to the July 4th conferences held at Twin Oaks Community in Virginia over the past five years and is sponsored by the Federation of Egalitarian Communities. The emphasis will be on secular, egalitarian groups such as those that use the Walden Two model.

There will be workshops on many aspects of communal living, including values and agreements, social structures, interpersonal relations, sexual equality and what that means in community, systems of distributing labor, the economics of community cooperation and much more. If you are ready to join a community now, you will be able to make contact with a number of communities looking for new members. Come and share the learning and the celebration.

The conference fee, which includes food and a place to camp, is \$ 20 per person, or \$ 22 after May 15. Write for more information or register now (include your phone number) by sending a \$ 10 deposit to COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE, Dandelion Community, R.R.1, Enterprise, Ontario, KOK 10.

WALDEN II EXPERIENCE

You have the opportunity to try a short-term, real communal living experience at a Walden-II-Week to be held June 4-11 at Twin Oaks, Louisa, Virginia. 12-25 people will live together for the week forming their own government, communal treasury, work credit system and social organization. With the help of members from Twin Oaks and East Wind, the Walden-II-Week participants start from "scratch" and function as if they were going to live together on a long term basis. If you are thinking about communal living, this is the ideal opportunity to "test the water before jumping in". Setting up the household, arranging for sanitation facilities, planning menus, distributing work, preparing budgets and learning to communicate are some of the first essentials. But social interaction, positive reinforcement, dancing, massage, swimming, hiking and parties are just as important. Each Walden-II-Week is different. Each forms its own government and makes its own decisions within a Walden II framework. Each time new friendships are built.

PLEASE: no pets and no illegal drugs of any kind. No children except at future Walden-II-Experiences advertised as especially for children.

The cost will depend on your own Walden-II-Week group. Registration deposits (which go to the sponsoring community) are \$15 / person for registrations received before April 30, or \$ 20/person after that date. Upon arrival, the communal treasury is begun with an additional contribution of \$ 35 from each new member. Sometimes as much as half of this has been refundable at the end, depending on how the planners and managers have handled their budgets. To register, send your money and a self-addressed envelope to Walden-II-Week, Twin Oaks, Louisa, VA. 23093, and we'll send you a map, work-preference sheets, and other information.

HELP WANTED

We're looking for another couple or two to help us start a small business specializing in erotic graphics. We need people with artistic ability as we want to do such things as fluorescent ink posters combining photos with computer graphics, embroidery "kits" so the do-it-yourselfer can decorate pillows and sheets, and ? We have a photographic darkroom and a fair amount of workspace on our farm. Since we already have an operating "home business" in another field (electronics), we're not starting from scratch. We're an affectionate, easy-going nudist couple, mid 30's, who are into a swinging, free-love lifestyle. We like cats, Mexican food, dry wine and a little meat in our diet. We don't like wearing clothes or 9-to-5 work hours. We work hard when there is a job to be done but we love to relax in the sun, work in the garden, swim in our private pond; make love when the mood strikes -- and we're looking for people with compatible likes. **Ron and Virginia Tipton, Route 7, Fayetteville, Arkansas 72701**

We are a group of people in Mendocino County, California, forming a birth center where mothers and fathers will have the opportunity of giving birth to their children with competent medical care and in a manner that is harmonious with their understandings and lifestyles. We need a doctor to associate with us. We have the facility, energy, love, and there are now many among us who are pregnantly waiting for a doctor to complete the whole in our birth center. If you are an interested doctor, or can put us in touch with one, please write us at: **Birth Center, P.O.B. 547, Ukiah, Calif. 95482**

home birthing

My name is Mau (rhymes with how)... I'm running a HOME BIRTHING SERVICE for those 'into' having their Babe in their own home.

I believe this situation calls for the guidance of someone with expertise. Some of the benefits of the SERVICE are: help in recognition of, and dealing with EMERGENCY situations (and they DO happen now and then); help with decisions; prenatal exercises for the lady and her partner; dietary advice and nutritional guidance; organized TEAMWORK; monitoring of physical/mental progress of the participants in the event, and Not the least; the Birthing of your Babe.

Okay...some background on myself: I'm a 40 yr. old cancer lady (ascend. moon) I've been an R.N. for some 20 years...currently licensed in Mo. recently I went back to school...a B.S. in Zoology and an M.S. in Ecology (major: Physiology). NOW...my sister and I are back-to-the-landers in the Mo. Ozarks. We are lacto-vegetarians. Our life philosophy includes: harmlessness, truthfulness, continence, introspection, self-surrender to good and daily meditation. We do not smoke, drink or use other drugs; and ask those who visit the clinic to refrain from same while here. For more info send a stamped large envelope and 50c to **Mau/Golden Light Birthing, Rt. 6 Doniphan, Mo. 63935.**

We are seeking unselfish, socially-conscious non-careerist, MOVEMENT fund-raisers. MUST have successful fund-raising experience and be able to do semi-scholarly research at the level of MONTHLY REVIEW. Prefer economists, political scientists, etc. Should be familiar with the New Left Literature **Midwest Institute, 1206 N. 6th St. 43201**

ANANDA APPRENTICE PROGRAM 1977

Ananda Cooperative Village is again offering its Apprentice Program, an opportunity for serious seekers to participate in the spiritual activities of the community and to work with Ananda members. The 1977 program will run from May through October, and will offer apprenticeships in carpentry, organic gardening, organic dairy farming, publications work, and vegetarian cooking. For more information and an application form, please write to Prakash, c/o **Ananda, 900 Alleghany Star Route, Nevada City, CA 95959**

GROUPS LOOKING

EMISSARY COMMUNITIES, P. O. Box 328, Loveland, Colorado 80537 [Est. 1932; Includes rural and urban communal centers throughout the world but particularly in the United States and Canada. The emphasis is on right expression in daily living. No exercises, diets, rituals, belief systems, or other techniques are used. Farming, home-making, business, construction, publishing, music, drawing, dancing, sports, teaching and many other patterns of activity serve as settings in which to practice the art of living. Each center is characterized by harmony, creative achievement, and the true joy of being.

Survivor 2, Mainland has available approx. 200 acres lower midwest area. Will accept people who are communitarian (share all but personal goods that includes soap and bicycle), no personal autos but you must have one to reach us; intelligent people who can and do communicate verbally and via long hard letters; who will and want to work 4 hours a day on directed farm projects including dirty stinking ones; who will work 8 hours a day on extended family projects which are personal development, including anything from piano concerto composing to weight lifting; tolerant of all but the "holier than thou" religious or militants; who are non-smokers of anything, who want only moderate amounts of good wine; who are not of the holy unwashed and who aren't afraid to admit having failed. Some people will be nudists or bi-sexual but none will be oppressed by the actions of others. Separate, comfortable, clean private areas will be afforded each adult that lives here, but all other communal activities such as eating, cooking, work, income, will be communal. **M. Manning General Delivery Tulsa, Okla. 74101**

Furniture Shop, a natural foods bakery, a computer programing and building company, a sewing industry and more. Along with these and with people taking outside jobs, we support ourselves. We also grow our own veggies and have 2 cows and chickens. Our requirements for visitors and family members are willingness to work a full day \$105/mo. for food and rent, and most important, commitment to a spiritual path. We recognize all religions as ways to God. No illegal drugs are permitted on the property.

We come together in the name of God. Our ideals are to create an environment where people can live harmoniously with nature, with each other and with god.

We are open to new family members. those interested in visiting are requested to write in advance. **The Abode of the Message P.O. Box 396, New Lebanon, N.Y. 12125.**

Butterworth Farm. Our population shifts from one to five people. We're into organic gardening and simple living (no electricity). We are primarily gay males, though we are not "separatist". Committed to human friendship, we want to live in harmony with nature and with other people. **DO NOT COME HERE WITHOUT WRITING FIRST, PLEASE. Butterworth Farm/The Octagon, RFD 2, Orange, MA 01364, [est. 1973].**

Fors Ecommunity Corporation, The Imaginary School, Sunnybrook, Kentucky 42650. Since its incorporation in 1973 Fors Ecommunity has come a long way toward its primary goal of establishing "The Imaginary School." In 1974 we bought 27 acres of land. During the past two years we have built a cabin for two, a rootcellar, a greenhouse and potting shed, a compost privy and a tipi. Two of us, Mead and Tom, have paid for all of this out of our teachers' salaries. We have had the help of many hard-working visitors. Currently we consider 2 or 3 others to be "fringe" or part-time members. In the fall of 1976 we broke ground for the construction of our main building which will house a community kitchen, study rooms, library (we already have 4,000 volumes), crafts room (complete with spinning wheel and loom), and performing arts room (two pianos, other assorted instruments, costumes, make-up, dance floor). We hope to have a very small number of boarding students. Other local homesteaders and nearby community families will provide some day and part-time (week-end) students. We aim to provide study opportunities for all age groups, infant through adult. The performing arts and folk crafts will be our educational speciality in addition to basic studies in language and literature, mathematics and science. Work/Survival experiences will be an integral part of our school since our lifestyle emphasizes self-sufficiency for food (our organic gardens are improving and we have an orchard of about 25 fruit and nut trees) and for energy (we use wood stoves and we have plans to purchase a wind generator system). Community/Communications study is expected to grow out of the all-important process of relating person to person at home/school and then extending this awareness abroad. A commitment to spiritual growth is another significant aspect of life at Fors Ecommunity. We share interests in Yoga, Tai Chi Chuan, Sufi dancing, Meditation, Zen and so forth. We are vegetarian. We do not keep pets. We do not smoke, drink or use drugs. (Cussing, however, is permitted!) At present the two of us are living off of our savings so that we can work full time on the school building. We will plant a large patch of blackberries next spring for a potential cash crop. Our tax-exempt status should be approved very soon and that may open some new avenues for money making. If the facts and ideals stated here catch your interest write us. We are and have been continuously try to find a core group adults who can share ideals and friendship while devoting their energies to the **Imaginary School**.

[Our address is Fors Ecommunity, The Imaginary School, Sunnybrook, Kentucky, 42650].

Dandelion Community, R.R. 1, Enterprise, Ontario, KOK 1X0, Canada. Dandelion is a **walden two**—inspired community of seven adults living on a 50 acre farm in southeastern Ontario, near Kingston. The community began at Twin Oaks' 1974 labor Day conference, and moved to the land in May, 1975.

As a community, we feel that we can only be effective if we cooperate and work together. Sharing our work and doing meaningful work that we enjoy are important sources of satisfaction for us. We are organized around a planner-manager government and a labor credit system which distribute work as equally as possible and generates between 40 and 50 hours of work per person per week.

We have communal sharing of income and will raise our children communally. Our first child will be born at Dandelion in March 1977.

We support our community through our industries, mainly our tinnery which recycles tin cans into candle holders, jardiniers, lampshades and more. As we grow we plan to diversify our means of support.

We are also attempting to build as self-sufficient a life as possible by such things as growing most of our own food, building our own buildings, and heating them with wood grown on our own land.

Dandelion is ready to grow. We're looking for people who want a life based on cooperation and equality; who are interested, as we are, in understanding and changing their behavior with the help of behavioral science, and particularly the technique of positive reinforcement. We are open to anyone willing to abide by the agreements of the community.

What can you expect to find at Dandelion? A lot of building, organic gardening, a couple of goats, delicious vegetarian food, lively discussions, music, and laughter.

If you would like to visit, please write or call in advance. We like visitors to stay a week, preferably two, so we have time to get to know each other. We ask you to help with the work and contribute \$1.50 a day (but we have a program which refunds part or all of this money according to your participation in the labor credit system). We don't allow illegal drugs of any kind and smoking is restricted in public areas.

Want to find out more? Write for our free brochure. We also publish a bi-monthly newsletter — \$3/yr.

Mulberry Family, 2701 Grace Street, R'mond, VA 23220 [804] 355-6341 [est. 1972] is an urban community of 12 adults ranging in ages from 21-35. We live together intentionally in a system of democratic socialism which supports and encourages personal growth and development through the purposeful cultivation of interdependence within the group. Individuals who join our group demonstrate commitment to:

1. intensive and extensive authentic personal encounter and sharing where love is evidenced through the wholeness of personal interaction
2. continued experimentation with positive self identification and artistic self-expression.
3. horizontal leadership characterized by group decision making related to Family maintenance, growth, change, and development, and equality in the implementation of decisions.
4. change as an eternal fact and thus self-governance through consensual understandings rather than rules
5. the twin assumptions of individual uniqueness and human communal ity by acceptance and appreciation of individual differences and collective strength and creativity.
6. individual life styles which value non-role existences and interaction
7. continual exploring, experiencing, and experimenting with the individual's relationship to Family and Family's relationship to the larger environmental system.
8. the establishment of intentional home and family as an important and viable living/learning center, an alternate living style.
9. the development of human resources and conservation of other natural resources

We are not currently seeking new membership and persons interested in visiting are asked to write two weeks prior to their intended visit. When writing, please tell us some things about yourself and what you hope from visiting with us. We will respond and send you a copy of our Guidelines for Guests and Visitors. (See **Communities #23**, p. 33).

We have 80 acres in the Northern Adirondak mountains and are looking for ecologically minded couples or singles (the maximum number is 16, giving each about 5 acres). Each member shall have his own homestead site, which can start as a weekend camping site. Our property is mostly wooded, has several springs as well as a trout stream. Write for more information. **Earthworks Community Box 345, Roscoe, N.Y. 12776**

VIVEKANANDA MONASTERY AND RETREAT, Route 2, Box 228, Fennewille, MI, 49408 [Est. 1966]. Six to twelve men are in residence. Income is from donations, etc. The monastic candidates are building up the place entirely by themselves, so there is lots of manual labor, including building and gardening. It is a branch of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago (leader, Swami Bhashyananda) which is a center of the Ramakrishna Order of India. The perennial philosophy of Vedanta (Upanishads) of the ancient Indian scriptures and its realization through yoga are the ideals studied and practiced, particularly as seen through the lives and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Inquiries regarding monastery or for making retreat are welcome.

New Beginnings Community, c/o Joel Davidson, Dutton, AR 72726. Four family community living on 128 acres of mountain land. Visitors by invitation only.

HARBIN HOT SPRINGS, Box 649, Middleton, CA 95461 707-987-3747 [Est. 1973]. We are about 25 adults of various ages and about half as many children in the process of evolving our own form of community. We are united in our love for the land and an enjoyment (and recognition) of diversity and generally agreed upon the importance of being into and living some sort of growth process.

The day-to-day affairs of the community are run by policies set by our weekly community meetings, open to all members, and ruled by consensus.

Harbin Springs comprises about 1050 mountainous acres, about two hours north of the San Francisco Bay area, near State Highway 29 south of Clearlake. The hot springs supplies two hot pools. Our many cold springs fill our large cold pool and supply our water needs. We have quiet, clean air and water, and privacy. Up to 50 acres are suitable for gardening (but not large-scale farming). Numerous buildings, large and small, are in the process of being restored and upgraded to modern standards.

The land is owned by the Heart Consciousness Church, a non-dogmatic, non-profit religious corporation. It is formed of the community members and controlled by a Board of Directors, all living here, who act as trustees for the land. The Church expects new members or visitors to manifest deep commitment to some process that they consider spiritual or manifesting of what they consider the best part of themselves.

Current monthly dues are \$60 and a minimum of 30 hours of community work. Each member is responsible for his own financial situation. Our members have varied sources of support, with local sources being developed. Donations from visitors and proceeds from workshops are also a significant source of income for the community as a whole. Members are responsible for feeding themselves. But many of us join together in a community kitchen for Sunday brunch and weekday dinners. Gardens and orchards are in the process of development for better self-sufficiency as a community.

Goals We want to create a utopian community of over 50 members, of high level interaction and accomplishment, where we support and teach each other so that each can have an environment to realize dreams, with a dominant attitude of creativity, growth, and high-level functioning. The nature of the land is to encourage the spiritual aspect of living. The nature of community is to require success in the practical aspects of living.

Visitors are encouraged on Sundays, by arrangement other times. A donation of \$3/day or \$5 overnight or equivalent work (\$2 for children) is asked. You may join in community meals for \$1.50. One sponsor from the community is required for visits of a few days to two weeks. **New Members** We are open to new members who are energetic, creative, and dedicated to building a community. The situation here is still fluid enough that one can influence the shape things take. Three sponsors are required to stay past two weeks or to apply for membership.

The Human Dancing Company of Ashland, Oregon, was born in Spring, 1974, from a group of individuals with previous experience in theater, dance, communal living and radical ("from the roots") consciousness.

At present there are eight members for whom the Company is the first priority in their lives, and many others who are committed or involved to very different degrees. Members of the Company share an attitude towards life not easily described in words. . . because it rests essentially on the existential guidance of intuition and sensitivity, rather than on beliefs and crystallized concepts. It doesn't advocate a particular way of life; it simply finds itself at odds with callousness, superficiality, fanaticism, and apathy. In the words of one member: "The heavy questions are asked and lived, off and on stage. Performing Art is an extension of the Art of life. Our growth is our greatest gift to each other."

The name Human Dancing Company gives clues about our attitudes:

Human — implies an emphasis on a state beyond genders, encompassing both genders, and on a state encompassing both spiritual-ness and animal-ness.

Dancing — is the **action** of being human, that is, to have all bodies (spiritual, mental, emotional, physical) acting as one.

Company — to be and do all that with companions.

We do not live communally per se (though we have in the past and may again in the future), but we cooperate closely on survival levels. At this point we each survive in whatever way we can. (We are in a position to be supported by grant foundations, but it hasn't happened yet — maybe simply because we haven't met the member who has the talent for grantsmanship.) The Company (non-profit, tax-exempt) owns 80 acres of land in the Cascades near Ashland. We live and work on the land in Summer and visit in Winter. We see living on the land (and caring for its maintenance and progression) as one form of dancing. We hope to eventually establish a home base for all activities of the Company on the land.

The Company has performed in Ashland and toured extensively through the Northwest and California. At this date we are preparing five dance and theater productions to be given at Southern Oregon State College, including a special show on the theme of Human Liberation using members of the community-at-large, to be presented in Spring. The Human Liberation show consists of two parts: one to be produced exclusively by women, the other part produced exclusively by men. Segregated workshops are already in process towards this show: each gender keeps secret what it is preparing.

Besides performing and giving theater-related workshops, we are involved in and support all sorts of over/underground subversive activities, such as men's and women's consciousness groups, art films, symposiums, retreats on the land, etc.

On the spiritual level, we see God simultaneously as the forever resurrected Absolute and only Authority **and** as the crucified, denied victim desperately needing our help. The attitude that we (humanity) are the "Saviours of God" (Kazantzakis) is what moves us (the Human Dancing Company).

For more information — **Human Dancing Company, 159 N. Laurel, Ashland, Oregon 97520 [Est. 1974]** or/and send 50c for "For Humans Only", a booklet about us and our philosophy on art and life.

Our community has undergone many changes since our beginning in anada Marga in Aug. 1972. In November 1972, we started a natural foods bakery and our focus shifted to it.

In May, 1974 we moved to 225 acres of rented land in the country. That fall we built a pole frame house. We also have built two small yurts and a pond and sauna. We have cultivated an organic garden for three years. In Feb. 1976 we passed the bakery on to a wider group of friends. It continues to thrive.

Since letting go of the bakery, we have not really had a central focus. It has been a time of taking stock as a community and as individuals. We share the joy of living on this beautiful land we have put so much energy into. We hope to see a continuing community living her. Beyond that our future is nebulous. We are looking for more folks to join our community. Our numbers have dwindled from 12 to 3 at the moment. Much of the future direction will depend on the new folks who join us.

The folks who live here now are Mitch, 25; Steve, 23; and Mikel, 22. Mitch has lived in the community for four years. He is currently working in a collectively run restaurant. Steve joined the community this summer. He works at the bakery and paints houses. Mikel has lived in the community for two years. He is doing carpentry and furniture making.

We share a desire to live on the land in harmony with nature. We are also striving further to make our living in ways that help aid personal growth. We aren't into any heavy trips; spiritual, political or otherwise. People interested can write to us. **Be-Lite Community, Rd. 2, 44 Starks Rd., Newfield, N.Y. 14867.**

Ananda Ashram was established 1964 by Dr. Ramamurti S. Mishra. Throughout the year 20-30 people including families and children live here. We are supported by guest donations, resident donations, and our cottage industries of incense and publications.

Our functioning is based on regular group meditations, Karma Yoga or selfless work, and sharing of responsibilities such as cooking, grounds, repairs, office, et. Vegetarian diet. No drugs. Study of Sanskrit Language and original Sanskrit texts such as Upanisads and Gita is emphasized.

Our purpose is based on the teachings of Shri Ramamurti, which is to experience the underlying unity of all peoples, religions and ultimately of all life, this understanding being arrived at by Self-Analysis; that is, first to discover how our thoughts, desires, and conditioning

and suffering, and then through the practice of Yoga, meditation to go beyond the mind in order to discover our oneness.

Ananda Ashram is open year round to all who are searching for meaning in their lives. We are open all summer, and during the rest of the year for retreats of up to one month. We feature special programs every weekend throughout the year with well-known spiritual leaders, yoga teachers, healers, etc. We offer courses in the summertime for those who wish to teach Yoga. Shri Ramamurti is generally here May through Sept. **Ananda Ashram, Box 805, Monroe, NY 10950, [914] 783-1084.**

The Renaissance Community, Box 281, Turners Falls Mass. 01376. Begun in 1968, not as an alternative lifestyle, but as a changing creation designed to fit the individual need to recognize and express SPIRIT CHARACTER, to live in the resulting high energy, and to make it possible for all individuals involved to "be as they would like to be". Now takes form as a non-profit corporation set up to maintain communities for the members of the RENAISSANCE CHURCH (a federally recognized church based on world unity and a spiritual renaissance in the New Age).

The 250 members of the Renaissance Community share everything. Everyone takes a vow of poverty before joining the community. Every individual contribute his life's energies and maintains his responsibility either by having any normal job or by working on a crew inside the community. Community crews include carpenters, painters, excavators, farming 35 acres, silk screening, filming 16 mm and video, concert sound, concert lighting, recording studio, restaurant, and grocery store.

Rules: no violence, no excessive alcohol consumption, no illegal drugs.

The community maintains communications with anyone who wants to communicate. This is done through creative works channeled through the church. Community members produce the Renaissance Radio Show, aired weekly on 30 stations across the States and available for any radio station that will donate 30 minutes per week to listening. Church memberships exceeds 600. Meetings are every Sunday at 11 AM in Turner Falls in our Theater-Church. Everyone is welcome, and meetings are always crowded, intense, and an experience of shared love and peace in high energy. We are especially interested in making connections with other groups and communities since we feel that the new age is for everyone—unity and love

are the only issues. All differences are beautiful in the light of love. The community now has members visiting to and from the San Francisco Family, Findhorn, The Blackie in Liverpool, and The Farm.

Visitors to the community are welcome for up to two weeks to start with, or you can attend Church services on Sundays. If you are in the area, initial contact should be made through the main offices at 69-71 Ave. A in **Turners Falls, Massachusetts [90 miles west of Boston, just off Rte. 2].**

Teramento, 10218 14th S.E., Renton, WA 98055, [206] 255-3563, [Est. 1974]. (Esperanto — "Loving Earth") is now 8 adults (19-63) and 4 children (1-14). They make up 3 households occupying 3 adjacent houses. The multi-racial community has an adjoining 1½ acres of raw land on which we will erect new housing and community buildings, and use of 24 adjacent acres of cooperatively owned woods, pasture and garden area.

Most "Tera" folk now work outside. There are jobs in all fields at all levels within 5 to 18 miles in this, Seattle, area. But one may earn a modest living within the community in construction — training and supervision therein are provided when needed. Other work in Tera includes subsistence gardening and wood cutting. Land, some supplies, and tools are shared in our cooperative community thus far. We have occasional meetings, gatherings and dinners together. Drugs, liquor and free sex are discouraged. Love of and openness to one another, and acceptance of God, are expected.

Tera was started in '74 by A Pacific Group which had been launched in '71 by Fellowship of Reconciliation people. Tera folk have participated in anti-Trident, nuclear power safety, and Amnesty endeavors. We aim to 1) foster constructive social change — (A Seattle area meeting of all co-ops was organized by Tera recently and is now a monthly event); 2) become more egalitarian — (decisions are by consensus); 3) integrate within the community all basic activities — consumption, production, recreational, spiritual, educational, etc.; 4) constantly expand (when present location is full — establish a new community, etc., etc).

A recent fire gutted one of the 3 houses. The dispossessed household was taken in by one of the others at once. The members became closer, more communal, because of this experience. The burned house will be reoccupied by Thanksgiving. Memberships is open.

PROVIDENCE ZEN CENTER...

The Providence Zen Center was established in 1972 by Zen Master Seung Sahn, From Korea, and a small number of students to practice Zen and live together as a community. Providence is now the central Zen Center of the six under the direction of Zen Master Seung Sahn. The others are in New York, New Haven, Cambridge, Los Angeles, and Big Sur, California.

We publish a monthly newsletter, handle most of the extensive correspondence Zen Master Seung Sahn carries on with many of his students, and prepare and distribute this correspondence and stories and informal talks as teaching material to the other Zen Centers.

We hold a seven-day intensive meditation session, called Yong Maeng Jong Jin, "to leap like a tiger while sitting," six times a year. Visitors are welcome, preference being given to those who plan to stay the full week. The schedule of 11 hours of formal practice includes bowing, chanting, seated meditation, a work period, and an interview with Zen Master Seung Sahn.

During the rest of the year, we hold morning and evening chanting and sitting periods everyday, and have a lecture every Sunday evening, and a period of informal instruction on Wednesday evening. Guests are again welcome to join us at any of these times. We offer training in the martial art of Zen swordsmanship, Shim Gum Do, "Mind Sword Path," brought to this county by a student of Zen Master Seung Sahn's, Chang Shik Kim, 10th Dan belt, and taught in Providence by his student Jacob Perl.

The Zen Center is supported primarily by the rent paid by residents who number between 10 and 15. Dues and contributions come from about 20 regular visitors. Grove Press has published Zen Master Seung Sahn's first book, **Dropping Ashes on the Buddha**, a collection of his correspondence, talks, and questions and answers with American Zen students.

In addition to our house and a storefront waiting to be renovated, we have a big garden where we grow a lot of our vegetables, and a beautiful little bell-house on our acre of land.

The road at the bottom of Won Gak Mountain is not the present road.
The man climbing with his back-pack is not a man of the past.

Tok, tok, tok - his footsteps
transfix past and present.
Crows fly out of a tree
Caw, caw, caw

The Christian Homesteading Movement is almost as diverse as a homesteader. The homesteader must be shepherd, gardener, carpenter, herbalist, inventor, educator, doctor, poet, liturgist, and so on. The Movement helps men and women become these things, so it is not so easy at times to define us. But we have a definite program, skilled dedicated people, rules to guide us, and a destination to reach.

Our programs are the major branch of the Christian Homesteading Movement whose purpose is to form Catholic communities or villages where families own and operate homesteads with handtools.

Potential members must successfully complete a homesteading week and have an interview. Members meet four times a year at the Homesteading Center where a weekend is spent attending classes, participating in discussions, exchanging goods, getting assignments and getting to know each other in anticipation of eventually living in community.

A Homesteading Week is a full week of instruction on homesteading subjects. Classes are presented as work bees, lectures, demonstrations, and discussions. We limit the number of participants to 15 and in some weeks to only 10 in order to insure personal attention and thorough training. We presently offer Homesteading Weeks on the subjects of basic homesteading, advanced homesteading, herbalism, home childbirth, log cabins, Christian customs, carving, and gardening. Please write for information enclosing two 13c stamps. **Christian Homesteading Movement, Oxford, NY 13830, [est. 1961].**

Entwood is an intentional community still in the process of forming. Its purpose is to set up and maintain a society aimed at and operated for the benefit of its members.

It is located on a 201-acre farm one mile east of Amesville, on U.S. Rte. 50A (550), in an area abundant in state and national parks. The land is about ¼ woods, ½ hill pasture, and ¼ tillable land. Buildings are a two-story frame house, a workshop, corncrib, three barns, poultry house, equipment sheds, farm office and library (old milkhouse). At present there is one member family.

Entwood is not anti-technology. We try to make clear distinctions between what is bad about the outside world and what is worth saving. Technology, properly used, is generally in the latter category.

Expenses are expected to run about \$300 a month. Members are to invest a minimum of \$3,000. This buys two shares in the owning corporation and

covers membership fees. Proceeds will be used to build your home on a ½-acre homesite which will be chosen by you and will be a completely private area. Homesites are restricted to front 100 acres. Arrangements can be made to pay this if a potential member does not have this much cash. If members leave, their stock will be purchased by the community. After a one-year provisional membership, each member will sign a standard business contract which entails financial commitments and an acceptance of the community's bylaws and behavior code. Clothing and personal effects remain private property but large possessions such as vehicles must become community goods. Anything that is produced or earned by a member automatically becomes community property.

Day to day running of the community is directed by members and a planning committee selected by them. Until our agriculture and industries are developed sufficiently to support us, the community's main source of income will continue to be wages earned in the city by members.

We have chickens, beef cows, pigs, and a wide variety of fruits and berries. The growing season runs from late May to early October and all gardening is done organically.

Since the number of visitors who can reasonably be accommodated is limited, it is necessary for us to have advance notice. Visitors should expect to help with the work and either contribute cash toward the food budget or bring their own food. No illegal drugs or substances are allowed on the property. **Entwood, RR #1, Amesville, OH 45711.**

Yoga Society of New York. Regular classes in Hatha Yoga, Yoga Teachers Training, Classical Indian Dance. Affiliated with **Ananda Ashram, Monroe, NY** **Yoga Society of New York, Inc., 100 West 72nd Street, Suite 501, New York, NY, 10023, [212] 799-8270, [est. 1960].**

STOREFRONT CLASSROOM UTOPIAN COMMUNITY, P. O. Box 1174, San Francisco, CA 94101, [415] 566-6502.

The first 2 of us got together in 1971, and began the work of developing a lifestyle that would enable us to live communally without coupling/possessiveness/jealousy, transiency, hassles, leaders, inequality, or boredom. We wanted a community of strong, rational, self-directing single people who could form heterosexual, polyfidelitous family groups (multiple, non-preferential sexual relationships inside the family), communicate with maximum honesty and clarity, and throw themselves totally into the work of creating a larger

utopian community (link-up of many families) which would cooperatively educate children, use a collective economic system, operate city and rural centers for members and practice ecological principles. Since that time most of our original dreams have materialized; the rest are not far off. The key to our success has been the "gestalt-orama" process we've evolved. It is an ongoing method for transcending negative conditioning/habits, getting to know others deeply, defining personal goals, learning to express oneself, and collectively creating a new culture suited to our concept of utopia. There are now about a dozen people closely involved with this process. One polyfidelitous family (the Purple Submarine) has been established for many years (four people, possibly six by the time of this listing) and others are forming. We publish 3 successful publications: the Storefront Classroom newspaper, Utopian Eyes magazine, & Far Out West comics (samples of all 3 will be sent out to anyone for \$1.50). some of us support ourselves through these publications; some hold outside jobs. We have a regular social schedule including potluck volleyball, dances, soccer, raps, hot springs trips, & theatrical events participated in by a loose community of up to 100 people. Upcoming plans include doing some sort of childcare/school, and buying a country place (when we feel there are enough of us). Call or write.

GTC. . . Originally made up of people who had gotten together to publish the "Good Times" underground newspaper. Publication of the paper ceased in 1972, at which point many of the members went on supporting themselves by establishing a graphic arts collective. This graphics collective has come to involve all commune members, plus a few others who live outside the commune. We have experienced myriad changes during our history, but certain values have remained constant. Our social contract, which is re-negotiated every six months or whenever a new member joins, makes these values explicit.

We are striving to live a cooperative lifestyle in which each of us is acknowledged as being innately self-worthy despite differences in experience and skills. We try to give each other support in meeting our personal needs and in working through conflict situations. We raise our children communally, share many possessions, contribute to a communal budget, eat an organic modified vegetarian diet, work together in our non-hierarchical business, and cooperate on housework and maintenance of our communal vehicle. We are expanding

our consciousness of such issues as feminism, ageism, ecology, health, and non-authoritarian, non-capitalist politics. We are dedicated to integrating our understanding of these issues into the choices of an everyday, practical lifestyle. Our personal interests include music, dance photography, gardening, psychology, politics, and math. Some of us are bi-sexual, others are heterosexual. We strive for open relationships, and feel uncomfortable with traditionally coupled people.

The graphics collective of which we are a part is oriented towards movement groups, small businesses, and cultural workers. We do illustration, design, layout, paste-up, copy camera and dark-room work, typesetting, and arrange for printing. With the agreement of the graphics collective as a whole, new commune members with the necessary income-generating skills may also join the graphics collective; otherwise we expect that they will work in some other non-hierarchical group to obtain their share of our communal income needs.

Our membership presently includes three adults and one child as permanent members, and three adults and temporary members. We are intending to grow again to be 8-10 adults and 3-5 children. If you would like to explore the possibility of joining us, call or write (include self-addressed, stamped envelope) before visiting. We expect to spend 4 to 6 weeks getting to know new people (includes a 3 day stay with us) before agreeing to live together, and to spend a month living together before accepting new people as permanent members. Visitors and temporary members are expected to contribute energy and money to the commune. **Good Times Commune, 2425 Market St., S.F., CA 94114, 415-864-9181.**

Cooperative College Community. A group of artisans, academics, craftspeople, and artists from East Coast colleges and universities is attempting to create a community in which scholarship, art, ecological balance, self-reliance, and education are valued more highly than personal wealth and professional advancement. We envision roughly 75 permanent, adult members, living on a large tract of land in a rural Northeast setting. This community will constitute an economically cooperative village designed to be minimally dependent on the economy of the larger society. Such self-sufficiency will allow the community to operate a small, liberal arts college that does not require its students to furnish their professors with a material living.

Members will work in a variety of agricultural, industrial, and professional

branches (e.g. publishing, consulting). Each and every community member will be a member of the college faculty, teaching one course a semester in a variety of practical and theoretical subjects. We see the college as a cultural branch of the community (not giving us any profit); students will pay an overhead charge for room and board. The group has developed by consensus a constitution and prospectus, and is proceeding rapidly with land development and community planning. The group is moving slowly, taking each step as the previous stage is solidified, realizing that the transition for people takes time, and building a minimal settlement will take a few years.

Please write for a prospectus. Our monthly newsletter and minutes are also available for \$5/year. We are especially interested in persons who have both clear skills and can teach those skills. Persons who are presently learning a skill will also be considered.

Write to Joseph R. Blasi, c/o Harvard University, Longfellow Hall 309, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Address Correction - The correct address and phone number for the Storefront Classroom Utopian Community, listed in our 1977 Directory, is PO Box 1174, San Francisco, Cal. 92101. PH: 566-6502

Long Cliff Peoples Collective is presently (10/76) three people living on 52 acres of rural mountain land in southern Kentucky. We share a common dwelling and schedule, are vegetarians, non-smokers, non-drinkers, non-drug-abusers, and do not exploit animals (please, no more pets). We are becoming self-sufficient in organic food production; studying/practicing dialectical materialism (from Marx to Mao), music, mechanics, and Tai Chi. We have a functioning mechanics shop, and plan to develop our woodworking skills for another source of income. Other types of work done here are housework, construction, and road work. We have no division of labor.

Our principal struggles presently are against sexism, individualism, consumerism, and conditioned work attitudes. Vehicles, money, etc., are commonly controlled or not used. We want/need people who desire, through collective work and study, to develop the habit of considering the common good over self-interest.

If you consider these ideas important, then come and put them into practice with us for awhile. Send us a blurb and a stamp, and we'll arrange with you a good time for your visit. **Lou, Terry, and Nadie. Long Cliff Peoples Collective, Sunnybrook, KY 42650.**

Family Synergy is based on and dedicated to the premise that people can live fuller and more rewarding lives, realizing more of their potential, by belonging to family groups larger than the nuclear family. We facilitate discussion and exchange of ideas, and collect and disseminate information about—the expanded family in all its forms; open relationships; and all kinds of group living. We provide ways for people interested in furthering, participating in or researching these emerging lifestyles to meet, to get to know, and to keep in touch with and to assist each other.

We are not a single commune or expanded family, but a group of people in more than 50 states and 4 foreign countries. Some of our members live in communes, group marriages, open relationships, and other alternatives; many others are single or are in conventional 2-person relationships (married or not).

We are a totally non-profit, volunteer organization. Founded in 1971, we now have over 1,000 people included as members or affiliates of our chapters in various parts of the country. We publish a monthly newsletter including such material on alternate life styles, and offer many services.

To obtain a sample copy of the Newsletter and more information on **Family Synergy**, write PO Box 30103, Terminal Annes, Los Angeles, CA 90030 and mention communities in your letter or postcard [and, if possible, include \$1.00 to cover costs of the sample mailing]. Est. 1971.

Julian Woods is a partial income sharing community in the mountains of central Pa. dedicated to individual freedom and diversity. We began six years ago as a suburban collective household, bought our 150 acres 3 years ago and moved to our land in spring of 1975. Putting finishing touches on our 2½ story woodworking/auto shop/barn and planning individual/and cluster housing, a community center, greenhouse and pond.

Ecology, Alternative energy, art, music, wholesome foods, expanding interpersonal communication and awareness, eliminating traditional sex-roles, non-punishment, yoga, sunny afternoons at the creek, thursday night bridge are directions for many of us. A nearby university offers additional cultural activities.

We contribute \$100/month to cover land payments, utilities, and various expenses that we hold in common. Some of us are supported by our own furniture refinishing business, auto repair, teaching at the university, com-

munity upkeep, artistic endeavors, and odd jobs. We encourage new ideas that can support us, either individually or as a group. Diverse professional opportunities exist locally.

We have a \$2000 initiation fee to contribute towards future growth and to help reimburse past expenses as land-payments, sewage, and permanent facilities. If a member decides to leave the community, full or partial reimbursement on a graduating scale is possible. Options exist to fulfill the \$2000 commitment while living at the community.

Come and visit! Please send a self addressed stamped envelope, for replies. In love and sharing, **Julian Woods Community, Julian, Pa 16844**

The roots of our **Integrity** family here at **100 Mile House** stretch Back to roughly 1948. Initiated by a half dozen or so then, our number has swelled to over 100, with many closely associated communal houses, and centers around the globe.

Our prime interest is on living to the highest vision. We've found that as there is a concern that what is right in life predominate, it becomes easy to work out the details of everyday living.

Many of us work in businesses which we own and operate; a ranch, lumber yard, garage, bakery, and inn, to mention a few. Others work around our community here, and in either case, as far as we are concerned, these things that are done with our hands are a means of expressing our integrity, our inherent nobility and strength. We need a medium through which we can express this and so we happily do what needs to be done.

We meet three times a week with a particular few who lead us, and various aspects of our living experience are brought to focus.

We would welcome your inquiry, though we are already bursting to the seams with scheduled visitors and many classes. We publish a monthly newsletter and may be able to introduce you to a center in your area. **Inquiries to: Dave Thatcher, Integrity, Box 9, 100 Bellingham, Wa. Canada VOX2E.**

Tupelo Ridge is a recently formed community on 115 secluded acres of both wooded and pasture land near Mammoth Cave National Park. We are now living in a large old 7 room farmhouse which we've restored. There's also several out-buildings and a big barn where we milk our two cows.

Last summer we focused our attention on our one acre garden, designing and building a solar water heater, constructing a root cellar and preparing the house

for winter. We enjoy the spirit of our individuality yet try to incorporate our ideas into a group effort. We prefer a vegetarian diet although not all of us are strict vegetarians. Our interests vary from Yoga to alternative energy sources. However we all have some common goals, among these are being open and honest, being ecological minded, having flexibility of roles and duties, and enjoying nature and life. Right now the land is owned by one person but a land trust or cooperation will be formed.

We are presently looking for folks to join us. We have no children, but are open to having them here. The only livable building is the farmhouse, but two of the outbuildings could be made habitable and there's numerous sites on which to build. If you're interested or curious for more information, please write, call or visit us. **Tupelo Ridge, Huff, Ky. 42250 [502] 286-4459.** Please include self-addressed stamped envelope.

Shalom Community, Rt. 2, Box 402, Brown Summit, NC 27214, [919] 373-3855, [Est. 1974]. Though we were formally established on May 1, 1974, we have communal ties going back many years before this.

Currently, we have 7 adult covenant members with seven children and several people in an inquiring member status. All adult members are currently employed or in school, all in professional jobs. We are also putting in a lot of labor into building on and caring for the land.

We are a contemporary Christian community with our own statement of faith and covenant. We put quite a bit of effort into personal growth and development with a lot of emphasis on love, trust, sharing, and related values. We understand ourselves to be a service community, with primary service directions through our individual jobs and in the development of and offering of retreat services and facilities. We are trying to maintain a creative tension between involvement in the work of the world (creative change and the service of others) and personal growth. We are building on our 46 acres so that we can have a rural base for recovery, growth, strengthening, and sharing and thus be enabled to reenter our service lives with greater commitment, courage and joy.

We welcome visitors who have made arrangements in advance and expect to slowly add a few more members who fit with our primary orientations.

We are an intentional community of two seeking others with whom to share our adventure. We are looking for individuals or an existing community who, out of their own passionate desire, are living so that the following premises are *sine qua non*:

1) No "private" business—There is nothing I want to keep from you, be it feelings (positive or negative), information, history, or intentions. And I want to know you just as intimately. If I have secrets from you, you cannot be known. So—no lies (no matter how they might soften the blow), no strategic changing the subject, no stating, "That's none of your business."

"No private business" does not mean "no solitude." Alone time and space are important.

2) Open sexuality—We are passionately and intimately concerned with each other, and our sexuality-sensuality is an integral part of this involvement. We want a community in which all members are erotically excited by and with each other...and themselves.

3) No compromises—If you and I disagree, we cannot but fight it out until something new comes up. Even in the short run there are no compromises. If I compromise in your favor, I will begin to resent you and start playing underdog power games, and vice versa.

All community decisions are made by consensus or they aren't made. If we decide any other way, I falsify myself and you and us. If you feel no, vote no. No one can abstain. If you compromise, I don't know all of you, and I want it ALL!

4) Transpersonal exploration—

The spiritual and the material are distinct and they are One.

Concrete and abstract are separate and a Unity.

Meaning and non-meaning (nonsense) are the same and not-the-same.

Doing is and isn't non-doing.

Reverence and lust are distinct and they are One.

I am me and you are you and we are each other and we are One.

It's not because it* is

It's not because it isn't

It is because it is

Because it's not at all.

—James Broughton

"Those Old Zen Blues..."

* "It" as in "It's raining," or "This is IT!" (q.v. Alan Watts)

A central part of our adventure as a community is to explore "It" as *Iyoumeithemus*.

Some explorations we do and are undone by:

Just sit; just look (at something, someone, each other); just touch (yourself or another); just give (not pay)

attention.

In our experience the above four basic concerns, together, synergize. We want more people with us.

We know this is very brief and that there's much more to discuss, but we hope this will provide a basis for further dialogue. **David Pursglove, Judy Kamerman, c/o Hamilton 900 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02118.**

Appletree, 2104 Columbine Ave., CO 80302; [303] 443-2817. [Est. 1974]. Co-op house; 7 people. Dine together every day. Little meat, food additives and refined carbohydrates avoided. Organic garden. House meetings with rotating facilitatorship. No vacant bedrooms (Nov. 1976).

Ulee and Vim believe in determinism (large scale behavioral engineering considered presently dangerous). Working towards communal life: intimacy, property held in common, most earnings handed over to commune for redistribution. No striving for self-sufficiency and/or isolation. Into local networking. Communal child rearing. Supporting feminism. Intimacy main goal: every adult relating with every other adult. Pressures and frustrations felt by members will be dealt with by the whole group. "Transparency" requires no secrets, nothing to hide between members. Pushing transparency w.r.t. "outside" world to point of some insecurity seen as important for ourselves and politically. Structure (schedules, meetings, agreements, guidelines, Walden-II type planner manager system after commune has 10 adults).

Ulee (1940) feminism, sidereal astrology, art; macrame earns her \$500-\$1000/yr. Vim (1935) into scientific approach to understanding human interactions. Scientist/glider pilot \$13,000/yr. Sonja (1966) and Nico (1968) split time between Appletree and their mothers'. Sonja likes school, dancing, music. Nico likes electrical and mechanical things, cooking. Communal "nucleus", consisting of the 4 of us, looking for kindred spirits. We expect to grow, after we move within Boulder County, to nucleus of may be 8 in co-op house of 12 and, by 1980? On final location. (new communal village?) into nucleus of may be 15 in co-op house of 20. Expect communal business(es) eventually. Equity \$24,000.

Appletrees "co-op members" don't necessarily share Vims and Ulees beliefs. They are: Bill (1953; pottery, rafting, gardening, accounting), Cathy (1956; drawing writing, photography, vegetarianism, OXFAM) and Niki (1950; elementary school teaching, self healing, photography, karate, swimming).

For booklet about Appletree send us \$2.00.

Formerly Harrad West, Re-established in 1976 in new location with new name. Three people in the immediate family, larger family gatherings include a dozen or more.

We remain an urban group, one km. from downtown Berkeley. Most of our income comes from outside the home. Work of family members includes engineering, pottery, commercial art, teaching learning and child development.

Having changed family structure to fit our own needs, we are now concentrating on urban farming, wise energy use and playfulness. We are open to new members from time to time. The process can be slow and involves sharing ideas and information both ways. No drop-ins. **Goodlife 2012 Vine Street Berkeley, Ca. 94709 [415]525-0251**

Yashodhara Ashram, Kootenay Bay, C., Canada VOB 1X0, [Est. 1956]. Yasodhara Ashram, incorporated as a non-profit society, was founded in 1956 in Burnaby, British Columbia, by Swami Sivananda Radha, a direct disciple of Swami Sivananda of Rishikesh, India. The Ashram moved to Kootenay Lake in 1962, settling on 83 acres of land 25 miles from Nelson in the south-east corner of the province.

The Ashram gives those who are serious about spiritual life an opportunity to discover and follow their own paths. We provide a retreat where people of all religions may come to find their center and pursue the goal of Self-Realization.

The ideals of harmony, peace and selfless service provide the focus for the vision of the Ashram, and the manifestation of these ideals in our daily lives is an important concern to all of us.

We give courses in Yoga and work-show in self-development, including a three month Yoga Teacher's Course. Hatha, Mantra, Jnana, Karma, Raja and Kundalini are the principal aspects of Yoga taught. Swami Radha has adapted many Eastern techniques for self-development to the group situation, creating workshops which emphasize the unity of the spiritual with the mental, emotional and physical levels of being.

In addition to the teaching program we run a bookstore, recording studio, print shop, publish a journal, *Ascent*, three times a year, and operate a small farm and orchard.

If you are interested in our activities or programs, or if you would like the bookstore catalogue or the Ashram Tapes and Records brochure, please write to the Program Secretary at the Ashram.

Cerro Gordo Community. Community association of potential future residents formed 1974 (currently 100+ members); cooperative for actual residents formed 1976 (initially 14 members). Future residents are planning a car-free, do-it-ourselves, village for 2,000-2,500 people with individually-owned homes on commonly owned land clustered in a natural setting, (1200 acres on Dorena Lake).

Community economy is to be based on small businesses with broad markets outside the community. Our goal is to have all jobs located in the village to eliminate use of autos for commuting. Construction of two residential clusters and commercial space began this year.

The design is ecologically oriented with a Base Plan created and approved by future residents. Planning decisions are made on a case-by-case basis (consistent with Base Plan) to mesh with individual needs. Interested persons subscribe to Cerro Gordo News (\$13.50 for nine issues) and experience the planning process by which homesites are developed by and for those ready to move. Subscribe or write for further information. Cerro Gordo Community, PO Box 569, Cottage Grove, OR 97424, (503) 942-7235.

YOGA SHAKTI MISSION — We are an international family dedicated to the foundation of new spiritual consciousness on the planet. MA YOGASHAKTI SARASWATI is our Guru, guide, and inspirer. Yoga is her teaching. World is our Family, Truth is our Religion, Knowledge is our Breath, Service is our Worship.

The first Mission branch in the United States was established in 1971. Today there are four Ashrams in the U.S. and three in India. These centers offer classes in Hatha Yoga, meditation, Yoga philosophy, satsang, and special programs dedicated to quickening the evolution of mankind. A national center with meditation gardens, retreat and residential facilities, is forming near Melbourne, Florida. Contact:

Yoga Shakti Mission
Box EG 871
Melbourne, FL 32935
[305/259-1319]

Yoga Shakti Mission
839 S. Federal Hwy.
Deerfield, FL 33441

Yoga Shakti Mission
213-03 35th Ave.
Bayside, New York 11361

Yoga Shakti Mission
Box 657
Telluride, Colo. 81435

We are a small group of 25 people practising Zen Buddhism under the direction of Samu sunim. Samu sunim combines Zen practice with agriculture and handicrafts in which work becomes practice and practice work. It is Samu sunim's teaching based on down-to-earth Korean Son (Zen) Buddhist tradition in which he was nurtured that we should sit or stand firm on both of our feet without wobbling, use our 'hands' to earn a living and cultivate our mind-field. To stand firm on both of our feet and to use our hands is to live our life fully without depending upon the system. To cultivate our mind-field is to practise enlightenment and exercise freedom in our everyday life. Here life becomes art and creation where we demonstrate freedom earned from our work-practice.

Although we have been growing vegetables and flowers and meditating out in the countryside (in Newmarket, Ontario) we do not yet own any farmland (we have been renting it). Thus, we are still city-based and further not all of our members are committed to the simple-and-old lifestyle in the country. (They are dedicated to the practice of sitting meditation but still hold on to their careers.)

A few of us are living and practising together at our Community House (131 Westminster Ave., Toronto). We are earning a living by using hands, whether it be sewing cushions or carving wood, and saving money to buy land. We want people to come and **work with us now to build an agricultural farming community based on Zen practice** and not to move in afterwards and take advantage of what has been done by others' hands.

We embrace all people, regardless of having children or not having children or otherwise, provided they are sincere, work hard and practise regularly. Inquiries welcome. Write to: **The Son Lotus Society 378 Markham St., B-1, Toronto, Canada, M6G 2K9 or phone [416] 923-7571 or 535-3517.**

Point-of Power Recreation Network is looking for high-consciousness city folk who want to connect with a group of same committed to nourishing each other's innate preference for life-supporting beliefs and behavior as they share the pleasures and maintenance of a beautiful home in the country--a place for boats and horses, a place to swim/fish/farm/garden/build/dance / make music/pleasure loved ones/grow children/participate in humanistic educational programs, and more. The land is 35 acres of secluded field and woods on navigable tidewater, about two hours by car from Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. On it is

one large fine house and a boat dock. Let us hear from you. Write to **ReCreation Network, P.O. Box 606, Chestertown, Md. 21620**

ON AUROVILLE: CITY OF THE FUTURE

A most ambitious and unique collective experiment is taking place in the new city of Auroville now under construction near Pondicherry, India. It is an attempt at the conscious collective expression of the integral evolutionary vision of the great mystic, philosopher, revolutionary and poet Sri Aurobindo, and his collaborator, Mira Richard, now known simply as the Mother. Sri Aurobindo elaborated his vision in a series of complementary works: **The Life Divine, The Synthesis of Yoga, The Human Cycle, The Ideal of Human Unity, Essays on the Gita** and others. It fell to the Mother to implement his ideas, culminating in the establishment of Auroville in 1968, which presently has 400 residents. Three UNESCO resolutions supporting Auroville have been passed since its inception and slowly the new township is gaining recognition around the world.

The Auroville charter, written by the Mother, outlines broadly the ideals of Auroville:

- "1. Auroville belongs to nobody in particular. Auroville belongs to humanity as a whole. But to live in Auroville one must be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness.
2. Auroville will be the place of unending education, of constant progress and a youth that never ages.
3. Auroville wants to be the bridge between the past and the future. Taking advantage of all discoveries from without and from within Auroville will boldly spring towards future realisations.
4. Auroville will be a site of material and spiritual researches for a living embodiment of an actual human Unity."

Before looking at the general decision-making and governmental principles the Mother left for Aurovilians to guide themselves, it is a good idea to provide a little more detail on the spiritual principles on which Auroville has been conceived. It was Sri Aurobindo's view that humanity is not the last rung of terrestrial evolution, that the evolution continues and man will be surpassed by the appearance of a new race, which he called the "supramental race," a race of beings possessed of the Truth-Consciousness, which is behind all the manifestation and has progressively revealed itself in ever more con-

scious levels through evolution. This new race would be as different from man as man is from the animal. Preceding this race would be an intermediary race, the superman, one who had consciously advance in his own evolution through successive transformations. Auroville is part of this evolutionary program.

Shortly after the founding of Auroville, the Mother gave the following guidelines for residents of the new city. To be a true Aurovilian, she said:

1. The first necessity is the inner discovery by which one learns who one really is behind the social, moral, racial and hereditary appearances. At our inmost centre there is a free being, wide and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who ought to become the active centre of our being and our life in Auroville.

2. One lives in Auroville in order to be free of moral and social conventions; but this liberty must not be a new slavery to the ego, its desires and ambitions. The fulfilment of desires bars the route to the inner discovery which can only be attained in peace and the transparency of a perfect disinterestedness.

3. The Aurovilian must lose the proprietary sense of possession. For our passage in the material world, that which is indispensable to our life and action is put at our disposal according to the place we should occupy there. The more conscious our contact is with our inner being, the more exact the means given.

4. Work, even manual work, is an indispensable thing for the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not inject his consciousness into matter, the latter will never develop. To let one's consciousness organize a bit of matter by way of one's body is very good. To establish order around oneself helps to bring order within oneself.

One should organise life not according to outer, artificial rules, but according to an organized, inner consciousness because if one allows life to drift without imposing the control of a higher consciousness, life becomes inexpressive and irresolute. It is wasting one's time in the sense that matter persists without a conscious utilisation.

5. The whole earth must prepare itself for the advent of the new species and Auroville wants to consciously work towards hastening that advent.

6. Little by little it will be revealed to us what this new species should be, and meanwhile the best measure to take is to consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine."

For such an ambitious undertaking as Auroville, where many diverse people from all over the world have come together to collaborate in a work both material and spiritual, some method of making decisions and self-government had to be formulated. Until the Mother died in 1973 most of the decisions regarding Auroville were made by her. However, she was given an occasion for outlining certain principles for this process, which indicate the difficult course of working without the machinery of a set of written rules and laws and the consequent necessity of applying to those who break the laws a set of punishments or sanctions. The psychological and spiritual burden of the method she has suggested will be readily apparent, but it may turn out in the end to have been the only course.

It must be pointed out that all the people involved directly in Auroville are infused with its high aspiration, which must inevitably color their approach to everything. Since the stress is not on the fulfilment of one's own desires and opinions, it can be easier to arrive collectively at decisions major or minor than if everyone is busy trying to arrange for his own satisfaction.

All of this is said, of course, against the background of the spiritual discipline and system of psychology Sri Aurobindo detailed in his written work. Auroville is an attempt to put them into collective practice, to realize human unity in diversity, and to establish on earth a new way for aspiring man to live his life. The aspiration — and the quality and breadth of the ideal aspired to — are of fundamental importance in any undertaking, collective or individual. Auroville's gives the appearance of being the highest and widest of undertakings and the outcome of this endeavor will have profound consequences for humanity. **Eric Hughes, Matagiri, Mt. Tremper, N.Y. 12457**

PEOPLE LOOKING

I'm male white and 22 and I'm ready to make my move. I'm interested in visiting rural communities this spring and summer and eventually joining one. Here are some of the things I'd like to see in a community. A northern climate preferably in the Eastern to Central part of the country. A relatively small size. A feeling among members that they are catalysts for social change. If you're into escapism or have all the answers, don't bother to write. I also have a personal interest in constructions and alternative energy and

I would like to put a lot of my energy into a community business. If you have similar interests, please let me know. **Roy Hunter, Squantum Farm, Polpis, Nantucket, Ma. 02554**

Is there a community in Cal. Somewhere North of Santa Barbara and south of Sacramento looking for joiners? I am a 28 yr. old, experienced carpenter, looking for a liberated, but somewhat structured community.

I have the energy and desire to contribute in my own way to the survival of just about any group. If I might be a positive force in your community, write to: **Dennis Gatch, 1227 Nunnely Rd., Paradise, Ca. 95969.**

Phil Harber, an inmate in a federal prison (serving a 6 yr. term for drug possession), is looking for a community in which to live and contribute. He will be out in April and would appreciate correspondence with folks who can help him in his search for a community. He also has a three year old son. Thanx. **Phil Harber, 38135-115, Box W, Lompoc, Calif. 93436.**

Dear people,

I have a house located in North Minneapolis three miles from the loop, on Penn Ave., which has been a community house for three years now. The community is in the process of disbanding. I would like to see the home used for non-profit housing based on a cooperative life style.

The home, because of improvements and being completely furnished is worth much more than the \$17,000 mortgage. I would be willing to sign over the house for the outstanding mortgage to a group dedicated to the above life style.

The home has three levels, plus a full basement, all in good repair. There are eight bedrooms, two kitchens, five dining or living rooms, two and one-half baths, two and one-half porches, with most of the house being accented with dark-stained oak. A two-car garage sits behind the house.

Please let me know soon if you or any other organization would be interested in this home. Sincerely, **Michael Kopyy, 1025 Western Ave., Eau Clair, WI 54701**

I'm looking for other vegetarian feminists to exchange ideas on creating non-exploitive lifestyles e.g., cooperative households (urban/rural), work collectives, hospitality network, etc. **S.C. 40 W. 83 St., #4F, New York, NY 10024.**

My name is Lenny,

I am 6 foot, weigh 185, I'm 32 years of age. I'm a very lonely person. I have

many talents such as decorating, baking, business and management.

I want to get away. I would like to share, work, and grow emotionally with either a companion, a business partner or a lover.

I'm very sensitive and loving. I am an energizer and good organizer. If this appeals to anybody, please write or call: **Lenny Pomonis, 151 Youngs Avenue, Joliet, Illinois 60432. Telephone Number 815-722-1946.**

We, Sheila, Jack, and Kevin (age 4) are looking for two other families with children under six to share finances, work and friendship on our Southern Oregon farm. We have 40 secluded acres with a pond, small house, and three cabins that need some finishing work. Families should have an individual source of income and be interested in participating in a work-sharing system for gardening, construction, & child care, with eventual evolution into a cooperative, self-sufficient community. Please write your interests to **Box 808, Cave Junction, Oregon 97523.**

I am a non-smoking vegetarian woman, 30 years young. Shortly leaving Los Angeles in search of a healthier environment and more meaningful life. That is, working together toward a common goal, living close to nature and people. I am a Pices and have always lived close to the ocean so a community somewhere on the Pacific Coast would be ideal. Most important though are the people.

I have no tolerance to share my life space with drugs, smoke, or alcohol. My field is working with deaf, blind and physically or emotionally handicapped. My outside interests extend into theatre arts, fine arts and sharing of ideas with other sensitive beings. A strong hobby is writing and would love to start a community newsletter or become involved on some publication of alternative living. Please write me soon: **Joyce Siefel, 11824 1/2 Washington Place, Los Angeles, Ca. 90066**

Teddy Ullman, formerly of East Wind Community, seeks a non-sexist, non-violent ecology-minded egalitarian society situated along the coast or on an island in a tropical or sub-tropical climate. My own vision includes cultivation of seaweeds, fish and/or shellfish, along with terrestrial farming and orchards but I'm open to any suggestions and offers. If you are such a group, or if you could give me access to such a group, or if you are interested in joining or starting such a group, please write me. **Teddy Ullman, c/o Ship Balclutha, Pier 43; San Francisco, Ca. 94133.**

We want to leave the smog, and the freeways and the fierce competition of urban life. We are searching for a country community to join.

We are. . . Chester (33), a carpenter, cabinet-maker, a lover of nature and ricotta cheese pie, and. . . Ananda, graphic artist, therapist, ex-health food store owner, Tholisitic health and natural foods are quite important to us, as is always telling the truth to each other.

We have been thru many stages over the past few years; each of us pursuing our own inner journeys thru meditation and many different kinds of therapies. Now we both want to continue our journeys outside the pressure of city life, and spend more of our time closer to nature.

We are looking for a group of mature people, who are trying to change this decaying culture by creating positive alternatives to the ass-backwards way our society has of teaching values and love. We want to join an established community and help work towards self-sufficiency, ecological harmony, equality for all and above all, open and honest relationships.

We will be sad to leave the Bay area because we have so many friends whom we love here, but we will move anywhere if the circumstances are right.

If you think we fit you, and you fit us, please let us hear from you soon. We are anxious to stop thinking and planning and talking and want to get it on. **Ananda Coner & Chester Noreikis, 575 Montclair Ave., Oakland, Cal., 94606.**

I'm looking for an established community needing new members or other like-minded individuals to form a group with. I'd prefer to remain in Oregon, but would relocate in the western U.S. My interests and experiences include cooperative land buying, self-sufficient/subsistence homesteading, low-technology organic gardening, small animal husbandry, and down-home, low cost building construction.

I try to live in a non-sexist, non-ageist, and non-racist manner and would expect the same of those I'm with. Religious dogma is of no interest to me, although personal spiritual development is. Despite my middle class upbringing I consider myself a peasant at heart, but I need other peasants to make my dreams a reality. **Phil Hyre, 3566 Elmira Rd., Eugene, Or. 97402.**

Since I've been in prison, one of my relatives left me an 80 acre farm in Kansas. I'm very interested in finding a woman who would be into helping me start a village community. I was a sociology and agriculture major in college and

I'm into developing a care center for children.

I'm a commercial artist in beading and carving, and leather & would like to establish a work & sales shop.

I would like to correspond with a woman in the area of Topeka to help orientate me to what's going on in the area of the farm.

I'm full of love & peace; I was charged with a drug sentence and I'll be out in Feb. or March. There is a solid house on the farm and it's ready now for occupancy. **Hank Reed #87801, P. O. Box #97, McAlester, Okla. 74501.**

I'm looking for a rural or semi-rural egalitarian community — prefer to share labor, income, supplies (other arrangements possible). Quiet indoor space (private or not) is important; I like people but also need quiet retreat.

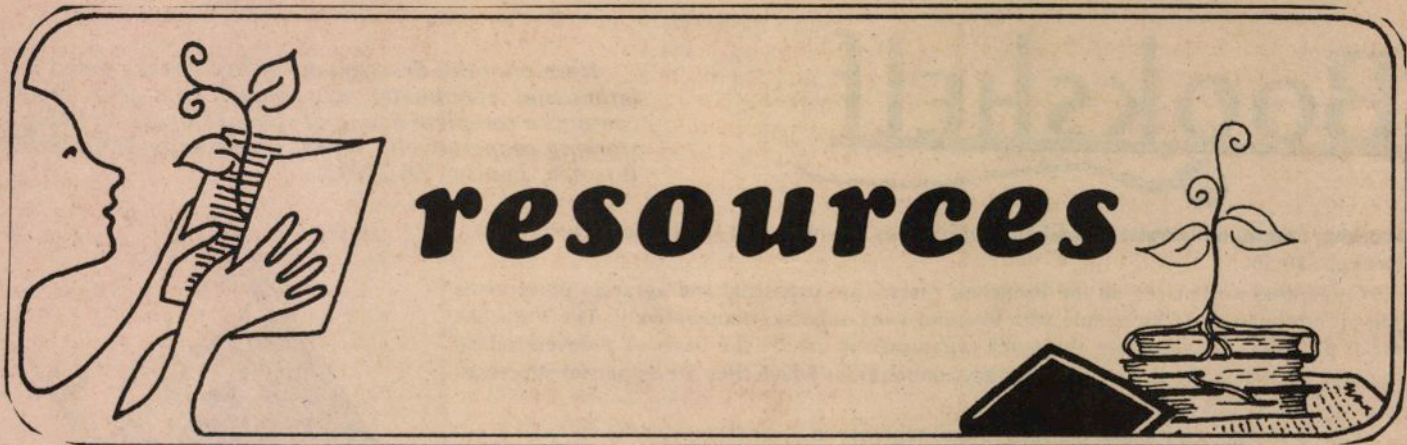
I'm into consciousness growth, meditation, "Seth Material", vegetarian natural food, professional music, gardening. Of late have been working as newspaper editor, writer, organizer at Food Co-op. Have had several communal living experiences. Desire to be involved in group decision making, to initiate new projects, to learn new skills. I'm a 26 year old man.

Possibilities for interaction with many people is important, as I am opening into touching, loving, sexual fulfillment, and because of musical interests.

If we might be compatible, please write to **Ahn Schoneberg c/o Questa Co-op, 255 Pismo St., San Luis Obispo, Ca. 93401.** Information on philosophy, goals, lifestyle, natural and cultural environment, finances, requirements of membership appreciated. P.S.—I'm not as formal as this sounds; throw in some humor, fantasy, dancing for joy.

Interesting hard working Jewish couple (non religious) is seriously considering moving to a warmer & sunnier climate. We would like to meet &/or visit a small group or family in the south west (possibly California). David, 10, & Sara, 6, would especially like to find playmates of similar ages. We have a 105 acre farm & have 4 years experience homesteading. We like books, movies, conversation, travel & sharing work & life with other interesting people. Myra likes her work with parent groups & young people. Stan would like to do more building & work toward self sufficiency. We'll be traveling to New Mexico & Arizona from December 22, 1976-January 22, 1977.

Lesser R D 3, Chicora Pa 16025 [412] 894-2194.



The Town Forum Bookshelf offers several books on Planned Community design, energy, nature, etc. To get the book list write: **The Town Forum, Cerro Gordo Ranch, Cottage Grove, Or. 97424**

These Times is an Independent Socialist weekly newspaper geared to reaching people not yet consciously part of the American Left. Subscriptions are a high \$15 a year from **New Majority Publishing Co. 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave. Chicago, Il. 60622**

Al. Root Company, Medina, Ohio 44256, publishes several books and manuals on Bee Keeping. A booklist can be had by writing to the above address.

Brooklea is an educational program designed for people ages (17-21) interested in farming and wilderness, particularly as related to skills in self-sufficiency. The Winter Project teaches a variety of subjects related to the operation and maintenance of farm and the outdoors, provides working experience in each, and an environment for individual development of interests. For more information write: **Brooklea Farm Project RDZ, Fort Ann, N.Y. 12827**

Community Service, Inc. Box 243, Yellow Springs, OH 45387 (Est. 1940) a non-profit organization concerned with the small community as a basic social institution, involving organic units of educational, economic and cultural development. It has pursued this purpose through publishing, local organizing, lectures, consultations and conferences. Their newsletter is published five times a year and community comments once. A subscription to the two together is \$5.00 a year.

No Bosses Here; A Manual for Working collectively, is a really fine organizing handbook for those interested in Co-op, non-profit organizations, etc. It has chapters on work structure, Personal and Collective Growth, Social Change, etc. Graphically nice too. Its Publishers, the Boston Vocations for Social Change, have several other fine pamphlets, books, etc. including the Boston Peoples yellow pages. To order **No Bosses Here (\$3.00)** or for more information about VSC write **V.S.C. 353 Broadway, Cambridge, Ma. 02139.**

For information on **Solar Heated, Underground Architecture** contact **Malcom Wells, Box 183, Cherry Hill, N.J. 08002**

ComNet, Northwest Information Network, Box 5599, Seattle, WA. 98105. Is a Cooperative switchboard/community memory for alternative communities and efforts in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and British Columbia. Extended co-op living/working group of eight makes up core staff. Supported through organizations, services to large public events (conferences, fairs, festivals). Send SASE for brochure, sample newsletter. They publish a directory listing 58 NW intentional community groups, 20 resource groups, 13 groups-forming, and over 150 individuals interested in communities.

Peoples Transit enables its members to travel anywhere in the U.S. by sharing rides in cars, busses and small planes. They are rather well organized on the west coast, but have fewer members in the east so that it is not so easy to get a ride or riders here. People wishing to join the organization call toll free 800-547-0933.

Genesee Street Co-op — Vocations for Social Change, 713 Monroe Avenue,

Rochester, N.Y. 14607. A part of the Genesee Co-op, Vocations for Social Change is an alternative resource center for the Rochester area.

DIRECT LINE TO YOUR SENATOR

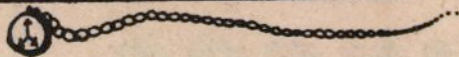
Want a direct line to your senator's office in D.C.? You've got it, no charge. You only have to know how to use it. To get the office of your senator to call you back just dial: 0-202-224-3121 and say: "I'd like to make this person to person collect to Sen. _____". The operator (of the Senate Office Building) will then say to the phone co. operator, "please call that number direct and she will give the number of that senator's office."

When his office answers, they may say that they cannot accept collect calls but will have you called back (if you leave your number). If they don't offer that, then you say, "I know that you cannot accept collect calls, but you could have me called back. My number is:..." Usually the same day you will get a phone call from the office of your senator and they will speak to you about your concern. Be sure to take the name of the person you speak to there, so you can get back to him and follow it up if he doesn't act on your request.

The Washington Area Men's Awareness Network 1234 Massachusetts, Ave, NW, #1027, Washington, D.C. 20005. Publishes a newsletter, **The Listening Man** which is printed 12 times a year. Subscriptions are \$1.00 per thousand of income earned.

Ken Hodges, it's editor, writes, "The Network has grown during the last two years with equal interest and participation from men and women, gay and straight. What that says to me is not only that men's needs are not isolated and unique but that those needs might possibly be met in the whole community."

Bookshelf



Here are brief descriptions of five books related to the intentional community movement. Our free brochure contains a complete listing of some 35 books on living and working cooperatively. Write: Community BOOKSHELF, Box 426, Louisa, VA 23093.

Working Communally: Patterns and Possibilities. by David French and Elena French. Hdbk., 269 pp. \$10.50.

Communal workplaces, in the Frenches' vision, are industrial and agrarian enterprises run on a human scale by people who live and work together cooperatively. The Frenches make plausible the argument that such organizations can be the basis of a decentralized society. They describe three contemporary communities which they see as partial successes in carrying out this vision.

This is an important book, the first to pull together in a coherent way the rational arguments for a communal society.

Communes: Creating and Managing the Collective Life. by Rosabeth Moss Kanter (ed.). Pbk., 544 pp. \$6.50.

The Social Science Editor of *Communities* magazine wrote, "This is the best single introduction to the issues involved in living communally that I've seen. Rosabeth's book is valuable because it articulates many of the problems of living in community, provides a framework for understanding those problems, and gives examples of how other communities have dealt with them."

Beyond Marriage and the Nuclear Family. by Robert Thamm. Pbk., 231 pp. \$3.95.

Thamm takes a social-psychological perspective in looking at problems in contemporary society and sees at their root an inability in most of us to deal with dependency, jealousies and self-involvement. He builds a strong case for the commune as the environment which will facilitate our transcending those interpersonal difficulties. Within such an environment, he argues, we can learn to develop strong ties of intimacy with a number of others, allowing us to be free of excessive dependency on any one person.

Families of Eden: Communes and the New Anarchism. by Judson Jerome. Hdbk., 171 pp. \$7.95.

Pat Conover, a sociologist and member of Shalom Community, says in his communal bibliography, "this is the most valuable book on the contemporary commune movement. It is wide ranging both in scope of direct research and in issues addressed."

The Social Science Editor of *Communities* magazine praises Jud's "...exceptional ability to capture the texture and meaning of communal life in well-chosen observations of actual communal events."

Neighborhood Power: The New Localism. by David Morris and Karl Hess Pbk. \$3.45.

Morris and Hess have provided the beginnings of a handbook, one detailing the methods which intentional communities and other cooperative groups can use to expand the boundaries of their sharing to include more than their own memberships. Drawing upon their experiences in the Adams-Morgan neighborhood of Washington, D.C., the authors explain how, through demonstration experiments cooperative groups can persuade their neighbors to regain economic and political control of their own lives.



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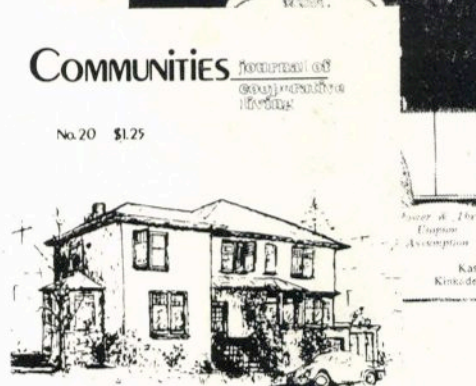
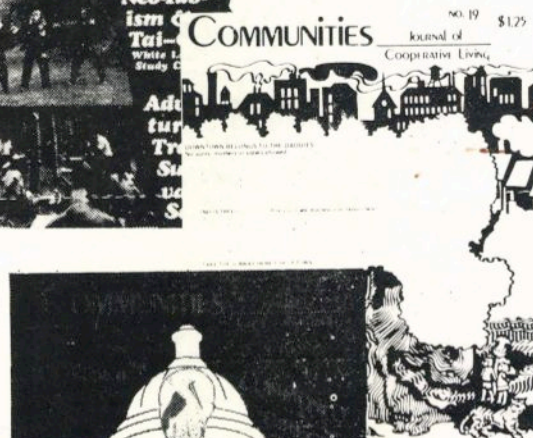
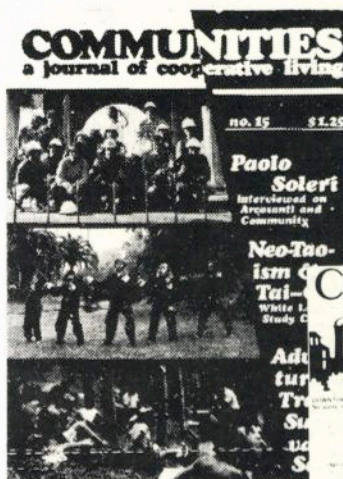
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