

COMMUNITIES journal of cooperative living

no. 35

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CONSUMER COOPERATIVE BANK ACT

Be it Enacted by the SENATE and HOUSE of
REPRESENTATIVES of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA
in CONGRESS assembled, that This Act may be cited as the
NATIONAL CONSUMER COOPERATIVE BANK ACT

STATEMENT of FINDINGS and PURPOSE

SEC. 2. The economic and financial structure of this Country in combination with the Nation's natural resources and the productivity of the American people has produced one of the highest standards of living in the world. However, the Nation has been experiencing inflation and unemployment together with an increasing gap between producers' prices and consumers' purchasing power. This has resulted in a growing number of our citizens, especially the elderly, the poor, and the inner city resident, being unable to share in the fruits of our Nation's highly efficient economic system. The Congress finds that user-owned cooperatives are a proven method for broadening ownership and control of the economic organizations, increasing the number of market participants, narrowing price spreads, raising the quality of goods and services available to their membership, and building bridges between producers and consumers, and their members and patrons. The Congress also finds that consumer and other users of self-help organizations have demonstrated their ability to

In this issue

In drawing up the final plans for this issue, our intention was to use material from five different editorial sources (Jim Bowman - British Columbia, Gary Newton - Austin, Paul Freundlich - New Haven, and Chip and myself in Twin Oaks) and bring it all together in a 64-page issue. We did not succeed. The amount of material was too plentiful (a pleasing state of affairs for us) and we have had to hold out Jim Bowman's eighteen page section of the state of the cooperative and communal movement in British Columbia. This will appear in the Jan/Feb issue.

In addition, we were not all too sure of what challenges would be in store for us in having an issue in which there were so many cooks. The smoothness with which it occurred is testimony to the collective working process which we have evolved between New Haven and Louisa over the past two years.

The main thrust of this issue is the Consumer Cooperative Alliance material which Paul Freundlich and Gary Newton gathered at the CCA conference this past summer.

One of the major items of interest at the conference was the National Consumer Cooperative Bank Act. It is not possible to overstate the importance of this act to the cooperative movement. It is a tool which if used wisely can not only make our businesses (and lives) more solvent, but also increase the networking between the new and old wave cooperative movement and, hopefully, make a significant impact on the U.S. economy.

The rest of the magazine deals with various other aspects of the cooperative movement. In our search for appropriate social structures, we once again look at the kibbutz as a model which, with its 50 years of tradition, embodies many of the values we hold important to our own lives. The article, "My Home is My Castle", is a reprint from the kibbutz movement magazine, *Sdemot*, and is one we feel adds perspective to the models we are presently creating in this country.

Jud Jerome shares with us in his article, "All in Common", yet another viewpoint to the ongoing conversations about income-sharing: should we do it? how much? what are the social ramifications? etc.

Of particular delight to me is the article on the Twin Oaks conference. It was rewarding to hear such a positive response to our efforts from an objective observer.

Meanwhile, we are gearing up for the "Guide to Community and Cooperative Alternatives in America". We are all filled with enthusiasm for this project and see it as a service to all of us in the alternative movement. The guide will be more of a book than a magazine and will be received by our subscribers as the March/April issue.

In general we're feeling good about the scope and quality of our material and the standard of design we've attained. You're invited to confirm that or to shake us out of our complacency. Our biggest problem to date is: How can we sell more magazines? This desire for increased circulation is two fold; one, we know there are folks who simply do not know about us and who would like to be kept up to date on what's happening in the cooperative movement, the other, to be more pragmatic, is that our already below subsistence wages are currently dependent upon grants. Not only is that source of income questionable in principle, but it can't be counted on indefinitely in practice. Hoping to change this state of affairs, we have decided that it is necessary to 1) raise our subscription rate (it's been the same for five years) to \$7.50, our single issue rate to \$1.50 and our institutional rate to \$15. This will be in effect as of January 1. If you wish to extend your subscription at the \$6 rate, you may do so up to that time. We are not happy about this rate increase but, unlike other magazines, our continuation is dependent on sharing the financial responsibility. Because this magazine is an important part of the cooperative movement; because it is dedicated to the ideals of community; and because we consider our readership a part of our community, it seems appropriate to ask you to show your support for **Communities** and the work we do.

Raising rates, however, is not going to solve the problem of how to increase our readership. We have come up with a relatively painless way for you to spread the word. If you know of someone who would find **Communities** an informative and enjoyable addition to their lives, send them a gift subscription (still at \$6 a year) for Christmas, the New Year, their birthday or just because you like them. We will enclose a gift card with each of your orders.

In the next issue a major section will be on Canadian coops and communities (see above) and, to break us out of the mid-Winter doldrums, we will have a series of seagoing adventures from the People's Yacht Collective to the Purple Submarine.

Have a nice holiday,

Mikki

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Communities

journal of cooperative living

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Continuity

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ALL IN COMMON

SHARING & COMMITMENT IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

by Judson Jerome

Jud is a prolific author and poet whose work has frequently appeared in these pages [see Communities nos. 22, 28, and 30 for major articles by him].

This article grew out of a correspondence between Downhill Farm and East Wind concerning resource-sharing as a requirement for membership in the Federation of Egalitarian Communities.

Most communal groups in the United States today (of which by far the largest number are urban) are expense-sharing groups, at least as far as such things as groceries, mortgage or rent, taxes, utilities and vehicles used in common are concerned. Most make some distinction between these common expenses and "personal" expenditures, which may include such things as medical bills, vices, personal transportation, gifts, clothing, perhaps furniture (and sometimes even buildings), record and tape players, and other property over which individuals (or sub-groups such as families) want to maintain control. The "allowances" at kibbutz-type communities symbolize that there are at least some minimal areas of personal choice essential for happiness. If I want to send my mother a birthday present, I may not want to put the matter of how much I should spend up for community discussion. (One mother in community reported receiving gifts from her grown non-member children and finding it ironic that she was not really free to send them gifts. They could come to visit her, being put up as visitors by her community for a small fee, but she was rarely free to visit them.)

Few communes practice resource-sharing, though the exceptions are important. Most of the large religious communities expect total commitment of all resources of those who join, and among the largest, most stable and most effective secular communities, such as the members of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, resource-sharing is required. There is no question that this arrangement is nearer the communal ideal of holding all in common and meeting all needs from a common pot, and it has a number of very practical advantages for communities, as the relative size and stability of these few communities indicate. But my

concern here is with the tens of thousands of other communes (such as Downhill Farm, where my family and I have lived since 1972) which for one reason or another have been unable or unwilling to make that kind of commitment. One problem is that of finding an appropriate legal structure in our society for such groups. Most have no legal structure at all. In what entity's name is property to be held - and what provision is made for the community's continuation beyond its current membership, for those who leave the community, for non-member relatives, and other economic questions insoluble strictly within the limits of community concerns? There are better or worse answers for such questions, but most of these communities have no answers, have not formulated a process for responding to the questions, and therefore cannot take the step to pooling their resources. Expense-sharing is a compromise.

A QUESTION OF PERSONAL HISTORY

Most communes are made up of unattached adults, which I will call here UAs. Most are in their twenties or thirties, though some are in their teens and some are in their forties or older, sometimes refugees from or graduates of marriage-and-the-family, sometimes retirees, or individuals who have some independent income. Among UAs one might classify single parents with preadolescent children (mostly very young ones), though this group, including their children, are almost large enough to constitute a separate classification. There are very few families in most communes (though some of the old-line cooperative communities and some religious communes, especially Christian, are composed almost entirely of families), and not even dyads seem to survive well in communal contexts. I don't know how typical Downhill Farm is, but since 1972 there have been perhaps 40 adults who called this home. Marty and I (married for over thirty years) and the youngest of our five children (now 11) have lived here more-or-less as a family unit until we combined with another woman and her three daughters to form a triad of adults and extended family including all the children. One family with two young children lived here a year. Three sets lived here as couples - two of these in the first days of

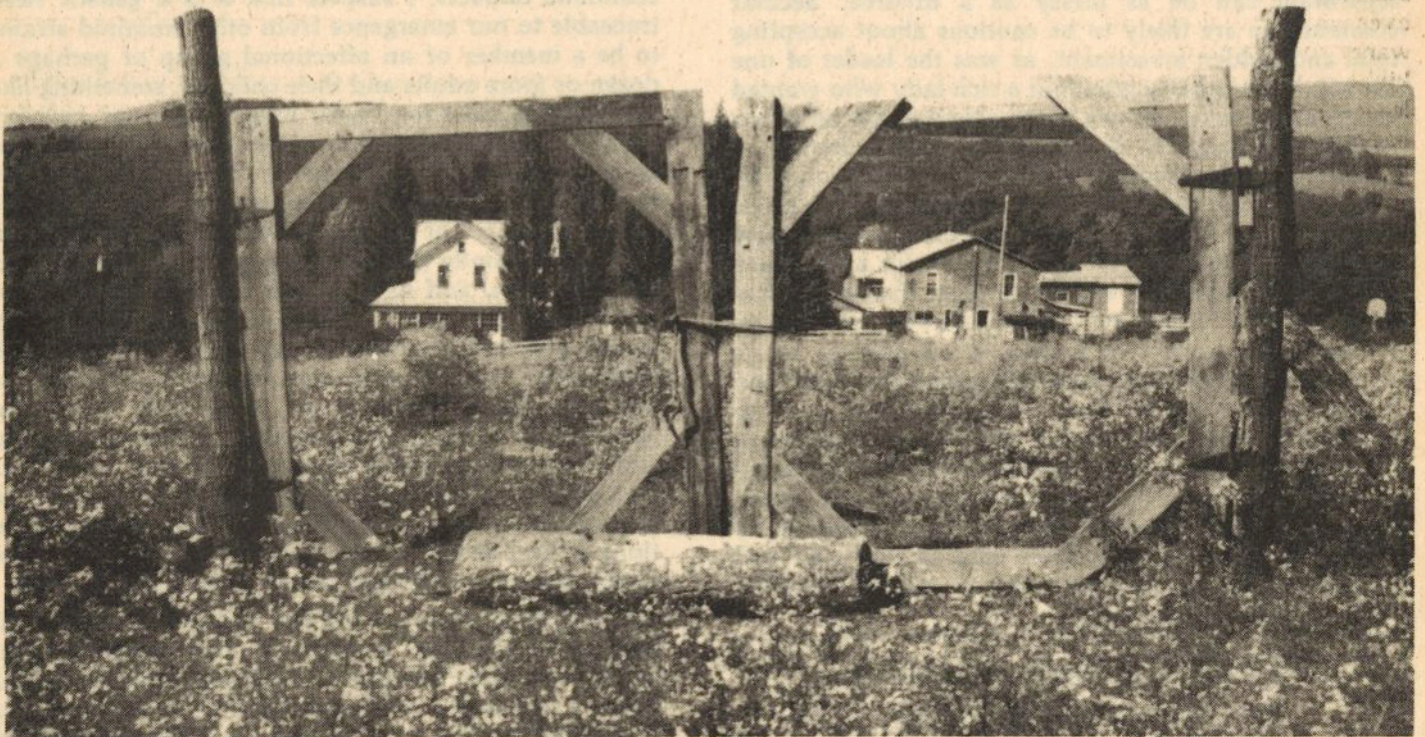
the commune, leaving in less than six months. The third is the only couple relationship which began here, and after living as a couple for a year, they left to set up private housekeeping. One single parent with infant lived here for the first year of the child's life. All the others were UAs. Some formed sexual liaisons with one another which lasted for short periods, but they did not move in together and live as dyads. As I said in *Families of Eden*, couples who move into communes tend to break up (sometimes recoupling with others - inside or outside the commune), and couples who begin their relationships in communes tend to move out. There is a basic antipathy between the commune and the family unit (or any other strong sub-group) which has been noted since the early communal experiments in America, and apparently only in those groups sharing a strong religious commitment to the family does the family survive.

These factors have an inescapable bearing on the question of resource-sharing. The UAs who populate communes are typically from middle-class families, WASP, with perhaps some college or a degree, no settled profession or trade, no stable source of income, and no property in their own names (except sometimes a car). They tend to be all in favor of resource-sharing, since they have no resources to share except their current labor and income-earning ability, and because of their similarity of background, the latter is generally within a narrow range - not like sharing income between a day-laborer and a brain-surgeon, for instance. They usually have no responsibility for dependents. (Divorced fathers with child-support payments to make have a problem in joining communes. A few have tried

it at Downhill Farm, but they have all had to leave to increase income. Single mothers accompanied by children often have welfare or child-support to sustain them, which is usually more than enough in communal contexts.) Rarely are UAs supporting elderly parents or other such dependents.

Resource-sharing is relatively rare in urban communes, where UAs are likely to be employed and have a wider variance in salary than characterizes rural jobs. Some rural groups hire themselves out at day labor and share the proceeds, recognizing that while some are employed "outside", others are carrying on the essential non-remunerated work of the farm. Resource-sharing is most common in those rural groups that have their own industries. If their work at income-producing is shared in common (or balanced with other essential community work such as cooking or gardening), it is a relatively easy step to resource-sharing.

"Income" is not the same, however, as "resources". The whole question of resource-sharing is simplified if the terms are made equivalent for all practical purposes, for it is clearly evident to the group that so much work per day or work per month brings in so much money, which must be divided up to meet community expenses. But there is little possibility of accumulation of capital under these circumstances. In the kinds of industries communes are able to engage in, on the periphery of the economy, limited by conscience to a fair-price structure, avoiding purely speculative activities (imagine a commune playing the stock market!), income is almost bound to be consumed by current needs. It can meet the mortgage, but not make the down-payment. It can buy the gas and pay for repairs of machines, but not buy the



Downhill Farm

BANDS: THE ONCE AND FUTURE SOCIAL UNIT

heavy equipment that might produce more income. And the daily needs of relatively healthy, able UAs give no measure of the total cost of community. Lack of capital is linked to absence of dependents and other external concerns. To build a "total" community, including infants, the disabled, the elderly, medical facilities, recreational facilities (and opportunities), educational facilities (and opportunities), and other such appurtenances of a society which somehow accomodates the full range of human needs, requires capital, something, alas, beyond a fair return for a fair day's labor or decent product.

UAs outside communes receive a variety of subsidies. A father co-signs the note for one's first car. Sometimes parents give newlyweds a house. Sometimes a family business or property is made available. Often the credit line of a family or friends is used to acquire what the UA could not acquire independently. A dozen UAs sitting in a grubby communal living-room trying to figure out how to get a business started might represent millions of dollars in credit resources which would be available to them if they were in private life but which they are either unwilling or unable to tap as members of a commune.

Those who have property or investments in their own name are rare but important in communal economy. Evangelical religious communes often benefit from them in significant ways. Their members usually come to them as a result of a powerful conversion experience. Since prosperous people are often the ones most in need of salvation, they come bearing a bundle, of which the community relieves them. It takes only a few such conversions a year to make religious community a good business. When, as often happens, the inspiration fades, the experience of community sours, or these individuals do not successfully integrate with the community, the separation can be as messy as a divorce. Secular communities are likely to be cautious about accepting total and sudden investment, as was the leader of one Christian community who told a rich lady who wanted to join and give her money to the group to get rid of her money and property first and enter poor. Indeed, a number of communities have been wiped out by prosperity, especially if it comes unearned from a single source. After a few agonizing separations, a community may come to prefer those who arrive with a knapsack only, whose departure will be no more disruptive than their entrance. Prosperous UAs may have a greater than ordinary desperation to belong to something, to be accepted by someone, to sense purpose in their lives and utility in the wealth. Such motivation can lead to impossibly high expectations and bitter disappointments. Essential as it is for accumulation of community capital, the absorption of subsidies of any kind, especially those linked to the fortunes and families of UAs, is perilous. Communities tend to prefer to pull themselves up by the bootstraps of income resulting from their current industry.

*There is a basic antipathy
between the commune
and the family unit...*

Before discussing some of the specific practical problems communities face as they move toward resource-sharing and the implications of these, I would like to describe a kind of ideal I think most of us in community have in our imaginations. Our society seems designed to generate UAs. Even at young ages children are given allowances and expected to learn to manage their "own" money. They are often career-typed early, and both their individuality and their potential income-producing qualities are admired and encouraged at school and at home. It is in the system's interest that we be essentially isolated from one another, interchangeable parts with specialized, utilitarian functions, and human linkages are discouraged or curtailed. Once I was sitting in a row of typists when our first weekly checks were delivered to our desks. Innocently I began comparing mine with my neighbor's. The supervisor loomed over us instantly. I was violating the basic ethic - as though I were cheating in school - by sharing information about income.

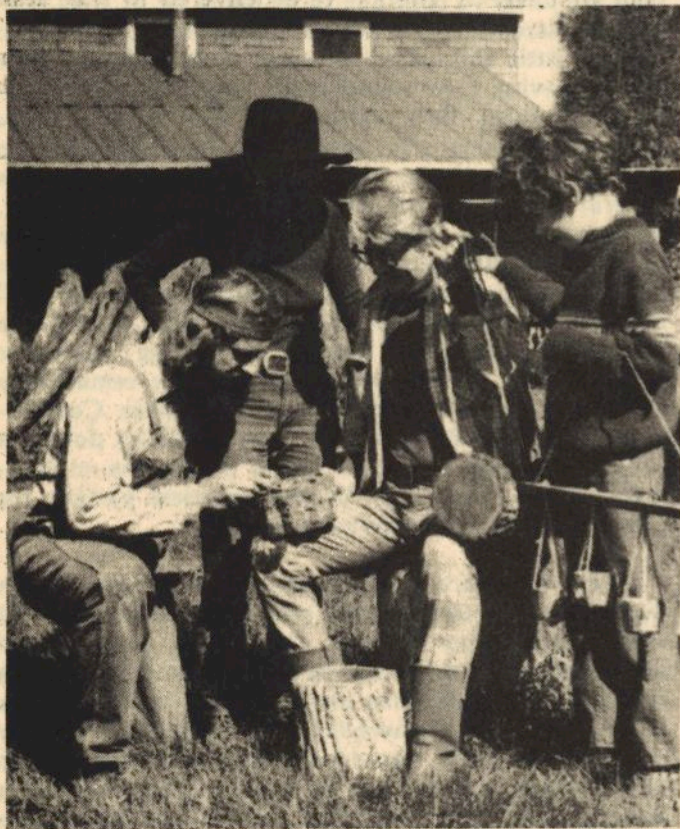
*If getting serious about
life means going back
into the system, the
commune movement has
failed.*

The communal ideal we oppose to that is one of total melding, obliteration of individual differences at least in economic respects. I suspect that it is a genetic need traceable to our emergence from other hominid strains to be a member of an affectional group of perhaps a dozen or more adults and their children, something like the hunting-gathering bands which were our primary mode of social structure throughout our two-million or so years before the emergence of agriculture some twelve thousand years ago. In one way or another we are still in search of the lost Band - a group larger than the nuclear family (hence not so sexually repressive as family groups) and smaller than the tribe. We do not yearn to be part of an anonymous mass, but of a group bound in mutual dependency and caring in which each individual is valued as a total person, for uniqueness, but not utility. This is an instinctual, emotional yearning for an ideal that probably cannot be realized under any general social structure, certainly not under that of our contemporary system. But it helps us understand ourselves, our disappointments and frustrations as well as our satisfactions, when we realize how deeply the ideal is lodged in our make-up.

In the surge of communalism of the late sixties and early seventies the pursuit of this ideal reached sometimes comic, sometimes tragic proportions. Instant bands were formed, with a pretense of total loving and responsibility. The group was a great Mother with an ample bosom, to absorb and provide all. Some communes were conceived of as group marriages, with

sexual access of each to each and, theoretically, diffuse and shared responsibility for all children. They pushed the river - the essential love they relied upon being mostly illusory.

Yet the ideal remains important. We may despair of its realization, but I think most of us still shape our action to some degree according to this model. Imagine, say, three to a dozen adults living in some mutually acceptable relationship in which there were no exclusive dyads. They have genuinely combined their resources and income-gaining efforts. They are sensitive to the total needs of each - including distant members of the families of each. For example, suppose that George gets his absent father to co-sign for an educational loan to help Myrtle's grown daughter go to law school. The group accepts responsibility for protecting George's



Downhill Farm residents

father's risk. Luke wants plastic surgery, which most of the group regard as vanity, yet they take on a few extra hours of work per week over the next few months for the sake of Luke's happiness. A teenager in the group has gotten pregnant and wants to keep the baby. The group commits itself to the responsibilities of child-rearing. My brother, or perhaps even my cousin, gets nabbed for possession. If I were in private life I might put my property in hock to help go his bail. These are things that happen in families, burdens families bear. How willing will a band be to take such actions? Fear of such contingencies, and of any group's unwillingness (or simply slowness) to respond causes many to be unwilling to consider joining a group which requires total sharing of resources. They want freedom of choice in aspects of life in which they cannot expect group

understanding and sympathy. I doubt that simple acquisitiveness or desire for personal wealth for selfish reasons is a strong factor in their reluctance. They are worried about others outside the group for whom they feel somewhat responsible.

Most resources for emergencies such as I have described lie fallow most of the time. If a group were to pool them, they would have an insurance policy of much greater power than the resources of any individual. But because the decisions pertaining to the use of those resources for such emergencies as I have mentioned depend so much on love and so little on reason, and because we cannot make love happen among a dozen people, cannot even be sure when and whether it exists, we do not form such bands. Our triad of adults and our four dependent children is an effort to create such a band, but our numbers are small, and the interfaces of the combined families with the outside world are hazy. The thought of adding another member is threatening, so difficult is it to maintain close contact and caring among the seven we have now. It is difficult to imagine how our trust and intimacy could reach out to four or five adults instead of three, six or eight children instead of four - never mind a band of a dozen or two.

THE COMMITTED AND THE TRANSIENT

Communes result from UAs in search of bands, settling for compromises. Some very creative approaches to the problems of dealing with individual economic needs and varying economic capacities through communal means have been worked out by communes old and new. But not many of us know quite what to do about the Blotzes. Here they come down the lane in a camper, exploring community. They would like to join our raggle-taggle mob, but they want to do it right. They have, for instance, a design for a solar-energized house, with all the amenities, they would like to build for themselves and a few others who might move in, and from the sale of their last home they have the hundred thousand the house and solar generating equipment would cost. They have two school-age children with them and a third in college. They would like some kind of alternative school, or a commitment from the community to help them with the younger children and continue to support the eldest. They also support Mr. Blotz's invalid mother. They want to help capitalize some kind of industry that will both benefit the community and allow them to maintain something of their life-style - not luxuries, in their view, but essentials, such as insurance payments, orthodonture for Suzy, maybe a family trip to Spain they have been planning for years and hate, now, to relinquish. And what about their summer place on a lake in Michigan? They co-own it with another family. It would be a shame to sell their share. Maybe folks from the community could use it from time to time, if that's agreeable with the co-owners. But there is an annual upkeep cost, and there is, of course, the sailboat...And so on.

I don't think I am inventing extraordinary complexities. Those are the situations we deal with. What community would not like to have a resident M.D.? Well, here's your Dr. Blotz, two Dr. Blotzes (one a psychiatrist). One might react morally and say these folks are really not interested in community if they want all those things, are unable to make a more total break with their past. But do we really want a future without orthodonture (for cases diet won't correct or prevent) and trips to Spain? Or is our moralism a rationalization for our inadequacies as communities?

I can imagine the permanent residents settling into bands of a few adults and their children, perhaps several of such bands having separate households on the same acreage. As UAs pass through, some of these would settle out, joining existing bands or forming new ones. Presently communes focus on prospective members - sometimes not allowing people to stay unless they have a serious interest in joining or are in the process of joining. The fiction is that all will be there forever, though the facts are that many, perhaps most, are transient. Probably few mean to deceive, but group pressure is such that each person, no matter how uncertain his long-range intentions, has to maintain that fiction. Thus the group pressure may encourage a kind of hypocrisy. Somewhat cynically I have come to believe that those who talk most about community as an ideal and their personal commitment to it are likely to be the first to leave. Much bitterness and ambiguity surround relations with people in the commune who have privately decided to leave but have not announced their intention.

The opposite assumption - that most are there temporarily - might be healthier. A number of friends and sometime residents of Downhill Farm have never made a pretense of membership, though some have lived here as long as a year at a time, participating fully in all activities and decision-making. Since there is no expectation on either side, there is no bitterness about their departures or arrival. We gain a great deal from their occasional presence - for a weekend, week, month or year. Such people need clear terms (here it is \$5 per day plus labor), easy entrance and exit, no requirements of investment, no need to report property or income or intentions. And some of them may one day join us permanently.

If communes were structured that way I would expect the band or bands of permanent members to share resources fully, taking account of the complex family needs of each. Transients would clearly be there on a pay-as-you-go basis. My guess is that the total population of such communes would average 40 percent permanent, 60 percent transient (more in summer, fewer in winter). Pressure to join, to become a part of a band,

A number of communities have been wiped out by prosperity.

would be against the ethic of such a place: that would be like pressure to make love.

Resource-sharing through love or contract is an important communal goal, but there is no clear, simple, best means to work toward it. One of the strengths of the commune movement is the diversity of communities within it and the wide-range of choices possible to those who join. I hope I have not given the impression here of having any "answers". Certainly we have not solved the problem at Downhill Farm. But by raising questions and suggesting possibilities I hope to stimulate a variety of creative responses among communities of diverse types.

DEFINING 'RESOURCE SHARING'

If communes are organized to force resource-sharing they are likely to continue to be made up of UAs with little to share, little complexity in their lives, people who bring in little and take little away if they change their minds, having contributed while they were there such labor as earns their subsistence and a little more permitting gradual improvement of the community. In time some permanent members will settle out of the generally transient pattern, raise children, grow old, become disabled, develop the full range of a human community. Meanwhile occasional increments of gifts or accumulated resources of incoming members will increase their substance and enable them to develop increasingly effective means of gaining economic support. This has already happened, in a remarkably short time, in the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, whose businesses gross over a million dollars a year and whose combined assets are in the million-dollar range. That may be the soundest pattern for overall growth of the movement.

Meanwhile there are thousands of communes which do not find resource-sharing possible or desirable but which lack other models for stable growth and development - and I think these amorphous groups are the ones which are most likely to provide the Blotzes with an alternative where they can finally turn in their camper on a truck, provided a legal structure can be found which makes sense in terms of the commune's structure and which provides security for those who want to make their resources available for community development yet need some relative freedom of choice in meeting their complex needs.

I am not happy with the analogy, but in many respects communes are like colleges. UAs come to them for some important growth period in their lives, then move on when they have derived as much benefit as they believe they can and have developed interests and commitments which cannot be pursued in present communes. Some "graduates" have expressed guilt at having ripped off communities by gaining skills there and undergoing personal growth and then having moved on, depriving the community of these benefits. Were they alumni of a college they might express their gratitude in annual gifts or bequests. Indeed, they might, while living in the community, pay a tuition for the educations they were receiving.

Somewhat cynically I have come to believe that those who talk most about community as an ideal and their personal commitment to it are likely to be the first to leave.

Among other analogies I do not like are hotels, camps, half-way houses, sanitariums, research institutes, monasteries, retreats. Communes have many characteristics of all these. All the analogies have in common a core or staff of permanent residents and a considerable flow of transients. (My guess is that communes have between 25 and 50 percent turnover per year. About a third of Americans generally change residence each year.) A considerable number of communal members would be in tax-subsidized institutions, from the army to mental hospitals to jails to public colleges, if they were not in communes. In many respects they are laboratories of social experimentation providing data which could have many applications throughout society. It seems as though there ought to be some tax-exempt format which would enable them to clarify their status and derive benefits they deserve from the social services they perform.

My fear is that both resource-sharing and non-resource-sharing communities, but especially the former, are selecting against the Blotzes, selecting for UAs. Suppose we really like the Blotzes, love them, find no conflict between their values and our own, their behavior and our own. Moreover they are people ready and able to make commitments, deep, serious, life-long commitments. To what extent are we driving them away from us and attracting the uncommitted? The Blotzes walk around the property talking about reforestation, a sauna, a greenhouse. They want to know what will happen when they are in wheel-chairs. For the most part we haven't even theoretical answers for them. We are worrying at most about firewood for next winter, replacing our worn-out pickup.

When Downhill Farm had a going industry - manufacturing Hollolog planters from sections of oak - we operated on the basis of a monthly assessment of \$150 per month per adult and paid ourselves \$3 per hour for working in our little factory. Thus 50 hours of work per month met basic needs. Some worked overtime for cash (the first \$150 never changed hands) for personal needs. When the orders were coming in, we might have committed ourselves to working 40 hours per week instead of 50 per month and put the surplus into improving the land, the facilities, the business, expanding our functions, getting into outreach into the larger community around us, looking toward children

and adults, making some arrangement for medical care, and so on. But because we consisted of UAs for the most part, these were low priorities compared to free time for reading, meditating, personal development, gardening, walking in the woods. We didn't come out here in the country to get rich, we kept saying. Why build ramps for wheelchairs when everyone is able-bodied? Economic homogeneity is a kind of self-perpetuating system. The community was a good place for UAs. Prospective members could see that immediately and make choices accordingly. When members found their interests or concerns extended beyond what the community was providing or likely to provide, they moved on. That was easier than changing the community.

And we had no requirement of resource-sharing, which, I think, would have further discouraged those who might have brought in resources to share. What we want is love and responsibility - attitudes we cannot create by fiat. We can create structures which change processes and in turn facilitate the growth of desirable attitudes. Resource-sharing seems at first to be one of those structures, one which will impose equality and so make possible mutuality, peership, loving and responsible community relationships. But it may have the effect of selecting out rather than smoothing out differences. If we have an attractive plan for those with nothing or little to lose, one which is threatening for those with a great deal to lose, we may expect our population to continue to be drawn mainly from the footloose - who will simply move on when they reach a stage in life when commitment and attachment develop to meet fundamental needs. For example, many have left communes precisely when they began having children, as though intuitively recognizing that it was time to stop playing around and get serious about life. If getting serious about life means going back into the system, the commune movement has failed. □



Jud at Work

New Communities:

Art Saly is an editor and photographer for the Wesleyan University newspaper - Hermes. Art attended the Twin Oaks Conference Labor Day Weekend and wrote the following piece

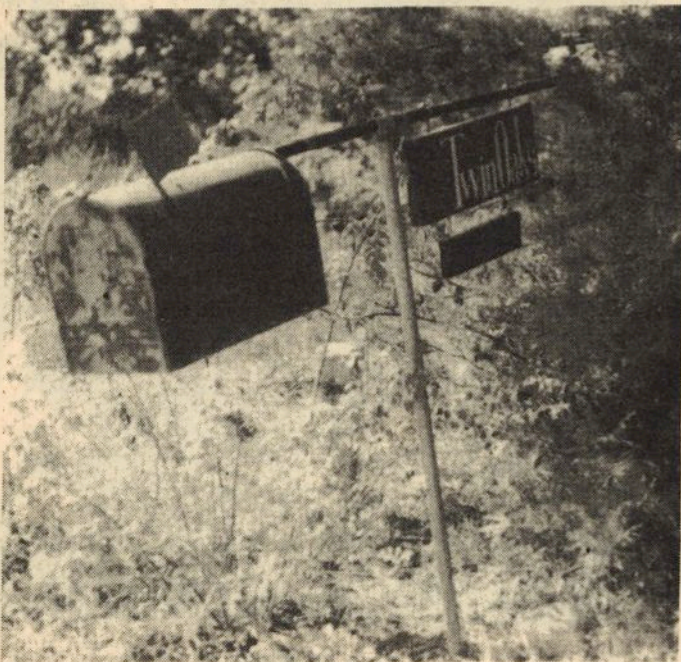
I rode down to Charlottesville with an old couple who had left their decaying neighborhood in urban New Jersey to settle in the quiet of Spartanburg, North Carolina. The man wore nondescript clothes; gray pants and a white shirt, a gray hat without much shape to it covered his head and he looked at the ceiling of the railroad car. His wife was blonde, her hair tied up in a beige scarf. She had been talking to me about visiting their children in Westchester. She was friendly, but her expression was cunning, even seductive - and it seemed so unintentionally.

"It's so noisy up there," she said. "I just don't know how they stand all that commotion. I wonder how we stood it."

I asked her if she liked it 'down south'.

"We love it," she replied.

We made small talk for a while, and it grew late. The train was due to arrive in Charlottesville at 9:45. The old couple wanted to rest, but a black family up in the front of the car was making a lot of noise. The man turned his head in my direction and bent it closer, confidentially.



"They get juiced up," he said. His face was wrinkled from weariness. "What can you do? But they're usually quiet when the lights are turned off. This is unusual." He paused. "And where we live, we've got quiet neighbors and no trouble. Where did you say you were going?"

"Charlottesville."

"You live there?"

"No, just visiting."

"Oh-Ho! Big weekend!" came his response.

Just as I couldn't talk to him about the black people up front as people and not some sort of environmental hazard, I felt it was too hard to try to articulate to him the purpose of my visit. Instead, I was already imagining myself as a Northern boy who travels long distances by train to see his lover, a Southern nurse at the University of Virginia Hospital, on the weekends. I smiled and said, "Yeah, I guess so."

It would have been hard for me to articulate what was really on my mind. Perhaps I should have said "I'm going to a conference to talk with people who are experimenting with alternative lifestyles. It's called Twin Oaks," I could have told him, "and it's based on the community outlined in the book, *Walden II*, by B.F. Skinner."

Perhaps I should have, but I didn't want to spoil our comfortable agreement.

I

We are not a conference center. But we have chosen to hold this gathering here because this is where we are building community.

-Twin Oaks introductory Conference mailing

The taxi-yellow van with Twin Oaks Industries, Louisa, Va. written on it pulled into the bus depot at Shannon Hill - a general store next to a cornfield where the bus from Charlottesville had dropped me off. I found that I had ridden on the bus with another conferee, a woman from Germany. Waiting by the gas pump, eyed by the four old men who sat on the steps of the store, I had favored her with my best Wesleyan-learned Deutsch, but she had neglected my attempt and spoke English instead. When the van from Twin Oaks turned up, she was telling me that West German television had shown a two-part series on communities over the last winter. It had inspired hundreds of German people to come to America, searching for community or looking for help in starting communities of their own. The first part of the series had been called "Das Geheimnis Der Zwinige Achen" - "The Secret of Twin Oaks."

A Real Alternative

by Art Saly



Mikki of Twin Oaks and Sydney of Another Place: Making Connections

We were helped into the van by a considerate man wearing work clothes who looked to be in his late twenties. As we rode, he told me that most of the Twin Oakers had been working steadily for a week, along with people from other participating communities, to ready their land for the expected crowd of 350 people. When we arrived, it was 8:15 a.m.

The ride had taken less than ten minutes. We pulled into a gravelled driveway and found ourselves at Emerald City, a large, about 40-foot square building made out of corrugated steel which was, indeed, painted green. The large garage-type door was rolled up, and people were busy inside, making phone calls and setting up tables and literature. Next to Emerald City some people were assembling a junk food stand, courtesy of Pepsi-Cola. Branching off from the driveway was the main eating site

- a couple of large tents in a clearing strewn with wood chips. Several large drums sawed in half and mounted on metal poles rested over firewood on cinder blocks; they would serve as the dishwashing stations.

II

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities is a group of intentional communities spread out across North America. We range in size from small, homestead oriented groups to village-like communities modelled after the Israeli kibbutz. All of our groups have been in existence for several years; one was founded in 1967. Our common ideological base, which includes a central belief in cooperation, equality and non-violence, has

brought us together in an effort to offer more people a real alternative to a competitive and consumption oriented world.

**-Federation of Egalitarian Communities
introductory hand-out**



Mealtimes: A chance to share thoughts, meet people

I walked down into that area, looking for a place to put my gear, and met someone who turned out to be very important to me: Piper of the Aloe Community. Aloe is one of the six communities represented in the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, of which Twin Oaks is a member. Piper is 54, one of the oldest people living in community that I saw. She is very committed to her lifestyle. I talked with her that morning, getting my bearings on the communities movement. During the conference, she co-lead workshops entitled, "Walden II - What Does it Mean?" and "Work and Labor Distribution," as well as leading "Aging in Community". I worked with her, filling up cans of water and bringing them by wheelbarrow to 'handwashing stations' near the portable toilets at the campsites.

All of the 350 conferees were assigned jobs, usually taking about three hours in total, for the duration of the conference. And it is a tribute to the organization of the conference that it all worked - people showed up to operate the dishwashing stations, prepare food, pick tomatoes, do sanitation work - to help the Community itself as well as to provide for the needs of the conference.

Piper and I set up a handwashing station near the main gathering place - a large clearing, again, floored with wood chips - where Gary from the Zany Ramorski Ranch and Laurel from Twin Oaks were doing electrical wiring for the floodlights which had been mounted on trees around the area. Gary is a tall, red-haired man in his mid twenties, and he wore a ragged yellow T-shirt and cut off jeans. He was working on a ladder with wire strippers and pliers, connecting a junction box for the lights.

As we worked, Piper talked to me about "living in

community," the operative phrase at the conference. There are over a million people across America who are seeking to live the communitarian life in one way or another, but because the media does not currently take an interest in the communities movement, most people are not aware of its scope.

"I used to square dance a lot," she told me. "And when I would move to a new town I always wanted to know if there were any groups around who square danced. I would ask around, and people would say, 'No. I don't square dance,' or, 'That seems like a nice thing to do, but I don't know of anyone who does it here.'"

"But then when I finally would make contact with a square dancer," she explained, "it would turn out that there would be a square dance almost every night at someone's house. That's the way it is with communities, also."

Aloe is a community of 11 people - eight adults and three school-age children, on 150 acres near Cedar Grove, North Carolina, about 25 miles from Chapel Hill. Their industry is a tinnery; they make craft items such as plant holders and lamps from tin cans and sell them at craft fairs. The business grosses about \$40,000 a year. Some members, as is often the case in community, hold outside jobs as well on a part-time basis. Aloe heats with wood, and is moving toward a high level of self-sufficiency in growing what they eat.

Piper told me the fact that Aloe has children of school age is especially significant. The community was formed in 1974 at a Twin Oaks labor day conference partly because Twin Oaks would not take in children who had not been born there. The three girls at Aloe go to an alternative school and also attended the conference.

More people began coming in, helping with the chores. The Twin Oakers, having worked for a week or more, were slightly tense, though excited. Piper went off to arrange something and I worked a bit with Gary, talking about his community, the Professor Zany Ramorski Ranch, located near Charlestown, West Virginia. I steadied his ladder while he told me, "We're a community of healers. We want to be a place to which people from the outside can go for help and reassurance. What do we do? Herbal, homeopathic, acupuncture, acupressure, etc. Western medicine treats only symptoms..."



Laurel: Twin Oaks electrician

"I've been here for about a week. I'm here because of the people coming to the conference. We have 27 people in our community - 27 including everyone, and we share with Twin Oaks - they call it labor exchange, we call it helping out."

Laurel, a member of Twin Oaks, worked with him, doing electrical wiring. She seemed angry, but very controlled. She had gone to get some parts, and had come back to find that she had forgotten something else. Looking at her expression, Gary called out, "It's getting



Watermelon, cheese, tomatoes from the garden, fresh fruit salad

to you!" She ran up to his ladder and jumped for him, but he had already hoisted himself into the tree. She laughed and went out of the clearing. But there was still, from my point of view, underlying hostility and a sense of deliberate good feeling laid on over it.

This was a small thing, but an important one. Indeed, even with all of the ethics of cooperation, interpersonal relations are the biggest problems for these communities, which are cooperative and egalitarian. Because they make room for the individual to go his own way (this word replaces "his") without working out a model (except a behavioral one) of the human personality, there is no clear way in which people deal with conflicts once they arise. There are many attempts.

Re-evaluation co-counseling, the cooperative therapy between equals widely advocated by the Movement for a New Society (MNS), is very popular. But it doesn't seem to treat problems deeply enough. Then there is the re-inforcement of cooperation in working and playing together; and there is an egalitarian code of ethics subscribed to by the members of the federation. This code emphasizes direct feedback between people, consideration, tolerance, self responsibility and the inviolability of personal privacy. But often people don't come together. The average annual turnover rate in communities is 20-25 percent.

III

The first activity which I involved myself in at Twin

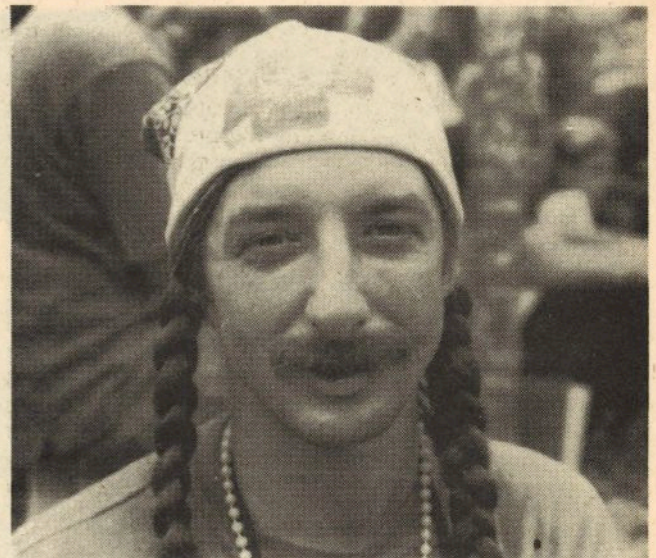
Oaks was a tour. Larry, a Twin Oaker and the community's business manager in charge of their industry - which is making hammocks - took a group of 10 conferees on a tour of the land.

Twin Oaks is an experiment which we hope will produce a better life by means that have a reasonable chance of succeeding. Our aim is to create and expand a community which values cooperation, sharing and equality, which is not violent, racist, sexist or competitive, which strives to treat people in a kind, caring, honest and fair manner and which provides the basic physical and social needs of its members. Our original inspiration came from B.F. Skinner's Walden Two, but, while some of us continue to find inspiration in Skinner's behavioral utopia, we are a diverse group of people with individual orientations varying from the utopian to the spiritual to the pragmatic. Our approaches to designing our culture reflect our diversity, and life here has often been pictured as a continual struggle within and between ourselves to find ways that feel right to all of us.

-Twin Oaks Community

Twin Oaks has a land area of 470 acres, bordering on a river which is wonderful to swim in. Larry showed us all the facilities - the industrial building, where members of the community make hammocks to the accompaniment of music or readings, to the auto shop, to the children's house, the barn where livestock is kept, and the comfortable and clean buildings where the members of the community live. Each person has his own room, and this is regarded as a special place in which one can be alone without interruption and find a feeling of peace away from the rest of the community.

Child rearing in Twin Oaks has changed since 1967, when the community was founded. At that time, Twin Oaks tried to make sure that children were, in fact, communally reared. It soon turned out that children did need the special affection of at least one person. Now they are cared for by people called "metas", and have at least one "primary", often their natural parent, who has



Patch

special responsibility for each of them. They live in a separate house where they have a lot of autonomy near an adult dwelling.

Twin Oaks shares labor in a credit system developed from that proposed by Skinner in *Walden II*. The average load is about 45 hours a week; and a member can work in the hammock industry, in maintenance, child care, accounting, farming, or other areas of cos choice, depending on the amount and kind of labor needed. In Oneida (all of the buildings are named for past communities) Larry showed us the labor credit board, the central message and work distribution area for the community.

Oneida is a good looking wooden building - its large windows hung with plants, which also houses the Twin Oaks Library - about 5,000 volumes including books on philosophy, psychology and history. Oneida, Larry told us, was built out of scrap wood and junk for about \$5,000. It was their first building, and he said he had heard tell that there were walls in it hanging by only one nail. Their newest building project, by contrast, called Tupelo, will house a projected 15-member branch of the community, have provision for solar heating, and cost about \$200,000 to build.

I was an atypical member of my tour group. Most people were older, many from communities and most interested in starting communities of their own. I snapped pictures continually, and felt as if I was working for the C.I.A. But I was met with trust, rather than suspicion. During the tour, people asked Larry penetrating questions about all aspects of life at Twin Oaks - ranging from queries about interpersonal relations to questions about industry and land use - and he answered them freely and completely. I began to feel, as I would throughout the conference, that people were, by and large, sharing all of their experiences, very frankly, in the interests of exploring all sorts of alternatives.

IV

The tour wound up at the river, and then I walked back to Emerald City at the other end of the property for dinner. After the meal (buffet style under the tent) everyone congregated in the main gathering area - now lit by the floodlights which Gary and Laurel had installed - and we sang a few songs and played some "new games." These games, including some trust exercises, some cooperative action games and dances held for 300 people, were an ongoing feature of the conference. One game - played on Sunday in a huge field - was an amazing experience. Each person was picked up, one by one, and held high in the air, was passed down a line of perhaps 100 people, carried along in the midst of a lot of fun, jokes and joy.

I slept in a sleeping bag underneath the stars and, thankfully, it did not rain. The Conference was workshop oriented. People from communities and cooperative, or democratic organizations across the country gave presentations on such topics as "Communal Child Rearing", "There Aint No Such Thing as a Free Lunch (Tradeoffs of Living in Community)", "Therapy in Community," "Spiritual Dimensions of Community," and "Community as Big Business: The Harsh Reality" (led by Larry). The workshops were held over a period of three days. In that time, I attended five.

V

The most significant effort at financing community conscious enterprises is the formation of the C.I.F. They are establishing a \$3 million (or larger) fund in cooperation with such organizations as: The American Friends Service Committee, the Center for Community Economic Development, the Worker's Co-Operative Association, Inc., The Institute for Community Economics, Inc., and the Northeastern Appropriate Technology Network."

-Communities Magazine



Terry Mollner, of the Community Investment Fund in Boston, led a workshop called "The Gandhian Concept of Trusteeship, Economics, and Community Building", which I found particularly interesting in the light of Wesleyan's struggle with the problems of its South Africa related investments. Terry explained Gandhi's concept of Trusteeship, in which property and funds are held in trust for the community and cannot be used for personal gain. In relation to this idea, he is working on setting up a corporation specifically designed to provide an alternative to investors. Rather than putting cash into stock in the large multinationals, they will be able to invest in communities and democratically run enterprises through this corporation, and be guaranteed a suitable return.

We are alternative to the lifestyle dilemma facing many women and men today. Because of our goals and structures, women do not have to choose between a career, marriage, children or single living. Likewise, men are not pressured to be the main means of support, or to perform by attaining individual financial or career success."

- East Wind Community

Another workshop which I attended, called "Open Relationships", was headed by two women from the Federation of Egalitarian Communities - Ocean from Twin Oaks, and Jane from Dandelion, which is located in Ontario, Canada. They detailed how people were exploring alternatives to the monogamous relationship - what expectations people have on entering community, people's attitudes towards gayness and bisexuality, and means of resolving difficulties between partners in relationships.

East Wind is an intentional community located in the

Missouri Ozarks. We are interested in attracting more members, especially people who have been underrepresented among us: Black people, gays, working class, women and older people. We need you to join our struggle to create a new society.

- East Wind Community leaflet

Most members of these communities are white, middle class, and educated. Although they are sincerely egalitarian in their outlook, this doesn't seem to have changed the reality of this fact. It was my conclusion that, in most communities, heterosexual monogamy was the order of the day; and that no other alternative seemed to really work out. While there are gay communities, most people's attitude towards gayness seems to be, as one conferee noted, "I think it's good for people to experiment with their sexuality; I am in favor of gay people expressing their needs, but I don't feel into it for myself." As people in community try to break down their preconceived notions, they are finding that, in practice, certain preferences do emerge.

Twin Oaks seems to be drawing towards couples relationships. A lot of people are unhappy about it. But it seems to be happening on a deeper, lower level that we can't do anything about.

- Twin Oaker at the Open Relationships

When my partner is with someone else, I'm lonely for the person I have a rapport with - I haven't resolved this.

- Dandelion Community participant at the Open Relationships Workshop

VI

Mealtimes at the Twin Oaks Conference were a blast. There was a lot of free spirit there, the sort of energy and trust that characterized peoples' interaction. It was an unusual group - 350, passing through the large tent, eating huge amounts of watermelon, cheese, tomatoes from the garden, peanut butter. There were young





Larry

mothers breastfeeding their children, active, working people in T-shirts and jeans, old men, tanned and frail, men who were sunburnt and burnt out, people in soiled clothes, needy and hesitant to talk, the Germans, social and talkative for the most part, a scattering of quiet intellectuals and parent-at-kid's-picnic type observers. And Zany Ramorski's doctor, Patch, danced around, spreading a special joy and lightness. He wore a band with an MD designation on it around his head and a tie dyed shirt; he picked up little children and talked carefully and soothingly to adults.

There was a lot of trust between the conferees. Several times I left my camera on a tree or gave it to someone to participate in an activity, and it was always there for me when I returned. There was a real commitment to another way of life, in which sharing and cooperation, not competition, were the prerequisites. And over the feeling of celebration, the happiness gained through hard work and commitment was very clearly there.

The conference, also, was a time for connections, Sydney, a woman from Another Place Farm, in Greenville, New Hampshire, gave a workshop on just that topic, entitled "Planetary Networking - the Potential of Planetary Connections". Another Place Farm is a community that is exclusively oriented towards giving conferences and making connections between communities. While most of the connections made at the conference were considerably more short range, Sydney's workshop included presentations of the Findhorn Community in Scotland; Auroville, the United Nations sanctioned international community in India; and Arcosanit, Paolo Soleri's developing "ecologically perfect" dream city in the desert of Arizona.

As a conference and living community we see that every act and every moment of life can be a coming to harmony with ourselves and the earth...waking up, going to work, organizing a conference, cutting wood or baking bread can be an attunement.

-Another Place Conference Center

In the developing communities movement, people are creating a new society within the old, and are changing it - not through revolution, but through the long process of exploration and self-development.

I had come to the Twin Oaks Conference not only to satisfy my own interest in community life but also to write this article. And I found much of what I had hoped to: real evidence that there is a widespread, alternative movement in this country working, albeit in a quiet way, for social change. For me, the options of "living in community" - whether it be urban or rural - look more and more realistic and sensible.

The couple I had rode down to Charlottesville with had sought to "get away from it all" by leaving the tumult of the city for the isolation of a sedate country village. The communities movement, on the other hand, gets involved. It stands for integration; its identity is to take a position against fragmentation.

It is my hope that readers of this article will recognize this, and feel moved to challenge the many outmoded conventions of our familiar alienated society. □



New Games

Upcoming conferences: Aloe, Easter Weekend 1979:
Women in Community

Aloe, Mid-June 1979: Children in Community

The Federation of Egalitarian Communities

Aloe Community, Rt. 1, Box 100, Cedar Grove, NC 27231

Dandelion Community, R.R. 1, Enterprise, Ontario K0K 1Z0, Canada

East Wind Community, Box 6B2, Tecumseh, Missouri, 65760

North Mountain Community, Box 207, Rt. 2, Lexington, Va. 24450

Twin Oaks Community, Rt. 4, Louisa, Va. 23093

Los Horcones, A.P.D.O. 372, Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico

the Consumer Cooperative Alliance

the Institute,
the Movement,
& the BANK



On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Consumer Cooperative Alliance, and the passage of the Consumer Cooperative Bank Act by the Congress of the United States, signed into law by the President:

INTRODUCING...

Every-once-in-a-while something important happens. Not only one the scale of our individual lives, but as the product of many lives, where the results will affect many lives.

Vietnam happens because a number of American themes need to be played out. A coalition of political and economic institutions take the country for a ride. But the tires keep blowing out. While we're fixing the flats, another coalition develops which forces a change of drivers. And after a brief side-trip into Cambodia, that particular ride is over.

Every social, political and economic institution contains a series of probabilities. Under certain circumstances a complex set of well-prepared mechanisms move missiles down well-greased channels, *and bye-bye world.*

But the choices to create the probabilities are in human beings. And after exploring those probabilities for a while, if they really don't work very well, we move personally and institutionally to make changes. *Who's that we, white man? Whose institutions? What if they work well for the managers and poorly for the managed? Poorly for the poor and well for the rich?* All that *sotto voce* is a cautionary to large-scale analysis... Nevertheless, eventually we create new institutions which create a different set of probabilities... as with the United Nations (which doesn't work very well either) as with the bank (we'll see)...

One of the effects of Vietnam was on the American economic system, particularly its role in a world economy. We hear about energy reserves, the weakness of the dollar, the health of Japan and Europe. *Bye-bye Miss Colonial Pie. A few slices, anyway.*

At the same time, that cornerstone of the American system, industry, has been unable to fully automate or farm all its labor out to Taiwan. In a climate of rising material expectations and expensive capital, labor-intensive or capital-intensive industries mean the managers and stockholders come up short. Except where businesses have been able to use unskilled and unorganizable labor (the MacDonald's - Kentucky Fried Chicken scam) workers are increasingly getting their share.

And the managers are worried, the planners are worried, the cities with their heavy service responsibilities (and vulnerability to public opinion) dependent on a well-organized, skilled labor pool are scared to the edge of disaster.

Enter cooperatives. Really, I'm not kidding. That's more or less what's been happening before our very eyes. It took the depression in America to develop institutional support for the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Works Progress Administration, Tennessee Valley Authority and the Farm Credit Administration.

Where do you go when the social mechanisms of a society begin to add up to a future which looks unacceptable? *You begin to look around at some of the less attractive options. Coops are threatening to a competitive ethic, but consumer coops are, after all, for the purpose of consumption, and that's downright apple pie.* Coops change the relationship of

managers-to-workers-to-owners-to-community - *but at least folks are working.*

For all the stagnation and compromises of the older consumer and producer coops in America, cooperators hung on from the 30's through the 40's, 50's and 60's. Besides cheaper goods for their members, and hopefully a better life, they maintained a set of institutional probabilities; a social policy alternative.

For all the collective jumble and the financial fumble, the new wave of coops (begun as sixties activists turned to creating life support systems and economic organizing) have had enough impact to reenergize that social policy alternative.

Add to the mix the leadership of the Cooperative League of the USA, and enough liberal, progressive or pressurable Americans in places of power, and we have the creation of a new institution, a new social mechanism, the Consumer Cooperative Bank.

Communities is a journal of cooperative living. At almost six years old, we are a forum for urban and rural people who've made some choices about the kinds of lives we lead. We choose cooperation and community, not because it's always easy, but because it offers a hopeful choice to live together in friendship and trust, love and mutual respect, honoring the universe of which we are but a small part.

Choosing the CCA as a focus to explore the relevance of coops to community is as natural as the choices over the past few years of new wave cooperators to join with Consumer Cooperative Alliance, rather than create a new national organization.

CCA has for half a century remained a meeting and learning place; a point of coordination for common interests; a national network for cooperators. The latest 4-day Institute in Madison, Wisconsin was jammed with workshops which passed on the state of the art of coops; confronted the difficult practical and theoretical questions we face as individuals, organizations and as a movement.

The questions were debated in the corridors and clean-air-filled-rooms. Proposals and changes were discussed and decided in the assembly at the end of the Institute. Implementation of decisions is in the hands of an able board, committees and individuals returning to their own coops.

The next twenty-odd pages focus on the significance of the Consumer Coop movement which the Alliance represents; some of its history and relation to intentional community; the feel of this particular institute through workshops, pictures, conversations and exploration of key questions.

The Bank Act itself is dealt with in a depth we hope is useful without overwhelming. As always, the purpose of this report and of *Communities* is to empower and support us, citizens and communities, toward a more mutually just, equitable and loving world.

Paul Freundlich

What is CCA?

In the 1920's, there was ferment in the consumer cooperative movement. How shall the cooperatives grow? Shall they work together, and how? What kinds of new cooperatives are needed? How shall the existing cooperatives use their energy towards the building of a better world? And what was the role of the Consumer Cooperative Alliance?

In the early part of that decade the Cooperative League of the USA had been founded, as the first major American attempt to unite consumer cooperatives in one fold, for mutual support and advancement. It was indeed a time of basic organization-building, of enthusiasm, of positive approach. Cooperatives worked with each other, slowly at first (there were many debates, of course) and then with greater intensity as their ideas led to actions. One achievement, after considerable discussion about directions, was the organization of a food cooperative wholesale - for food, it was felt, so vital to every person, could provide the basis for a massive cooperative education program. Through food co-ops, people would learn about cooperation.

The intellectual and organizing thrust led, in 1929, to the development of institutes, especially-organized gatherings of cooperators designed to stimulate thought, to discuss the problems of cooperatives, to bring people together for the people-base needed for the overall cooperative movement.

For the next fifty years, the institute pattern grew in maturity and usefulness. Originally lasting many days (they were indeed vacations with a purpose), the institute pattern shifted some years ago, in recognition of changing styles, to a "long weekend". From the beginning to the present, the institute served as inspiration for cooperative members, as training ground for new cooperators and staff members, as an opportunity to hear from co-op leaders. Participants have included cooperators from many kinds of co-ops: food, housing, credit, auto repair, health, bicycle, craft, insurance, memorial societies, nursery schools, book stores, optical centers and others.

In the last five years, with the unprecedented growth of many new small cooperatives, supplementing the older and usually larger cooperatives that had been the heart of the institute for so many years, the institute vision enlarged. Indeed, the Cooperative Institute Association (long the formal name of the sponsoring group) became the Consumer Cooperative Alliance, with a desire to serve not just its long-time supporters but the entire consumer cooperative movement. No longer was it to be a northeastern U.S. regional educational activity - the valuable institute idea was offered to cooperatives in all corners of the United States and Canada.

Today, the Consumer Cooperative Alliance is the only international forum for consumer cooperatives of all kinds, large and small, new and old. Its annual institute program, varied, intense, stimulates the sense of a cooperative movement, through discussion, workshops, all kinds of teaching/learning occasions.

The Consumer Cooperative Alliance governs itself as a cooperative.

The Alliance is financed by individuals and cooperatives.

THE STATE OF THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN THE USA

Membership and dollar volume figures for coops can be impressive:

Kind of Co-op	No. of Co-ops	Membership	Dollar Volume
Consumer Goods	1,000	1.2 million	\$477 million
Credit Unions	22,866	31.4 million	\$33.9 billion savings \$27.9 loans outstanding
Housing	2,500	500,000 families	\$1 billion annually
Student Co-ops	250	25,000	no estimate

What they mean depends on where you draw the line on participation. Most of the older, Twin Pines coops work on a rebate system. Member ownership is through an elected board. Similarly, the larger housing coops often provide economic benefits for a membership far removed from responsibility. Most people don't even think of credit unions as coops. Nevertheless, any coop means local control and the potential to put some democracy in action.

The new wave of coops involve membership in work and decision-making; have a wider consciousness about politics and community, and have begun to take themselves seriously as businesses. There are a few hundred thousand, mostly young Americans, living in urban groups and rural communities who don't show up in any figures.

For forty years the cooperative movement was on the defensive in the USA. The new wave of energy and now the passage of the Bank Act raise visions of a more coherent cooperative economy, perhaps as the base of a new localism and deeper community.

Remembering the scale of the competitive economy, and all the questions which plague coops internally, the state of the cooperative movement could be characterized as *hopeful*, perhaps *healthy*, but a long way from home.

As a cooperative, membership in the Alliance is open to all. This point of view has kept the Alliance vigorous and forward-looking. Many points of view and experiences are represented in institute attendance, in the membership, on the board and on its committees.

Today, as in the 1920's, there is still ferment, and the same questions are being asked. However, today's consumer cooperatives have their own Alliance - their own platform - built over fifty years. Through the Alliance and Institute experiences, cooperatives today are in a better position than ever before to aid themselves and each other in their mutual efforts to build a better society for all.

For further information, contact:

CONSUMER COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

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Detroit, Michigan 48202



1. the Institute

It Wasn't Camp David

by Kris Olsen

The annual meeting of the Consumer Cooperative Alliance (CCA) took flight in 1978 from its venerable roosting grounds of the past 49 years in the Northeastern United States. The migration spanned nearly half a continent as CCA alighted upon the city/campus of the University of Wisconsin - Madison. The occasion of this epic journey was part a celebration of a half century existence in cooperation, and part reaching out to broaden participation and membership as investment in its future.

The months of planning and preparation involved drew people from 35 states and Canada: Members and workers from food co-ops, hardware co-ops, housing cooperatives, co-op federations, co-op credit unions and gas stations; from both the *new wave* movement and co-operatives with experience measured in decades. For 3½ days, from June 29th to July 3rd, they came to rendezvous in over a hundred workshops and presentations, culminating in a general membership meeting.

A summit of 25 representative cooperators, veteran and fledgling, also convened for two days prior to the conference. The foundation of the summit was questions: Who are we? What is the co-op movement doing? Where are we going?

There was an underlying commitment by those present to share and struggle to reach common understandings. In the beginning each person shared a personal experience that had been meaningful in the last week. Social walls had begun to visibly melt as the last person was speaking, a breeze of intimacy warmed the atmosphere, there was no longer a room of strangers. The summit was the beginning of a dynamic that would become symbolic of the conference; a deeper way of exploring issues and effecting communication between people with diverse philosophies and experiences in cooperation; a synthesis I believe is necessary to the growth and evolution of a co-op movement.

Growth and evolution became words that were synonymous for the 250 people who attended the conference. In the hundred plus hours of congregation about co-ops that took place, the CCA as a federation was remolded. What began as tentative contact by men and women from new wave co-ops at the 1975 CCA Institute has become a common bond in 1978. Ingredients of idealism, youth, and some naivete from new wave people joined with the acumen and experience of members of the established cooperatives to form a vitalized cooperative network.

Edith Chistensen of Alexandria, Virginia, at eighty-five years the conference elder, was a sunburst of wit and enthusiasm. She found the conference "invigorating" and

was pleased to see co-ops as a bridge between generations; that "so many young people have gotten involved with cooperation." The attitudes of many of the seniors I spoke with affirmed Edith's sentiments. Katherine Price, a resident of a housing cooperative in Michigan said, "It's a wonderful feeling for me to see the young and old working together." Another comment indicative of the growth and change occurring, this from a young woman: "My beliefs about older people have been completely changed during this conference."

Many major issues of broad importance to the consumer co-op movement were confronted at the conference. The awareness of a need to propagate cooperation through a continual ongoing educational thrust was one. Queries of how this can be done, and what co-ops can do to assume a more active role in the education of their members; of students in schools and colleges; of consumers and the general populous were discussed. A second major issue was learning how to use the media as an educational tool. Some of the solutions ventured were basic and pragmatic: Bring co-ops and the principles of cooperation into the cultural mainstream and away from the isolation of being solely an economic or business solution. Create legislation favorable to co-ops at a national level. Create a resource network of co-op information, films, and literature as envisioned at local and national levels for use by schools, colleges, and community groups and individuals. Introduce cooperation into the public schools, as in the state of Wisconsin. Wisconsin has a legislative mandate for the study of co-ops to be a component of all social studies programs. I can think of no better perspective for studying society than co-op principles:

- Open and voluntary membership
- Democratic control of the organization
- Limited interest on any shares
- Return of surplus to members
- Continuous education about cooperatives
- Cooperation between cooperatives

A multitude of other workshops and caucuses provided information and experiences on practically every aspect of cooperation: Topics such as; Teaching Cooperation To Children and Introducing It Into the Schools, Group Dynamics-Facilitating and Consensus Decision Making, Improving Your Co-op Newsletter, Introduction to Memorial Societies and Co-op Funeral Homes, Advanced Bookkeeping, How Co-ops Affect Energy issues, and Women, Men and Sexism in the Co-ops. The last had a significant effect on those participating, and offered direction to future conferences.

The formal structure of this CCA Institute, its skeleton of workshops, agenda, and presentations was strong and functional. There was a flow and continuity in the registration and orientation process, and well constructed pamphlets and brochures in the folio of handouts. The agenda of workshops was staggered, some starting on the hour, while others began on the half hour; thus allowing someone to sample one presentation and hold option for another without a long wait.

Facilitation of workshops ranged from a glowing state of health to slightly anemic. Those in good health reflected firm and sensitive facilitation, concise presentations, and

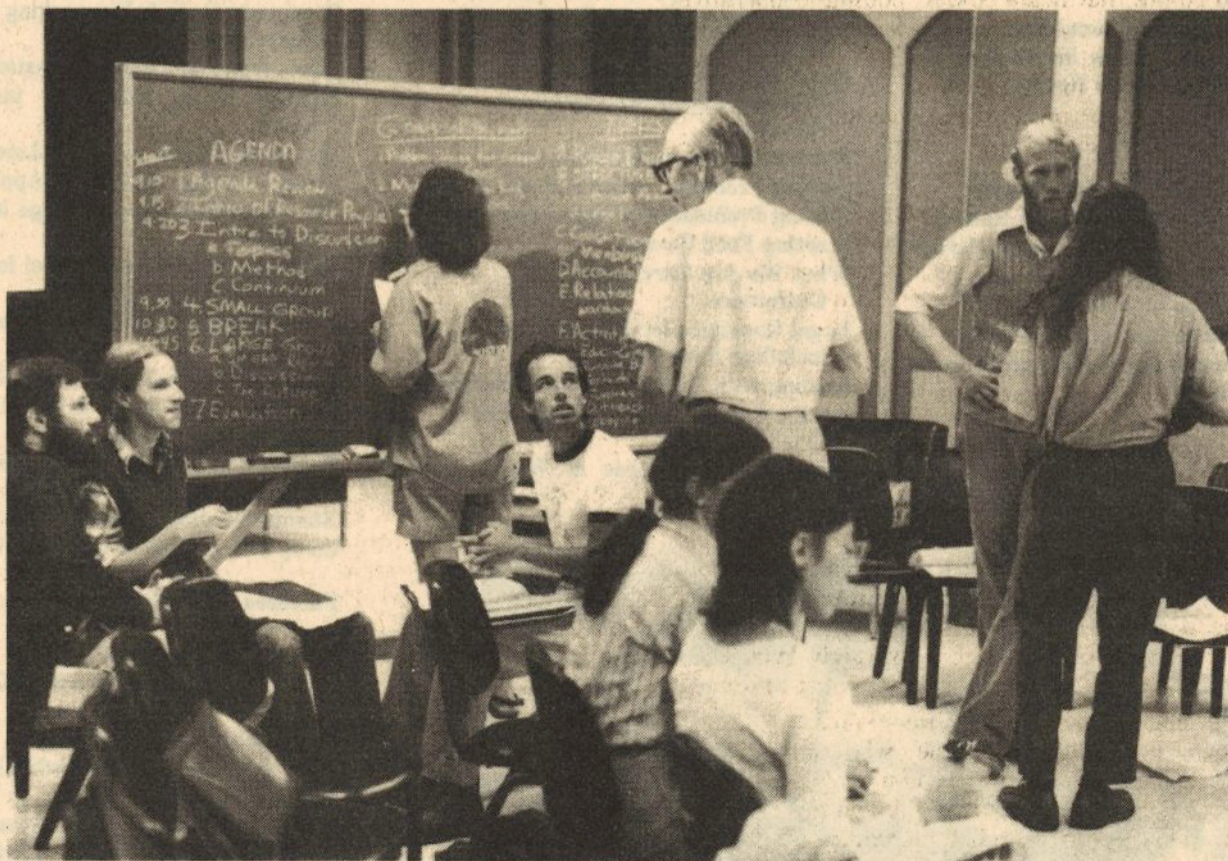
encouraged participation and interaction with the audience. Good facilitation means a sense of purpose and direction; to be a knowledgeable and sensitive guide in exploring a subject with others. Those I judged to be anemic usually reflected a lack of sufficient preparation, too little or too much guidance, and might have fared better with more thought on the element of time.

The undertaking of a conference of this size for the first time will feature growing pains. There will always be risks, yet I think the advantages and experiences justified them for CCA in 1978. The physical facilities were fine, the food good, (though its extremes of cafeteria and health food reflected the age and cultural range of the participants) and when adjustments had to be made on short notice, the organizers responded well. Sincere attempts were made to resolve each situation.

The free, unstructured time between workshops was a chance to experience people personally; to know new people and renew old unions with old friends not seen for months and years. A time to learn, share and grow. Interactions occur that become seeds for new ideas, for networks of information sharing and communication, for friendships; these become threads for the weaving of a new social fabric.

The excitement and intensity of three days of almost non-stop workshops and interaction left many people at a low ebb of energy by Monday morning. Hence, the business meeting was late in starting. The agenda was well thought out and organized, and the decisions to be made were important and far-reaching: A new board of directors was elected, representatives of both established and new wave co-ops: The resolutions from the Sexism in the Co-ops Workshop were accepted: A major structural change in the formation of CCA regions was made, evolving from three unbalanced to eleven more equitable geographic regions. The co-op news service/press center and the idea of a national co-op federation, talked about earlier in the summit, were accepted as CCA extensions to be developed. This will likely take place in the midwest in the coming year. I left shortly before the meeting adjourned, a salad of rich experiences, sharing with people, and weariness of mind and body.

The migrating flight of CCA to the midwest was a success, made so by the individuals involved. 1979 will find the CCA Institute in Austin, Texas. I hope to be there, to witness the growth of another year of cooperation, to see old friends again and meet new ones. □



WORKSHOPS, CLASSES AND DISCUSSION BY CATEGORY

Structure-Operations-The Cooperative Workplace

Availability of Technical Assistance
Effects of Grants & Job Slots
Rotating and Decentralizing Jobs

Co-ops In Federations/Structuring Federations

What are Co-op Corporations, Community Development Corporations, C.A.P. Agencies and How We Work with Them

Co-ops, Community Technology & Local Self-Reliance
 Introduction to Collectives & How They Relate to Co-ops
 Workers in the Co-op Workplace
 Role of Board of Directors and Member Involvement
 Alternatives to Board of Director Decision-Making
 Group Dynamics, Facilitating & Consensus Decision-Making
 Finding & Using Computer Time to Solve Co-op Problems/Analyze Business Systems

Housing

Drawing Up A Co-op House Budget
 Touring Co-op Houses with Experts
 Maintenance in Co-op Housing
 Co-op Households
 Converting Existing Rental Housing into Co-ops
 Legal Questions of Co-op Housing
 Co-op Houses and Taxes
 Community Sponsorship of New Co-op Housing
 Relations with the Community
 Effective New Member Selection & Orientation in Co-op Houses

Energy

How Co-ops Effect Energy Issues
 Alternative Energy for Co-op Houses
 Introduction to the Rural Electric Co-ops
 Co-op Auto Garages
 Introduction to Bike Co-ops
 Introduction to Gas Station Co-ops
 Co-ops, Community Technology & Local Self-Reliance

Politics

Co-ops and Government Organizations



Women, Men and Sexism in Co-ops Food

Interregional Buying & Trucking
 Introduction to Co-op Label System
 Effective New Member Selection & Orientation in Food Co-ops
 Direct Marketing/Dealing with Farmers/Producer-Consumer Relations
 Structuring Co-op Warehouses
 Solving Problems of Rural Food Co-ops
 Solving Problems of Urban Food Co-ops
 Starting Food Co-ops
 What We Are Serving At This Conference
 Legal Questions for Food Co-ops including Food Stamps
 Dealing with USDA Extension Service
 Agribusiness, Co-ops & World Food Crisis
 Touring Co-op Stores & Warehouses with Experts

Communications/Education

Starting a Newsletter
 Improving Your Newsletter
 Dealing with the Media
 Communications & Networking Among Federations
 Introduction to Co-op Publications
 Building Co-op Education into your Co-op
 History of Co-ops in North America
 Co-op Principles & How to Apply Them
 Can There Be a Co-op College in the U.S.A.?
 Symposium from New School for Democratic Management
 Co-op Movement History for the North Country
 Co-operative Historical Association
 Introduction to Co-ops & Social Change
 Network of Austin
 Teaching Cooperation to Children & Introducing It Into Schools
 Running Regional Conferences
 Co-op Movements Around the World

Finances & Credit Unions

Finance for Beginners
 Introduction to Neighborhood Credit Unions
 Advanced Bookkeeping
 How to Improve Your Credit Union
 Developing Capital
 The Bank Bill & How to Implement It
 Touring Offices of CUNA, CUNA Mutual & World Credit Union
 Management & Financial Planning for Small Co-ops
 Reading Financial Statements
 Profits, Patronage Refunds, the IRS and Your Co-op
 Payroll, Sales & Related Taxes
 Fund-Raising & Grant Proposal Writing

Health Care

Group Health Co-ops
Dental Care Co-ops

Broadening Our Horizons

Introduction to Electronic Co-ops
Introduction to Hardware Store Co-ops

Introduction to Bookstore Co-ops
Introduction to Sprouting Co-ops
Introduction to Legal Service Co-ops
Introduction to Crafts Co-ops
Introduction to Memorial Societies,
Co-op Funeral Homes

C.C.A. Activities

Bank Bill Committee
Education Committee
Media Committee
By-Laws Changes Questions Period
Development Committee
Housing Committee
Program Committee



Michael Freedberg spoke on the relation of energy and appropriate technology to coops.



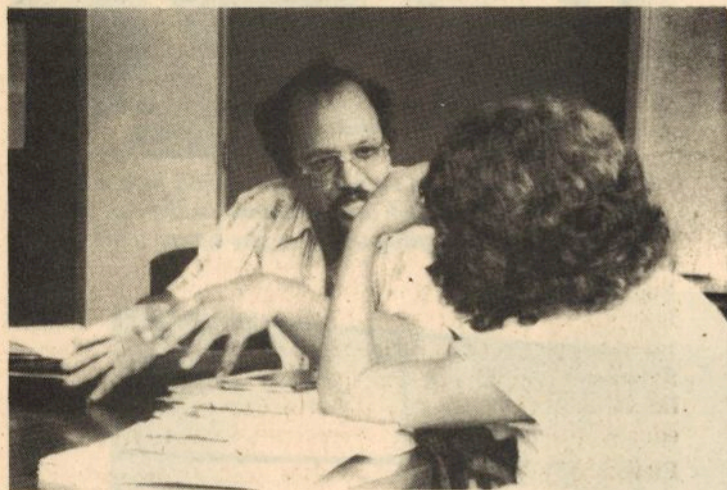
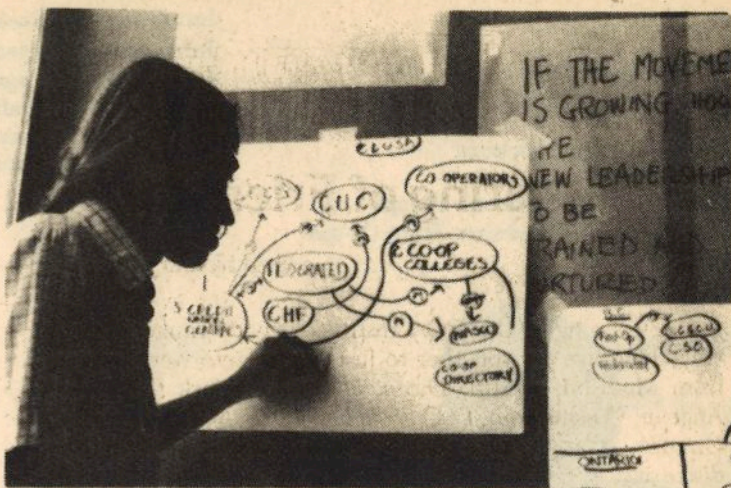
In Madison, a spirit of cooperation was put into practice with the policy that each attendee assist in the running of the conference by signing up for a few hours' work time.



The Women, Men and Sexism in the Co-ops workshop elicited the strongest critical comments on the conference specifically, and of the co-op movement in general. Men

and women, young and old, gathered in the lobby of the main conference building on Sunday evening for the last workshop on the agenda.

What can we learn from coop movements in other countries (many of which are more advanced including our neighbor, Canada)? Keith Jardine (of Fed-Up Coop in British Columbia) gave us an organizational chart of Canadian Consumer Coops; despite their dealing with a larger dollar volume, that chart indicated the Canadian network made more sense. Maybe when American consumer coops deal with a larger dollar volume, we'll have the staff and organization to make more sense, too.



"We need an umbrella on the national level. Unity, not uniformity."

My father said, "Son, if you're going to be part of a movement, make sure it isn't made up of half-vast ideas."



"I've learned so much, I only wish I was younger and could do more."



We're still groping for a synthesis that allows our coops to do what they do best - feed people, house people, provide credit, etc - without having to do the whole job of community building and cooperative education.

2 the Movement

A Gathering of Friends

edited by Gary Newton

One evening at the CCA Institute a wide range of new wave co-ops got together to just talk. There were people from Madison, Austin, Davis, Cal., New York City, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and Armstrong, Ontario, Canada. Following are excerpts from that discussion.

Gary H. Newton, Austin, Texas: Why are we working in co-ops?

Elaine Nesterick, Madison, Wisconsin: The biggest reason I'm still working in co-ops after 7 or 8 years is because they have made the most impact on my life. The way I see the world today is a result of my experience in coops. I didn't come to coops with a political goal. I developed my sense of power out of my experience in coops. My personal power and the feeling of collective power I have with other. We need to open that possibility for a much wider group of people.

Keith Jardine, Vancouver, British Columbia: What gives you faith and keeps you going is that you know what happened to yourself. I saw this happen to myself, too. It sustains my faith, too. Where co-ops are effective are where they provide an actual personal experience.

Tony Vellela, New York City: The women's movement was able to overcome an extremely diverse group of people and they only had one thing in common. The women's movement showed women they could take control over their lives. They could actualize themselves. Co-ops should try to do the same thing.

Wayne Clark, Austin, Texas: I came to coops from political organizations. What sucked me in, in terms of changing my head, was to go to a meeting and somebody right off the bat wanted to know who I was and what I thought on this issue. It happened to me and I've seen it happen to other people. That is the reason I really push process in meetings.

Paul Freundlich, New Haven, Connecticut: How I got involved was through living with other people. I had a fairly decent political analysis, but I hadn't figured out how I could apply it to my life. When I started to live communally, eight years ago in New Haven, it took me about three months to be reached deeply...to admit this was how I wanted to live. This felt right...a kind of openness with others, a flow in my life...more hopeful as a way to continue growing.

And once we had our personal trip together in our house, the next thing was how to keep the economics together so we could continue to grow. I started reaching out to other communal groups and organizing coops, because that was the next obvious step. To me it's very much taking on whatever is possible...building a world around ourselves, making it as consistent as possible. But also carrying a head with a more general political analysis so we keep linking up with other people.

Keith: We organize for social change but we're into business and sometimes our priorities get muddled. When does service take priority over why we are doing it? There is a constant shift back and forth: emphasize the process of working collectively for a while, then realize the economic reality of not putting out a quality service. The pendulum swings the other way to focus on the quality of service provided, and the process suffers.

Brian Livingston, Eugene, Oregon: In a lot of ways, new wave coops have failed to show their best side to the people of the community. In the rural area where I am from, coop stores didn't go anywhere. Groups of five or so families buying all of their food together and cutting their cheese once a week. The people had fun, which is good. But they didn't want a coop, they wanted cheap food. But if you just provide cheap food that is not what we're about. Education and social change is what we're trying to do.

Tony: It really points out a basic contradiction I don't think we talk enough about. We expect to organize and bring people into a system which sells itself on less expensive goods or services. At the same time we are committed to the idea that if it is better (like organic food), then maybe it should cost more. We are telling people that they should be willing to pay more, but we're also telling them it is okay for them to come in through cheap food. It is a contradiction people see through all the time.

Brian: On the other hand you have a coop which deals with that contradiction, and is economically successful, and still has problems. There is one in Seattle that has 15,000 members and is possibly on the way to becoming another Berkeley Coop with several branches. Their manager is so far away from the base of the coop that it is impossible to educate that many people or have any sense of relatedness.

Elaine: Is it feasible to be involved in business and social change at the same time? One of my ultimate frustrations about working at Common Market (a food coop in Madison) was that most of my energy - 75 to 80 percent of my paid time - went into business. That happened no matter how much I wanted to spend time on education, social change, planning, or reflection.

Gary: I don't think these things are mutually exclusive: social change and good business; social change and competitive prices; good business and relatedness. A major problem is we haven't gotten the business together. The result is we are inefficient and we don't have time for anything but getting food on the shelves. We need to learn our skills and organize ourselves. What I find exciting about social change today is the connection between appropriate technology, community organizing, alternative energy, anti-nukes, etc. I see we are coming together to meet certain needs the community has.

Elaine: I think we as people in coops do a great deal to bring these things together. I think we have to do it. Define what our role is to social change - our relationship to agribusiness and the food industry.

Brian: For me, the overriding goal is that people need to have some control over their world. People need to learn certain things and have certain experiences. With other people constantly making decisions for them they can't make mistakes and grow.

What I think's important for coops is that somebody can walk in and for the first time have a structure which supports them in making choices.

Gary: Wheatsville Food Coop is an example. It was started to show that a staff could work for the members, that there could be a dialogue between staff and members. To show that people can delegate responsibility to a staff they trust and have the staff accountable to them.

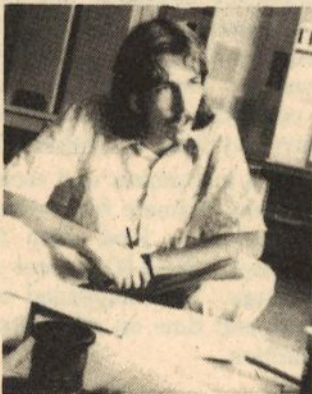
The revolutionary things coops do is empower - giving people knowledge that they can gain control over their lives; that they can trust each other; that other people can work for them and be accountable.



Elaine



Brian



Gary



Paul

Keith: There is work which is not satisfying, not enjoyable, frustrating to do. Doing something which is extremely tedious and has little tangible results is not rewarding. I was delivering mail for a long time. It was really high pressured and alienating. I had to handle a lot of paper which literally cracked my hands so they would be bleeding by the end of the day. That was a social need. But it was really a drag.

Elaine: I believe that any kind of work can be organized in such a way as not to be alienating. Either by not spending all of your time doing one task, or else organizing it in a different way so that the relationships between people are good and rewarding.

Gary: A lot of the problem though is our inability to spread the work out. In our communities are people who would enjoy doing almost any kind of work.

I don't see it as particularly individualistic to be selective in choosing where we work. Doing things we don't feel comfortable doing ungrounds us. It pulls us out of process.

Elaine: I guess the question for me is whether I should have the right to decide for myself what I do.

Gary: If you don't, who does?

Elaine: Not the right, but tactically whether it's correct, or whether collectively it should be based on what needs to be done.

Paul: If you have the peers who you can sit down with and say, "This needs to be done," and then divide the labor, that's great. That's how it works for us mostly doing the magazine. But in a lot of working groups I've been a part of, we just didn't have that level of commitment to a common vision. In that situation, if we had a political commitment to collectivity, it could get really crazy. I reached a point a few years ago where I could hardly go to the bathroom without asking four other people if it was okay.

Keith: If you have peers making collective decisions and checking priorities in a larger context, that's great.

Jimmy Pryor, Austin, Texas: But the final goal is not for a few people who work at coops to feel good. Is it going beyond this? We need to think of the next step.

Paul: I think of Austin Community Project (a dissolved federation of coops, collectives and organic farms in Central Texas). A number of people were at the center of that work. They got a really strong hit of empowerment. For people like Gary, Wayne and Jimmy it did provide the vehicle for taking the next step to wider social, economic and political involvement. But for a lot of people who were slightly involved, when it came down to hard work to develop a surplus for social change, cheap food wasn't enough to motivate them. They didn't care enough.

I see the limitation of coops as - How many people can you give a strong hit of empowerment to? How much responsibility and authority can be spread and still be efficient?

Gary: Coops first empower people. The next step is to change social relationships...the way we relate to each other. The third step is to institutionalize these values.

Paul: It's an organic process. We start off with an idea of how social and economic relationships *should* work. How people *could be* individually and collectively responsible, and we design an institution - coops, collectives, communities. Then we *do* it, and all the people who go through that experience are changed. As we change, we take what we've learned about how things do work...something, I hope...and redesign the institutions so the social and economic relationships work better.

We try to broaden the class and race, dealing with the contradictions within society. We keep moving and making connections and addressing whatever we can. It's a very natural process, but you need to keep the core; caring about the people you live and work with. I don't think we can organize just out of what's wrong with society: we need to have our lives and communities together and organize out of that.

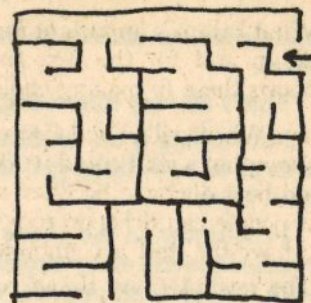
How far can coops take us? I think if we build them as part of our communities...see the development as a whole... But really, I think we have to just keep finding out. For sure, we have a long way to go. □

Networking or Don't Get Fazed by the Maze

by Paul Freundlich

*What is this thing called networking,
this funny thing of which I'm thinking?*

-popular song of the 80's



No doubt some people came to CCA for the travel, and some just to assimilate all that good information. But for many of us, we came representing our coops or organizations, but already quite aware of some of the issues, projects and people. That translated into acting as resource people and facilitators for workshops, but it also meant it was a working meeting - working the net of people and projects - exploring potential and connections. If you think Ann Evans of the California Department of Consumer Affairs, Joe Hanskenecht of League Insurance, Stu Kohl of NASCO and Shanti Frye of ACTION (to name a few) are just paper-pushing bureaucrats, you're wrong. These folks have a glint in their eye for the ever-present possibility of cooperative development. I mean let's just be glad they're on our side.

It turns out that most of us who've been working to change society at any level of complexity have been busy, little *networkers*, whatever we called it. At the CCA meeting, however, the *concept* of networking was conspicuous by the mystification it evoked. Here's some thoughts about the relation of networking to community and cooperative social change in general, and the CCA meeting in particular:

In an environment as complex as ours the choices are between chaos and rigidity, or humane situations; rhetoric and dogma, or intuition backed by information and analysis. Face it, folks, unless we completely remove ourselves from the society, we're going to be, at best, restructuring with the same materials: telephone and sewer lines, highways and buildings, governments and money.

What we do with this technological patrimony is at the edge of our vision. Decentralization and democratization of the auto makers, airlines and bureaucracies are better understood through utopian fiction, than understandable from present circumstance. Neighborhoods, rural communities, coops and collectives is about the state of the art. Even there we have a hard time maintaining both trust and competence.

Suddenly we're projected into large-scale food distribution; both challenged and intimidated by the promise of a coop bank. Which brings us back to networking. Beginning with what we already know something about - the communities and coops in which we center our lives, subject to our own rules, expectations and cultural assumptions - how do we take the next steps into a more complex future? How are we aware of the possibilities for learning, coalition or synergy? How without building empires, can we develop the linkages (thank you, Robert Theobald) or federations capable of realizing economies of scale sufficient for economic and political survival? How can we preserve a

sense of social justice, without becoming rigid and dogmatic as we strike a nervous balance with the values of the society at large?

Finally, understanding that none of these questions admit of total solutions right now, is there a way to describe the informal process which precedes any decision to create ongoing, purposeful structures for social change?

Lately I've been giving some thought to the metaphor of the *rat race*. Thinking of the mazes most people run, so carefully constructed over the generations *for our own good*. What can we do besides muddle through or give up?

The political answer is that we move the walls around; the social planner's that we cut some new doors and close some old ones; the revolutionary that we blow the walls out. The schools say the maze is worth learning, and at the end lies happiness; the media that the walls are made of marble and the path is paved with gold. The psychological answer is to be helped to find our way back to the beginning (the Hansel and Gretel solution) and thus to be free; the spiritual that if we can divest ourselves of our egos, our bodies will not be far behind, at which point the maze becomes largely irrelevant. The cooperative answer is that we get together within the maze, and by working together, create our own reality.

Well, here's another: The networker climbs the wall and finds you can walk on it. Further, we find others up there; that we can talk to each other and share a perspective.

But do we stay there?

A self-enclosed system of networkers is of little interest as pulling an individual disappearing act; as absurd as thinking that blowing out the walls will relieve the need for structure; as limited as forgetting that if we did get back to the beginning, we'd still confront the same maze; as helpless as cooperative community building within an uncongenial political, economic and social environment.

So it comes to networking being one of the functions of an intelligent engagement with the human condition in a complex society. Those of us who do it well spend an inordinate amount of time running back and forth in the maze, climbing up and down walls, shouting and cajoling across apparent divisions. Occasionally our perspective allows us a few short cuts; occasionally we dismantle a few walls; sometimes we get so high we think we're flying; sometimes we fall off a ladder during transitions. Always we try to remember there seemed to be a reason for the walls in the first place - speculate about what that was, and the extent to which any of us are ready to live without boundaries, in total open communication and exchange.

We can use our learning to educate; to map the maze

and define our choices; to say in a final and spiritual sense, we are the maze.

That's all very interesting, but so what?

Networking is an art form, not a science. That's not to say it isn't critical to how-things-get-done, or that it doesn't take consistency and hard work.

I could stay on the phone or travel the rest of my life. By the time I reached the end of my circuit, not only would I be back at the beginning with enough fresh material to begin again, but I'd have added enough potentially interesting contacts to double the net.

Now what would I be doing besides supporting Ma Bell? I'd be passing information, making connections and developing projects. A good networker is like a good computer programmer hooked to a point of view. All of which develops over time.

We're operating out of our own context, experience and knowledge. Shifting between being formal and accountable representatives of projects, organizers involved in possible synergies, brokers for good works, and individuals capable of putting our own energy on the line.

At CCA I was representing Communities Magazine; looking for synergies with the New England Cooperative Training Institute; passing information for the Federation of Egalitarian Communities, a coop insurance plan with International Group Plans, New School for Democratic Management, etc., etc.; committing my personal energies as a workshop leader and resource person.

At CCA, much of the networking action centered around the Coop Bank, as the most promising, accessible, and appropriate pot of potential, but there was plenty left for federations, synergy, merger and consolidation; NCAT, HUD, CETA, HEW programs; new developments and useful models of organization and management.

"Who do you talk to in...if you need...?" "...is doing something similar, you should talk to..." "CETA won't fund that, but...got funding through...for something similar." "We're doing...and if we could get together with..., maybe the three of us could rough out a proposal we could bring back to our groups?" "I like that aspect of what you're doing and think our readers would, too. Would you be up for writing an article?" "Maybe I could visit?" "I could commit a week if it got rolling." "Let's see where it is next year."

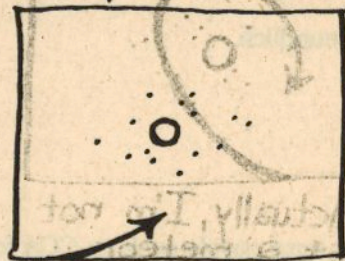
At some point, to accomplish something, we need more formal relationships to deal with these possibilities. One limitation is complexity (how much can we keep together without formal understandings and channels?) another is trust (as power and money become more significant, can we trust and be trusted without formal and structural accountability?). Trust can succeed formality, but rests on experience: Networking can precede formality because the issues are speculative. Up to a certain point, we're just talkin'.

At various points cheese does need to get wrapped, tax returns filed, magazines typeset, money changes hands, goods are purchased, houses built...and shared. Each of these actions requires different levels and kinds of formality.

But the transitions do seem to be happening in a reasonably organic fashion. At some point, Mark Looney does become the official representative of CCA to the Bank Implementation Commission; relationships which were tentative and personal are considered collectively and organizationally. At a speculative stage it's important to have centers like CCA which coordinate the networking for organizations, and provide a meeting ground for individuals. At a speculative stage it seems critical to exchange visions and get to know each other before building more formal coalitions, organizations and programs.

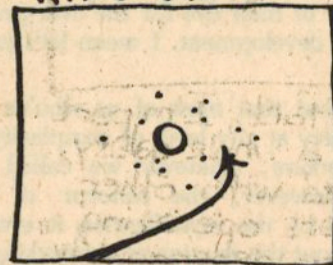
Mostly we're people, dealing with friends we respect. Playing within the boundaries of an economic, political and social system which

no kidding
"Whoeee! That's one spicy meatball."



"Hi, folks."

"Hey, it talks. What talent!"



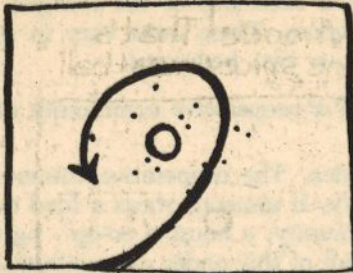
"Nice little system you've got here."

"You sure are a nice addition. How'd you like to stick around, meteor?"



"I do find you all very attractive, but I have my own path."

"No kidding!"

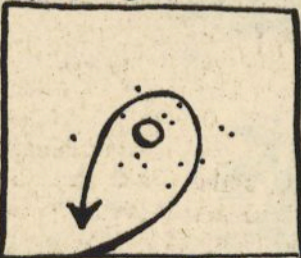


"Actually, I'm not just a meteor... I'm a star myself."



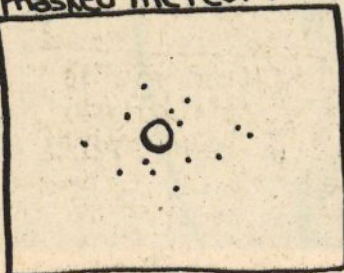
"In fact, I'm part of a whole galaxy, filled with other stars operating interdependently."

"Wow, a collective universe!"



"See you, folks. I'll pass on word of your existence."

"Who was that masked meteor?"



finds our pretensions mostly irrelevant. But if we're short of the stage of major social intervention, we're well beyond demonstrating in the streets because that's our only option.

Our point of view has to do with being small, and the intuition that's valuable. How to be small, humane and not powerless? Reach out. Know your friends. Look out for each other. Share possibilities. Serve ourselves, each other, our communities as best we can, taking our turns being grocery clerks, counselors, administrators, editors, cooks and parents.

In Israel I was visiting a kibbutz, passed a man pushing a wheelbarrow, thought "That could be a cabinet minister," as that could be us, doing our chores, taking care of business.

The particular quality of our networking is that we maintain a core or center of experience which both sustains and legitimizes us as community people. I can bop around the country, or mouth off in "Communities", because I've put in my time and continue to as a local organizer/participant; I live communally, help put out our community calendar, facilitate cooperative housing meetings, do my food coop shifts, be a single parent and try to be a good friend.

Mark Ritchie and Gary Newton both were at the New School for Democratic Management session in Minneapolis before coming to Madison, but eventually they go back to Earthwork, a resource center in San Francisco and Austin Urban Alternatives, a neighborhood organizing project in Austin. Edna Turner, between being president of CCA and member of the board of Mid-Eastern, is a full-time worker in the Port Washington (NY) Food Coop. Mark Looney goes from his bank bill maneuverings to local business development through Strongforce in Adams-Morgan.

So when I visit Brian Livingston in Eugene, Oregon, the visit is on two levels. One is sharing the excitement of local involvement - in this case, CAREL, the northwest regional information and organizing project Brian is part of, is putting on Community Village, a bevy of booths on alternatives, within the Oregon Country Fair. For three days I participate as a staff person, learn and share. On that level I'm operating as another conference and event organizer, comparing my experience in New Haven and Another Place Farm. Comparing notes means mutual learning: I get to experience his world, he gets a different perspective.

Second, over a period of several days, we exchange the big and small-time projects we're working on separately; feeling out the possibilities of mutual work, offering direction and feedback. Out comes our long-delayed, traveling alternative circus; a national networking meeting between regional alternative groups; magazine distribution, the bank bill, NCAT update... We're building a framework of understandings which will get passed on and developed when I see Ann Evans in Sacramento or David Morris in Washington, D.C. - when David comes to the Northwest - when mutually known third parties meet - a growing analysis, worldview, set of values and preparation for action shared by a widening network of cooperatively/community-minded human beings.

It's a little like becoming kin. You mix your blood as you've visited each other's home base. You understand each other's language because you've spoken it. Understand the intuitive balance of each other's lives. How loving and working and playing; building and resting; going outward and inward can coexist.

The net is made up of:

- real environments made real by a history of commitment and energy
- the potential we create for mutually supportive development
- the people we are and the loving and respectful communication we conduct on the phone, through the mails, as we visit, and at moments of intentional concentration, like CCA, 1978, Madison, Wisconsin. □

Creating the Future

A Conversation with Jim Wyker

by Gary Newton

As the CCA Institute came to an end I sat down with Jim Wyker, to talk about his vision for a cooperative community. Jim is a rugged 77 year old co-operator from Berea, Kentucky who looks like he is in his fifties. He has been working with co-ops since his late teens.

What amazed me about our conversation was the similarities between his vision for a new cooperative community in Appalachia, the Rochdale Pioneers vision for Cooperative Villages over a hundred years ago, and my own vision for a self-reliant neighborhood in Austin, Texas. Although we're fifty years apart in age, Jim and I are very similar. We're both dreamers trying to actualize our dreams.

Jim: I've been interested in Appalachia for 50 years. I've studied their various impediments and obstructions... I thought the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was going to take care of them, but TVA is in the hands of big bosses instead of the people, so it didn't do it... It has to be built on the local people and resources. No way Washington can do it. If our community can use local wealth, local intelligence, local leadership, local planning, and local land to lift ourselves by our own bootstraps, then anyplace in Appalachia can do the same.

GHN: Where did you get the idea for a cooperative community as a solution for Appalachia's problem?

The immediate background of the thing came out of the Moshavs in Israel. Twenty years ago I was visiting, twice living, on Moshav communities. This was the best self-help community I've ever seen. I've been back a couple of times to study the Moshavs. We are trying to establish the first American Moshav - self-managed, self-owned, self-generating.

When did you start trying to get other people interested in starting an American Moshav?

In 1974 we built 27 low income houses... Immediately these old people in the community said let's get a retirement home. I said I wouldn't get a retirement home, but I would help get a whole community. I had a Moshav in mind. There would be a retirement section in this community. Now after four years they are warming up to my idea. They had to fail on a community retirement home by itself, before they got interested in the community as a whole.

Jim, Would you describe the Moshav for us?

Moshav is physically a mile round. Around this circle are houses where crews and their families live. In one area of the circle is a dense compound for the elderly. It is designed as an octagon building large enough to accommodate the community services including: crafts, fooding, medical

care, garden, library, recreation, spiritual inducement; the whole of elderly lives. On each side of the octagon is a twelve unit apartment house. These units vary in size - efficiencies, one bedroom, two bedrooms.

How does your vision of a cooperative community differ from existing coops?

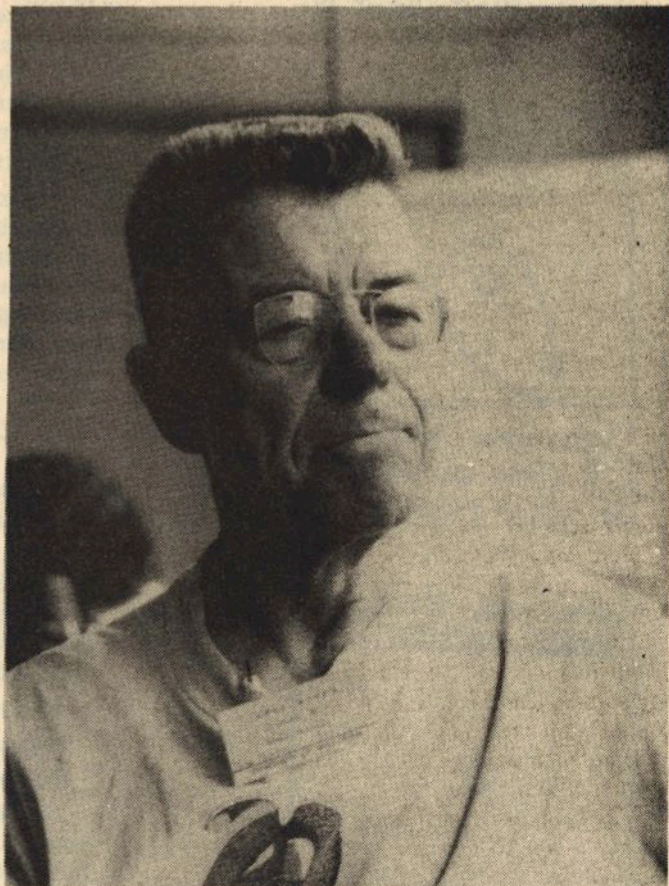
We are innovating an idea. The cooperative community will be a total community. If someone starts a food co-op they have a partial community; a housing co-op - partial. We're going to package all of this under one umbrella - a multipurpose co-op...vitality and life and initiative and innovation. These are words we have to put back into the future of co-ops. Most coopers aren't even dreaming of these things yet... We don't remember how the Rochdale Pioneers launched this thing with a lot of ideas, reality, and practice.

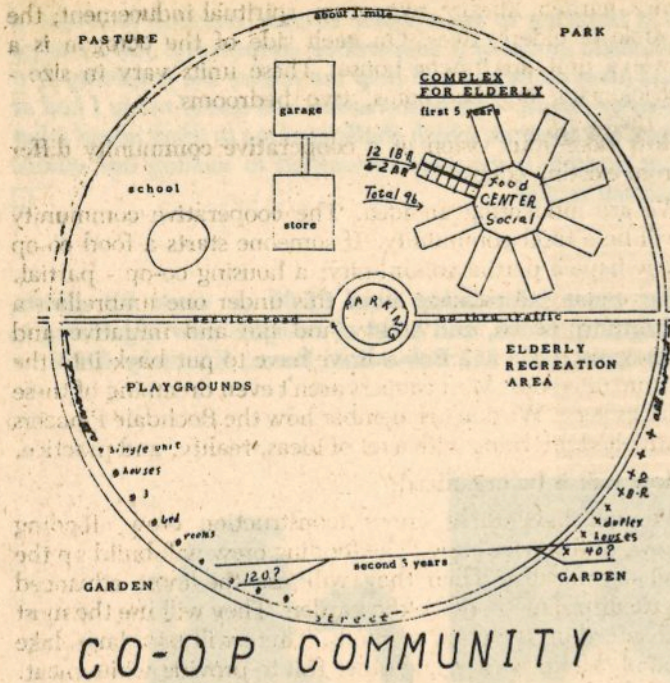
How will it be organized?

We will have three crews...construction crew, fooding crew, and service crew. The fooding crew will build up the soil organically. Then they will use the most advanced agricultural methods for the garden. They will use the most advanced preservation methods. There will be a large lake full of the finest carp and other fish to provide white meat. The food program includes not only vegetable and fish but it includes fruits. The third crew will be the service crew. They will handle the shuttle buses and car rentals, financial matters, ordering, selling, capitalization, patronage funds, credit, the health program, education. Almost all of the vision will come from the service crew. They are the brains of the whole thing.

Describe some of the technology you're going to use.

We can heat 47 percent with solar in our area. We're





FEATURES - Shape of Tomorrow
 producer and consumer - holistic
 mutual aid and finance - self-reliant
 ecology, conservation, compost
 intermediate technology - economy
 open membership - people first
 intentional lifestyle - education
 land trust - refund net gain

ENERGY MISER:

solar, all units compost
 toilets, no water
 pedestrian travel, local
 recycle water, for irrigation
 fuel alternatives to gas
 maybe mules for draft
 organic fertilizer, green manure

We have designed our co-op community, 250 families, 100 acres, young and old, our own crews for fooding and construction and services. Land trusts, full employment, no inflation, and an affirmative action

**THE ANSWERS DO NOT DERIVE FROM WASHINGTON.
 PEOPLE MUST PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN
 EMANCIPATION**

investigating supplementing the solar with heat pumps. The only alternative to that is fireplaces - no gas, no oil, no coal. The second thing is the dry toilet. It saves half the water. This is nature's way of disposing of human waste. We will take the water off the main complex and have enough wash water for the whole community. We'll collect the water on the roof, put it in cisterns, pump it back to the house for washing clothes, bodies, dishes, pick it up again out of the drain pipe, run it through a filter; put it in the lake for our fish, swimming, boating. From the lake it goes to the garden which is at the bottom. So what we have done is recycle the water three times.

They are talking about water all over Appalachia. How do we get water? There is enough water on the top of the houses to supply all of the water we need if you use dry toilets. And of course HUD and the rest of them don't even want to look at them. But they are going to have to. What we are doing is setting an example of how to do these things so people will scream to the heavens that they want them.

How are you going to finance your vision?

Our finance plan is original. We are saying you shouldn't separate the old people and the young people and the children. If you don't, the probability is that the old people in most places are going to have a few resources they have laid up. At least they have a home and a little income. We have them transfer the whole package to the retirement section. They pay for the units they will live in, which won't cost as much as they will get for their present property. They only occupy $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ as much space because of all of the public space. The rest they invest in the community credit union at 6 percent. The young fellows on the crews borrow this money at 6 percent rather than 9 percent. That is the difference which broke the camel's back in the economic system. There is also a surplus of money from the crews. The crews are going to get more money than they need and

we're asking them to put their surplus in the credit union. Between the old folks generating capital beyond the cost of the house, and the young people generating capital for the cost of the house, we're going to build up our capital in about ten years. This will cover about ten years of development.

Instead of all these workers having a capitalist ripoff they get 100 percent of their produce, because no one else can get it. Instead of consumers being ripped off by obsolescence and excess prices, they get a fair price. Therefore they have more money to invest in the total enterprise.

How are you going to get the money to start the project?

We're trying to get 20 people who will give a \$1,000 advance. That is more than enough for the down payment on the land. After that, payment on the land will come from people buying units. The 40 people who can pay in advance will have enough money to take care of many other front end expenses. We put this in to the credit union branch of Co-op, Inc. - just like in a bank. These people then have a priority on units because they have already bought their land share.

How will people of the community relate?

In the big dining room there will be a big community meal every day, taking in not only old people, but all the people around the ring. Everybody will eat there. This is a daily two hour ritual for the community where business and community is discussed, consensus reached. There will also be places for speakers, films, dramas, and explanations of interesting things. The purpose of this second hour at noon is so these old people as well as these young people don't go dry. They keep alive, alert. They keep living - they need inspiration. Therefore you can't separate the old people from the middle aged people, the young people, or the children. You have to keep them together. This is something the retirement homes have not recognized at all. They cut up community instead of compacting community.

up community instead of compacting community.

Where are you on this project now?

We're dickering for the 4th time on the farm we want first. And we're dickering the second time on the next farms. We don't know whether any of these farms will come through. This thing could fall completely flat for lack of land.

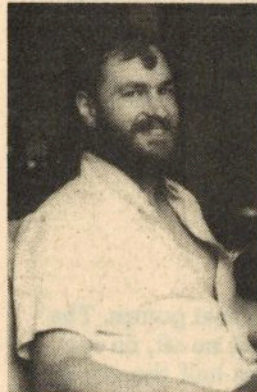
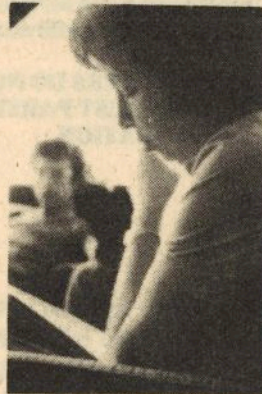
How many people are involved now?

We have 20 people right now who are actively involved. We also have the organization incorporated as CO-OPERS, INC. This will be the parent organization under which the others will be set up.

Jim, I wish you the best of luck.

It is inspiring to see a senior co-oper working to create a wholistic model of a cooperative community. Jim's energy and ideas excite me and help me realize the feasibility of a positive future. This conversation was one of many I had at the CCA Institute which challenged me to think about what was possible if we were committed to making our visions become reality. □

For more information send \$1.00 or more for charts, diagrams, forms, and a list of co-ops now organizing to Co-ops, Inc., 111 Bob-o-link, Berea, Kentucky 40403

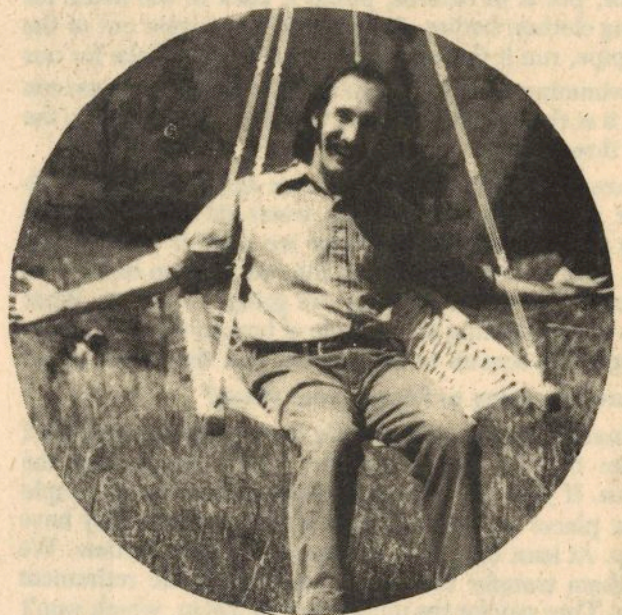


Integrate Your Life in an Intentional Community

Twin Oaks is a community -

- where work is never more than a stone's throw away
- where titles are never used - or needed
- where appropriate technology is an ever increasing part of our lifestyle
- where self-sufficiency means we are able to support ourselves by our own internal industries
- where dishes, child care and laundry are a part of our 45 hour work week
- where excitement is watching our community grow and being active participants in its planning

BEAT THE SYSTEM: JOIN OURS



We, at Twin Oaks Community, invite you to come live with us. Write for visitor information:

**Visitor Manager C
Twin Oaks Community
Louisa, Virginia 23093**

3 the BANK

Report

by Bill Lundberg

The passage of the National Consumer's Cooperative Bank Act by the 97th Congress and its subsequent signing into law by President Carter presents unique opportunities and problems for both young and old consumer cooperatives in this country. It may also be the first major test of the growing cooperation between *new wave* and *established* co-ops.

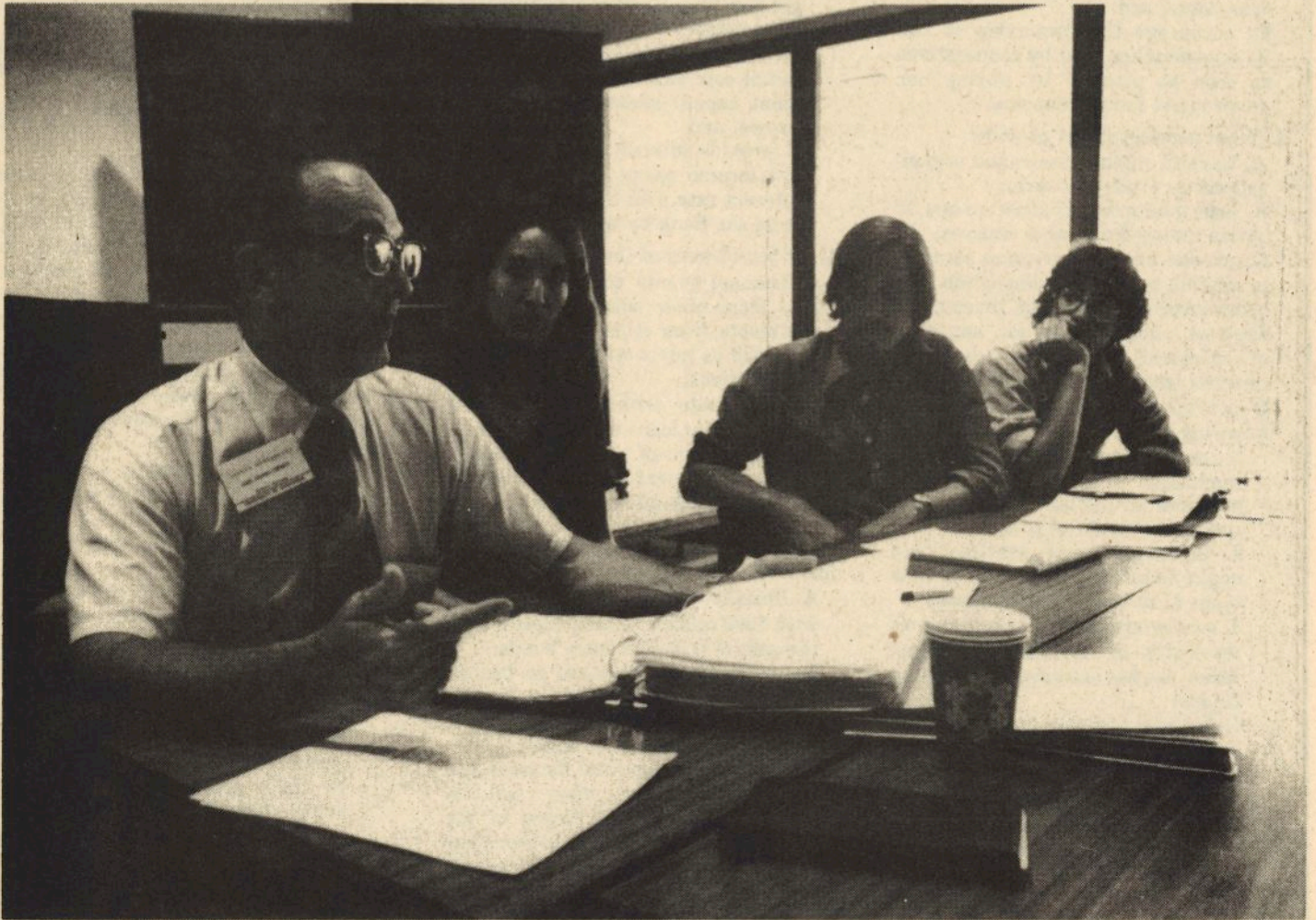
The Co-op Bank Bill will loan money and provide technical assistance. A self-help development fund will subsidize interest or loans for low-income co-ops. The Bank will initially be capitalized by a U.S. Treasury investment of \$300 million of seed money.

As co-ops borrow money from the Bank and repay those loans, they will be required to invest in equity shares of the Bank. Thus, capital investment by the co-ops will gradually replace government seed capital and shift the ownership and control of the Bank from the government to the cooperatives and their members.

The Bank's seed capital concept is patterned after the Farm Credit System, which developed in the same way with government seed capital in the '30's, saving thousands of family farms from foreclosure during the Depression. The Farm Credit System has paid back all government seed capital and is now completely owned and controlled by farm co-ops and their members. It has grown to become one of the world's largest independently owned banking systems, loaning over \$33 billion to farmers and their cooperatives in 1977.

Lack of credit and technical assistance have traditionally been two of the major roadblocks to ongoing consumer cooperative development in this country. They have been two of the prime reasons why cooperators in this country have found themselves developing from scratch in *new* and *old* waves of grass roots co-op development with intervening troughs of dissolution and bankruptcy since the 1840's. The last trough of dissolution, which occurred with World War II, the post war boom, the advent of supermarket technology, the co-ops' corresponding inability to find capital, and McCarthyism; separated the present wave of cooperative development from the previous wave of the 30's.

Many European cooperative movements have developed steadily since the mid-1800's because they have not been legally restricted from receiving capital from cooperative credit sources. Sweden's consumer cooperative movement is 85 percent internally financed. It has had access to its



member' capital through co-op savings accounts within the cooperative, as well as member investment and employee pension funds. This access to capital, plus good educational and technical assistance, has helped the Swedish movement grow steadily since the 1860's. Today it controls nearly 18 percent of the country's retail trade, sets the price and quality standards for the entire economy and has a large, progressive, democratic impact on Sweden's economy and society, while still being controlled democratically by the masses of its members.

Access to the capital and technical assistance through the Bank is no cure-all for the problems of co-ops in the U.S.A.

The opportunities for unparalleled growth may also bring with them considerable problems. Many newer co-ops, and some of the older ones whose primary emphasis has been on participation and community, have been reared on Schumacher and the Club of Rome's Report on the Limits of Growth. They see the availability of capital and technical assistance for growth as an anathema. Growth to them raises spectres of power and control.

In the past few years, new wave co-ops have begun taking their relationship with established cooperatives more seriously. In turn, they have been taken more seriously by the older co-ops, and signs of increased communication and

SYNOPSIS OF CO-OP BANK

I. Purpose:

- A. encourage the development of new and existing cooperatives eligible for its assistance by providing specialized credit and technical assistance;
- B. maintain broad-based control of the Bank by its voting stockholders;
- C. encourage broad-based ownership, control, and active participation by members in eligible cooperatives;
- D. assist in improving the quality and availability of goods and services to consumers; and
- E. encourage the ownership of the Bank to be taken over by cooperatives as soon as possible by buying our government initial financing.

II. What services it can provide:

- A. loans to eligible co-ops and organizations up to 40 year term;
- B. loan guarantee to allow co-ops to obtain money from other sources;
- C. provide financially-related services to eligible co-ops: includes credit and other insurance, tax help, investment analysis, equipment rental, appraisal of collateral and estates, business analysis, computer services;
- D. provide technical assistance (TA) in following areas:

- 1. organizational assistance: dissemination of information on best practices in organization, financing and management of co-ops;
- 2. investigate new services that might be offered by co-ops, or new types of co-ops to be organized;
- 3. survey areas for investigation of feasibility of establishing co-ops, make market surveys for existing co-ops;
- 4. financial analysis: analyze capital structure, cost of operations, etc. for co-ops who apply to Bank;
- 5. management training and assistance: train staff and board members in effective management techniques specifically for co-ops;
- 6. conduct membership studies and

provide membership education services;

7. provide programs for informing consumers and general public of the advantages of cooperative action;

8. coordinate and help make available to co-ops programs of other government agencies with programs relevant to co-ops.

E. Self-Help Program: under this program, the bank will be able to:

- 1. supply capital through taking equity or through repayable grant to low-income co-op so it will be able to be financially secure enough to get loan from Bank or other sources. This capital advance will be available both to newly forming co-ops as initial capitalization and to supplement capital structure of existing co-ops; and
- 2. provide interest supplements to low income co-ops that will lower interest rate paid by co-op on loans from the Bank by up to 4 percent.

III. Other Powers of the Bank:

- A. channel grants to co-ops, accept gifts from other sources, accept investments from other financial sources, such as international cooperative organizations;
- B. participate with other financial institutions in loans and guarantees;
- C. modify terms of loans, interest and capital supplements as needed; and
- D. open branch offices.

IV. How the Bank will be capitalized and financed:

- A. Initially, the Bank will be provided with \$300 million in seed capital from the sale of U.S. Treasury bonds;
- B. the Bank is authorized to borrow from private financial sources (including co-ops) an amount up to 10 times the initial government capital;
- C. as co-ops borrow from the Bank and repay these loans, they will be required to invest in shares of the Bank. Thus, this equity held by co-ops will gradually replace the government capital and shift ownership and control

to co-ops and their members.

V. How the Bank will be controlled:

- A. Decision making power for the Bank is vested in a 13 member board of directors, who will oversee both the lending and Self Help/TA operations;
- B. initially, the 13 member board will be appointed by President Carter; seven of these board members will represent relevant federal government agencies, and six will be from cooperative enterprises;
- C. as government capital is replaced by co-op equity, co-ops will begin to elect more and more members on the board, until they finally elect all but one member; and

D. the Director of the Self-Help/TA section of the Bank will remain a presidential appointee.

VI. Who is eligible for Bank loans and services?

- A. As stated in the bill, an eligible cooperative is an organization chartered or operated on a cooperative, not-for-profit basis for producing or furnishing goods, services or facilities, primarily for the benefit of its members or voting stockholders who are ultimate consumers of such goods, services, or facilities, or a legally chartered entity owned and controlled by any such organization or organizations, if it -

- 1. makes such goods, services or facilities directly or indirectly available to its members or voting stockholders on a not-for-profit basis;
- 2. does not pay dividends on voting stock or membership capital in excess of such percentage per annum as may be approved under the bylaws of the Bank;
- 3. provides that its net savings shall be allocated or distributed to all members or patrons, in proportion to their patronage, or shall be retained for the actual or potential expansion of its services or the reduction of its charges to the patrons, or for such other purposes

cooperation have developed. The distribution of Co-op label goods by new wave co-ops in the east and west; increased representation by the new wave on the boards of the regional cooperative wholesale societies, the Consumers Cooperative Alliance's board, at jointly organized conferences and training programs, have all shown indications of increased understanding and cooperation between new and established co-ops.

With these developments, fears of non-representation and patronism have begun to fade. But, many within the new wave co-ops retain a sceptical attitude about cooperation with larger and older cooperatives, particularly the

Cooperative League, whose board is dominated by representatives of the agricultural, producer co-ops.

The passage of the act has stemmed from the efforts of a broad-based Bank Bill task force, established by CLUSA (the Cooperative League of the U.S.A., the umbrella organization of all the cooperatives in this country). The task force drafted the bill, pushed it through Congress, and organized the lobbying efforts around the country. The work of the task force is now complete and it has been dissolved.

The writing of the regulations for the Bank and the development of its programs will go a long way in

as may be authorized by its membership not inconsistent with its purposes;

4. makes membership available on a voluntary basis, without any social, political, racial, or religious discrimination and without and discrimination on the basis of age, sex, or marital status, to all persons who can make use of its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, subject only to limitations under applicable Federal or State laws or regulations;

5. in the case of primary cooperative organizations restricts its voting control to members or voting stockholders on a one vote per person basis and takes positive steps to insure economic democracy and maximum participation by members of the cooperative including the holding of annual meetings and, in the case of organizations owned by groups of cooperatives, provides positive protections to insure economic democracy; and

6. is not a credit union, mutual savings bank, or mutual savings and loan association.

B. No organization shall be ineligible because it produces, markets, or furnishes goods, services, or facilities on behalf of its members as primary producers, unless the dollar volume on loans made by the Bank to such organizations exceeds 10 percent of the gross assets of the Bank.

C. An eligible cooperative which also has been determined to be eligible for credit assistance from the Rural Electrification Administration, the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation, the Rural Telephone Bank, the Banks for Cooperatives or other institutions of the Farm Credit System, or the Farmers Home Administration may receive the assistance authorized by this Act only

1. if the Bank determines that a request for assistance from any such source or sources has been rejected

or denied solely because of the unavailability of funds from such source or sources, or

2. by agreement between the Bank and the agency or agencies involved.

The architects of the legislation here intended the eligibility requirements to be sufficiently flexible so as to include both producer and consumer cooperatives, and most collectively owned and operated businesses should qualify as producer co-ops.

D. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a credit union serving predominantly low-income members (as defined by the Administrator of the National Credit Union Administration) may receive technical assistance

VII. Lending Powers, Interest, and Repayment Rules of the Bank:

A. the Bank may make loans, or participate in loans with other financial institutions or guarantee loans to eligible co-ops (defined above) if it determines that the applicant has or will have a sound organizational and financial structure, income in excess of its operating costs and assets in excess of its obligations, and a reasonable expectation of a continuing demand for its production, goods, commodities, or services, or the use of its facilities, so that the loan will be fully repayable in accordance with its terms and conditions.

B. Thirty five percent of the Bank's capital is targeted for loans to low-income co-ops. As stated in the Act: The Board of Directors shall use its best efforts to insure that at the end of each fiscal year of the Bank at least 35 percent of its outstanding loans are to

1. cooperatives at least a majority of the members of which are low-income persons, and

2. other cooperatives, if the proceeds of such loans are directly applied to finance a facility, activity, or service that the Board finds will be used predominantly by low-

income persons.

C. Until 1983, housing co-ops may make unrestricted applications to the Bank. Commencing on October 1, 1983, the Bank shall not make any loan to a cooperative for the purpose of financing the construction, ownership, acquisition, or improvement of any structure used primarily for residential purposes if, after giving effect to such a loan, the aggregate amount of all loans outstanding for such purpose would exceed 30 percent of the gross assets of the Bank.

D. Loans cannot carry a term of more than 40 years, and pre-payments of the loan must include both interest due and some repayment of the principal of the loan, except for those with a term of less than 5 years.

E. Interest rates on loans are required to be kept as low as possible, taking into account the interest rate the Bank will have to pay on its capital (initially Treasury bonds) plus its operating expenses and outlays for TA, etc. Current forecast of rates, based on the experience of Farm Coop Bank is that they will run one half to three quarter percent over the cost of Treasury bonds, currently 9.25 to 9.5 percent, so initial rates on bank loans will be in the range of 9 1/4 to 10 percent annually.

F. The Bank has the power to make variable interest rate loans.

G. The Bank must assess, as one of its criteria in the loan approval process, the impact of the co-op loan on existing small businesses in the area.

H. The Bank may purchase loans, that it has previously guaranteed, from private lenders and re-finance terms if that will allow the co-op carrying the loan to meet its obligations instead of going under financially.

I. Any applicant for Bank loans or services may appeal within 30 days directly to the Board of Directors if they feel that they have been incorrectly denied access to applied for services or loans. The Board will review at the next meeting.

determining how responsive the Bank will be to the needs of co-ops, both new and old, around the country. A Federal Inter-Agency Task Force on the Bank Bill, comprised of representatives from 10 federal agencies have been charged with the responsibility for developing a first cut of the regulations for the Bank.

In order to develop input from cooperatives into this process, CLUSA has formed a 35-member Bank Implementation Commission. The members of the Commission were appointed by the League in consultation with co-op leadership around the country.

The League's central position in the bill's development and passage led to its central role as the channel for input by the cooperatives into the Inter-Agency Task Force. The central question for many new wave cooperators is how the League will manage this process and how it will develop grass roots input from new wave co-ops.

Update

by Roger Neece

I attended the first meeting of the CLUSA Bank Act Implementation Commission in Washington, DC, on September 28 and 29th as an observer. I came away impressed. CLUSA and the Commission members are actively soliciting input from new wave and low income coops. The meetings themselves were clearly attentive to new wave positions. Besides the 35 commission members, more than 20 observers attended the meetings. Most of these attendees were representing low income or new wave constituencies.

The Commission meeting included a thorough discussion of the legislation; including specific suggestions for input to the regulation process around such critical issues as the definition of what is a low income coop. Also, a low income/new wave caucus convened at dinner on the 28th for informal discussion. A committee of the commission to specifically consider the Self-Help and Technical Assistance areas of the Bank met on the afternoon of the 29th.

Our synopsis of the Bank Act is based on the latest information gathered at these meetings. Further, latest indications are that the Bank will probably begin operation by June, 1979. Nominees for the Board of Directors will be screened by the White House staff in November and December, 1978, and the President will forward his recommendations to the Senate for approval by early February. It is anticipated that the process of staffing the Bank will take place in March, April and May. The total Bank staff will be about 150. Funding levels for the Bank in the first year will be \$65 million for seed capital (of \$100 million authorized) \$10 million for the Self-Help Development Fund, and about \$2 million for technical assistance.

The Federal Inter-Agency Task Force on the Bank has been organized. Representatives from HUD, Commerce, ACTION, Labor, Treasury, SBA, CSA and the White House are included. It has set a timetable which focuses on having a first draft of the bank regulations out by January 31, 1979. The draft will be ready for consideration by the



Board as soon as the President's nominations have been confirmed by the Senate. The Task Force's plans for public input into the drafting of the regulations are still not clear.

The Bank Act Implementation Commission, in its role of officially recognized spokesperson for coops, has decided to hold a separate series of six regional meetings in November and early December, 1978. These will solicit input from the broadest possible spectrum of coops, and public interest groups, churches, labor and low income organizing groups in both urban and rural areas. These meetings are to achieve two purposes: informing interested parties on the potential of the Bank to assist their efforts; to gather specific feedback on potential problems. The Implementation Commission will use the feedback as it exerts its influence on the Inter-Agency Task Force's process of writing the regulations. Coops can also use the meetings to define their own positions in preparation for the Task Force hearings, and for strengthening regional coalitions.

Meetings have been set for the following regions of the country: Mid-East, New England, Southwest, Midwest, Southeast, West Coast. These regions will be scheduling their meetings in the period from November 4, 1978 through mid-December. For exact information on the dates and location of the regional meeting in your area, contact:

Southeast:

John Gouchy
Graham Training Center
Rt. 3, Box 95
Wadesboro, N.C. 28170
(704) 851-9846

Far West:

Morris Lippman
4294 Wilkie Way
Palo Alto, CA 94306

Mid West:

Pru Pemberton
CLUSA
1828 L St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20336
(202) 872-0550

Mid East:

Don Martin
Rochdale Institute
465 Grand St.
New York, N.Y. 10002
(212) 673-3900

Southwest:

Walden Swanson
Wheatsville Co-op
2901 N. Lamar Blvd.
Austin, Tx. 78705
(512) 475-COOP

Eugene Sanchez
2403 San Mateo N.E.
Suite 14
Albuquerque, N.M. 871100

New England:

Roger Neece / UESC
216 Crown St., rm 404
New Haven, Conn. 06510
(203) 776-0451

Within each region a series of smaller meetings will develop interest, support and representation for the large, regional meeting. CLUSA is presently soliciting foundation support to provide money for at least 30 low income representatives from each region to attend the large regional meeting. The grants will also bring four members of the Implementation Commission.

New wave input into these regional meetings is off to a good start. In three regions, new wave people are coordinating meetings, and in the other three are involved in the coordination. CLUSA made it very clear that it was demanding that all facets of the coop movement have a full voice in all phases of the meeting process.

It is now the responsibility of each one of us to take the opportunity presented by the Commission to get our views heard at these regional and local meetings.

The Bank has the potential to exert a powerful influence in the development of a community-based society in the U.S. in at least three ways. First, its purpose is to provide money and technical expertise. Where local groups and networks have struggled to provide an alternative to present social and business structures, the major stumbling blocks have been the lack of capital and business experience. While members have been committed to social or personal change, they often have no idea how to run a food coop, day-care, school, building... Lack of balance sheets and traditional corporate and management structure have made loans difficult to maintain. In many cases, however, distrust of the coops ability to manage money has been as prevalent in the coop - part of a suspicion of any transaction more complicated than simple barter. *This is not to deny a clear pattern of discrimination against coops by banks and government agencies.* These struggling local groups are rightly expected to see the bank as at least a partial solution to their problems.

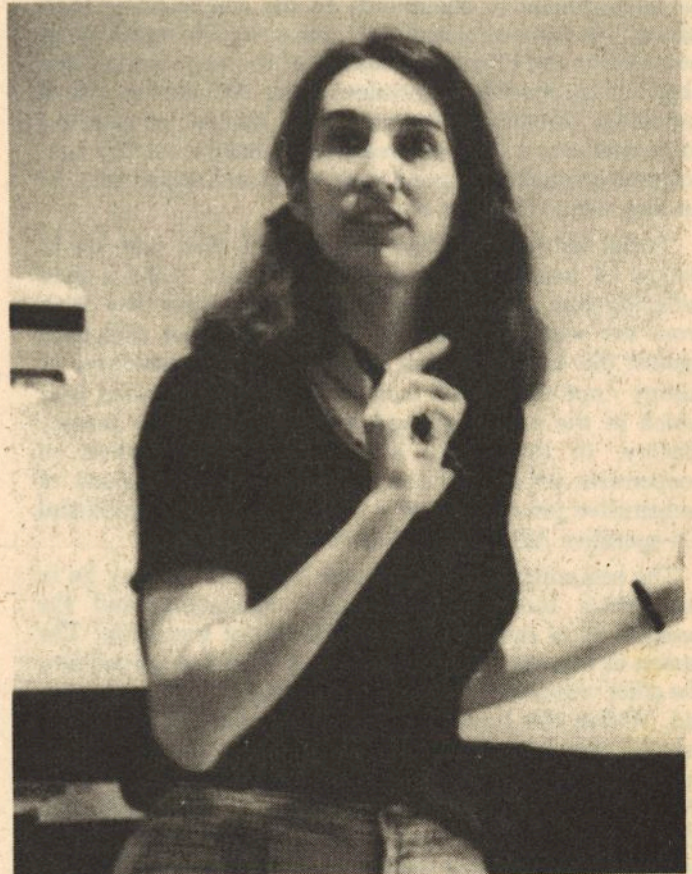
Secondly, many new groups will be given the impetus to organize by the prospect of the Bank's financial and

technical assistance. Indeed, part of the Bank's charter is to facilitate the formation of new coops and cooperatively organized, social change institutions.

Thirdly, the Bank, through pursuing these two paths, plus engaging in an educational program about cooperatives and cooperation, will be acting in at least a defacto way as the focal point for a new, national network. The potential for development within this national network of coops and social activists, using the internal resources and synergies may be as important as the Bank itself. In a manner of speaking, the Bank is a product of the network, since it has required a substantial and growing national coop presence to realize the Bank. The Bank exists to service this network, not vice-versa. For this type of relationship to develop, all of us as cooperators must clearly make our needs and wishes known. Fortunately we don't have to start from scratch. By using our existing local and regional networks we can both be most effective in relation to the Bank, and in strengthening the networks.

This is not pie-in-the-sky. The Bank exists and will be hiring staff in the spring to begin operation in early summer. The regional meetings provide a means for you to direct your input and learn about the Bank.

It's our responsibility not only to see that the Bank supports cooperative development, but that the Bank itself in its day-to-day operations, internal structure and decision-making be a shining example of the kind of institutions we seek to build. For this to happen will require not only pressure from the outside, but a substantial and committed cooperative presence within the Bank. Ideally, government is our representative. In the most responsive and responsible way possible, this should be *our* bank. □



The Utopian Heritage of the Cooperative Movement

by David Thompson

With a new surge of consumer cooperatives in the United States over the past decade, and the passage of the Consumer Cooperative Bank Bill we are entering an era of change and challenge. What is the philosophical basis of the cooperative movement? Consumer cooperation as a theory is based upon practices begun long after its founding. A short perusal of the objectives of the Rochdale Pioneers in Northern England would suggest an entirely different set of goals at the outset than are present today. Early cooperators were totally identified with creating a new society. They were self-supporting home colonies arranging their own power over production, distribution, education, and government. A later generation of cooperators would only concern themselves with adapting to society rather than changing it.

Clearly a study of the early cooperative movement shows the commitment to community as the end result of their efforts. The focus on community was central to building the new society and lifting workers out of the wage slavery and abject urban conditions prevalent in the 19th century rise of Industrial England. Rather than discuss cooperative communities as a Utopian dream abandoned a century ago, cooperators ought to expand their vision and regard them as an idea whose time has not yet come.

"Social institutions which lose sight of their past are in danger of losing control over their future. Like a man suffering from amnesia they know neither where they came from nor where they set out to go. The best safeguard against this loss of identity and direction is knowledge of history - *not that which was, but that which abides, and which in the past contained and announced the future.* History, in this sense, is a necessary foundation of cooperative policy and the complement of the study of cooperative principles." W.P. Watkins, the **International Co-operative Alliance, 1895-1970.**

The beginnings of the Rochdale Equitable Society lie in the British Industrial Revolution; alienation, and the breakdown of the fabric and structure of social life. The masses of humanity cleared from their land and herded into the cities were removed from their ancient forms of mutual aid. Within this hostile urban setting, workers needed to rebuild new forms of mutual association to combat the consequences of poverty, disease and unemployment amid the cyclical depressions of the 19th century. Without land to till, laborers were removed from their ability to provide at least sustenance in their daily lives. Food had to be paid for

in cash, and cash only came from labor. Soon the urban migrant was locked into the new industrial economy without any means of self-sufficiency. Clearly society would face serious disruption if solutions were not forthcoming. Out of that struggle of the urban worker for better conditions arose solutions.

Some of the earliest ideas for a vision of that new society came from Robert Owen, a Welshman, who moved to Scotland as a young man. Later, in 1800, he became a partner in a mill in New Lanark on marriage to the mill-owner's daughter. Owen undertook a series of experiments in the factory town guided by a determination to set out principles of production, living conditions, education, and child labor that developed his own ideas of social responsibility. From around the world came numerous political leaders and dignitaries to see the outcome of these experiments and to assure themselves that better working conditions did indeed still guarantee a handsome profit. Owen's ideas of a society transformed by that of rational and cooperative living within a community setting were soon taken seriously in a Britain beset by the economic depression.

Invited to be part of a national committee on the Poor Law, Owen presented his fellow members with his ideas of **Villages of Cooperation.** Under this plan, villages similar to that of New Lanark would be built in agricultural areas. Factories would employ the labor not required on the land, and in the villages would be found the community buildings, including communal forms of heating, communal kitchens, etc. The intent was to provide work and reduce migration to the city. His plan was included in his, **Report to the County of Lanark: A New View of Society.** (1813).

For twenty years, Owen worked on developing New Lanark as a model factory town. Towards the end, however, his policies met with resistance from his many financial backers upset at his overt anti-religious beliefs. Hoping to find a more perfect place within which to practice his views, Owen removed himself to the United States of America. In 1824, Owen found himself leader of a large utopian colony in Indiana called New Harmony. Because of his international renown, Owen stirred great interest in this communitarian experiment. On two occasions in 1825, Owen lectured in the Hall of Representatives to audiences that included Presidents James Monroe and John Quincy Adams, together with the

Cabinet, the Supreme Court, and both Houses of Congress. Would that today's communitarians have that same reception in official circles. Unfortunately, Owen's potential was destroyed by inadequate planning, and the idealism and incompatibility of his many followers...the experiment came to an end in 1827. Yet the impact of Owen's presence and the interest of so many others who had arrived in the New World did sprout numerous settlements, some with qualified success.

Before Owen had left for the United States he had written an article about the Cooperative and Economical Society. It projected the establishment of a community of 250 families living together and sharing common services.

Owen's economic message generated numerous cooperatives in Britain during the 1820's, and a clearer definition of cooperation was developed. The goals of many of the cooperators of the 1830's were to establish cooperative communities as their answer to controlling their own production and consumption. The 1830's were years of great strife between organized labor and the ruling class. In the midst of this ferment was established the Rochdale Friendly Cooperative Society. Another similar venture opened a store in Toad Lane in 1833. Although it lasted only two years, it involved some of the people who would later help found the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society.

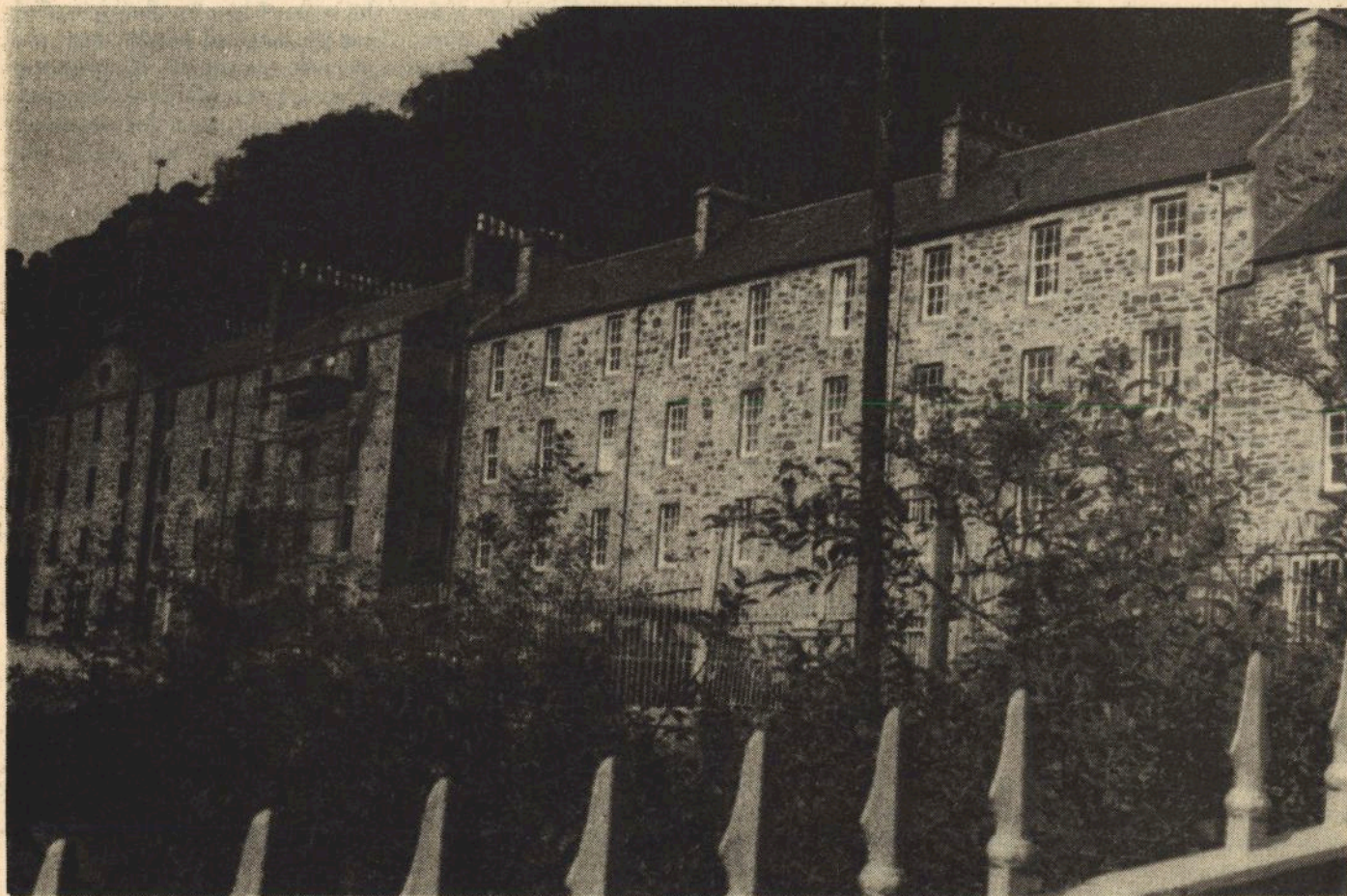
The choice of Rochdale for its historical role in the development of the cooperative movement could not have been a better one. Located within the heart of the Industrial

North of England, it was often the center of activity for various social and political movements.

In the 1840's, poverty in Rochdale was reaching desolation. Unable to wait for government action to relieve their conditions the people of Rochdale set about their own solutions. The Owenite group urged reconsideration for the ideas of a cooperative store as the precursor of the cooperative community. The Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society was formally established on August 15th 1844.

Paramount among their considerations was the theme of associative industry and community as an alternative to existing society. The historian, Harry Laidler, wrote of the period, "...almost all poor workers who desired to escape from the slavery of the new factories and the horror of the new towns were convinced that if only they were to live together in a community they would be as secure as any fugitive who sought sanctuary."

At this time Owen was back in America, attempting to work with the Fourierists in developing further communities. Although now 73, he still had the spirit and capital to support his lifelong ambition. However, for his followers back in Rochdale, the idea of instant community was far beyond their meagre savings. It was only through the principles of cooperation drawn up in Rochdale that a means to an end were found. By organizing their consumption in a form that generated savings, the surplus could be set aside to form a pool of capital by which they could bring about the new society. The influence of the



New Lanark, Scotland

Owenites is easily seen in their earliest documents. "The statement of objectives placed at the head of its rules envisaged the establishment of a store for the supply of consumer goods; the provision of houses; the establishment of productive enterprises to employ members suffering from low wages or out of work; the acquisition of land for cultivation, also to provide employment, and finally declared," that as soon as practicable, this society shall proceed to arrange the powers of production, distribution, education and government, or in other words, to establish a self-supporting home colony of united interests, or assist other societies in establishing such colonies."

The term *home colony* was in regular usage by Owenites, and was a synonym for Owen's *Villages of Cooperation*, those communities envisioned as governing their own affairs and having little to do with the old *immoral world*. The British Cooperative historian G.H.D. Cole, describes them, "The form of common ownership to which they looked forward was essentially local: the Home Colonies were to be owned by those who lived in them. Their members were to produce in common what was needed for their own consumption or for exchange with other colonies in order to procure such goods as they did not make for themselves. Not merely Great Britain, but the whole world, the Owenites believed, would be transformed quite soon into a Cooperative Commonwealth made up of local communities, each resting on the principle of mutual service and educating the new generations in the spirit of Socialist fellowship."

While production and consumption were united objects of the workers involved, the idea of a *home colony of united interests* made sense. The community would live together, providing its own needs. This partnership of producer and consumer within the same community would be ended by the ascendancy of *consumer cooperation* under the leadership of John Mitchell, a Rochdale born cooperater who later became the chairman of the English Cooperative Wholesale Society. Mitchell put an end to much of the communitarian idealism of the Owenites and later also the Christian Socialists who wished to ensure a special position for the workers in a cooperative enterprise. With the help of the Fabian Socialists, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, Mitchell developed the theory of *consumer supremacy*. By 1900, any notion of worker participation in a cooperative community had ended. The Cooperative Wholesale Society was more interested in employing workers than in schemes of co-partnership. While consumer cooperatives bought land, farms, and housing, it was not to begin community and end unemployment but to provide supplies for the consumer through one national unitary system. Though the cooperative movement flourished in Britain it became a *practical* organization which reserved mention of cooperative principles for annual conferences and paid little attention to them in the day-to-day activities of the cooperative trading world.

Since the 1900's, the British cooperative movement has grown into a large trading empire. It proved that working people could operate, manage and capitalize a complex national enterprise, and it showed that cooperative forms of production and distribution were within reach of the masses. Today, however, the cooperative movement in



Cooperative Store: Rochdale, England

Britain is faced with the competition of the major food chains. No longer is there the sense of loyalty that pervaded the prewar generations whose parents had taught them the nature and meaning of cooperatives in the life of a working class community. "Without money to fall back on, men must turn to each other for help. And out of the necessary habit grew not only the friendly societies, the unions, the coops, but all those other groupings of community."

The difference lies to a great extent in the events of history in the century following Rochdale's founding. In 1844, political and social movements on a nation scale had been crushed, the cooperative movement at the community level was the only growing force for progressive action. A study of the cooperative movement in 1968 stated, "The Cooperative as a private welfare society, was under these circumstances, a powerful magnet to the energies of the politically and socially aspirant. It offered not only food, clothing, shelter, but education and the prospect of political and social transformation of capitalist society." In the 20th century many of the cooperative's tasks have been assumed by the State, and the idealists drawn to more specific areas of change; to the great union organizing drives, the building of the welfare state, employment, municipal housing, public projects etc. The mutual aid aspects of the Coop have been curtailed as the government moved into the social aspects of daily life.

In the United States, Owenites and followers of the cooperative movement played important roles in the development of the community ideology prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th Century. Owen's two themes of community and of cooperation seemed more possible in the spatial freedom of America; the new land was removed

from the effects of early industrial capitalism; communities could begin right away without mass violence or attack upon the state; and thirdly they could exist comfortably withdrawn from the mainstream and its corrupting associations. Brook Farm, Massachusetts was especially central to theories of cooperation with one of its members having studied Rochdale at the source. Other fervent admirers of Rochdale played parts in the founding of the Grange and the Knights of Labor. The years towards the close of the 19th Century were the great years of utopian communities, cooperative workshops, and cooperative stores all building their unique elements of cooperation in the new world.

With the 20th Century came death of the *home colonies of united interests*. Although the idea has been kept alive by some of the leading cooperative theoreticians, it has never been revived on any mass scale. Martin Buber in *Paths in Utopia*, is possibly the most eloquent critic of the failure of consumer cooperatives to fulfill their potential. He saw the movement as being the most historically powerful models of future society, but being least suited to act as a cell of social reconstruction. In one passage, Buber critiques the cooperative impact of people simply shopping in the same store, "It brings people together with only a minimal and highly impersonal part of their total being. This part is not, as might be supposed at first glance, consumption. Common consumption as such has great power to unite people...but the Consumer Cooperative is concerned not with consump-



Robert Owen

tion proper but with purchases for consumption. Common purchasing as such lays no very significant demands on the individuals participating in it... Similarly, as soon as common purchasing becomes a business, responsibility for which passes to the employees, it ceases to unite people in any significant sense. The bond becomes so loose that there can be no question of communal cells and their association in a complex organic structure..."

The idea of the cooperative Commonwealth returns each time cooperators urge discussion of our movement, yet they receive sparse treatment in the philosophical debate on our future. In fact there are few cooperative theoreticians around today who even attempt to outline a cooperative tomorrow. This lack of vision inhibits our movement. Unsure of where we are going, we lack an idea of how to plan our direction. Because this indecision is also present in all sectors of western society, cooperators are once again given the opportunity to prepare ideas about the future. Jack McClanahan, now working in Appalachia with Jim Wyker on building a cooperative community, laid out his suggestions in a proposal, *Regaining a Sense of Community: Priority for America* (1976). He hypothesized that if members used their coops better, and understood their meaning, they would want to become cooperators not only in their day to day lives but in their philosophy/value system. His second hypothesis was that if members extended their area of involvement and intensified their cooperative relationships they would see themselves building an organic unit essential for creating a strong society and would expand their cooperative into a full community. His third hypothesis was that if these community-conscious cooperators and cooperatives united with others, they would realize that they are linking organic cells into a network of mutual aid as an effective means of helping themselves and the nation to regaining a sense of community.

This present day plea for a cooperative community originating out of the growth and success of the consumer cooperative movement is in line with the heritage of Owen, and the Rochdale Pioneers as they too searched for a solution to their conditions. Time and time again cooperators strive for the idea of community as an end result of their work. With cooperation on the ascendancy once again, is it not time to renew our interest in the historical foundation of our movement? The cooperative movement once again finds itself with a new chance to find its soul, and to rediscover the cooperative faith that motivated the Rochdale Pioneers to build the Cooperative Commonwealth.

As Sir, Thomas Williams so clearly states, "If we have equal faith in our principles and equal courage to put them to the test, we can in this century make more real the ideal of the Cooperative Commonwealth which they in their day struggled so hard to achieve and in which, in the hardness of the times, we may begin to see a new hope of justice, prosperity and peace." □

David Thompson is a coop activist in California, on the Board of Associated Cooperatives [the regional wholesale]; whose interests lie in studying Rochdale's history [near where he was born], and California's utopian communities [his adopted state].

The search for a viable primary social unit has been a continually pressing issue for the U.S. communal movement. Some groups have adopted the structure and values of the nuclear family while others have invested themselves solely in non-monogamy and total communal childrearing. Yet still others experiment with variations on these themes.

This article is of particular importance in that it presents a long range view of the kibbutzim movement from a strong anti-familial base to the present day family-dominated trend. Why this happened... and how this can be seen as a positive move are questions that those of us modeling our communities after the early kibbutzim need to look at.



MY HOME IS MY CASTLE

by Yehoshua Gilboa

Although collectivism is the very bedrock of the kibbutz way of life, the kibbutznik (no less, and perhaps more, than the town dweller) is able to declare: "My home (or my family room) is my castle."

Settlements used to hold debates on "The family - ally or rival of the kibbutz?" and similar subjects. The family has established itself so firmly as a social cell within the kibbutz that such discussions now seem to be dying a natural death, but it is illuminating to recapitulate some of the arguments:

"The more we concentrate on the family and its concerns," argued some members, "the weaker becomes our identification with the kibbutz; family solidarity clashes with the spirit of collectivism. 'Normal' family ties supercede the partnership based on a shared objective and on common aspirations and ideals. Families retreat from the community into themselves; the family room overshadows the communal dining room..." In short, these were forebodings in the usual style of "Where is it all leading...?"

In its early days the kibbutz movement held revolutionary views in regard to the family; the kibbutz was largely anti-familial in outlook. Paradoxical as it may sound, the unnatural phenomenon of rejection and discarding of the family was natural to the young kibbutz movement. The family has always stood for continuity, whereas the acts of immigration to Palestine and settlement on the land were interpreted as a rupturing of relations with the family and with familiarity, and all that they implied. The first kibbutzniks were not only rebelling against the Diaspora for nationalist reasons; they were also revolting against what they regarded as the warped society evolved in exile. They despised the petit-bourgeois patriarchal family. Their breach with their parents and background had in many cases, a wider ideological and social basis that went beyond Zionist self-realization.

Any attempt by the 'work committee' to display consideration and allocate husband and wife the same 'Shabbat' was regarded as a dangerous anti-community act.

If you try to "conjure up" the kibbutz of the nineteen-twenties, for example (and there is no need to overtax your imagination: many veterans can draw a vivid picture for you), you can still savor the early anti-familial atmosphere and beliefs. At that time, the kibbutz seemed to be the "Antithesis" of the family. One joined the kibbutz out of ideological motives, through a desire to attain a certain goal. Affiliation to the kibbutz lifetime-partnership was, therefore, an entirely conscious and deliberate act, unlike membership in a family, which resulted from a kind of "biological inertia".

After all, what was kinship but an accidental fact, established by blind chance? The prevailing mood in the kibbutz favored "familialism" by choice, and rejected identification based on a birth certificate. The kibbutz was regarded as a partnership held together by a shared sense of mission and, as such, was considered to be inevitably selective - whereas the traditional family was characterized by predetermined and binding laws of kinship. Thus, the kibbutz saw itself as a new kind of family, based on spiritual affinity rather than the conventional blood-ties. The contrast between these two kinds of kinship was discussed at great length in the literature of the kibbutz movement - and present day kibbutzniks may find the discussion quaintly amusing.

The anti-familial mood manifested itself in diverse and - let it now be said - strange ways. The attitude towards relatives is a case in point. If a kibbutznik had relatives in another kibbutz, the society's code of behavior demanded that this fact be regarded as of no significance, and that a certain degree of mutual coolness be displayed. As for relatives who lived in town - they were regarded as "strangers". A kibbutznik would have had to be "soft" in order to maintain contact with relatives outside the kibbutz movement.

The anti-familial trend was evident even in the treatment of "couples". An elderly woman member reminisces - with a mixture of fondness and self-mockery: "What did being a 'couple' mean in those days? The difference between an individual and a couple was denoted by an application to the secretariat or social committee for allocation of a family room." For the kibbutz - and sometimes perhaps for the couple themselves - this was the beginning and end of the "transition to family life". Women members generally maintained their "independent status" and even their maiden names after marriage.

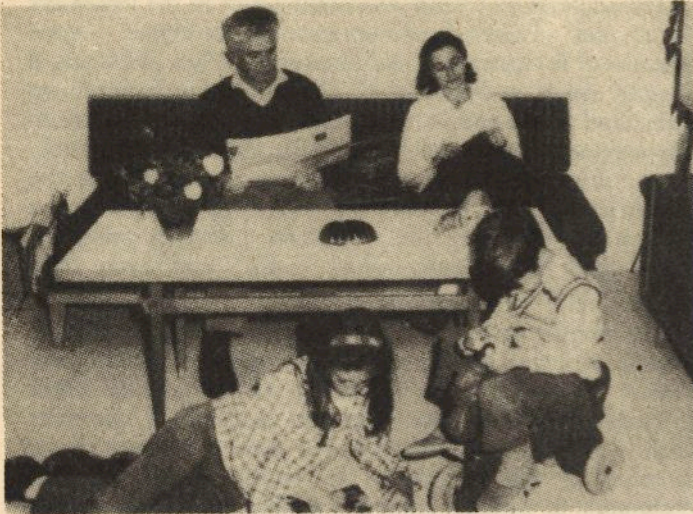
The kibbutz wedding ceremony in those days? Well, they held it, and then again, they didn't. After all, there were always a certain number of binding laws of personal status in Palestine. If the relationship was legalized, it was done hastily, in order to get the ceremony over with. Later on, as a result of the "regression to familialism" it became customary to conduct several wedding ceremonies at the same time, several times a year.

Those devil-may-care old days now seen like memories of some prehistoric age, or like yellowing pages in an ancient album. Today we are accustomed to "individual" weddings in the kibbutz, generally held at the request of the young couple. Quite often kibbutz weddings rate as "luxury ceremonies", even when they are held in the open air. In most cases, the wedding is no longer marked merely by a "party" where all the gang gather round and tell tall stories; but includes a religious ceremony, complete with bridal veil and ring. It is difficult to gauge the degree of genuine feeling attending these ceremonies, but there can be no doubt as to their profound family significance. What used to be a "kibbutz wedding" is now basically a family occasion, in which the kibbutz - in the natural course of events - also participates. Not a single aunt or cousin twice removed will be missing from the ceremony. Who could believe that relatives were once regarded as strangers, on principle? The changes in the institution of marriage can be evinced even from the invitations - normal petit-bourgeois wedding invitations, resembling their counterparts all over the country. And even when "joint" weddings are still held, they are followed and supplemented by separate family

In the kibbutz - we find not only fathers and sons, but even grandfathers and grandsons, in close proximity, working side by side.

celebrations. Eyebrows are no longer raised at these customs and ceremonies, just as birthday parties and anniversary celebrations are now accepted in family circles, with the participation of relatives from outside. There was a time when relatives came to visit the kibbutz as a whole, whereas now they come explicitly to see the family. Even the most fervent of kibbutzniks now dares to display a warm attitude towards relations.

We would be doing the kibbutz movement an injustice if



A family at home

we regarded the early manifestations of anti-familialism as being symptomatic of the malaise of ideological infancy. There were other reasons why it was difficult for the kibbutz to elevate the family.

Even after the kibbutz had rid itself of its pretensions of creating a "new man" and a "new world" (this including innovations in the family sphere), it still remained a basically purposeful society. And, therefore, even if we discount the ideological denial of its importance, the family could not play an important role in a kibbutz world where the central preoccupations were: the nation, the movement, the national mission, the volunteering spirit, defence, the precepts of Zionist self-realization and the kibbutz itself, the personification of all the tasks and challenges. In those days members were overworked and too wrapped up in other matters. They devoted all their energies to the kibbutz and, through it, to the movement and the entire Jewish community. These obligations took precedence over family duties, particularly when the latter were often only vaguely defined.

For many years the kibbutz also lacked the suitable physical and material conditions for developing family life. Members will explain to you that family life cannot be nurtured without a reasonable degree of seclusion. And how could a family create its own "privacy", in the days of the "primus" (a bachelor who was a permanent tenant in a family room)? Nor was the method of building - each row of rooms looking out on the main "thoroughfare" and connected by a long open porch - conducive to encouragement of a family atmosphere. There were times when a couple had to wait many months until they were allocated a room of their own. The undervaluing of family life was therefore also the consequence of poverty in the material sense of the word.

But objective conditions should not be made to bear the whole brunt of the blame. It is true that the kibbutz was in economic straits, but there was also an atmosphere of deliberate indifference towards the family. Veteran kibbutzniks will tell you than any attempt by the "work committee" to display consideration and allocate husband and wife the same "Shabbat" (i.e. weekly day of rest, not

necessarily on the Sabbath) - was regarded as a dangerous anti-community act... Hence the trend towards greater familialism in the kibbutz was a scissor movement, as ameliorated living conditions "met up with" the aspirations of members. The rise in the standard of living exposed and encouraged familial impulses - which, in turn, stimulated the creation of suitable conditions for realization.

The more I delve into the past, the more I tend to believe that the present family situation in the kibbutz is largely a reaction against the years of neglect resulting from the early ideology and from limited material opportunities. And if disregard for the family in the early days was born out of the purposeful character of the kibbutz - reaction has set in in this sphere as well. One member expressed the opinion that the excessive familialism of today is a symptom of a "wider desire - the desire not to spend one's entire life in a mobilized society". Another commented that this development seemed to reflect a yearning - well, how should she put it - for a social life independent of institutionalized social frameworks. They both claimed that nothing had been detracted from the kibbutz as a result of these yearnings; on the contrary, the family unit and the comradeship between families were helping to nurture a more natural social life, liberating members from the obligation to seek it in working hours or in organized communal activities.

Some people relate the changes in kibbutz life to changing "international trends," since ideological and social "fashions" replace one another rapidly in the modern world. In the nineteen-twenties feminine emancipation was the universal catchword of progress. The enthusiasm of women was aroused by demands for equality of the sexes in employment, education and public life. Various European political parties recognized the need for, or profitability of, including the demand for equal rights for women in their



Father and son

platforms. But after the Second World War, Western society tended to stress femininity rather than emphasize the equality of the sexes.

After the First World War social fashions dictated that women should regard themselves first and foremost as "human beings" - whereas now they tend to adopt a new scale of preferences, emblazoning "I am, above all, a woman" on their banner. And, although there is, of course, no basic conflict between humanity and femininity, these changing demands have practical implications. In the past women were ready and eager to act and even to fight for their independence. Today the home, family, children and feminine interests play a larger part in their lives.

Women members generally maintained their "independent status" and even their maiden names after marriage.

In any case, there can be no doubts as to the strengthening of familial tendencies in the kibbutz. In the first half of the sixties, the late Yonina Talmon* collected and analyzed the views of kibbutzniks on the problems of the family and its ideal size. The following are just a few of the opinions in favor of large families:

1. "The people closest to any person are his brothers and sisters. Nothing can replace this. A man without relatives is alone in the world."
2. "We once thought that ties of friendship were more important, and could replace the family. But it turns out that you can't rely on them."
3. "In the midst of intensive communal activity you often feel so lonely, so insignificant. Only in the family does the individual receive individual attention and feel secure; we must strengthen the family as much as possible."
4. "A large family is a guarantee against loneliness."
5. "There is nothing more beautiful than children; a large family is a real family, a whole world."

These views are now even more widely held than they were then.

Any kibbutznik who still believed in the existence of an ideological conflict between kibbutz society and the family within it would probably now be regarded as a museum piece. Not only does the kibbutz display maximum understanding and tolerance of family "privacy" from the emotional and social point of view, but the family is now reclaiming certain tasks usurped for many years by the kibbutz.

The kibbutz family is, of course, still far from being an "economic unit". It is exempt from the need to struggle for material survival. The central traditional tasks of the regular family, such as running a household and caring for children (in the wider budgetary and existential sense) are entrusted to the community. The kibbutz family bears no direct responsibility for the livelihood of its members.

But at the same time, the functions and occupations of the kibbutz family are increasing. It is worth mentioning, in this context, the "family sleeping arrangements" which are accepted in some kibbutzim. At first their introduction was thought to be an earthshaking innovation. But the custom soon became standard procedure. And, although the education and future of the children are ensured by the collective, "Father and Mother, and even Grandpa and Grandma have an increasingly large say on this question" (according to several members). There has been a natural expansion of the tasks of parents in supervision of the behavior, manners and reading habits of their children. Parents (and grandparents) are most certainly more involved than in the past in caring for sick children. Parents sometimes even "advise" their children on choice of friends, and exert some influence over selection of an occupation as well.

There is one piquant fact which should be noted: in the kibbutz, that former hotbed of anti-familialism, the offspring of "European" ideology and initiative, the symbol of revolution, innovation and social avant gardism - yes, in that same kibbutz we now find that *hamoulas** (extended families) are developing, with all the characteristics of *hamoula* life.

Says Yona Golan of Mishmar Ha-Emek: "The modern kibbutz is possibly the only modern society in the world which has *hamoulas*. In what other developed, progressive, industrialized society could the 'extended family', with its close ties of kinship, survive?"

The trend to "*hamoulization*" in the kibbutz is in blatant contrast to everything we know of urban development. After all, in its cultural standards, services and general concepts, the kibbutz - however great the role of agriculture in its economy - may be regarded as an urban society. Such a society is characterized by dispersion of the family and its



fragmentation and the generation gap, while social mobility dictates the inevitable gap between grandparents, parents and children - because of their different housing and employment, and the geographical and psychological distances between them. Yet, in the kibbutz of all places, we



Dining facility

find not only fathers and sons but even grandfathers and grandsons in close proximity, working side by side. Who could have dreamed that the kibbutz, that rebellious, super-progressive unit, would restore a model to modern society the natural and human values forfeited during the headlong rush for development and progress - namely, the extended family, the *hamoula*.

Hamoulization expresses itself in different ways in various kibbutzim, and there are varying evaluations of the influence of the evolving hamoulas. Most of the people with whom I discussed the question regarding *hamoulas* as welcome evidence of deep-rootedness and continuity, of the integration of the generations - a sign of the tranquility and stability of life. One woman member waxed almost poetical when she said that, "the human heart must expand with joy, at the sight of four generations (in this day and age!) sitting down together to eat (and in kibbutz dining room at that - the symbol of collectivism)."

"There is indeed much to rejoice the eye and heart in this phenomenon," said another member, "but we cannot disregard the shadows as well. If the consolidation of a nuclear family may tend to distract attention from the

kibbutz community, and if the small family is reclaiming various tasks which were once carried out by the community - then the extended family is even more likely to constitute a rival to the collective."

Here and there people pointed out the existence of *hamoula* pressure-groups in kibbutzim, a phenomenon similar to (though smaller in scope than) that found in communities in which the *hamoula* is a traditional element. There are even cases of mobilization of a kibbutz *hamoula* to vote at a kibbutz meeting on some matter concerning one of its members. ("Do they have a parliamentary whip to round up the voters?" I ask jokingly. "It may surprise you to hear, but they do", is the reply.) This individual and family interestedness is sometimes reflected in devious tactics and in conflict conducted "without shame or conscience".

There is another aspect to *hamoulization*, which reveals acute communal sensitivity to a plight which may be caused by "fate" alone. Kibbutzniks will tell you that the isolation of single members, even the loneliness of couples, is highlighted against the background of extended families; the *hamoula* which fills the dining room with the chatter of grandparents, parents and children. One may well ask: where in the world is there a haven from the mortal suffering and adversity? But the kibbutz, by its very nature, finds it difficult to console itself with the argument of the inevitability of human destiny and suffering.

We can see that, in a relatively short period, the kibbutz movement has acclimated to new arrangements which have assuredly never been regarded as revolutionary changes. One good example of daring innovation which has rapidly been transformed into an established custom is the kibbutz "four o'clock teatime". It has been totally "appropriated" from the communal dining room (except in one or two remaining "nature reserves"). Its natural location is now the family room; any other arrangement is unthinkable.

The family room is also taking people from the dining room at suppertime. Kibbutzniks try to explain the reasons for this. Let us imagine that it is a cold and rainy evening, that the dining room is quite a distance away, and that it is warm and pleasant at "home" (in the family room). You have a kitchenette, equipped with a small gas cooker and oven, the little refrigerator is full, you have a toaster and all the necessary utensils, and the television set is on. Under such conditions, you may just feel too lazy to drag yourself to the dining room, so you prepare a meal at home.

It is true that this rarely occurs. Members note that there is generally a state of "coexistence" between the family room and the dining room in regard to meals. Tea-time may have become an "institutionalized" integral part of family life, but the communal dining room has not lost its power of attraction, particularly at suppertime, and especially if it is attractive and comfortable, the food is tasty and the service "pleasant and polite".

If you try to 'conjure up' the kibbutz of the 1920's...you can still savor the early anti-familial atmosphere and beliefs.

"We once thought that ties of friendship were more important, and could replace the family. But it turns out that you can't rely on them."

There are variations in the positive attitudes towards the dining room. Some of my confidants did not regard the dining room as the symbol of collectivism or any other kind of *ism*, but compared eating there to "going out to a restaurant" in town - an act attesting to a high standard of living. Many members, on the other hand, speak of the communal meal as the concrete expression of the spirit of cooperation and as an act of identification with the collective - "qualities which stand the test despite all the changes in the kibbutz way of life". Others offer a less imposing explanation and say that in the dining room the member finds satisfaction as a "social animal": It is a meeting place, where people can see and be seen, listen to stories and tell them, absorb information and share gossip.

When I discussed the changes in the kibbutz attitude towards the family with kibbutzniks (mostly female), I often encountered denial of any correlation between the strengthening of the family and the kibbutz crisis. "Why search for conflicts between the family and the kibbutz?" one woman member asked, almost in anger. She believed that the prior assumption of antagonism between the family and the kibbutz could distort one's entire outlook. But it is apparently an old habit to approach discussion of kibbutz problems equipped with formulae regarding "the individual and the community", as if it were impossible to even hint that there is no conflict between them.

Be that as it may, the modern kibbutz is characterized by its ability to preserve the unity and normality of family life more than the average modern society (we are referring mainly to the "secular" society). We should avoid romanticizing the kibbutz family, and there is certainly no point in doling out uniform praise. But, in an age marked, *inter alia*, by the disintegration of the family - the kibbutz family can boast of its relative stability.

"All praise to the founding fathers" - say many kibbutz members, "however great their errors and illusions on family problems." But there are those who will immediately add: "How could they have been expected to understand so many years ago? Almost all of them were enthusiastic youngsters, unattached and belonging to the same age-group. How could they have guessed what the future would bring? In their innocence, they believed in perpetual youth; a 'new world' without trace of the old institutions, seemed to be within their grasp."

From time to time, in the course of conversation, kibbutzniks return to the good old days which have gone forever. It seems to me that that distant era is as familiar to the younger kibbutzniks, born at about the same time as the State of Israel, as it is to their fathers from the Third Aliyah.

It is the youngsters who constantly feel impelled (out of intellectual curiosity or ironic amusement) to describe the "weird concepts" which were once prevalent in the kibbutz - and which were thought to be applicable beyond the kibbutz borders as well. According to these theories the family was most definitely not a fundamental human phenomenon, and was destined to become extinct like other "prejudices". There were some people who regarded the kibbutz as the "trailblazers" of the movement for eradication of the family on a universal scale. In the present-day kibbutz one also encounters an "avant-garde" approach to the family, but this time its objective is reversed: some kibbutzniks now claim that the kibbutz alone is capable of demonstrating to an unstable and turbulent world how to achieve maximal family stability even in a modern, industrialized, dynamic society. There is no way of knowing whether this new universal pretension will stand the test, but meanwhile we are witnessing the consolidation of the family unit within a form of life which one displayed most of the attributes of anti-familialism.

But such is the way of certain revolutions; they are not "permanent". And the changes which have taken place in the realm of the family within the kibbutz are part and parcel of a healthy historic and human development. Some members do not hesitate - in retrospect - to define the early, anti-familial kibbutz society as an anomaly. It was, after all, a non-organic association, based on ideals and programmes alone! The natural condition only evolved in the next generation, since the primary contact of children with the kibbutz was established through the family, through the home into which they were born. Has the kibbutz revolution faded away? It would be more correct to say that, in the sphere of the family as in other areas, the kibbutz revolution has matured. And this is not the first time in history that, as a result of prevailing conditions, the extreme and utopian elements of a revolutionary outlook have been modified. It is better to welcome such a development than to mourn it. □

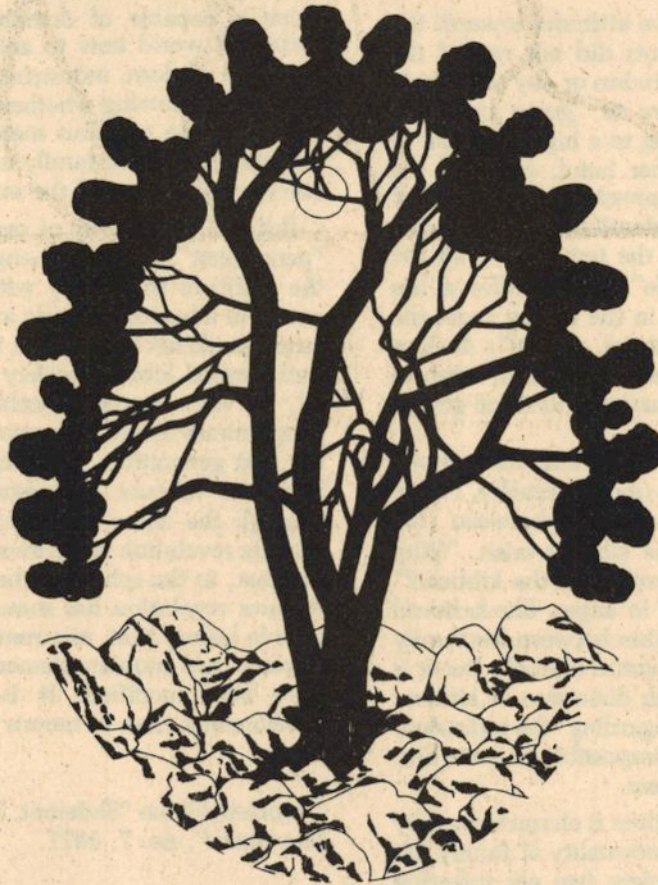
* reprinted from "Shdemot, Literary Digest of the Kibbutz Movement", no. 7, 1977.



Taking care of one's room in the children's house

Is Communal Living A Viable Alternative?

A LECTURE AND SLIDE PRESENTATION BY
THE FEDERATION OF EGALITARIAN COMMUNITIES



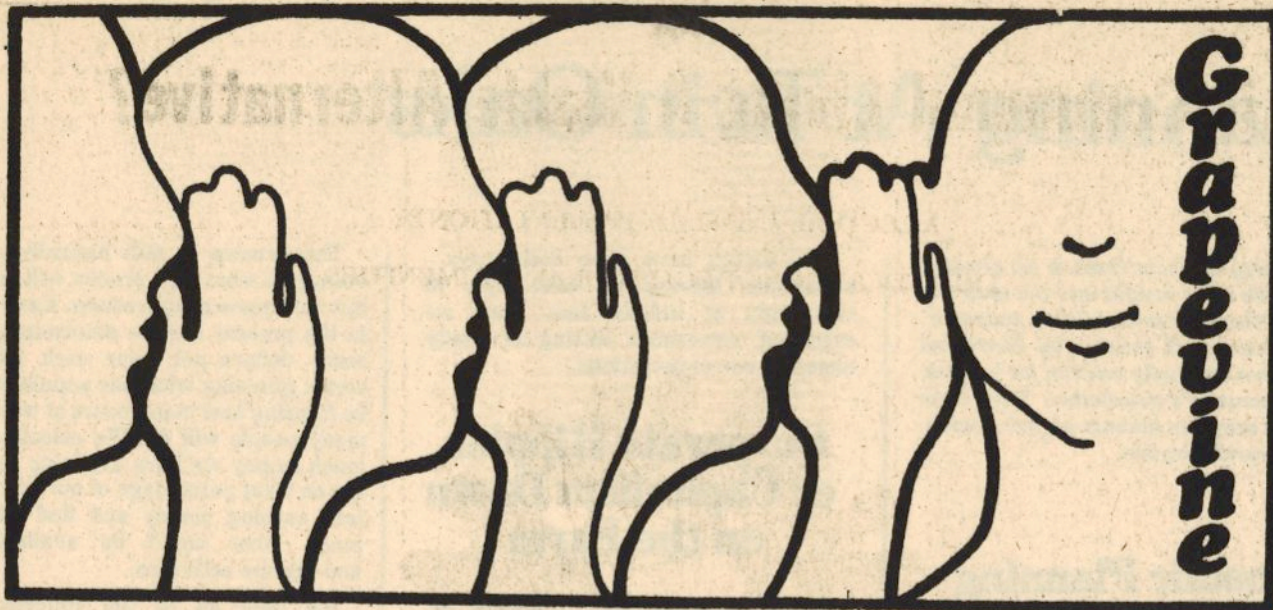
There are thousands of people in North America living in economically and socially successful communal groups. If you have an interest in the state of the communal movement today, you will want to hear about it from a member of one of the egalitarian communities existing in the U.S. and Canada. Explore with us our development in communal child rearing, sexual equality, income sharing, government and interpersonal relationships.

Contact one of the following communities for arranging a lecture and slide presentation.

Dandelion Community
R.R. 1
Enterprise, Ontario
Canada K0K 1Z0

East Wind Community
Box 6B2
Tecumseh, Missouri
65760

Twin Oaks Community
Rt. 4, Box 169
Louisa, Virginia
23093



Take Paradise Put Up A Circus.....

Dave Felder

Alternate Current is a bi-weekly journal of the Miccosukee Land Co-op. The 8-12 page publication prints town council minutes and local announcements, as well as providing a forum for discussion of community directions, ideals, and problems. Cartoons and drawings are interspaced with informative, original and reprinted articles on energy, food, practical skills, and the local Indian tribes. The following article appeared in the Aug. 7, 1978 issue. [Vol. VII, No. 15] It is reprinted here because "expansion versus quality of life" is an issue many communities have had to wrangle with. It's sometimes helpful to share how another deals with similar problems.

One problem the co-op has had from the beginning is that of seeking its identity. Some individuals have thought that the word "co-op" meant that the community had a duty to take care of them. Some have viewed the co-op as a movement which succeeds only if it expands. In spite of conflicts of vision the co-op has developed into what it always was - a residential community of people who seek the privacy and serenity of living with good neighbors in the woods. As a community of home

owners our main concern should be to protect the quality of life in our community. One thing we can do to improve our quality of life is to use our development moneys to provide the community center and swimming areas and other things people paid for and were promised. The worst thing we can do is to take actions which would endanger either our privacy or our development funds.

Recent actions taken by the town council threaten both our privacy and our development funds. Step by step, without consulting the membership, the council has been getting the co-op more and more involved in the purchase of new land.

Any expansion of the co-op involves dangers to our quality of life. Publicity is needed to sell additional acres and publicity will attract tourists. It took three years for tourists to lose interest in the co-op after initial sales. Maybe this time with an expensive publicity campaign and an expanded co-op to visit we'll have a permanent tourist trade.

If the expansion fails the co-op will lose money that has been spent. There will no doubt be pressure to put more and more money in to salvage the publicity money, binder money etc. But if the expansion succeeds as hoped, things will be even worse. Suppose we succeed at doubling the size of the co-op? We'll end up with a huge organization that can no longer be run on a personal and informal basis. When someone puts a note on the mailbox about a party there will be twice as many people. When you go to co-op functions you'll see a lot of strange faces because we'll be a big crowd. I, for one, find it hard to

relate to large numbers of people at once. There is an optimum size for a community. Small is beautiful.

I wonder about some of the motives for wanting more land. Most people want it for a buffer. This makes sense but the desirability of a buffer has to be weighed against the cost. Of course the new people will need a buffer also - ad infinitum. There is nothing a developer can do that is as bad as what we can be doing to ourselves between publicity and the commitment of our development funds. Some people think of the co-op as a movement of some sort and think that expansion is a test of success, like religious zealots who show their faith and calm their doubts by converting others. I don't think that expansion proves success. Success will be proved when people are all moved out here in finished houses, enjoying each others company at our community facilities. If we make the co-op a desirable place to live others will copy the idea. This concept won't spread from here to California by our buying all the land in between.

Despite the dangers involved I'm not totally against our helping a new neighborhood group to form. I contributed to the binder fund but am concerned about some council actions and proposals being considered. Whether this particular expansion is good or bad depends on how it is done. If it is done with a limited publicity campaign and separate financing - with the project to be dropped if buyers are not located soon - then it is good. But a large publicity campaign that turns our co-op into a circus and an unrestricted financial commitment that uses up our development funds could ruin our co-op.

Planning At Twin Oaks

Planning at Twin Oaks is an attempt to provide some insight into the nuts and bolts of their communal living endeavor. These two small articles by Gerri and Josh were originally written for Leaves, the community's newsletter. Twin Oaks is an 80 member kibbutz-styled community in rural Virginia.

Economic Planning

by Gerri

If Twin Oaks is anything, it is "bureaucratic" say some, "structured" say others (as you well know if you're a *Leaves* reader). And "planning" is now the magic concept of our present bureaucratic structure.

Some of us superstitiously believe that if we 1) can know all of the objective data that there is to know about an area, and 2) know what we subjectively want from that area, then we can 3) design systems such that we can predict the future and that the future will be to our liking.

Sigh! It doesn't seem to work that way, at least not perfectly. But we keep trying, especially with our economic situation.

Economic planning started in the early fall of 1973. Robert, previously a city planner, dove into the project, and the results of his interviewing managers on their predictions for the year brought him to the conclusion that we would run out of money during the winter. Our collective response was, "Oh, dear", but we didn't do anything about the information. By the end of December, our bank balance was perilously low and we weren't expecting any income until May. Enter...short term emergency measures - outside work, frozen budgets - but more important, long term economic planning.

We started our tradition of periodic resource allocation (money and labor) on the basis of predicted population and available labor, plus needed and earned income. From April 1974 to April 1977, we did this planning every 6 months. Then we did one 8 month plan and now we've moved to a 12 month plan.

In its early phases, economic planning was unsophisticated and wildly inaccurate.

Our errors have gone both ways - sometimes leaving us with tens of thousands of dollars less than we expected, sometimes putting us dizzily ahead of our expectations.

Corporate Hippies, or Capitalism Down on the Farm

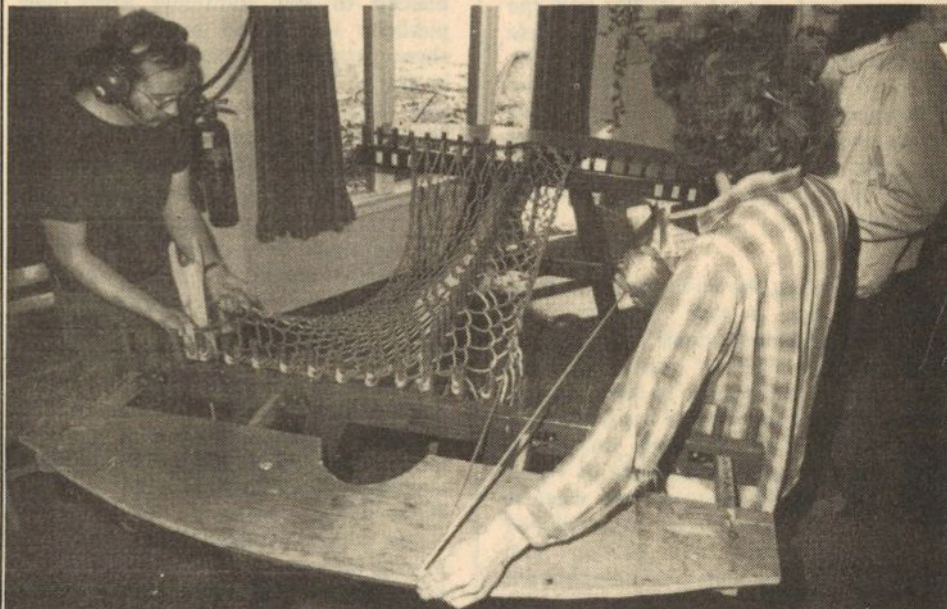
"Return on investment", "accrual accounting", and "net present value" are jargon phrases from the walnut paneled boardrooms of industrial conglomerates. But for the past year these terms and more of their ilk have been bounced around Twin Oaks without a three piece suit in sight.

This "taking the capitalist road" by us go-with-the-flow commune hippies is a result of our need for more income than we can depend on our hammock shop to provide and hence our need for one or more new industries, we organized a New Industries Crew (NIC) in 1976. As this crew delved deeper into what we need to know to make sound financial decisions, we have begrudgingly gained a respect for the establishment corporate lords who, it appears, know something...and we have learned to borrow some of their techniques and formulae.

The process is still basically asking managers what they predict will happen, but with some modifications. Early steps in the process include determining how many dollars per hour each industry earns, guessing what our population will be figuring how many hours of work that many people will do. We calculate how much money we have available depending on what percentage of our labor goes into earning money and find out how much labor could be available for non-income activities.

We then go to the councils with amounts of money and labor possibly available to them. (The more money that non-income areas want, the more labor needs to go into making money and the less labor there is for non-income areas). A council has the task of distributing the available resources to the managerships within that council and informing the economic planners of the details of that distribution.

Once the plan is finalized and set in motion it serves managers as a guideline for spending money and labor and serves the community as a blueprint of what we should be doing. Economic planners are supposed to follow up the plan with a monthly recording of what we've actually done, earned and spent. To the extent that we pay attention to the planning we set in motion we can at least forestall catastrophes and at the best do what we want to do knowing we can afford to do it.



Actually, new industries are not new at Twin Oaks. We have, in the past, set out to manufacture film winders, behavioural research programming instruments, dulcimers, dresses, hats, candles, candy, macrame, enameled copper, films and veal calves...all unsuccessfully. Nor is the NIC our first attempt to formally evaluate proposed new industries in order to make better planning decisions. As early as 1972 we had a New Industries manager for that purpose. In fact, in late '72 Gerri proposed that we cut pretty designs in old tin cans with a cutting torch and sell them. The idea was squelched by the New Industries manager. Can cutting is now making a major contribution to the financial support of three communities (Springtree, Dandelion, and Aloe). oops!

NIC has been the most refined system for new industry evaluation we have yet devised. Much of our efforts have gone into developing a list of criteria that a Twin Oaks industry might be expected to meet in order to succeed, meet our needs and fit our values. We have had to learn some of the economic equations used by big business to make the same kinds of decisions and we have developed a formal procedure for gathering the data and guesswork necessary for using those formulae in making our evaluations.

We are just now beginning to put these tools to work. So far we have written evaluative proposals on two industries - Hanging chairs and Backpacker hammocks. Evaluations of rope manufacture and agriculture are in the works.

None of us involved in such evaluations owns a three-piece suit, yet. But we sure are beginning to feel like business people.

Criteria for a Twin Oaks Industry

There are at least two members willing to commit themselves to the next year of management for the income activity.

The projected income for the income activity reflects a dollar per labor credit hour that equals the Federal minimum wage rate during the fourth year of operation of the activity.

The product or service is something Twin Oaks would purchase if it were on the market.

The major material for the activity should not be derived from non-renewable resources.

Essential production steps for the activity result in a minimal amount of pollutants being expelled into the environment.

The design for the work space does not incorporate aversive working conditions, like fumes and cold/hot extremes, nor excessive heavy, muscular stress.

Marketing for the activity is focused on the local and regional areas as much as possible.

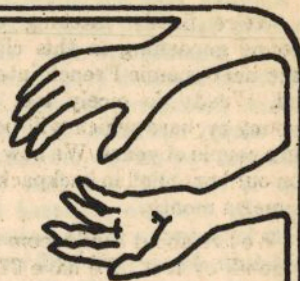
The income activity uses resources available through other communities whenever possible.



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Ads should be 50-200 words in length and preferably typewritten. We reserve the right to edit. Dated material requires a minimum of 6 weeks lead time. Feedback on ad response is welcome, as are donations.

Conferences

★ The National Association of Housing Cooperatives is holding its 1978 conference and exposition in the New York City Statler Hilton Hotel. (Of all places!) The conference is intended for those in all levels of management, as well as for housing officials, community organizers, socially-minded developers, and advocates. Workshops will focus on cost cutting, organizing new co-ops, beginning and intermediate management concerns, sweat equity, and tax considerations. A variety of registration plan options allow the cost to range from \$90 - \$158. A limited number of partial scholarships are available. For more information: NAHC, 1828 L St. NW, Suite 1100, Washington, D.C. 20036 [202] 872-0550-

★ The Bear Tribe Medicine Society is a group of Native and Non-Native people striving to share with others those lessons of harmony that we have successfully learned. We are a land-based organization, living on 40 acres an hour away from Spokane, Washington. We have a working, small farm situation, with garden and livestock, as well as other business projects, such as

publication of *Many Smokes Magazine*, a Native American-New Age publication, and, of other books, such as *The Bear Tribe Self-Reliance Book*, and *Buffalo Hearts*.

We have seminars at our home base, which are called Self-Reliance Center Seminars. These are 4-day programs, during which people come and learn about the Native philosophy, about living in communities, and about skills that will allow them to successfully live in harmony with the Earth Mother, and each other. We also have visitors who come to stay with us for varying periods of time during the year. Because of the number of people who wish to come and be with us, and because of the financial upkeep this entails, we do ask a donation from people who are coming. For those on longer stays, that donation is \$25.00/ per week. The cost of the seminar this year, 1978, is \$60.00 for each adult, and \$40.00 for each child.

We do not allow people to bring liquor, drugs, or negative thoughts onto our land, and any who attempt to do so will be asked to leave. Other than that, we have no restrictions. We feel that one of the lessons people coming to us must learn is how to enjoy working. Therefore, all those who come to visit are asked to participate fully in whatever activities are happening at our home base at that time. These activities could include any of the farm working activities, office work, work on publication, and general upkeep of the place.

Many Smokes is the quarterly journal which presents a combination of Indian rituals and beliefs with news of political importance. Also included in the 22 pages are book reviews, a calendar of events, and a couple pages of ads. Subs. \$2/year; \$3.50 outside the U.S.

Other publications are *The Bear Tribe Self Reliance Book*, and *Buffalo*

Hearts, by Sun Bear. Both books are \$3.50.

For more information and subscriptions, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: P.O. Box 9167, Spokane, WA 99209

★ Swami Kriyananda is coming to town! Throughout November the director of Ananda Cooperative Village (see *Communities* #26, 30, and 31) will be touring cities in southwestern states. Two workshops (successive nights) will be presented in each of the following cities: Houston (7th-8th); Austin (10th-11th); Albuquerque (15th-17th); Tucson (19th-20th); Phoenix (21st); Carlsbad (27th); San Diego (28th-29th); and Orange, CA (11/30 & 12/2).

"Joy is Within You - An Ananda Experience" will feature a talk on yoga, slides and discussion of Ananda Village, and spiritual folksongs by Ananda singers. \$3 admission. "The Practice of Joy", the second seminar, will be on the art of joyful, energetic, and successful living. \$10. Specific location and further information are available from Ananda, 900 Alleghany Star Route, Nevada City, CA 95959

Groups Looking

★ We are 3 extremely lovable hard-working people engaged in building an egalitarian community on 110 acres of subtropical mountain land. We are in cloud-forest at 5300 ft. It rains plenty temp. range: 40-85 degrees Fahrenheit.

We're finally catching on to year-round gardening in this climate, using the bio-dynamic French intensive method. Weeds do nicely too. We have a young orchard which will begin bearing in a couple of years. We now pack fruit in on our horse and in backpacks a couple of times a month.

We live about a mile from the highway - uphill by foot. We have 57 chickens, 8 goats, and a cat. In the 3 years we've been here, we have built a people house, sleeping hut, storage shed, goat house, and 2 chicken houses. These are simple and sturdy; furniture is built into the ground and floors are of hardened clay. We do have a carpeted "orgy room" for reading, talking, and laying around. Other comforts include solar and wood-heated water for shower and kitchen and an open fireplace in the living room.

The land is paid for and we're becoming food-self-sufficient. We receive \$3000 annual rent on Manitoba farmland, which has been enough for us. Tierra del Ensueno will become a cooperative when enough people join. We expect most other property and decisions to be communal.

We're happy; we're enchanted by mountains; and we enjoy the work, but we miss social stimulation and task diversity possible in a larger group. We need enthusiastic, joyful, funny people who are ready to commit themselves to community.

If interested, write and explain why, telling about your dreams. Write: **Sany Suggitt, Stan Hildebrand, and George Kaiser at Tierra del Ensueno [translation: Land of Dreams] Apartado Postal #11, Salama, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, Centro America**

☆ **Community Alternatives Society** is a group of people who have a common concern to change our lifestyles. We're committed to a non-competitive, non-sexist, intergenerational, and non-consumerist lifestyle. We want to live lightly on the land, and to practice collective action, self-reliance, celebration and spirituality in a cooperative community.

Community Alternatives Society is made up of 3 co-ops. The Nasaika Housing Co-op is a 3-story building now under construction. When finished, the building will accommodate 55-60 people (35 adults, 20 children) in 9 living units of 4-9 persons each. Private and public spaces are planned.

The Fraser Common Farm Co-op is a 10 acre working farm an hour's drive from the housing co-op. The farm will provide 2/3 of the community's food. Nine people are currently in residence, but when the building is complete, 20

can live there.

The Ground Hog Collective is the social/community action co-op that undertakes anything from demonstrations to book publishing, wherever an alternative to the existing order is called for. The office will be close to the housing co-op.

The 3 co-ops make their own internal decisions, consensus-style. Varying types of membership are available: resident, non-resident, and associate. These carry varying privileges, responsibilities and financial commitments. Write for more information: 2125 W 7th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6K 1X9

☆ We are presently four adults who live, work and share together - there are others who are close as well, but not in the same ways. We are striving for many things - encountering problems and difficulties along the way which help to clarify our goals and bring us closer together. We do commercial fishing to support ourselves - selling to coops in the state of Maine and have a rather large garden. These activities help us to reach a goal of economic self-sufficiency. We share income, experience, ideas, love (and quarrels) to get to know each other better - to develop closer and more meaningful relationships.

We want a community of people who can both live and work together in an open, honest, intelligent and committed manner.

We're political in the sense that we're attempting to set an example of how a different society can survive and meet the needs of the people in it, though we try to avoid the "we're the answer" psychology.

Our physical location is beautiful. We have a farm on the Maine coast, but we're not totally isolated from cultural activities.

Our priorities have been getting established, and now we wish to have more people join the group.

If this appeals to you, please get in touch. The Atkins Bay People, Julia, Len, Bill, Ed. **Atkins Bay Farms, Cox's Head Road, Phippsburg, Maine 04562**

☆ **Tayu Institute** is a non-profit, predominantly gay spiritual community now forming in the Russian River area of Sonoma County, California. Our founder and spiritual director is Daniel Inesse, spiritual heir of the Tayu tradition, the root Teaching behind all spiritual paths. Tayu is the means of transforming one's life work into a work of art on a high esthetic level. We are presently occupying a temporary facility but have space

for students who wish to experience Tayu in action. Articles about Tayu appear in the new age magazine *Wings* (formerly *Sufi Times*), and a book about the teachings of Daniel Inesse should be published within the coming year. The Institute also offers weekend spiritual workshops in Sonoma County. For more information write: **Tayu Institute, P.O. Box 42555, San Francisco, CA 94101 or call [707] 865-2879.**

Groups Forming

☆ **A Proposal: A Community Farm Devoted to Social Change**

We have 350 acres (in trust, paid for) in Kansas, now being farmed for wheat, milo, alfalfa, and cattle. We want to use this land as a secure base area for creating social change, which we define as creating a truly democratic society that will be free of elitism, racism, sexism, and ageism. We think the best plan is to create a community, in the spring of '79 to farm the land communally and ecologically and devote our income and energy to programs such as these:

- 1) **Library For Social Change** - a film, videotape, audiotape, book, and record library loaning social change media throughout the nation.
- 2) **Bookstore for Social Change** - a mailorder bookstore focusing on social change books.
- 3) **Media for Social Change** - write our own literature, perhaps with a comic book format; make our own films, music, poetry, plays - perhaps a newspaper and a speaker's bureau.
- 4) **Other Communities** - city people with a commitment to social change could come to the Farm, meet each other, develop trust, and make concrete plans for change in their home areas, perhaps by establishing new urban communities where maybe half the people work in paying jobs, the other half working full time at organizing, etc. Or they might choose a rural community near the city.
- 5) **Radical Therapy** - further develop the analysis of how the present society is destructive of human beings, how to heal ourselves and others, and integrate this information into our changing this society.

These are only some of the possibilities. While lots of us feel powerless, the reality is that we are in a time of real opportunity - opportunity to create lasting social change. We have more to do than we have time for!

We feel people's commitment to change is the best possible asset they could bring to this work. So, if you have the desire and you find joining us to be a real possibility, please write to: Tom Cunningham, 4016 Meadowbrook Ln., St. Louis Park, MN 55426

☆The ARC Foundation has been conceived, but is yet to be delivered into practical manifestation. We are presently a handful of individuals with 40 acres of hills, trees, and streams in north central Arkansas. We should live in harmony with Father Sun and the Earth Mother and establish an intentional community/seed-center for the New Age: a wholistic, gentle, healing alternative to the production consumption carnival.

During the last 7 years we have been working, developing building skills, collecting tools, salvaging materials, and gathering information. We are now ready to actualize...

By the early 80's we intend to be functioning as an energy self-sufficient and spiritually sustaining community that would provide: 1) Design and consultation for wholistic living situations available with experienced construction crews. 2) An appropriate approach to the healing arts involving organic vegetarian foodstuffs and medicines, Oriental and Polarity therapeutic techniques, midwifery... 3) Dissemination of New Age Ideas and Ideals through the mediums of Art, crafts, music, literature, etc... 4) Research and Educational outlets in balancing New Age Physics and appropriate Technology with ageless Metaphysics and psychic-social integration. For further amplification write ARC Foundation Box 112, Wenona, Ill. 61377

☆Is there anyone interested in forming a close-knit, hard-working, comprehensive farm cooperative and intentional family? I am going back-to-the-land this fall and this is my ideal. Meanwhile I'll offer camping and conference use, homesites for late-model mobile homes, food, wood, and water - for very low rent. There will be no electricity until it can be generated without the use of fossil fuels. Anything - pallets, cardboard, clean cans and bottles - packed in an orderly fashion, will count towards a rent discount. Andy and all materials needed. Please write: Marnin, P.O. Box 898, Independence, MO 6450

☆A New Age Community in Israel in the making invites sincere persons to help, and eventually to join us. It is located on the slopes of Western Galilee, a peaceful spot surrounded by woods. Interested candidates write to Dr. Asher Eder, Segev 25275 Israel

☆Urban group forming. We are a happy couple with a five year old son. We would like to form a multi-couple nonmonogamous communal family which includes children.

We are looking for people who share a common desire to live in a nonmaterialistic creative environment and who are engaged in some intellectual or artistic endeavor because they love ideas and the creative process, not because they find them a convenient means of support.

We are looking for a deep involvement with a group that is impossible within the strictures of a traditional nuclear family. We are seeking others with whom to share the intensity of emotional and intellectual intimacy. This requires people who are strong enough to be open, vulnerable and compassionate in their relationships with others.

It is important that the members of the group be people capable of maintaining stable and lasting bonds of intimacy. That they be people willing to commit themselves to living the rest of their lives in an extended family. We recognize the complexity of the interpersonal relationships and the attendant necessity of patient, sensitive and intelligent people to make it work. If this interests you and you wish to have an alternative to the isolation of the nuclear family and the lack of commitment of single life, please write P.O. Box 1084, El Cerrito, CA 94530 Ken and Carroll Johnson

☆We're struggling to build a stable social-change-oriented commune in the city, with the spirit of commitment and sharing usually found only in the country. Numerous small communes thrive in our neighborhood. We have a food co-op and an infinity of tools and possibilities. We have kids, vegetarian diet, cats, no tobacco. If you're thinking of trying an urban commune, give us a call.

Jessica, John, Judith & Morty, Park Slope, Brooklyn, NY [212] 965-3790

☆Six of us are putting together a Land Trust Partnership. We have found a mountaintop farm of 366 acres perfectly suited for organic fruit and herb farming. We are looking for carpenters, farmers, alternative energy tinkerers, a

massage-polarity therapist, and someone with knowledge in herbs to work in the Health Clinic we are setting up. We share a common vision, developed by George Ramsey, of a self-sufficient energy pedestrian community. We do need investor partners at \$3500-\$10,000. We can offer matching funds and tax advantages. Anyone interested please contact Gary Goren, 206 Parkview Marietta, GA 30060 [404] 427-6166

☆We are interested in forming an extended-family type community. We have 60 mountain acres. There is space and water for a dozen adults and a dozen children. Maggie's Farm is a beautiful, magical, wild place. The whole area is ruggedly beautiful. There is a loosely-connected community of about 100 people (including children) that lives close by.

What is important to us? We have a deep concern for restoring the harmony of the land. We try to live ecologically and simply. We desire that our children keep growing mentally, physically, and spiritually unhampered by the system. This goes for ourselves as well. We place a great importance upon personal growth and open egalitarian interaction between people.

If you are interested, please write for more specific information. Contact: Stephanie Mendelson, Box 538B, Renick, West Virginia 24966

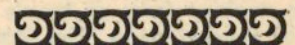
☆We're still here, a family of 5, us and our 3 kids. Been through the ups and downs, ins and outs of community, cooperation, alternatives, extended family and believe it or not we still want to share ourselves and our lives with a group of people.

We live in the Arkansas Ozarks. This is a good place and we're digging in - like to be close to the earth, connecting up with the energy of the universe. We want to share that gut level spiritual connection with people. We move toward being open and honest, communicating our feelings and thoughts and working through conflicts.

Family is important to us, our children are a priority. We're seeking our tribe or clan to fulfill our vision of gathering strength and nourishment in group consciousness and self awareness.

If you share our vision and really want to do it, please write and we'll go from there...

Rod Davis and Suska B., Star Route 3 Pettigrew, Arkansas 72752



People Looking

☆ I am an India born, U.S. citizen, U.S. licensed board eligible psychiatrist in a continuous process of integrating East-West ideas about concepts, percept emotion, actions, and life, mind, spirit, universe, God, science and art.

I am organizing a multi-disciplinary group practice called **Holistic Health and Human Services, Inc.** and therapeutic residential center(s) where people can learn to be sensitive, loving, intuitive, intelligent, wise, acquire free will, universal identity and find a sense of at-oneness, atonement, eternal security, joy, pride, love, more often than fear, sorrow, degradation, isolation, aloneness, loneliness and use power nourishingly. One needs to practice it with discipline, concentration, patience and supreme concern.

Do you wish to join such a venture of people by people and for people? We will help to train for various assignments with our corporation. No special degree requirement but willingness to learn all you must. Contact at **Shirish R. Pandaya, M.D. 11461 Fox Lake Rd., Orrville, Ohio 44667, Tel. [216] 683-3241**
Please provide your resume, your

expectations and projected contributions of talents, research, publications, etc.

☆ I have been seeking and preparing for community for many years - and have had some experiences of living in - first an urban apartment community (in London) and in a religious community (in Scotland).

A woman of middle-age (50), younger than that in many ways - older in some, I work as a visual artist, a poet, and an educator concerned particularly with the need to make people aware of the threats and damage being done to all life-forms (particularly the animal world) and to the earth. I also need to work actively on the land - am interested in growing food, berries, caring for animals.

Ideally I have a vision of a community with a spiritual base - a monastic vision and structure to some extent - for laymen and women. This means to me respect for solitude, silence and prayer - space for aloneness - and flexibility and faith in the will to grow through freedom.

If any community, preferably in the north or southeast, or forming community, or individual would like to correspond with me or have more informa-

tion about me I would be very glad to respond. Contact: **Alwyn Moss, P.O. Box 5351, Greensboro NC 27403**

☆ Raw fooder desires contact/living space/networking energy from other raw fooders and fruitarians. Will share my contacts with you. Send stamp for reply. **Sundar, P.O. Box 9626, San Diego CA 92109**

☆ I'm a 79 year old Quaker man looking for a semi-retirement home where I can continue peace work. Anyone knowing of such a place, please contact **D.L. Arnold, 1322 Chelton Dr., Kent, OH 44240**

Land

☆ 117 acres in Highwater, Quebec, near the U.S. border. Perfect for groups, community, or several families. 2 houses, commons building with 2 meeting rooms and kitchen and dining facilities, and 8 small cabins. Rolling land with view of mountains and beautiful mountain stream. Write **M. Crampton, 3496 Marlowe Ave., Montreal, Quebec, H4A 3L7** or call 514-488-4494 or 514-481-8841.

UTOPIAN *Determination to be as happy as possible. Actualizing our ideas & dreams. Not tolerating mediocrity in any area of our lives.*

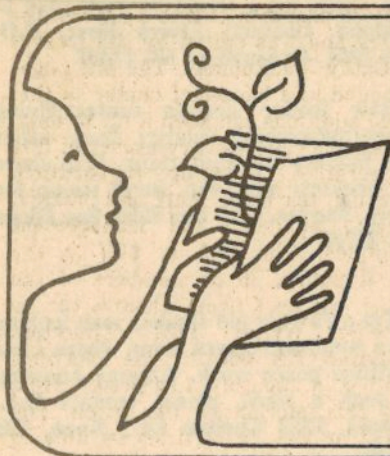
EQUALITARIAN *Shared leadership, non-ageism, cooperative economics. Polyfidelity (non-mono-gamous relationships within family groups).*

SPIRITUAL *Seeking the truth. A process for self-liberation. A dream & a plan for the liberation of all people, everywhere.*

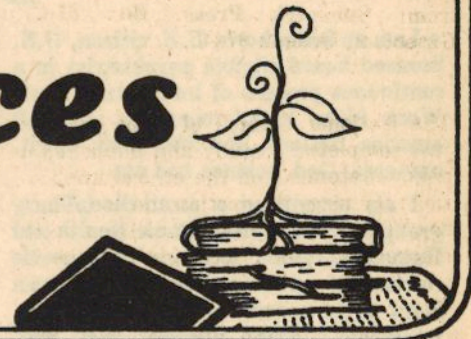
COMMUNITY *Deep friendship, intense verbal communication, dance, songfests, communal art, thought, work, companionship, religion, love, sharing.*

KERISTA VILLAGE *We are 25 people in San Francisco, with a rural center starting in Wisconsin. We're looking for kindred spirits. WRITE! We'll respond. For a subscription to our magazine, Utopian Eyes, send \$5. P.O. Box 1174-C, San Francisco, CA 94101. Or call (415) 566-6502/566-5640.*





resources



Legislation

Son of SI - Bill HR 6869, which has passed the Senate and is now before the House Judiciary Committee, and which some have labeled "Son of SI", expands federal crimes to include: obstructing a government function by fraud or physical interference, hindering law enforcement, obstructing a proceeding by disorderly conduct, revealing private information submitted for a government purpose, extortion, disseminating obscene material, failure to obey a public safety order, liability of an accomplice, and engaging in a riot.

HR 6869 would also make a great expansion of federal criminal law by establishing that for the first time all but a few federal crimes and misdemeanors could be prosecuted as **attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation** without the underlying offense having been completed. For example, a person could be federally prosecuted for attempting to persuade a friend to plan a demonstration blocking access to a government building - even if the friend said no and the demonstration never occurred.

The First Amendment's guarantee of the people's right of free speech and assembly is repeatedly threatened throughout HR6869. Picketing or parading is prohibited within 200 feet of a federal courthouse or any building occupied by a judicial officer. It would be a criminal offense for an individual to which "obstructs" a government employee in the performance of his/her official duty. These provisions broadly interpreted could mean the end of all mass demonstration and peaceful protest.

In addition: The sexual assault section restores the current law in which the

spouse, meaning husband, cannot be accused of rape, even if the couple is separated. The definition of "hindering law enforcement" includes the reporter who refuses to reveal the identity of a news source. Any written material giving any information "directly or indirectly" about abortion, or any "description calculated to induce or incite a person" to have or perform an abortion would be banned from the mail and from being brought into the US. If a person "knowingly" sent, helped deliver, or received banned material, they would be liable for up to 5 years in prison and \$100,000 fine (\$500,000 for organizations). Boycotts, such as those of non-ERA states could be considered extortion and blackmail, and could be punishable by 10 years in prison and \$100,000 fine (\$500,000 for organizations) because they might cause economic loss to a person or business. Enactment of this bill would also effectively eliminate the right to strike. For a copy of "Why Feminists Should Fight HR 6869", send a SASE and 10 cents to **Working Feminists, c/o LT, 1305 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10028**

The National Coalition to Ban Handguns is an alliance of religious and educational organizations, citizens and public interest groups, professional societies and other associations who have drawn together in a campaign to change the country's mood and laws regarding gun control. NCBH is working against the National Rifle Association which has lobbied strongly and successfully against firearms restrictions. For statistics on violence and deaths involving guns, or to contribute support, write: **NCBH, 100 Maryland Ave., NE, Wash. D.C. 20002**

Techqua Ikachi ("land and life") is published in the traditional village of Hotevilla in the Hopi Independent Nation. A recent issue alerted readers to 10 anti-Indian bills before Congress. The proposed legislation threatens land titles, hunting and fishing rights, water rights, freedom from taxation, and rights granted under various treaties. The very existence of traditional Indian ways and the respect of Indian sovereignty by the U.S. government are in question. For more specific information and to subscribe to this 6-8 page newsletter, write: **Box 174, Hotevilla, AZ 86030**. There is no regular subscription rate, but contributions make publications possible.

Publications

Guide to Alternative Periodicals is a comprehensive resource guidebook which covers nearly 700 magazines, journals and tabloids on creative alternatives and natural living. The publications listed offer a progressive viewpoint on a wide variety of topics and are listed alphabetically in categories such as Community Cooperation, Homesteading and Country Living, Alternative Energy, Children and Education, Crafts Survival, Health and Nutrition, Consciousness, Social Change, etc.

The Guide provides access to a vast network of resource information by listing each periodical's name, address, subscription price, frequency and a brief description. It includes such little known publications as **Simple Living, Earth Journal, Self-Reliance, Radical Teacher, Handcrafters News, Natural Life, Cre**

tive Simplicity and many other unique and useful magazines and journals.

This handy resource guide is available in its second edition as a perfect-bound paperback for \$3.50 (postage included) from: Sunspark Press, Box 91-C, Greenleaf, Oregon 97445

The National Council of Churches has just completed a study and published a policy statement on the ethical implications of energy production and use. They say "The energy problem calls on us to embrace an ethic of ecological justice in which is subsumed equitable, participation in decision-making, and sustainability." Copies of the full statement are available for \$1.75 from Kathrine Seelman, NCC, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027

Basic Christian Communities: Implications for Church and Society by David Clark, author of Basic Communities.

Basic Communities sets the recent rapid and global growth of Christian communities, community groups and networks in a historical and sociological perspective, and then looks at the important implications for the future of the Church and society, especially in Britain. A list of resources and a bibliography appear at the end. Although prepared with Roman Catholic readers in view, it is suited as a general introduction. This booklet is part of a series "Pastoral Investigation of Social Trends" specially written for discussion and study.

The booklet (published July 1978) can be ordered from the Liverpool Inst. of Socio-Religious Studies, Christ's College, Woolton Rd., Liverpool L16 8ND, England. Cost is 75p per copy, plus postage.

The Vagabond's Shoes is a quarterly newsletter for independent travelers seeking bargains and helpful information in their quest to discover the non-commercial world. Each issue features practical information about a given locale (such as free activities, services, and directions on how to get about), a book review of an exceptional travel publication, notice of the latest bargains being offered in transportation, plus features on organizations and events of interest to those taking charge of their own travel plans. The Vagabond's Shoes is available at a cost of \$5.00 per year from the Traveler's Directory, 6224 Baynton Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144 SA

Buying Transportation is a small booklet listing of little-known sources of low-cost transportation throughout the world.

Furthermore, it tells how and where to look for such - since prices and availability of bargains in the area of transportation is one of the fastest-changing commodities on any market. Buying Transportation is available for \$2.00 from the Traveler's Directory, 6224 Baynton Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144

The Traveler's Directory is an international cooperative of people who offer hospitality, information, and a large measure of friendliness to their fellow members in the organization. Each person listed in the Directory writes a short paragraph about him/herself telling of their interests, what they can offer to other members, and any restrictions that they would ask members to observe while in their homes. The TD is informal and does no more than provide the necessary initial introduction through which individuals may contact other individuals. It is published annually with quarterly updates and one may join at any time and receive the annual edition as well as the updates for the remainder of the year. The cost of one year's membership is \$10 (\$12 if one wants all materials sent via first class/air mail.) Traveler's Directory, 6224 Baynton Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144

The Cultural Watchdog Newsletter is published 12 times a year. Its 4 pages are dedicated to covering events, books, films, magazines, and ideas not adequately covered by mass media. Not only is attention called to magazines of interest, but they are often offered to subscribers without charge. The approximately 10 reviews comprising an issue are written in a first-person, critical, intelligent, and entertaining style. "Reviewing the Reviewers" is a regular monthly feature. It is described as "the only current attempt to evaluate the quality of reviewing in this country". Subs \$12/year. Write: Louis Ehrenkrantz, 6 Winslow Rd., White Plains, N.Y. 10606



The Free University Manual was written by 58 people in 31 free u's across the country and was edited by Bill Draves and Cathy MacRunnels. The 422 pages are bound in a loose-leaf binder so that annual additions can keep it up to date. The manual covers every aspect of free u. operation, including registration, recruiting teachers, staff and boards, finances, publicity and management techniques. The cost is \$15 to the general public, \$5 to members of the Free U. Network (from whom it can be ordered). Write: 1221 Thurston, Manhattan KS 66502. The Network publishes a monthly newsletter from which this information was taken. The newsletter includes articles on lifelong learning and alternative education, as well as news from free u's and learning networks, and practical how-to articles on running community education. Subs. \$8/individuals, \$12/institutions, and \$5/free u's.

The new, fourth edition of Alternative Celebrations Catalogue is now available. This is a basic resource book for "life supporting ways to celebrate Christmas, weddings, funerals, birthdays, and other events...leading toward a lifestyle of voluntary simplicity for human justice and world peace." \$5 postpaid. Write: Alternatives, 1924 E. Third St., Bloomington, Indiana 47401 [812] 339-5205

Women

The National Midwives Association is a service to the practicing or aspiring midwife, whether it be a certified nurse-midwife or lay (empirical) midwife. Currently with a membership of 150, and approximately 100 newsletter subscribers, then NMA seeks to foster the practice of midwifery, and the harmonious birth of new souls. The NMA is organized around several areas: legal aid, conference, newsletter, education, supplies, membership, and book-keeping. For each of these areas, a coordinator holds the responsibility of maintaining smooth operation and promoting communication. A facilitator oversees all the activities, to promote communication between coordinators and to help with their responsibilities. We are presently trying to build a network of regional contacts throughout the country, to facilitate local organizations.

The NMA publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, printing articles on legal activities, medical aspects, and offers a source for communication for midwives.

We also hold an annual conference featuring leading practitioners in the field and offering the opportunity for midwives to establish contacts throughout the country. We offer for sale midwifery supplies, educational workshops, books, and a registry of practicing midwives. Discounts for the above items are given to our membership.

We are totally supported by the membership and subscription fees, and are always in need of funds. Membership fee is \$25.00, newsletter subscription (included in membership) alone is \$10.00.

We have most recently been involved in helping lay midwives charged with practicing medicine without a license in state where midwifery is not viewed as legal.

HealthRight

Women's Health Forum

HealthRight, Inc., is a non-profit, tax exempt women's health education and advocacy organization which provides education, communication, organizational and advocacy skills to individuals and organizations committed to insuring quality health care for women.

HealthRight is a collective of approximately a dozen women of different ages from a variety of cultural, economic and educational backgrounds. Some are trained in health fields. Others have no "professional" health background, but have become knowledgeable about women's health.

HealthRight is involved in the following activities:

The HealthRight Literature Center

The Newsletter, HealthRight - The only nationally-distributed, broad-based quarterly newsletter on women's health issues. Circulated to over 3,000 organizations and individuals, HealthRight provides a forum for discussion and analysis of issues such as sterilization abuse, woman battering, DES, estrogens, childbirth and infant malnutrition in Third World countries as well as regular articles on women health workers, alternative medical therapies (herbs, massage, etc.), health news briefs, reports on what groups around the country are doing and educational resources. Subs. \$5 individual, \$10

institution.

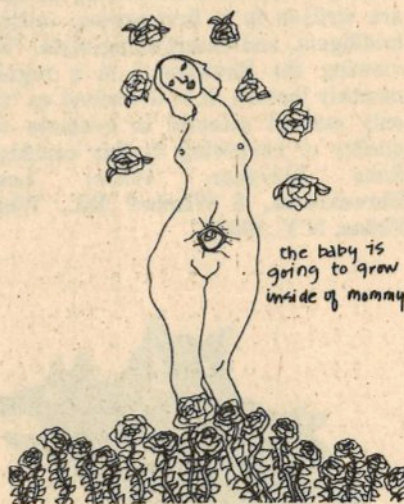
Training Courses - HealthRight has developed Know Your Body, Know Your Health System and Health Consumer Advocacy courses that provide women's and community groups with structured opportunities to share and supplement their health and health system-related knowledge. Additionally, HealthRight conducts mini-courses or one-session speaking engagements on topics ranging from contraception to health economics.

Community Work - HealthRight has been involved in educating the public as well as health care providers about issues such as abortion rights, malpractice insurance, occupational health, patient's rights, and sterilization abuse.

HealthRight's activities are funded through income derived from literature and newsletter sales, foundation grants and contributions from consumers and health workers.

For more information, write: HealthRight, 175 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10010 Tel [212] 674-3660

Mama Gives Birth is a coloring book about a family-centered birth experience. It is intended as an enjoyable learning tool for children expecting new babies in their homes. The idea was conceived by one woman who presented it to a positive experience pregnancy collective. The publication was funded by the Emma Goldman Clinic for Women, printed by a collective of women printers, with illustrations compiled by a women artists' collective.



Everyone here at Twin Oaks Community who has seen this coloring book, including the kids, has loved it. It's not sexist, traditional, or nuclear-family oriented. It's beautiful and sensitive.

Pictures view the experience as seen through the child's eyes: fantasies of what the baby brother or sister might be like, and realities of love, pregnancy and prenatal care, the birth at home, bonding, and infant activities.

The coloring book costs \$2.50/copy and consists of 25 pages (8½ X 11). Orders of 10 or more receive a 40 percent discount. The coloring book is a fund raising project for the Emma Goldman Clinic, a non-profit women's health care alternative. Write: Mama Gives Birth, Emma Goldman Clinic, 711 N. Dodge, Iowa City, Iowa 52240 or call [319] 337-2111

Organizations

The Community Self Reliance Center is a newly formed coalition of four Ithaca area organizations: Ecology Action, the Community Energy Network, the Coalition for the Right to Eat, and the Ithaca Real Food Coop. The Self-Reliance Center provides a focus for cooperation among these groups so that they can more efficiently and economically achieve their common goals, while broadening and complementing their individual concerns for more self-reliant living.

The center offers public workshops and seminars, a library and resource center, outreach projects (newsprint recycling, bike racks on city buses, community gardens etc.), self-reliance displays (wood stove, weatherization techniques, local food processing), and community economic development activities (facilitating the development of canning co-op, cheese production from local milk, alternative credit union, etc).

The staff is volunteer; funds come from local sources. For more information: 140 West State ST., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850 [607] 272-3040

The Mevlana Foundation is a non-profit organization that is headquarters for a series of schools in the United States, Canada, and England based on the Sema tradition. The Foundation follows the teachings of Mevlana Jelaluddin Rumi, perhaps one of the greatest Sufi mystics who ever lived. Mevlana, often called The Pole of Love, lived in Konya, Turkey in the 13th century. His knowledge of alchemy and the esoteric arts as applicable today as it was 700 years ago.

The Foundation sponsors a series of courses and lectures throughout

year as well as providing an on-going learning situation for the residents of the school and the members of the community. The course of study includes Sufism, the inner teachings of the major religions, sacred geometry and architecture, geomancy, and esoteric healing methods to help bring about the balance of the Whole Man.

Members of the Foundation all work in the community in various roles, from carpentry to business management, and from computer programming to commercial baking. Since Sufism is a way of life for the householder, each student has to be totally responsible for his own life.

Reshad Feild, author, educator, and Sheikh of the Mevlevi Dervishes in North America, is the advisor to the Mevlana Foundation.

For information, write to: **The Mevlana Foundation, P.O. Box 305, Boulder, Colorado 80306**

The Center for Community Economic Development is a private, non-profit, research and policy development organization working to promote the concept of community based economic development. CCED's primary function is to conduct public policy research by examining the ongoing activities of institutions created and controlled by local residents to improve the socio-economic condition of their communities - institutions such as community development corporations, cooperatives, and land trusts. Their purpose is to extract the lessons from previous experience and to communicate those lessons to community groups, legislators, foundations, and others in support of the concept. The CCED Newsletter (free) carries articles on economic research, legislative and policy analysis, and other specialized information. CCED maintains a library, open to the public, that locates, purchases, and organizes materials relevant to community economic development. The library contains historical, theoretical, and evaluative materials about community development corporations, cooperatives, finance and credit unions, business and industrial development, small businesses, minority entrepreneurship, rural affairs, various government programs, and information on foundation funding sources. The address is 639 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, Mass. Tel. [617] 547-9695

The Center for Psychological Revolution is a non-profit organization which has developed basic formulas to change the way people view their lives. CPR's

solution to life has little to do with an "answer", and everything to do with the "procedure by which people live".

"Principles for the new procedure..."

The procedure embodies the principles which underlie all emotional health, carried to a new level of seriousness and uncompromisingness. These principles include: openness and honesty; total disclosure; full discussion; talking at all times out of one's depths, not one's defenses; vulnerability; responsibility for everything one is, whether under one's conscious control or not; willingness to be corrected; commitment; involvement; acknowledging one's real emotions even when they seem hopeless or humiliating; spelling things out rather than depending on assumptions; facing all truth, no matter how undealable-with it may seem; respecting one's "inner voice", but taking into account the possibility that one's deepest instincts may be neurotic or "insane", and that uncovering whatever caused this condition will allow these instincts to "turn around" and assume their rightful form; "wrestling" with other people where they are wrong, but not trying to end the problem by "killing" them; realizing that the "salvation" of a human soul is worth any amount of trouble and energy, but not allowing hostile people to mistreat oneself in the name of their "salvation".

For additional information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to CPR, 1525 Hornblend St., San Diego, CA 92109



The Prison-Ashram Project is compiling a mini-directory to help spiritually-minded people who are coming out of prison to connect with "new age" culture. The listed people, businesses, ashrams, communes, religious orders, and training centers will specify what they have to offer and what criteria or requirements are important to them. Inclusion in the directory is not a commitment, but an invitation to write for further information. **Prison-Ashram Project, Box 39, Nederland, CO 80466**

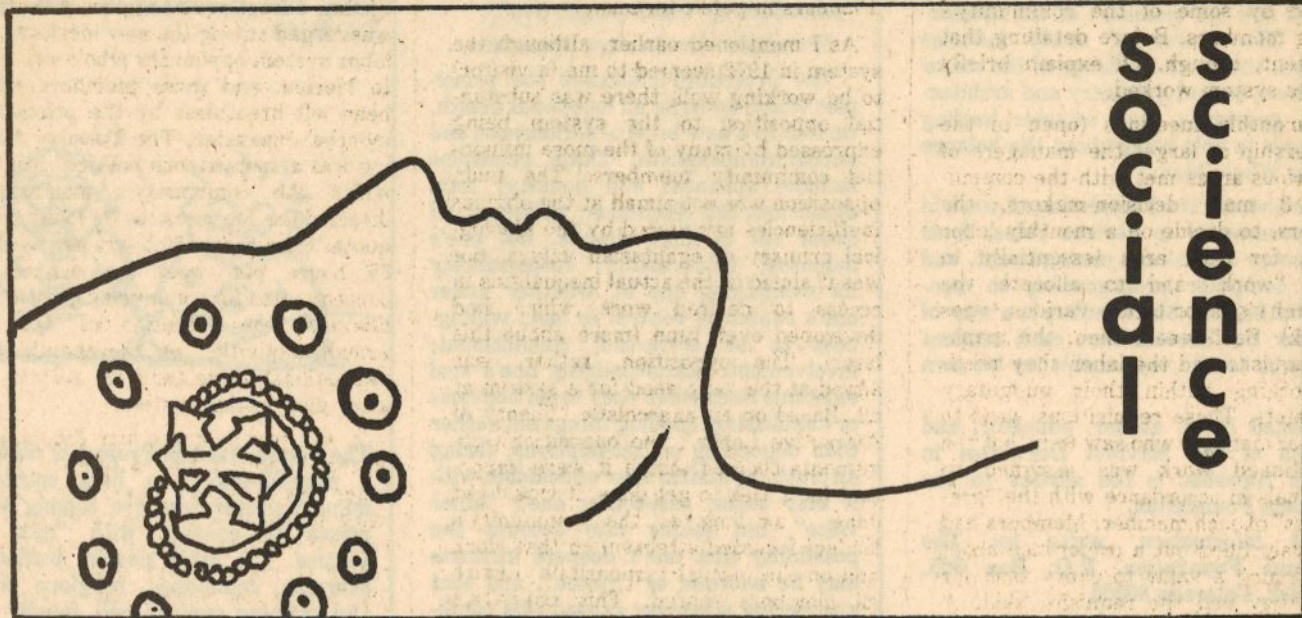


INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY PUBLICATIONS

The Institute encourages the study of the viability of small cooperative communities as a form of human settlement. This involves clarification of the relationship between the size, amount of social fellowship, economic cooperation, cultural integrity, political participation, technological change, child-rearing and education and the attainment of a high quality of life.

1. **The Kibbutz as a Way of Life in Modern Society** Menachem Rosner 150 pps. \$6.00
2. **The Quality of Life in a Kibbutz Cooperative Community** Joseph R. Blasi 800 pps. \$15.00
3. **Kibbutz Members Analyze the Kibbutz** Avraham Yassour 400 pps. \$7.00
4. **Assessing the Quality of Life in Small Communities** Joseph R. Blasi 50 pps. \$3.00
5. **Two Aims of Social Education: A Global/Communitarian Perspective of Securing Human Survival and a High Quality of Life** James P. Keen 84 pps. \$3.00
6. **Ego Development Among Kibbutz Founders and Second Generation** John Snary and Joseph R. Blasi \$2.50
7. **Comparative Study of Childrearing in China and Kibbutz** Michael Bernstein \$3.00
8. **A Delicate Balance: Kibbutz in Changing Times** Philip Warburg \$3.00

Address: **Institute for Cooperative Community, P.O. Box 299, Harvard Square Sta. Cambridge, Mass. 02138**



Science

by David Ruth

This article is a revised version of a paper David Ruth will be giving at the conference, "The Future of Europe and Consequences for Education", in Berlin this November [the earlier version will be published as part of the conference proceedings].

David Ruth, Communities Social Science editor for the past few years, has decided to take a break from the column and hopes to gain new perspectives on the workings of community to bring to the magazine at a future date. Since leaving Twin Oaks, David has increased his activism in local community politics and social structures and has just been appointed to a full time position with the Louisa County Inter-Agency council.

The column will be edited as of January 1979 by Joseph Blasi, professor at Harvard University and member of the Cooperative College Community. Joseph has been a Communities contributor in years past and is an active social scientist who will bring much richness to the magazine.

THE EVOLUTION OF WORK ORGANIZATION AT TWIN OAKS

Twin Oaks Community, an 11 year old communal endeavor currently populated by about 70 people in their 20's and 30's (plus 10 children under 6 and a few adults over 40), can be viewed from many perspectives. It has been variously described (1) as an attempt to build a behaviorist utopia, (2) as a quaint byproduct of a more universal search for family and community, (3) as an escapist retreat for those hippies and would-be radicals who were burnt out during the decade from 1965 to 1975, and (4) as a socialist island in a capitalist sea. (Write to me in care of **Communities** and I'll

send an annotated bibliography of writings about Twin Oaks.)

My own view is that Twin Oaks is all those things and more. In this paper I will look at Twin Oaks as an experiment in worker/community control of the workplace and as a school of living for those wishing to learn both basic skills and the complexities of collective economics and decision-making.

During the 5 years in which I was a participant observer at Twin Oaks the community's membership grew from 35 to 80 adults (and from 0 to 11 children). During those years, also, there was a fairly constant turnover of membership - about 25 percent each year. Few who entered the community had many basic skills such as food growing and preserving, mechanics, construction, selling or

management. Yet the community grew food, built buildings, established a \$500,000/year business, and experimented with different ways of organizing the labor of its members. My association with Twin Oaks began in the summer of 1972 just after the community had celebrated its 5th Anniversary. Kat was putting the finishing touches on her version of those first 5 years, and the community was about to expand its membership from approximately 35 to about 60 members, a process which was to take about 1½ years.

During my first visit I was impressed by the apparent efficacy and elegance of the community's labor distribution system; it appeared to parcel out the work quite rationally and in accordance with the community's stated ideals. The system seemed, for example, to go far toward recognizing that all who performed the community's necessary work were important to the community's success (and thus entitled equally to the community's rewards). The system seemed to guarantee that all members work an equivalent amount since those who performed a higher proportion of personally less desired work were rewarded by being assigned less total work, while those who were assigned more of their desired work were required to work longer hours.

The system went far, also, toward assuring equal access to jobs, toward limiting managerial and 'expert' power, and toward minimizing the inefficiencies necessarily caused by all of the above. I was unaware, however, of the growing

discontent with the system being expressed by some of the community's leading members. Before detailing that discontent, though, I'll explain briefly how the system worked.

At monthly meetings (open to the membership at large) the managers of the various areas met with the community's 3 main decision-makers, the Planners, to decide on a monthly labor budget for each area (essentially to define "work" and to allocate the community's labor to the various types of work). Each week, then, the managers requisitioned the labor they needed, working within their budgetary constraints. These requisitions went to the labor manager who saw to it that the requisitioned work was assigned to individuals in accordance with the "preferences" of each member. Members had previously filled out a preference sheet by assigning a value to every task for which they had the requisite skill. A value of 0.5 meant the member was willing to do 1 hours work in the area for 1/2 hour's credit. A value of 2.0 meant the member would do the work only if s/he would get 2 hours' credit for 1 hour's work. The preference sheet, as a whole, had to average 1.0.

The basic idea was that when the labor assigner balanced the managerial requests against the members' preferences, members would all be working an 'equivalent' number of hours. The notion of equivalence, here, was based on the assumption that all members would be assigned at least some work they considered aversive so that all members would be in a position to make the trade between, on the one hand, doing less disliked work but more total work, and, on the other hand, more disliked work but less total work.

New members who lacked the skills necessary to bid on much of the work were assured equal access (eventually) through the apprenticeship process. When an area needed a larger pool of workers and when it had been budgeted hours for apprenticing, access to the training needed was determined by "lots" (that is, through a selection process based on chance) among those who signed up as interested. Only in the selection of managers were skill and experience weighed as criteria for selection - and even there, most managerships were filled through a process of mutual selection of the most interested, managers having found other work more pressing.

Managerial and expert power were limited by rules which prevented managers from filling up their schedules with managerial work, by rules and norms which discouraged specialization, and the fact that most larger decisions

had to be made by the non-expert Planners in public forums.

As I mentioned earlier, although the system in 1972 seemed to me (a visitor) to be working well, there was substantial opposition to the system being expressed by many of the more influential community members. The main opposition was not aimed at the obvious inefficiencies introduced by the ideological primacy of egalitarian values, nor was it aimed at the actual inequalities in access to desired work which had developed over time (more about this later). The opposition, rather, was aimed at the very need for a system at all. Based on an anarchistic "Theory of Attractive Labor", the opposition's arguments claimed that if it were important for a task to get done, it would get done - as long as the community's leaders focussed attention on that work and on the mutual responsibility which all members shared. This opposition claimed that the labor distribution system served to focus member attention on "labor credits" and leisure rewards rather than on the work which would sustain the community. It caused, they said, members to think more about the hours they were putting in than about the work they were accomplishing.

The community's response was to create a semi-autonomous "branch" of 12 members, a branch in which radical experimentation with the labor distribution system would be possible. At the end of the summer many of the more vocal opponents of the system (including the Labor Manager) moved 3 miles away to the Merion branch, effectively isolating themselves from the information flow and from participation in the meetings which determined the whole-community policy. (The experiments at Merion are, in themselves, of interest, but will not be examined in this paper because of space limitations.)

During that Fall, Winter and Spring a dramatic population change was happening at the main branch (now called "Juniper".) Besides replacing the Merion contingent Juniper had to fill a new 13-space residence building and replace members who left through normal turnover (which was running about 25 percent). By the Spring of 1973 a substantial part of Juniper's population was made up of new recruits. Of important political consequence was the fact that many of these new members had been influenced in their thinking by ideas and experiences in the rapidly expanding Human Potential Movement, ideas and experiences which made them open to the Theory of Attractive Labor and to the notion that attention should be focussed on the "here and now" rather than on "future trips".

During the "Tuesday Meeting" of that Spring, a fragile and temporary coalition was forged among the new idealists, the labor system opponents who'd not gone to Merion, and those members who'd been left breathless by the previous 9 months' expansion. The Tuesday Meeting was a spontaneous political event in which the community's membership directed the Planners to: (1) lower work quotas from nearly 50 hours per week to 35 hours per week no matter its consequences for community growth, (2) liberalize the definition of work to include activities of therapeutic and recreational value, and (3) reform the labor distribution system.

It was just as quota was dropping to 35 that I came to live at Juniper. While other new members joined the proliferating therapeutic groups or engaged in cultural pursuits, I joined the committee trying to create labor system reform. The committee focused not only on the arguments based on the Theory of Attractive Labor, but on the most obvious of the other difficulties with the system, especially on the problem of overall work dissatisfaction among both workers and managers.

As a committee we subjected the system to intense scrutiny, but we came up with no concrete proposals. That Fall, however, the community's Labor Manager (who'd moved back to Juniper from Merion prior to the Tuesday Meeting) established a change in the labor distribution system which was ultimately to spell the death of the bidding system.

What Orin did was to announce that henceforth people who were working on projects which extended over more than a one-week period could assign themselves to those projects (once they'd been initially assigned to it) week after week until the project was completed (or until the project ran out of budgeted hours.) This "self-assigned work" as it was called, began as a miniscule portion of the community's labor, but over the next year grew to encompass a major portion of the jobs available. (The definition of "project" became greatly enlarged.) After that first year, controls were instituted which insured that managers actually assigned or approved self-assigned work and that managers kept track of the budgets in doing that assigning.

In many areas "crews" of people who were continually self-assigning the same work began to act formally as crews. These crews began limiting initial access on the grounds that the areas required special skills, including the skill to cooperate with members of the crew. Even where no crews developed, managers found it far easier to designate a

worker for a given task than to allow the system to assign them someone from the preference pool.

As the number of jobs in the preference system decreased, so did the usefulness of bidding - so the Labor Manager introduced a new preference sheet, one which asked people to specify how much of what kinds of work they would do at 1 hours credit for 1 hour's work. People were asked to specify at least 1 full quota of such work, and then to say how much credit they would have to get in order to do the unpopular tasks. In this way, nearly all the community's labor was either managerially assigned (at 1.0) or was 1.0 because of the new preference sheets. Only dishes and a couple of smaller tasks remained. Finally, in 1978, the universally disliked task of dishwashing began being assigned to every member on a rotating basis; and the last vestiges of the bidding system were dropped.

The bidding system was thus replaced gradually without much clamour. From one perspective the replacement of that system by managerially-assigned and crew-assigned labor did not change substantially the egalitarian nature of the distribution of work. The system itself had never been as egalitarian as it had appeared at first glance primarily because there always had existed a fairly substantial number of people whose work was guaranteed either because of their monopoly of the required skills or because the work was managerial in nature. Most of the work of these people had been, in fact, assigned outside the bidding system. More important, however, is that these people not only stood above the system, but that they had a large voice in the community's determination of what constituted "work" and in the allocation of labor time to the various work areas. As self-assigned work grew, more and more members found niches which allowed them also to stand at least partially above the system, insuring that new members and visitors got the majority of the work which remained. (It was primarily because of this last factor that rotation of dishwashing was introduced in 1978.)

From another perspective, however, the change from bidding to the present system brought a tremendous danger of compromising egalitarian ideals. Initial access to a work area did not remain open to all. The unexpected financial crisis experienced by the community in the Winter of '73-'74 caused the community to severely restrict apprenticeship hours and to back down on the principle that any area should be open to anyone regardless of their entering skill level. People with skills, or with the aggressiveness and ability to persuade managers that they could quickly develop skills,

were given preference over others in job access. Managers and crews, now that self-assigned work had introduced more stability to the system, knew they'd have to work with a new worker continually; these managers and crews were open to the ideological compromise since they saw it as bringing them more control over their work environment.

It wasn't until 1978 that the full extent of this problem was officially recognized and addressed. A job-placement program was set up within the Labor Crew to deal with finding new members work and finding work for older members who are wanting to switch work areas but can't find the opportunities. This effort to redress the inequalities that have developed around job access is still in its beginning stages.

So far I've talked mainly about these aspects of the labor distribution system which have changed over the last 5 years. The most fundamental attribute of the system has, however, remained fairly constant; the principle that all who perform the community's work are entitled equally to the community's material rewards has been only slightly amended - and that change came before I joined the community.

The change came primarily because the community has never been able to provide enough money for members to spend on vacations away from the community. What the community has said to members is that if they work extra (above normal quota) in designated income-producing areas, they will get a portion of the surplus so generated for their private use. Although there have been a number of systems differing in detail, most have paid members about \$1 for each hour of income-producing work done above the expected quota of work, and most have designated as the income-producing work only areas requiring little skill and thus open to all members.

Other than this small amount of discretionary income (few earn more than \$200/year), all of the material benefits of the community are supposed to be available to all members regardless of whether they engage in manual labor or technical work or managerial work. Even this equality is not precisely true, however, because some work areas have more amenities or prerequisites (like travel) than others. Still, there exists at Twin Oaks a functioning labor distribution system which does not depend on material incentives to motivate people to take on more responsibilities or to do the more onerous tasks. Managers do not eat better, have better shelter, or keep warmer in the winter than workers. And there are no owners who benefit from the labor of others without themselves working.

As a school of socialistic living, therefore, Twin Oaks has taught many members some very important lessons. Though the community had to back down from the notion that anyone would be taught any skill desired, Twin Oaks has succeeded in teaching people the basic skills necessary for the survival of a rural, largely self-sufficient community. More important ideologically, however, it has taught many people (people who were raised with the expectation that they should be rewarded individually and materially for working) that in an egalitarian system there are many incentives other than money for working and taking on responsibilities. In the absence of differential material rewards members have found that the pride of accomplishment, concern for the group as a whole, and the need for peer-group approval are powerful motivators (rarely has the community used the threat of expulsion as the ultimate motivator).

Members have learned, too, that implementing egalitarian ideals is no simple matter. All the systems attempted at Twin Oaks had flaws, as did all the changes proposed for debate. Members learn that participation in meetings of all sorts is necessary for the functioning of the community, and that in community as everywhere, the meetings are sometimes made difficult and burdensome by two facts.

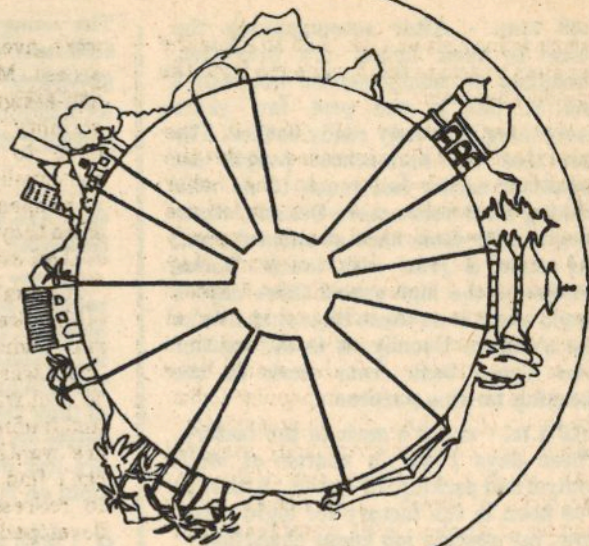
One fact is that although most members can agree on a list of basic values, most members do not agree with each other on the relative priority of those values in the actual practice of community. Values such as egalitarianism and compassion, egalitarianism and efficiency often seem to clash in practice. Important decisions involving changing the mix of trade-offs among values. Proposed changes must, therefore, meet resistance from those whose higher priority values are threatened.

The second fact is that whenever egalitarian values are compromised results in the unequal distribution of privileges, and the recipients of those privileges must resist, however unconsciously, changes which threaten the positions.

My five years at Twin Oaks were marked by a couple of periods when political conflict within the community erupted into acrimony, but for the most part, the debates have been marked more by tedium, frustration, and occasionally bursts of intellectual excitement, than by fighting or real ill will. The members who live at, and who come through, Twin Oaks have learned that it's possible for a rather ideologically diverse group of people to confront basic questions about the organization of their lives without more than occasional bursts of violence, and that violence of verbal in nature.

international

Impressions of Communal Living



edited by Vince

Meir Hurwitz of Kvutza Urim has been corresponding this year hoping to bring us a greater understanding of an Israeli lifestyle that is shared by over 100,000 people in his adopted country. As a native North American, Meir gives us a view of how a person joining a settlement that is already established perceives communal life. The Israeli style usually demands a commitment to ideals connected with the national state. That presents an added factor in the lifestyle. However that may influence matters, people living communally in Israel basically share the joys and struggles of people everywhere else.

The questions included in this column were part of the exchange that Meir and I are having in the correspondence. His last letter mentions some current facets of Urim life that are changing. Some of Meir's comments were helpful for me. They gave me a better view of the Kibbutz life that I had briefly experienced three years ago.

Impressions From A Kibbutznik

Urim was founded on Yom Kippur night 1946 along with ten other settlements in a dramatic move to settle the Negev. (1) The first settlers were youngsters, many of whom were from Bulgaria. They were being educated in a program for the absorption of youth. In 1950, the first American group arrived from a Zionist youth movement called Habonim. In 1955, the first Israeli group joined. Since then young people have joined Urim coming from North America through the Israeli youth movement. Today, there are 260 members and

candidates. (2) The last Israeli group which will be sent to Urim by the Israeli movement has just started its army service. Future growth will be mainly from the younger people, the oldest of whom are now finishing their army service and are starting to come back to the kibbutz as members.

Q. - Why is Urim called "Kvutza" and not "Kibbutz"?

When the first kibbutzim started to federate a number of different federations were organized, based on differing concepts of what a kibbutz should be. One of these federations was called Chever HaKvutzot, one was called Kibbutz Ha Me-uchad, a third remains to this day Kibbutz Artzi. The differences between Chever Ha Kvutzot and Kibbutz HaMe-uchad were:

Kvutzot
small
entirely agricultural
desire for close
contact between
members

Kibbutz
large
includes industry
no such desires for
closeness

- Today the name kvutza is an anachronism. Many kvutzot are larger than many kibbutzim. At any rate, it is impossible to distinguish between the two because of size. Almost all kibbutzim and kvutzot want to grow larger than they are today. (I say almost,

because I can't claim to know what's happening in all the 280 settlements.) I know of no kvutza that doesn't want to grow. Maybe there's a difference in the rate that an individual kibbutz or kvutza would like to grow, but the actual rate usually has no relation to the desired rate.

Almost all the kvutzot have industry today as do almost all the kibbutzim. Members are not necessarily closer on kvutzot than they are on kibbutzim. The Kibbutz Me-uchad movement split and part joined with Chever HaKvutzot to form the Ichud HaKvutzot Velta Kibbutzim. The remainder stayed as Me-uchad.

DAILY LIFE & FAMILY

Q. - Is there a typical work day?

For me, the day begins at 5:45 a.m. when the alarm rings. Work officially starts at 6:30 in the winter and 6:00 in the summer. However, in the factory where we make stainless steel screwdrivers and where I am working, work starts at 6:00 the year round. Since the factory is only about 50 meters away from my apartment, it takes less than five minutes to get there. 7:00 a.m. - It's back to wake the children. Naomi and I have five young ones; the most young children of any in our kvutzot. At the age of 13 or 14, the children will move to their own rooms, which they will share with a classmate. Yizhav, age 9, and Rivat, age 8, go to the school in Urim; Eiran, age 5 1/2, is in the kindergarten; and Borak and Keren, twins aged 3, still go to prekindergarten house.

7:40 a.m. - After accompanying the twins to their house, it's breakfast. Breakfast is usually served between 8 and 9, but in the past few years everything is usually ready earlier. The fact that the high-school people eat breakfast earlier had much to do with making meal hours more flexible. Since they usually come back at about 2 p.m., the same is true with lunch. Naomi teaches in the high school three days a week, and it is on these days that I wake the children. Usually, it is the mother who comes back from work in the morning for this purpose.

8:10 a.m. - and it's back to the factory. These days I am in charge of stock control and packing for export. Although I've been in the factory for eight years now, my specific job keeps changing.

12:00 noon - and it's lunch time. This is the big meal of the day and it is usually a meat meal. People eat in the communal dining hall normally.

By 4 p.m. the work day ends at the factory. Women officially work one hour less and mothers two hours less, not counting wake up time in the morning and another half hour around 10 a.m. to visit the smaller children.

at 4 p.m., I usually go to pick up the twins. Although the twins have been able to come home by themselves for some time now, they still have trouble bringing their little clothing bags. We then have usually gone to visit my mother, who is also living in the settlement. We stay there for an hour or so and then go home to join the other children. This arrangement allow Naomi to rest and shower.

Supper is at 6 p.m. and we can go to the dining room or eat at the apartment.

The youngsters usually have bedtime at 8:30, and we spend an hour with them getting all five comfortable.

At 9:30 p.m. one of us may leave for any special evening activity.

Q. - Are you able to relate well to five children?

In my opinion, yes. I think that relating to an only child well would be difficult. The more there are the easier it is to relate well. This means, of course, that I'm prevented from taking too much of their time and that they have more to relate to in the family themselves and are less dependent (for play and attention) on Naomi and myself.

Q. - Why five children?

We have five children because (a) Naomi wanted four, (b) I wanted as many as possible, (c) Borak and Keren, our youngest, are twins.

Q. - Do you consider it important to be with five younger ones for long periods in each day?

No. It's not the length of time that's spent with children (or friends) that's important, but what relationship is in the time together. I learned this from an experiment with youngsters that tested their security as related to the number of hours their parents spent with them.

The test was as follows: There were five lines at different distances from a basket. The child was asked to choose a line and from there to try to throw something into the basket. If the throw was successful from the first line - one point, from the second - two points. In



Kibbutz youth

general, the children who chose the farthest lines also scored the best. This was considered to be a measure of their security.

Q. - As a man do you bear much responsibility for your children?

Responsibility for children is divided between the parents (who bear ultimate responsibility in my settlement) and the metaplot (women who work in the children's houses.) The responsibility between the parents is left for them to decide. If a child has to be taken to the hospital either the mother or the father might go. Usually, the pressures at work will determine which goes.

However, as seems to be common with most family life as we know it, Naomi has more of a worrying nature than I and so will usually bear the brunt of organizing home life, including care of the children at home. While it is true that usually the women wake up the children in the morning, I wake our most of the time as Naomi has to leave for the high school where she teaches math.

Q. - Have any of your children ever lived away from Naomi and you?

No, both Naomi's former kibbutz at Urim had sleeping arrangements for the children in the member's houses by the time we were married. Yizhav, our oldest, will have his own room before he's in high school, as is usual for children in the kibbutzim where they sleep at home.



Q. - *When did Urim shift to parental care for youngsters at night?*

Night care has always been the duty of parents at Urim. When the children slept in children's houses a parent would sleep in each house on a rotating basis wherein each parent would sleep one week in a children's house until cos turn came again. There was also a mother on guard duty. If there was a problem with any child that the guard couldn't handle, she would call cos parent.

The decision to have the children not sleep in children's houses was taken before I arrived in Urim, before October 1960, due to the large population of former Americans who wanted the change. The first houses that were suitable for this change were built in the early 60's.



Factory worker

Q. - *How do you feel as a factory worker in kibbutz?*

I don't think of myself as a factory worker even though I've worked in the factory for eight years now. The first five years in this kibbutz, I worked with the chickens. Then, I spent four years as messenger (shaliach) to the Israeli youth movement. Upon returning, I did a short stint, four months, in charge of serving the meals in the dining room. In the factory itself, I've had a number of different jobs. At present, I pack the port orders and am in charge of the creakroom. Last year, I was taken out of the factory to serve as work organizer of the kibbutz.

I don't think there's any role that I could identify with enough to accept as my identification, certainly not in terms of work.

ON LIFESTYLE & RULES

Q. - *Does it seem that communism is a valuable lifestyle for Israelis in these times?*

What kind of a lifestyle are you referring to as communism? A communal lifestyle is as valuable in these times as in any times. However, I view it as experimental. I don't think that humanity knows enough, i.e. has progressed enough, to know how to live communally as it should be lived. And the only way it can learn is for people to live that way and to learn while doing. It's as valuable for Israel as for anywhere else. The fact that it's been more successful in Israel (if quantity, solidity and material progress are any measure of success) than anywhere else is a coincidence of history. It seems to be more difficult to start a mass movement in an established country than one which is in a pioneering mode, especially one with a high degree of socialist consciousness.

Q. - *How do you feel being a member of a community group for so many years?*

In the one sense, I don't. How does anyone feel being a city dweller for many years? or a farmer? Kibbutz is my lifestyle and whenever I do think about it, I affirm it.

On the other hand, I'm not happy with my role in my kibbutz. I've become a sort of "Don Quixote" with all kinds of radical ideas that others aren't interested in; for example

I think that kibbutzim should be more interested in the development of communes throughout the world.

I think that socialism is connected with the kibbutz. Yet, in Urim the general assembly voted to not celebrate May Day.

I think that involvement in politics is important.

I think that religion is important, and I am an humanistic Jew.

I think that the kibbutzim can learn more about intimate relations by discussing it.

In general, I think that discussing our problems in the open is better than just complaining.

Q. - *Do you sense a strong comradeship with others?*

No!

Q. - *Are there people in the community who are no longer friends?*

Urim has over 250 members now. There are members who never were friends. The members came from different groups and so Urim is a heterogeneous community with all age levels. In general, the atmosphere is friendly and warm, which is not always the situation in all the settlements.

Q. - *Is it comfortable living closely with many of the people for so long?*

Who lives closely? Once a kibbutz grows past thirty members, people aren't so close. When I arrived there were 130 members already. It's not that much closer than a small village. What is uncomfortable, however, is the knowledge that many major decisions in your life are dependent on the agreement of the majority of the members - when you can study, how many rooms you will have, what kind of work you'll do. This is what we accept upon arriving at a settlement. Those who cannot accept this uncomfortableness leave.

Q. - *Do you feel that women are second class citizens in kibbutzim always being in the laundry, kitchen and children areas?*

Definitely not. Anything the women want they can get, not individually but



as a group with voting power. There is a division into women's work and men's work. However, this division is not insurmountable. In one group that's here for training, and whose destination is to join a younger and smaller kibbutz, some of the men work with the youngsters and

some of the women drive tractors. This is unusual, yet it can and does happen. A number of years ago, I organized some discussions about the role of women in Urim. Many suggestions were made, but the main concrete proposal that came from these suggestions was to allow mothers an hour more free from work in order to rest during the day. Once this proposal was properly presented, it passed the general meeting easily. Mothers now work 7 hours/day while men, including fathers officially work nine.

Q. - Do men and women actually function in positive and supportive ways with each other in Urim?

No more or less than in Israeli society or in modern Western society. Members in general should learn much more about functioning in positive, supportive ways, in my opinion.

CURRENT EVENTS

At the last meeting, by a vote of 22 for and 18 against, we accepted the following proposal: The diving group would get jobs as extra work in order to earn money for diving equipment that would remain the property of the settlement. The next meeting will discuss an appeal of this decision. It is revolutionary and could have been considered only in a liberal kvutzva like Urim. The idea of direct payment for work done is felt by many to be the anathema to the socialist ideal.

A loose-leaf collection of the decisions of Urim has finally been published and a copy has been given to each family. It was placed in the laundry area where each family or bachelor received clean laundry. The collection includes decisions about membership, work, organization, consumption, vehicles, travelling abroad, vacation, education, higher education, parents of members and miscellaneous matters. This collection is particularly useful for new members who weren't here when the decisions were made.

We have a second factory that makes filling for sleeping bags and blankets. We're in the process of moving part of this factory to Urim from Ashkelon, the nearest city, where it is presently sited. There is a basic problem with the part of the factory that will remain in Ashkelon. On the one hand, we cannot hold on to it for that would mean acting as capitalist owners enjoying the fruits of the labor of others. On the other hand, it's not easy to give away because it's extremely profitable and should it become independent the new owners may some day decide to disconnect and join with our



A typical kibbutz school

competitors, a move which would hurt Urim.

The last item is a personal one, but it has a larger significance. My family is at present the largest that live in the same apartment. As our twins grow older our present quarters are getting more cramped. The minimum standard is two people to a room, and we are seven in three rooms. To resolve this situation a special apartment with four rooms and an enlarged kitchen has been prepared. We're now in the process of cleaning, and we'll be moving within the month. When Yizhav will move to his own room

in three years, we'll return to our present apartment.

FOOTNOTES

(1) The Negev is a sector of Israel that the Zionists began to control in 1945. During the times of territorial expansion, the Jews formed settlements in these new areas to function as guard posts.

(2) The kvutzot/kibbutzim recognize full members as those adults over 19 years who have spent at least one year in residence in the settlement after having served in the Israeli army.

Would you consider teaching the skills you know in a small college in a cooperative setting?

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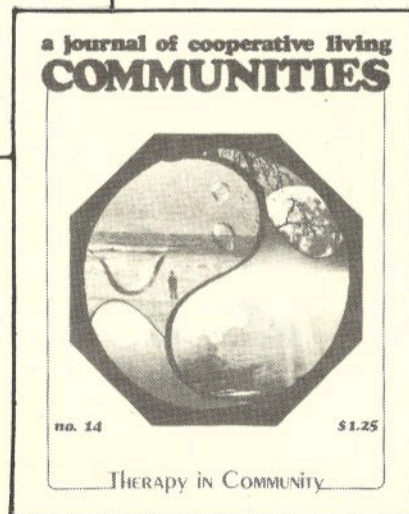
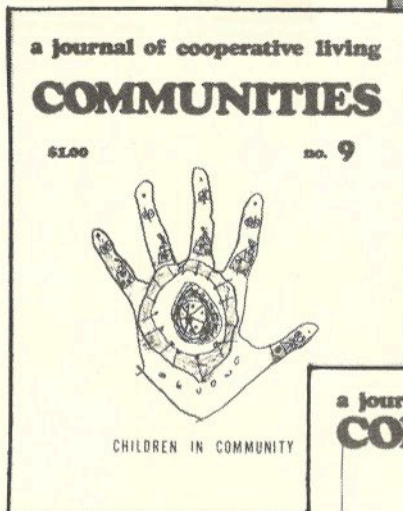
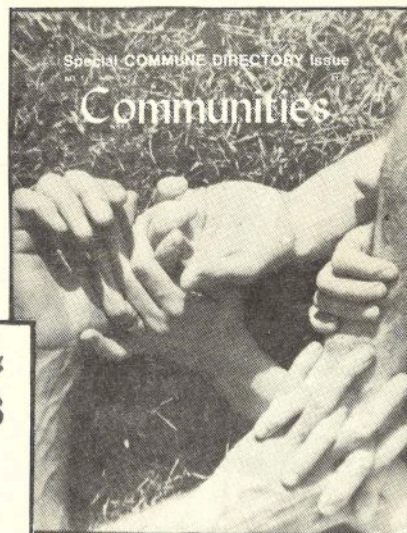
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