

Carol

# Communities

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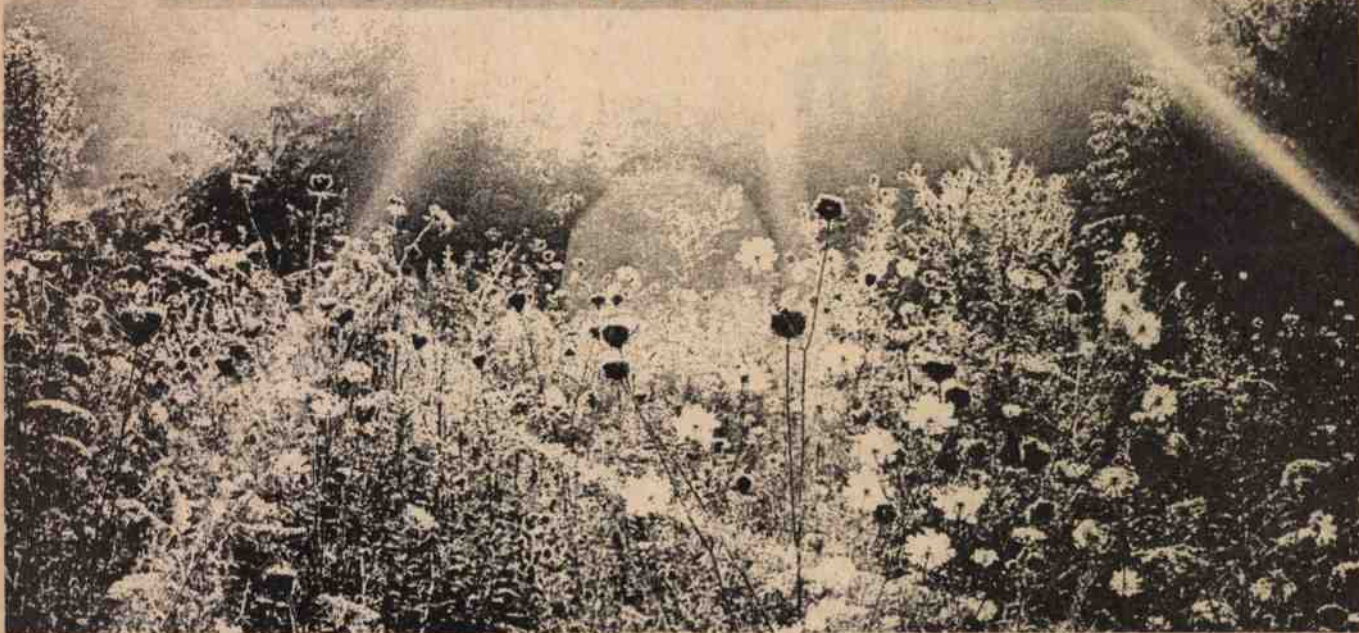
TO A FRIEND'S HOUSE  
THE ROAD IS NEVER LONG.

John





# Communities



December-January 1974

Number 6

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# Community

## Earth



It's easy to build barriers when living communally in a small group. There's always excitement and personality hassles that become the day-to-day focus. In a short time if there's no conscious choice to interact on a broader scale, the small commune becomes everything (undertaking the viewpoint of the mouse gazing through the grasses on the prairie but unable to see much beyond its nose). There are many things going on out there. Some of them seem incredible. Leafing through literature about the Chinese experiments, one wonders if these typical peasant success stories are just another form of Maoist rhetorical brainwash. Yet the fairly objective accounts do lend evidence to a real uplifting spirit that has taken hold throughout the countryside.

Being involved in the "communal movement" in this country the last five years and viewing the "progress" is not always heartening. Beginning with the numerous hippie anarchist attempts to the now budding middle-class, somewhat organized lifestyle experiments, one doesn't get the feel of any broad-based movement. We still are an extremely small percentage of the population, with little in the way of economic alternatives, and with almost no inter-cooperation. Viewing the world-wide picture is another side. In some of the socialist countries, substantial progress is being made to create viable alternatives through sharing.

### CHINA:

Chinese communes are not an escape from society but society itself. The home and workplace of 600 million rural dwellers. Each commune is a comprehensively cooperative unit integrating industry, agriculture, local and military affairs. China is a living example of how communalism can be a world-wide viable alternative to the dominant lifestyle in the West. Yet, it is in the developing stages and has many challenges to face and much evolving to reach a level of total equality within the society.

*"The future of China's rural experiment in the communes rests heavily on the willingness of her educated youth to devote their skills to the transformation of the countryside rather than to the pursuit of personal comfort and prestige in an urban setting; it depends on their willingness to share in the hard phys-*

*ical labor, it also holds out the satisfaction of helping to generate the basic changes which mark the most important revolution sweeping China today." (Liberation, p. 33.)*

"Commune" in China is reminiscent of the French usage of the term — a large political unit. One of the largest communes, Ch'eng-kuan, has nearly 100,000 people occupying an area of 120 square miles with over 20,000 acres of land cultivated. The people are divided into brigades, about forty-five, averaging around two thousand per brigade. Another grouping into production teams, of which there are about 500, sets the various levels of division within each commune. A second commune, Tungting, covers 75 square miles and has 11,000 families with 45,000 people. Under the commune are thirty production brigades and 237 teams engaged in farming and other occupations — some producing mainly food grains, others mainly growing fruit and still others in which fisheries are the main line.

How did these huge units come about? After 1949, China, like all developing agrarian societies, began to expand its cities with new industry and concentrated educational opportunities. The trend from the countryside began and with it the realization that stagnation of the rural areas would possibly condemn eighty percent of the Chinese people to cultural deprivation. Around 1951 cooperatives of a semi-socialist nature came into being as a possible answer to building the rural areas. The coop members pooled their land and major means of production. Then in 1956 advanced agricultural producers' cooperatives emerged with members working together and being paid on the principle of "from each according to one's ability, to each according to one's work." In 1958 a merger of twenty advanced agricultural producers' cooperatives led to the establishment of Tungting People's Commune. These mergers were initiated by the people through their experience that co-ops were unable to meet the needs of increased production on a larger scale. More people, funds and other resources enabled the commune to expand production faster. Increased production was accompanied by a constant rise in commune members' living standards. Per capita annual income rose from \$18 to \$75 in a twenty year period. Before the peasants couldn't afford to send their youngsters to the few





ONLINE





schools that did exist; now everyone attends the fifty schools for youngsters. The introduction of a cooperative medical system has provided free treatment to the peasants for a fee of \$1.00/year for a family. A fairly complete medical and public health network has been formed by the commune hospital, production brigades' clinics and production teams' health workers.

#### *Social Structure*

The people's commune performs the function of state power and at the same time organizes commune-wide production, distribution, consumption and other economic activities. In production work, for instance, the commune helps production brigades and teams work out production plans and supervises and checks on their implementation; helps them improve administrative and financial work and do a good job for accumulation and distribution, popularizes effective measures to increase production and advance experience, and organizes the supply of the means of production and livelihood. This direction comes from the revolutionary committee with 36 representatives from the various branches. These people practice collective leadership with responsibility for various fields of work

divided among them. These officials work in the fields a minimum of 60-100 days, at the brigade level 200 days and at the team level over 300 days a year. Commune leadership bears heavy responsibility, but it is exercised primarily in the midst of labor, not from behind a desk. Since the coordinated leadership and joint efforts at Tungting have come into practice, a dozen factories have been built to process fodder, process fruit and to handle the fishery and the lumber.

#### *Tri-level Ownership*

Collective ownership of the rural people's commune falls into three levels — commune, production brigade and production team. Farmland, forests, water and its resources, farm tools and machinery, draught animals, small factories and mines and other means of production are shared among the three. Collective ownership at the team level is the basic one. Usually the means of production owned by the commune are a small number of enterprises and facilities which production brigades and teams are unable to handle or which are more advantageous for the commune to run. The greater portion of the profits from commune-run enterprises goes into expanding production. Brigade-run



enterprises are those which are beyond the capability of production teams or are more advantageous for the brigades to run. For instance, one brigade in the commune with a population of 1275 controlled a fodder-processing factory, farm tools factory, and boat repair yard, which are on a smaller scale than the commune-run enterprises. The production team is the accounting unit in the commune. It organizes production and distribution and carries out independent accounting, being solely responsible for its own profits or losses.

All land within its confines belongs to the team. Small implements, machinery and some animals are at the teams' disposal and the commune cannot deploy them without compensation. Commune members have their share of small plots for private use and may be involved in some domestic sideline occupations. Each family decides what to plant on its own plot and the harvest goes tax free. This provides an important income supplement while posing challenges to the emphasis on collective values. Their incomes, bank savings, houses and other means of livelihood are privately owned and protected by the state.

#### *Work at the Production Team Level*

Each team has a leader elected through democratic consultations and with the leader is a deputy and seven team committee members all of whom work in the factories and fields. They divide among themselves responsibility for political-ideological work, production, finance and accounting, work among women, the militia and other tasks. The commune works out a proposed plan for sowing seed and sends it to the production brigades which in turn make their proposals to the production teams. According to the state plan and the needs of its members, each team works out its own production plan which is subject to endorsement at a general meeting of team members. After harvest, the team accountant records the amount of money and grain each family receives, the team's balance between income and expenditure and each member's work attendance. Individual incentives are embodied in the work point system, which accounts for thirty percent of a member's income. But the income differential is extremely small — on the average of five percent of total income. Overall evaluation of individual performance is made at long term intervals due to the present advanced collective consciousness. Distribution of the money is handled at special general meetings. Public accumulation consists of the reserve and welfare fund. The latter is spent on social insurance and collective welfare facilities.

*Q: Is there much job alienation?*

*A: I think there's alienation on the job, but nothing compared to what I've experienced in our country. People would tell you they're bored. At one irrigation works, there was a man standing there just turning a wheel, regulating the flow of water and watching these gauges. We asked him if he got tired of doing this. "Of course," he said.*

*Q: Do they rotate jobs?*

*A: I remember I asked that on a commune at an asbestos factory. They said they didn't switch to do farm work. The asbestos factory was going 10 years. At other places people said they didn't think there is as much job change as we would like or would appreciate. (Take Over, Interview with American visitors.)*

#### *Lifestyle*

Many of the members are quite satisfied with their present advances in level of living standards. Many of the people can still remember the old form of slavery to the petty capitalist who controlled much of rural China. Where there were thatched huts there are now new homes, bought with cash, that have high ceilinged living rooms with wooden-beamed structure. People are purchasing mahogany furniture and bicycles, transistor radios, clocks and clothing.

Members work eight hours a day, six days a week, except during the busy farming season when there are two days off a month. Apart from necessary meetings, all off-hours are at their own disposal. Each brigade has a cultural troupe composed of about five members from each team. They mainly give performances with singing, dance and acting in skits related to life in the villages. The family seems to be taking on new life since it's now being extended several generations with relatives usually occupying a courtyard. A typical situation is interconnected yards housing blood relatives with each yard containing a number of two room houses. A single kitchen and vegetable storage bin are shared by each courtyard. Electricity is available to power the radios and sewing machines and light the buildings. With the advent of guaranteed comprehensive care for members of a brigade combined with stabilized state taxes, the people feel liberated.

#### *Women Members*

Courtyard living arrangements have allowed many women to work extensively in the fields and factories; at Tungting women compose 46% of the labour force. Taking into consideration women's physiological conditions, the production teams always see to it that they are given lighter jobs. Also they are allowed to stop one hour earlier than men; during this hour women prepare lunch and perform the larger share of household chores. The primary path to women's liberation has been greater activism; relative to the previous generation great strides have been made to equalize the situation. Women are now paid equally. Many squads of team workers are women performing such wide tasks as dynamiting, canal building, management of agriculture — and animal care. At Tungting nearly 500 women hold leading posts at the commune, brigade and team levels and in the militia organization.

*Q: Were people into birth control or was . . .*

*A: It wasn't necessary, unmarried people just don't need birth control. They laughed when asked about it. Living together and having sex outside of marriage ends up being exploitive of women. They don't sleep with other people than their spouses. They have an ideological rationale for what they're doing and it has economic reasons because they are a developing country.*

*Q: Are there women's organizations in China?*

*A: We asked them what happened at the last meeting of the women's committee in one of the factories. They told us that all had decided they wanted more teachers in the kindergarten to make the education richer, and so they got teachers. There didn't seem to be separate women's organizations, like study groups. (Take Over, Interview.)*



China is seeking to build modernity in the countryside by transforming, not destroying an agrarian way of life.

*"The success of the commune system hinges ultimately on its ability to encompass two goals: The rapid development of the entire rural economy, including its mechanization and industrialization, and the elimination of such differences as those between city and countryside, between those who work with their hands and those with their minds and between men and women."* (Liberation, p. 32.)

#### INDIA:

Another unique village style movement that has been developing during the last generation is the Gram-dan Movement. It is a Gandhian alternative: self-reliant, human-sized communities (not more than 1000 families) brought into existence under Vinoba Bhave. Speaking at a conference in 1952 about the needs of the rural poor, he received a gift of 100 acres from a wealthy landowner (Bhoo-dan: land gift). This land went to some families in the then untouchable caste. Over the last 20 years five million acres have been donated, enabling seventy million people to live in around 150,000 villages peacefully transformed into communes, with no private ownership, where all vital decisions (concerning education, agriculture, health services, etc) are made unanimously by village assemblies.

With eighty percent of India's burgeoning population being rural, any hope for the progress of the poor will depend upon development programs of this type. Essentially a nonpolitical structure for the mobilization of local effort, the Gram-dan process is relatively simple. Each land-owner agrees to turn legal title to the property over to the village as a whole. The land is put in trust; twenty percent is leased, rent free, to those in the village who need land, while the remaining eighty percent is leased back to the original owner. Two percent of all produce from the land is donated by each villager using the land to a central fund which serves as a village capital base. A council composed of all village members makes all community decisions based on near-unanimous consent. The council must give permission for the sale of any of the village land — this keeps the land title in the village along with farming rights which remain with the original owner and heirs. Significant to this Sarvodaya program (welfare of all concept) is the development of cottage industries to produce utilitarian commodities, such as khadi (homespun cloth), soap, matches, leather goods, paper, pressed oil and farm tools.

An organization of Bhave's disciples, the Sarva Seva Sangh, numbers 5,000. While some circulate on foot among villages spreading the doctrine of integrated, self-sufficient communities based on sharing, the majority occupy ashrams on Bhoo-dan land where they establish local schools and work with villagers on reforms and rural development. These workers incorporate religion into the basic aspects of their lives. These independent workers are now the core of the movement and are responsible for what little organization exists in spreading the concept of land gifts and community.

#### ISRAEL:

In Israel the kibbutzim, which comprise only 4% of Israeli society, are a federation; there are four separate kibbutz movements of varying ideological persuasions. The kibbutz presents a valuable model for developing utopian visions of social reconstruction. Historically, isolation of commune settlements from one another and isolation from the rest of society have been distinguishing causes for their failure. The Israeli kibbutzim have federated their village settlements in a union under the same principles of decentralization that operate in their internal structure, and have become a powerful educative influence on society as a whole. There are industrial as well as agricultural kibbutzim, uniting production and consumption. Supported by the government and banks alike, the kibbutz is considered good business.

Wide differences exist between the American communes and the Israeli kibbutz. The nature of both respective countries provides a basic reason for these differences. The kibbutz was formed in a developing country. The ideology behind this developing economy was a thoroughgoing socialism which included control of the methods of production as well as distribution. Another difference between the kibbutz and the commune is in this attitude of the rest of the community toward them. The early settlers of the kibbutz were pioneers who had the moral support of the entire community. Politically, they were centers for the Jewish sovereignty because they represented islands of Jewish sovereignty. And the kibbutzim were built by people who were refugees, many of whom fled religious and political repression. To them, kibbutz was not only a spiritual refuge or political instrument, but a home. They were prepared to resolve the problems of education, death and illness within the framework of the community. From a tradition of wandering in exile, they had come home.

Today many of the established kibbutzim have existed for two generations and the standard of living is rising while the amount of experimentation is declining. Of the many kibbutzim and rural settlements in Israel, only a few are not political and are experimenting with spiritual ideas, organic gardening, etc. In Israel it is almost impossible to purchase land privately. Where it is available it is usually in small plots and the price is high. Often land that is for sale has restrictions against putting buildings on it, as there is much tighter government control here. Most agricultural land is leased to the various kibbutz movements, which are all connected with political parties. There is little idealism left in most of the older kibbutzim. They are concerned mainly with profits and markets. Many are very wealthy now with swimming pools, luxurious housing, t.v. sets, refrigerators. They enjoy a tremendous profit mark-up on their produce — far higher than farmers in the States — which places a tremendous burden on the masses of people living in the towns — "lumpen proletariat", mainly new immigrants from Eastern countries and the Soviet Union. Prices of food here are unbelievably high. Organically grown food is practically unavailable, as the few settlements that grow organically export almost all their produce to health food concerns in Europe. Where it is available, in two or three health food stores, the prices are too





high for the average Israeli to afford. Most kibbutzim pay lip service to socialist ideology, but in fact exploit the many idealistic volunteers that come to visit them from Europe and the United States. They also hire Arab laborers to do many tasks which they once had to do for themselves; affluence has made them lazy.

The following is a summary of some of the settlements that have either started on their own (outside of the various political parties) or are into organic farming:

(1) *Kibbutz Adamit*  
Upper Galil, Israel

This kibbutz was started by young, hip people from the West. They wanted to establish a non-Israeli kibbutz in Israel. At the moment they only have a few children there, all under the age of three. Some of the group is breaking away to live on a commune in Canada.

(2) *Kibbutz Gezer*  
Doar NA, Nahal Ayalon 73220, Israel

This is a kibbutz that was started by young Americans, Canadians and other English-speaking people.

They have about 50 people, only eight of whom are members. The rest are mainly transient young people some of whom may stay on and become members. They are experimenting with organic farming. They have a synagogue, but their attitude is that one can practice one's religious beliefs whatever they may be to whatever degree one wishes. They are vegetarians, but eat fish and eggs. They have only two married couples and four children — the oldest child being six. They hope to attract more families with children into their settlement. Women are required to return to six hours work a day as soon as their babies are six months old. The babies and children are watched by a "metapellet" (babysitter), but because of a bad experience they had they will not now allow any of the mothers to work as "metapellets". At the moment children sleep with their parents, but this policy might be changed in the future as more children come into the community, and they might if the members wish to be placed in a children's house. They have about 1200 acres of land, several young calves and 15,000 chickens.

They give the following description of themselves:

"We thought of the community of friends, committed to each other's welfare, responsible for each other's support, finding satisfaction in their own labor, as an ideal way of life. We thought of agriculture as a return to more basic needs ('by the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread'), a healthy physical life, a spiritual replenishment in understanding nature."

Q: In what social and economic ways is Gezer a kibbutz?

A: We see Gezer as a kibbutz, a socialist community, to the extent that work is contributed by each person to the best of one's ability, and to the profit of the kibbutz as a whole. No individual can receive bonuses or material reward of any kind by working extra hours. All kibbutz work is selected and directed by the members or by their appointed farm manager and work coordinator, for the benefit of the kibbutz, rather than the individual choosing work for personal profit.

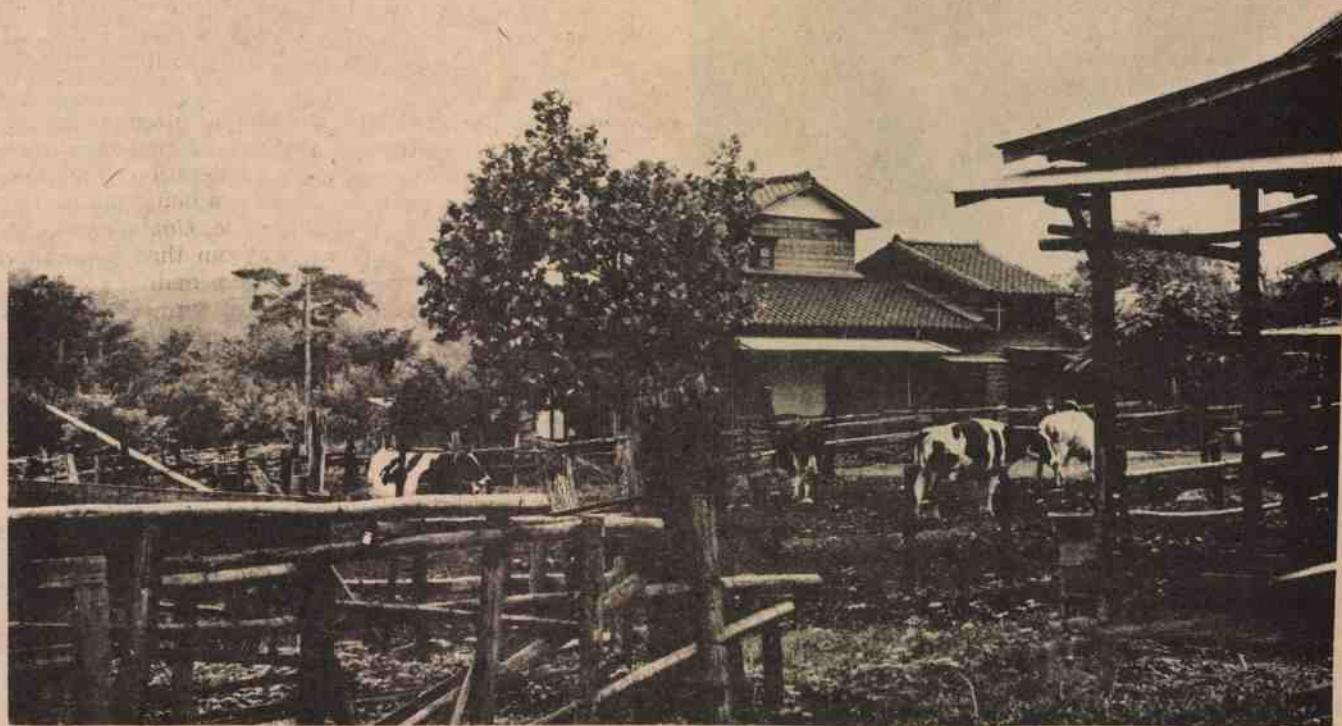
Q: Does this communal structure tend to oppose the interests of the individual?

A: It could, but then, we are looking upon the community as a collective to serve the needs of the individual. We try to be flexible in distributing kibbutz property, to allow the individual personal choice in using whatever facilities and resources we can provide.

Q: Are there problems with maintaining equality amongst people in work when there is a wide range of jobs and when some areas need strong management?

A: We've found it necessary to have some people acting as managers of the farm and its branches. A lot depends on developing a permanent community, for there can be rotation of jobs. We look on management as a necessary part of the work, with great responsibilities and demands. With rotation, we hope that social stratification or negative feelings towards people in these positions will be avoided. Everyone is contributing toward the same interests, and the manager is simply the person in the branch who knows its overall problems best.







Q: Doesn't rotation tend toward inefficiency and less competence?

A: It's possible. We'd like to reach a balance between these two interests, that of efficiency, and that of social equality, without becoming anti-professional. The longer a person remains, the more important he/she is to the village; seniority plays a big role for very practical reasons.

### (3) *Amirim*

Upper Galil, Israel

This is a vegetarian nature village and is a moshav rather than a kibbutz. They do a certain amount of organic farming, and also run a health resort to support themselves. Religious ideas are one's own business, so long as one is a vegetarian. Eggs, dairy products are allowed but no fish or meat. Members live in their own houses with their children, and each family receives some land for a garden. Most of the land is farmed collectively. There are about 50 families there—some from English-speaking countries, but most are Israeli. They have their own kindergarten. Many of the members are into health foods, natural healing, etc.

### (4) *Yodfat*

Doar NA Ashrat, Israel

This is a moshav shitufi settlement, which is like a kibbutz in that land is owned and farmed collectively, but is like a moshav in that children live with their parents, and families eat in their own homes rather than in a dining room — although at Yodfat there is a communal dining room for single people, and a communal meal for the entire community every Friday night. There are about 50 members and 35 children. Most of the members are Israeli, six families are American and Canadian. Most of the people are searching for spiritual meaning to their lives and are interested in many different spiritual ideas and teachings. (Ouspensky, Gurdjieff, Meher Baba are popular.) A communal meal and service is held every Friday night. Some of the members at times have been interested in group therapy, Gestalt psychology, etc. All are soul searching, looking for ways to grow spiritually, to change. A certain amount of organic farming is done, but only because it is profitable, and not as a matter of principle. The group grows apricots organically, and exports them to Europe. They may soon also grow tomatoes organically, also for export. They do not presently raise any animals except for a few horses used by the community for recreation. They are building 15 new houses and now have room for new members. However, they do not wish to absorb more than one or two new families a year.

### AFRICA AND EUROPE:

These two continents present a contrast in communalism and the reporting involved. Newspapers report that in a few African countries villages are beginning to be established along the lines of the Chinese model but on a much smaller scale. In Europe many of the communal living experiments are in the urban areas and are similar to the city communal household in America.

The African efforts are centered mainly in Madagascar and Tanzania where the people are implementing decentralized village governmental structures. Ru-

ral socialism is seen as the way to true democratization of power. The villages in theory are peasant cooperatives. Tanzanians number two million living in these forms with an average of 400 people per village. In the last six years 5000 villages have developed. These villages are destined to provide the agricultural base for the countries.

In Europe the various communal attempts are reported as in this country — with newsletters and magazines. In England there exists a federation of communal groups with interested members being part of the support for the movement magazine, *Communes*. (See the two previous articles taken from that magazine.) The other European countries have mainly city communes that are not affiliated in any formal way. Some sources for information on alternative lifestyle approaches in Europe are listed:

- Equality magazine, 6 Frankfurt, Main PB 3413, Germany
- Kollektivnytt newsletter, Schonegg 8820, Wädenswil, Switzerland
- Bit Free Info Service, 141 Westbourne Park Road, London W. 11, England
- Bialczyński KRAUDW W. Ololna 20/15, Poland
- French newsletter c/o Faligrand 8 Allee Roland Garros 94-Orly, Paris, France
- Gelso Verdo Community Via Chioggia 31 35100 Padova, Italy

### JAPAN:

A federation of well-established communities prints news occasionally. These 10 to 20 villages range in size from 50 to 350 people. For info:

- Comu-news, Japan Kibbutz Association R-10 Sangubashi Heights 5-14-4-Chome Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo, Japan
- Yamagishism Nagoya Information 307-12 Suwacho Shinjuku-ku Tokyo Telephone 03-209-3776

(More information exists on European and Japanese communal ventures in two books available from our Bookshelf; see the back of this magazine.)

### Conclusion

Many possibilities exist making it seem realizable that through decentralization we can reorganize this country while still maintaining industrialization and becoming ecologically positive. Of course, China could become another Russia; Africa and India new centers for uncontrolled development; and North America and Europe continuing decadent continents bent on self-destruction. We do not have the socialist state and its evolution in this country seems unlikely: it's a question of whether the expanding consciousness is enough to turn the tide and develop a new movement in our culture.

### SOURCES

*Peking Review* 1973 Nos. 13-18  
*Liberation* 1973 (Vol. 17, No. 8) Mark Selden, author  
*Take Over* (UPS) April 1973  
Muki Tsur, Sandra Teitleman, Virginia O'Rourke, about Israel; Virginia O'Rourke on India  
Assorted other clippings.



# Deed Land to God

Deeding the land to God has been known and practiced in the Islamic world for 1200 years; it is a way of life set down in the Koran. This concept is called "Wakf" in the Islamic language and referred to often in the Koran.

This philosophy was expressed repeatedly to the settlers who arrived in America in the seventeenth century and continually as they pushed their way across the plains to the Pacific Ocean. Native Americans believed *no* man owned the land, but that it belonged to the "Great Spirit"; they still hold this to be true today.

There are few expressions of this attitude towards land current in America. One such case is that of the legendary "Morning Star Ranch" community and Lou Gottlieb, who carried the case before legal audiences in Sonoma County in 1968.

This decision arose after numerous ownership confrontations within the community; he and others pooled together and wrote a charter stating that the land was in God's name. The idea seemed perfect; nevertheless, when the deed was filed at the Sonoma County Courthouse, there were 'heavy' repercussions. The courthouse refused to accept such a deed written in such an 'unethical' manner, claiming to be completely legal and forthright; therefore, the document was treated as an illegal pact.

However, the Morning Star people, and Lou Gottlieb in particular, began to prepare an appeal to what they considered an "insane" denial; this appeal and its ruling took almost two years, and set a precedent in California:

The courts ruled that a Deity is a legal nullity; thus forcing the deed invalid on the grounds that "God" does not come under the mortal laws of man, and/or may not exist; thereupon, the ruling stood: "Whatever the nature of the Deity, God is not a person, natural or artificial, in existence at time of conveyance, and capable of taking title."

Kenneth M. Eymann, Judge  
Superior Court, Sonoma County, California

Lou Gottlieb believed the land was under divine guidance; due to this belief he wanted to develop his philosophy of divine land; however, as the above indicates, this test case, some five years ago, clearly makes a strong case against the practicality of the concept in this country. This is precisely one of the major power bases of American economics, land (property).

There is some limited information concerning this aspect of land use, but even in these cases there were legal hassles and/or persons contesting the action. The rare cases are: a farm called, 'Gate of Heaven' in Keall, Kentucky, deed is registered to God; a couple named Nowel and Ann Singer, who live on a 1/4 acre in Oak

County, Ca., land title is in God's name, and from information gathered directly from Lou Gottlieb, Bill Wheeler's Ranch. There seems to be no other information available concerning this aspect of land use, available; at least not to (our) knowledge, perhaps (readers will) have additional facts and input we are not aware of at the time of this writing.

Looking at this concept from a practical and communitarian point of view, its philosophic basis appears correct and idyllic; however, given the society we experience and its legal mores, this philosophy is not designed for the moral ethics which control this country.

In terms of an alternative in land use, the "land trust" more easily upsets the present 'property syndrome,' as controlled by corporations, family cartells, etc. This utilization of combining communes, collectives, etc., into a 'land collective' or community land trust may well be the proper formula needed to confront the "ownership of property game," which has been cruelly played for the last four-hundred years in this country — and certainly in terms of colonialization and/or imperialistic land holdings.

The land trust or holding the land in common, has benefits designed for the moral ethics we experience on this side of the oceans. We are not fortunate enough to have the concept of sharing land with one another or land owners giving up parcels of land to poor farmers, city dwellers, etc., as in the "Bhoodan" practice in India, whereby land is vested to those who do not have any, such as the Gandhian philosophy postulates.

If large numbers of persons no longer own property individually, deriving income and/or individual profits from said lands, the economic base founded on individual ownership of land may not be revitalized in future generations, it may merely remain as community land held in common.

This is visible to some extent in terms of reservation land, whereby a given tribe holds the land in common; however, the problem in this particular situation is that certain members and/or individuals request their shares thereby breaking the land trust; often selling it to land developers who rape the land in order to make quick profits, as we all know from our own experiences, in our particular part of the country.

There are very interesting aspects of various philosophic renderings of land use now in practice. Many have appeared in previous issues of this magazine and more will no doubt appear in coming issues. The question of whether deeding land to God is valid, may not have received enough legal test in this country.

Deeding the land to God strikes a spiritual chord in most of us; however, the realities of dealing with "property monsters," courts, and possible theft of the land through legal 'strong-arming,' is prevalent.

Community-minded peoples throughout this country are witnesses to believing that the land is divine, and making a full scale effort to secure enough of it to ward off the mass abuse it has and is suffering.

If we hold the land as brothers and sisters; it will always be in God's name by the mere spiritual act of living together in love and peace, not abusing the spirit of the land.

Lee Reuben  
Lime Saddle



# Zoning: Legal Threat

New Community Projects has recently received information about a decision pending in the Massachusetts Attorney General's office that we feel has important implications for the communal movement. This decision relates to the constitutionality of a new zoning ordinance that has recently narrowly passed in the town of Montague. Among other things, this ordinance severely limits the ability of communes to exist in that town.

The outcome of this decision is important for all people in this state who are exploring alternative lifestyles: a ruling upholding the constitutionality of the law could presage a spreading of similar restrictions to other Massachusetts communities. The purpose of this letter, then, is to inform you of this situation and to ask you to write the Attorney General to express your opinion on this matter.

We feel that there are four issues in the Montague by-law that are important to people interested in alternative lifestyles. First, a restrictive definition of "family" singles out voluntary associations of more than four people for special treatment. Second, communes are defined as "lodging houses" and thereby prevented from locating in any residential or farming area. Third, a minimum floor space requirement for all dwelling units would prevent people from building cabins and other small living quarters on their property. Fourth, restrictions on "home occupations" could prevent people who do crafts for a living from doing them in their own home. See the accompanying sheet for more details on these provisions.

The law is now in the Attorney General's office for a ruling on its constitutionality. Each provision within the law will be ruled on separately. We feel that if these four provisions are accepted, communes in other parts of the state could be endangered. Ten to fifteen other towns have recently passed similar laws. Most cities, like Boston, Cambridge, and Brookline, already have laws restricting the numbers of unrelated persons living together. If the Montague by-law is *upheld*, the way would be paved for any community that so desires to crack down on local communes. If the by-law is *rejected*, this could prevent the passage of future laws and *existing laws would be much more difficult to enforce*.

We would appreciate receiving a copy of the letter you send. The decision is going to be made very soon—within a couple of weeks—so please write right away.

Also, keep us informed of related developments in your area. We will be talking more about the zoning issue in our next newsletter, and the more information about what is going on around the state the more helpful we can be. We would also like to inform you of our legal manual, which will be coming out soon. It not only deals with the zoning issue, but also tenant-landlord relations, house buying, and other legal matters of interest to communes.

## *The Contested Provisions of the Montague Bylaw*

Definition of "FAMILY": "Any number of individuals related by blood, marriage, or law, or not more than five (5) individuals not so related living together as a single housekeeping unit. Groups of more than five (5) unrelated individuals living together as a single housekeeping unit shall be considered to be multiple families."

This section is important on two levels. First, it singles out unrelated groups for special treatment. If this stands in the area of zoning, it could carry over into discriminatory treatment in many other areas. Second, by excluding large groups of unrelated people from the definition of family, this has the effect of preventing communes from living in areas of the town that are zoned for one and two-family residences. This includes all residential and farming zoning districts.

2. Definition of "LODGING HOUSE": "Lodging House shall mean living quarters accommodating more than five unrelated individuals, whether as a *licensed lodging house*, dormitory, coop, commune, or other similar arrangement."

This definition singles out coops and communes for special treatment, and, specifically, restricts them to areas where lodging houses are allowed. In Montague, this means that they can only be located in Limited and General Business Districts, on special permit from the Board of Appeals.

3. "Minimum floor area: for each dwelling unit no less than 700 square feet living space. . ."

This would prevent people from building small cabins on their property, either as single residences, or as living space additional to a main house. This appears as a serious threat to people living in rural communities.

4. "Home Occupations. Customary home occupations are allowed only on special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, which permit may be issued provided the Z.B.A. finds, among other things, that the following conditions are met. . ."

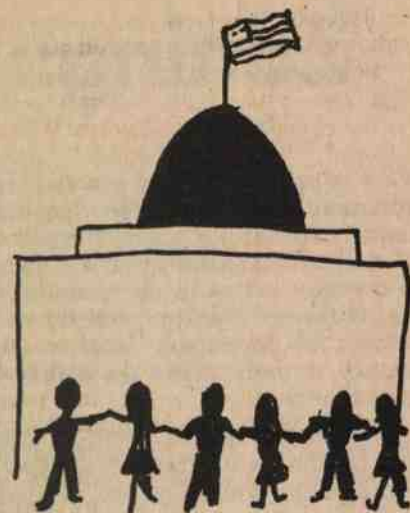
Nine conditions then follow. This section of the law requires permits for producing crafts and other home products in a commune and has the potential of being used to prevent people in communes from engaging in such activity.

[Ed. Note. Attorney General Quinn *did* approve this proposed law, so there will now need to be a test case in court. Communities in other states take note. You may be next!]

NCP, Project Place, 32 Rutland St., Boston



# Communes and the State



This writer argues that we needn't be too paranoid about how Big Brother might deal with a successful communal movement large enough to affect the national economy. The argument seems reasonable — but is Big Brother?

A number of people have discussed the interaction between the commune movement and the state, and almost invariably they see this in terms of conflict, and some go so far as to take the fatalistic view that the commune movement must necessarily fail in its intent because its anarchistic ethic is manifestly contrary to a system of centralised government, the central government has coercive forces at its disposal, and we are opposed to violent revolution; when the commune movement constitutes a threat to the central government, then, the central government will crush us. This fear has been expressed by people who are committed to a head-on collision with the state and a policy of noncooperation to bring about a collapse of power and a consequent state of anarchy. It's a fear which is not entirely without roots if we consider the histories of the commune movements in other countries.

The question of the intrinsic desirability or otherwise of a central government depends on how much significance we attach to independence on the one hand, and to interdependence on the other; in this, I don't think any of us has a completely polarised attitude, and some of the aims usually associated with anarchists, while appearing on the surface to be communistic, are basically ruthlessly capitalistic. The concept of 'workers control' going back to Lenin's battle cry 'The factories to the Workers!' is a case in point. If the profits of the factory are to go to the workers, what then goes to the road sweeper? Even his dirt truck is making a profit for somebody else. The profits of a factory, we could argue, belong no more exclusively to the workers in that factory than they had to its directors and shareholders; rather they

belong to all of us, and through the central government, this ethic is to some extent being implemented through selective taxation. And it's difficult to imagine how natural resources like mineral wealth (which usually concentrate in particular places) could be shared fairly unless there were a central government to override the avariciousness of the people who, by chance, happened to own a piece of mineral-rich land or some other eminently saleable natural resource. We are born unequal, and life creates further unequal opportunities for us at random; the purpose of a central government is to even out these chance inequalities or alternatively, to exploit the very unevenness of assets for maximum benefit of everyone. This would certainly be antagonistic to the commune which aimed to live independently and rely on its own resources, but it's quite compatible with and essential to the ethic of those communes who, while asserting their right to act as they wish where it doesn't affect another, nevertheless believe that we are all, to some extent, responsible for each other.

There are two major areas of conflict between the state as it exists at present, and a proposed federal society of free communes, one being the question of novel life styles in the face of a reactionary establishment, and the other being the radical change in economy which would occur if fairly big communes became the norm and became a significant alternative to the nuclear family. Let's consider the first. . .

In a number of ways, people are not free, and are subject to irrational and arbitrary constraints imposed, it would seem, by a reactionary government. In the profusion of building restrictions, licensing laws, the building of motorways in one's back garden, the operation of dirty or noisy machinery polluting neighborhoods and many other fields of conflict between one group of people and another, we can see that while decisions might not always appear to be



particularly enlightened, they are nevertheless meant to compromise interests as well as is possible. But in other fields, particularly where drugs or sex are concerned, laws are based not so much on maximising individual freedom as on arbitrary social taboos which are almost immune to rational argument. It's these restrictions which we feel could be inimical to the growth of a federation of free communes, or alternatively it's in our opposition to the perpetuation of these irrational constraints that we are likely to come into conflict with the state. But the initial panic legislation on drugs has evolved somewhat into a recognition that addictive and destructive drugs are not efficiently or rationally covered in the same laws that regulate drugs which create dependence only in a psychological sense, and it can't be long before public opinion forces the police to accept the law regarding homosexuals and stop visiting the men's lavatories with fraudulent intent masquerading as phoney prostitutes, or as a friend with a dagger in the other hand. Reactionary laws as they still exist affect the whole radical population, and not only those who are involved with communal living.

The question is really how best to combat reactionary attitudes where they conflict with our interests. The uncommitted population is very reactionary by our standards; they are more reactionary than the central government, so it's questionable whether a movement as radical as ours would be as free as it is, or that communes would remain as unmolested as they are, were it not for the fact of a body of law enacted by the central government and enforced by the police; the dictatorship of the proletariat is more blind and more callous than a reasonably enlightened government, however central. But in what way are reactionary attitudes going to come into conflict with our projected changes in life style? A useful fact to consider is that while the mass of the population is reactionary they are also apathetic; while they might intensely disapprove of their neighbor's lifestyle, they will usually leave it to someone else to do anything about it. So it should usually be possible to deviate somewhat from the norm before anyone feels impelled to offer obstruction. Apathy in others is the radical's best ally. Unfortunately, though, we can make little use of this since, it appears, there is scarcely any difference in the apathy ratings of the commune movement on the one hand and the uncommitted traditional population on the other; where a worthwhile endeavor depends on almost everyone making a very small contribution, then the bulk of the members exclude themselves from involvement. This, as an index of potential, is disappointing, and should a radical innovation require group action, it would be questionable whether significant solidarity existed. Nevertheless, for a small group which can come together, general apathy will usually act as a shield. The areas over which irrational taboos operate are now quite small and still diminishing.

The economic problem is another matter. This is full of paradoxes. Despite the reaction to safe and psychedelic drugs, there is little opposition to tobacco and alcohol. The reason is, of course that the latter are very much the concern of capitalist interests, and play a very significant part, through taxation, in the national economy. The completion of an ocean-going

ship is a human disaster because, in a money-oriented economy, a lot of people are put out of work — the availability of work being of more importance than the goal to which they are working. So an achievement is simultaneously a disaster. In a good crop year, farmers risk financial ruin through overproduction and crops are deliberately destroyed to maintain prices. These strange facts make sense to economists and shareholders, but they make nonsense to people who see work as a contribution to life rather than life's justification, and who regard food essentially as something to eat. Clearly something is very wrong, and yet the market is finely balanced and a revolution in marketing would be difficult to contemplate. And yet, a federal society of communes does, to most of us, imply a drastic reappraisal of values with personal involvement, responsibility and experience taking a much more central place, and with the concepts of work and money and exchange acquiring much more flexible connotations. Not only this, but the one thing which distinguishes any commune from the rest of society is its drastic reduction in need of almost all of the things which our productivity oriented society is geared to mass produce. When the commune movement looks like it is achieving its object then, it might be argued, if the government doesn't intervene, industrial interests will force intervention because if they don't, industry as we know it will collapse; the cheapness of consumables and durables is entirely due to the fact that they are produced in vast quantities and if we cut down in the quantities required, prices will rise prohibitively and the industries will face financial ruin. Since their influence in the government is much greater than ours, the government will have to take action against our progress to preserve the economy.

There are too many factors here which we haven't considered. If we achieve our object, it won't be overnight; we're not contemplating a violent revolution; in fact, we're not contemplating a revolution at all, but a transition from a monoculture to a polyculture. This is necessarily gradual and industry will evolve according to the changing needs for its produce.

When there are few communes, the effect on the economy will be negligible. When there are more, the depression in demand for goods will become significant, but efficiency will increase. In summary, despite a vast change in the overall pattern of the economy, there need be no economic catastrophe, either during the change, or as an end product, and since the federation of communes will necessarily grow gradually, the changes initially need not even be noticed, and the changes in the end will be to everyone's advantage whether they are commune members or whether they prefer to continue in the present pattern of living.

It seems then that while there might be minimal friction between a federation of free communes and the central government on the questions of radical changes in social conventions, the economic factors are in the best interests of everyone. But there are positive reasons as to why in this country, the commune movement might play a useful, and even a vital part in the national scene. We're overcrowded, overpolluted and wasteful of natural resources. Urban life is deteriorating, and trees and grass and things like this are being replaced by librium and stellazine and things



like that. Political parties are converging, and must inevitably converge as the little that's left to fight for becomes so vanishingly small and the options are more and more rapidly used up.

Radical solutions are necessary — lots of solutions, because it's a dodgy problem and we don't know the answers. The commune movement will, in effect, be doing the experiments, and while we're doing them, we'll also be providing alternatives for those who need an escape. And lastly, it isn't really necessary, so

rigidly, to regard the government as our opponent. It is, after all, one of our experiments, and we are involved with its creation, its smooth running, and finally with its metamorphosis as the material problems go to the computers, and the human problems come back to US.

Taken from *COMMUNES* (No. 35), a beautiful journal reporting on the federation of people in Britain living communally — Write c/o Mathens, 88 Strathmore Ave., Hull, Yorks England for subscription info.

# May Valley Co-op

1957 -

Land trust and ownership articles in *COMMUNITIES* have been especially interesting to us and likewise observations on what causes high morale or the opposite. The 17 years of experiences of May Valley Co-op Community (MVC) confirms much you have printed on those points and would add materially to them.

MVC now has nine resident families on its 10 acres of homesites, most working in regular jobs outside. (MVC is conveniently located to most work in greater Seattle area.) Some one-third acre lots are still available (though the MVC non-profit price is under 42% of assessed value). Several families utilize the community organic garden while others find their own lots adequate. A barn, pen area and corral complete the facilities for food production and animals. Between its garden area and its forest, MVC has now tentatively agreed to a new community being developed.

The new community will be sponsored by A Pacific Group. APG is a group of singles and families of all ages which started with Fellowship of Reconciliation folk, 12/70. It aims to develop several communities, each somewhat self-sufficient, communal, and dedicated to societal change. APG and MVC memberships overlap as will their economies and usage of MVC's 26 acres of common land.

The APG community will be incorporated as an autonomous group when enough households, probably six, have become members and pledged. That event is expected within a few months. Meanwhile an Alaska APG member family plans to start a community on its 120 acre farm. Moreover an APG non-violent living center is starting in Seattle. MVC and APG memberships are open. — John Affolter, 10218 147th, S. E., Renton, Wash. 98055.

(The following personal experiences and opinions are not May Valley Co-op publicity and do not necessarily reflect the Co-op's views. — J. A.)

Nine families live in May Valley Co-op Community (MVC), 15 miles from Seattle, in single family homes. All of the workers, except yours truly, work in conventional Renton or Seattle jobs. MVC's 37 acres are divided into 27 acres of woods, creek, fields and two farm buildings. This community land adjoins 10 acres divided into 23 lots (one-third acre each), of which 17 are now individually held.

It all started in November '49 (the Seattle Co-op Housing Committee). Nine years earlier in my commitment to co-ops I had turned for a time from stores to housing. With a wife and two small children, I needed a haven for them, especially when I would be on long trips. Our rental in a strange, new, semi-cold city wouldn't do.

There were others likewise co-op minded in the big city — attuned to decentralist self-help ideas, escape from the cash treadmill. We planned for suburban self-help co-op housing and propogandized it widely. Our numbers grew? In '52 we formalized into Seattle Co-op Housing Assn. (SCHA).

The Christian communal life of the Bruderhof attracted a few of us in '53 when its recruiters visited Seattle with slide shows. They sought members to help them branch from Paraguay into the U. S. The Chris Dreschers — most Christian of us all — did leave us as too mundane and slow, to join the Woodcrest, N. Y., Bruderhof.

More of us then scrutinized the communal. We learned of Macedonia Cooperative Community, saw Koinonia films, studied other colonies. In '54 I spent nine days in several communal Hutterite colonies



(Montana, North Dakota, Manitoba) to see how they ticked and why. Like their customs, the high degree of gentleness and cooperation among them was "not of this world." And the efficiency of their households and farming was unmatched.

We couldn't buy the contention that, to succeed, a close-knit community (which we tended to aspire to) must be based on religion in every aspect. However, we did more or less accept sociologist Henrik Infield's theory that it must be based on a philosophical and emotional tie at least akin to religion. Therefore we revised our SCHA by-laws to approach his requirement.

Our ground of agreement had been solely the Rochdale principles of consumer cooperation — purely practical ethics. They were now demoted with two more universal values. The results, written into the by-laws, were:

"1. FAITH — in the inherent order, goodness and growth potential in the Universe and in every person. . .

"2. THE GOLDEN RULE: (a) Compassionate treatment and kindness toward all . . . non-violence . . . participation in civic affairs; (b) Assurance of necessities to all fellow cooperators; (c) Truthfulness and frankness.

"3. COOPERATIVE PRACTICES: (a) Membership open to all; (b) Equality . . . each member one vote . . . Rule of Consensus; (c) Freedom of expression, worship, association . . . freedom and security through . . . elimination of debt; (d) Non-profit operation — limited interest on capital, surplus returned as patronage refunds; (e) Fostering of unselfish cooperative living; (f) Growth . . . continually."

Our theories were first put to the test through work parties in Seattle, repairing our respective homes to ready them for sale. Thereafter practical considerations were dominant. For the hoped-for community, labor exchange was agreed upon with the Community's notes and equities as the medium of exchange. Development and construction costs were estimated by our volunteer professionals. The most practical felt we should obtain land before we gained enough members for a minimum settlement, as a means to gaining new members. Avoiding all realtors, Trustee John Roberts prospected the entire perimeter of the city, knocking on doors in likely areas. He found two farms, unadvertised, for possible sale. Five of us, including only two committed to residence (and who actually later moved in), i.e., Roberts and myself, then met and decided to try to buy one farm. This was only after I objected strongly that we did not have enough committed members. Nevertheless we each put up \$100 for an option. A committee then negotiated with the owner. We ended up with 37 acres, mostly wooded, in secluded May (Creek) Valley.

The committed now really pitched in. Architect Dwight Lopp made and remade an overall site layout six times. Three of us, as an SCHA committee, developed by-laws. MVC's aim was described therein as a "comprehensive cooperative endeavoring to advance human brotherhood." The SCHA principles above were added to this.

Long discussion ensued over whether homes should be mutually owned (i.e., by the Coop, the householder having a perpetual lease plus an equity in MVC) or whether they should be individually owned by their occupants. We decided for mutual ownership. The

householder would have exclusive possession and would receive a deed, temporarily, for obtaining home financing. He could sell only to persons acceptable to the Co-op. To assure ideal brotherly relations between new, secondary buyers and old residents, the resale price formula excluded profit on the land but allowed an increase to offset general inflation.

The Rule of Consensus for meeting procedure also caused much debate. This method had been used regularly in SCHA and was found in most modern close-knit communities and in the French Communities of Work. It was urged for greater rapport between members and to safeguard individual freedom. But some feared that Consensus would be too slow. A compromise was made, with a provision for a two-thirds vote if Consensus failed.

Jubilance reigned at the organization meeting of MVC, January '56. Charter and by-laws were adopted by consensus and a Board elected by the 14 founding members. Most signed up with \$5 and agreement with our aims, in order to boost a good idea, though without clear thoughts of moving in.

The honeymoon was short-lived. In our second board meeting, one of our leaders, not on the former by-laws committee, proposed that every member be allowed to choose either mutual or individual ownership. Another supported him. The struggle was on. To win membership support the proposed mutual ownership contract was liberalized to include all benefits of individual ownership possible. Likewise, individual ownership was limited to satisfy mutual owner advocates — mainly yours truly. This limiting was via Deed Restrictions to be filed with the county (giving MVC a 90-day option to purchase at the non-profit price above mentioned, whenever the property was offered). If the option was not exercised, MVC would have first purchase right thereafter, at any terms and price offered by others, for a three-day period. Enforcement was by voiding any deed given in violation.

Though these efforts brought the two ownership forms closer together than ever before in history, neither satisfied the opponents. For lack of Board consensus, the matter was put to a vote at the next membership meeting. Allowing a choice of either form was the two-thirds vote.

Individual ownership prevailed at first. But gradually the trend reversed. By '64 most lotholders were mutual owners. Now only three out of the 17 personal lots are individually owned. A proposal to allow only mutual ownership is now pending. Financiers helped the cause of mutual ownership by severely weakening safeguards on individual ownership; they insisted the options be eliminated from the filed Restrictions. The 90-day one was made a separate contract between MVC and lotholder, enforceable only by money damages.

MVC was settled very gradually. By '57 water and road were in. Two members moved in that year, two more in '58, and one in '59. So it went. Because we organized the Co-op before anyone was committed to move or buy, residence or ownership could not be a requirement for membership. However, we were fortunate to have enough active non-residents, even until now, to fill out our Board. The non-residents brought us much-needed talents. Especially helpful was carpenter-contractor Bill Corr. While providing practical



experience in all construction phases, he was especially valuable as conciliator in our occasional petty clashes. Having at least six at a Board meeting also made for smoother deliberation. The sharp corners of any participant rubbed too abrasively into the others in a meeting unless there was a good enough number present to collectively absorb the rubbing easily.

Racial integration, though a MVC principle, proved a bit rocky in early years. In '57 and '58, in the face of scattered neighborhood hostility, one of us suggested we slow down. Thanks to our being already integrated and to the group climate, we did not. Angry words came from some neighbors after our second family moved in. They were the Harleys, a Negro-Nisei family. Later some young hoodlums harassed them at night with lights, rocks and obscenities. The Harleys were not frightened; he was a natural leader, a professional, the highest earner in MVC then.

Thereafter integration was mostly roses. The thorns pricked, though, when a new, strong-willed member asked in a meeting that the Harleys be asked to hide when her uptight father from afar visited her in her new MVC home. Since '62 we have been 50% white families and 50% other. In '64, NBC-TV filmed a short of us as an ideal integrated community without benefit of open housing laws). However, the interviewer met with frustration when he suddenly tried to browbeat me into denying socialism.

Our idealism took other turns. Hardly had three of us moved in before we had a monthly philosophical discussion group going with neighbors. This forum was partly superseded, after a new Quaker family arrived in '60 to make five of that persuasion, by a Sunday silent worship meeting in the community. One agnostic and one Adventist family joined us often. But the meeting was too small and heterogeneous. Upon its dissolution the Quakers returned to the nearest Friends Meeting, 10 miles distant. Later, in turn, three other MVC families followed, off and on.

The discussion forum died and then revived around district issues. One was the controversial wrecking yard one-fourth mile north, cut into a cow pasture opposite a growing residential area. The MVC Board refused to join neighbors in legal steps to evict the yard. The need of the kindly operator to make a living was felt primary and the Board members no longer personally needed to get mortgage loans. On the other hand, I felt for future MVC members. To attempt to bring an extra-legal, amicable settlement, I tried to mediate between the operator and the neighbors, without success. The matter ended in court with the county winning eviction.

A travelling pacifist was invited occasionally to speak in one of the few MVC pacifist homes. Non-pacifists, including neighbors, came. These were the only peace efforts in the district, since it was not intellectual, except that they did carry over into one Civil Defense meeting in the school during bomb shelter hysteria. There we briefly blunted the CD push; moreover, MVC as a group did agree to non-cooperation with CD. In fact, MVC never was infected with cold war panics.

One of our residents (a Boeing engineer with security clearance, a Canadian not yet eligible for naturalization) did become disturbed, about '61, over a rumor that we were red. He and another MVC con-

servative requested that a loyalty oath in substance be incorporated into our by-laws. Most of us would have none of it; it quietly died, never to reappear. Later our engineer was transferred and rented out his MVC home. When he found he would be away a long time, he sold to the Co-op which in turn sold via mutual ownership. He returned still later and was chagrined at not being able to take the house back and resume residence. We regretted that he wouldn't go to the trouble of building again.

Recently an MVC home has been the district's coffee hour spot for liberal politicians, or for a Demo precinct meeting. The June '68 meeting was heralded to 130 mail boxes in the precinct by a notice listing discussion questions like: "The Draft is totalitarian and unnecessary with a sane foreign policy?" But this ploy to raise a candidate for precinct committeeman boomeranged; they nailed me. When I had to strike out parts of the loyalty oath candidates must sign, and was refused by the election bosses, I did then find a good candidate. She was one of our unpolitical Negro MVC residents. On recovering from the initial shock, the Demo big wigs were glad. There was no competition.

Our main group thrust into the outside, however, was as a seedbed of consumer co-ops. Since MVC's birth sucked the life out of mother SCHÄ, MVC has been promoting the concepts of co-op housing among unions, churches, and Seattle's Model Cities agency. Other co-op types were fostered more directly.

The creek needed dredging, a water line water right-of-way needed clearing, and a 1100 ft. road needed building — in MVC's first year. Two of us with no experience, and a neighbor with some, offered to do the jobs at the lowest contractor bids. Though very skeptical, the Board gave us the green light. We three incorporated May Creek Tool Co-op, invested \$2600, and bought a used 6-ton TD6 bulldozer with carrier truck. We did all the jobs except that we had to give up on the road when nearly done. We hired one of the contractors to give it the finishing touches. The balance of the allotment for the road was prorated between us who had worked on it, as substandard wages, after paying a rental charge to the Tool Co-op for the dozer. When we weren't waist deep in repairing the monster we went on to clear and excavate on our lots with it. Neighbors also rented the machine. When we couldn't continue keeping it busy we sold it, and added, then, power carpentry and garden tools. Use of the tools has declined, though, because most residents have not invested in a Tool Co-op membership and because self-help building has been replaced largely by contractor building.

More consequential was our grocery buying club. I brought to MVC the small personal bulk foods business I had developed in Seattle. In MVC it provided wherewithal to barter for labor on our self-help house. By the end of '60 it appeared the enterprise could be co-operatized as originally planned. Once organized by MVC residents and neighbors, the Puget Consumers Co-op (PCC) bought the stock and equipment, hired me on a barter basis for my family grocery needs, and resumed operations in our daylight basement. The buying club increased to over 300 members and \$1200 monthly volume before the Health Dept. decided it was public and shut it down, in '67. PCC soon



opened again in a store building in Seattle, where most of its members were by then. The Co-op is still growing.

Today MVC is bursting with new life. Five of the 14 unimproved lots were purchased in summer '68, under mutual ownership, by new members. The wave of new members — 14 in '68 — brought the long-deferred Board election. Most trustees had served their four-year limit; hence two-thirds of the Board is new now. Plans for a sixplex in one corner of the common are being discussed, as is a proposal for a new community building to house a hoped-for pre-school kindergarten (with gradually more education added, plus all other group activities of MVC and the neighborhood).

What would I do differently if I could do it over?

I would aim for a much closer-knit group, dedicated to building a segment of a new, more moral society. The immediate goal would be for all members to work, as well as reside, within the community. Therein the members would hopefully unite in meditations, study, moralizing, philosophizing, and group psyche therapy — and in operating their own elementary school.

While the ethos of the group need not be religious in a narrow sense, probably it would need to recognize the central and necessary role of love and giving in all relationships — and the kinship of all life and being. Such common beliefs would need elaboration and would undoubtedly negate the draft, violence, war taxes, profiteering, brain-washing, indoctrination, regimentation. They would call for such methods as Consensus — uncompromised and mutual or communal ownership. They possibly would rank service to Mankind highest, followed by loyalty to a regional network of like communities, and then one's own. This ranking

would reflect that, to any person, there are more important values than life.

The history of communal groups suggests that for such a group to succeed it must have a depth of commitment that can result only from the group suffering injustices due to its beliefs. Moreover, the community probably could serve Man best by building its new society where it would be most visible to people in the old society — i.e., alongside it — within the U.S.A. There the group could hardly avoid confronting the Establishment, publicly demonstrating its beliefs, taking the consequences, and thus deepening its commitment in the process.

The sequence of steps I see indicated by past experiences is: (1) The group develops its beliefs, rules and procedures and lives by them; (2) Obtain pledges of full-time residence and work in the prospective community; (3) Plan group commercial production and subsistence production; (4) Develop community production and consumption operating and capital budgets; (5) Determine general location; (6) Collect down payments for property from all committed to move into the group (which payers would need to number at least six households); (7) Obtain an option on property. Not until No. 6 does it appear that it is likely to be possible to determine whether it is necessary to ask everyone to put in all his assets. At least the history of some successful religious colonies indicates that it was an economic crisis that compelled the ethics of communism to be invoked.

Withdrawal from the world? Perhaps it is a choice of building the new society to displace the old, or of fostering the old while remaining in it and thereby supporting it in part. Is the Establishment worth even fostering? — John Affolter





# Health

## Misc.

The following are bits and pieces taken from varied sources. Simple, inexpensive, natural remedies and recipes for the meagre of purse, the weak in body and spirit, and the open of mind.

This is presented in the spirit of others' ideas of remedies and aids. I make no personal claims as to efficacy or worth. One remedy may be immediately helpful to one person and yet have no effect on another.

The best advice I can give is to learn more of your own body's rhythms, her needs and idiosyncracies; and don't be too quick to dismiss the natural, the organic, the simple alternative—however unorthodox or "unauthorized" it may be. Learn more about them for yourself; then you will have the most reliable guide — your own enlightened discretion and judgement.

### COLDS

—Lots of fresh lemonade with honey. Eat fruits, little else. Give your system a rest.

—Garlic and lemon tea: Cut 1 clove into tiny pieces and put in the bottom of a cup and squinch with spoon. Add ½ lemon (peel if not organic). Brew a cup of tea (mint for good taste); add to cup and let brew for 3 minutes. Use honey as desired.

—See GARLIC below.

—Vitamin C: 1 gram (preferable *natural* from rose hips) every hour for 5 hours. Repeat next day. (This can be used for throat and other infections.)

—If you get chilled, exposed to wind or feel a cold coming on, take cayenne red pepper, ¼ teas. in ½ cup of hot water, sweeten with honey and take in sips. Warms and tones the system.

### Congestion and Bronchial Troubles

—To clear passages: Boil about 2 cups of water, add a few drops of eucalyptus oil, boil gently, covered, for 10 minutes until the odor is very strong. Remove pot from stove, and remove, lean head over the pot and cover head and pot with a towel and inhale. Do this until you've used up all the steam, then return pot to stove until boiling and repeat 2 or 3 times a day, as needed. (a drugstore for eucalyptus oil)

—Slippery Elm powder: Sprinkle 1 teas. in 1 cup boiling water. Simmer 20 minutes. Drink freely.

### Throat Soreness and Discomfort

—Mix equal parts of cinnamon, bay and sage. Add 1 teas. to a cup of boiling water and steep. Drink freely

—Gargle with sea salt and vinegar, diluted with water, several times a day.

—Chew on a whole lemon, between meals and throughout the day, with just enough honey on it to cut sourness.

### Headache

Good natural substitutes for aspirin:

—Wintergreen tea

—Mint tea

Drink strong. Sit down and rest.

### Stomach Dis-ease

—Good teas to soothe: 1. Chamomile, 2. Mint, 3. Slippery Elm, 4. Golden Seal.

—Garlic-parsley tablets are excellent, taken after meals for indigestion and general stomach troubles.

—Warm milk with honey may help.

### Intestinal Flu

—1 tbsp. each of cider vinegar, hot water and honey. Make this 3 or more times a day and sip.

—Fresh warm lemonade, with honey. Eat little. Nothing cold. Drink as much as desired of the stomach teas.

### Earache

—Eucalyptus oil *best* ... or olive or cod liver oil. Warm the oil, moisten a piece of cotton and put in ear.

### Toothache

—A drop of the oil of cloves or sassafras oil in the tooth will often bring immediate relief.

—A fresh garlic piece behind the tooth that hurts, leave there 1 hour.

—Follow vitamin C remedy. (for colds)

### Teething Babies

—Apply a paste of powdered milk, water and cinnamon to gums.

### Eyeache, redness

—Moisten rose petals and place over eyes; lie down for about an hour.

—Or use grated potatoes, apples or cucumbers the same way.

### Poison Oak

—Apply a cloth soaked in Epsom salts and warm water to the affected area.

—Make a paste of a couple tbsp. of uncooked oatmeal and a little water. Wrap this in a small clean cloth and rub it on the rash to relieve pain.

—Apply a solution made of equal parts cider vinegar and water.

### Poison Ivy

—Try above.

—Also: Green catnip is a natural enemy of ivy. Rub on rash. (You can buy catnip seeds; easy to grow, and also make a good tea.)

### Bee or Wasp Stings

—Make sure stinger is out; remove slowly, without squeezing.

—To relieve pain, apply any of the following:

- 1) paste of baking soda and water
- 2) lemon juice or honey
- 3) ice or ice water pack
- 4) freshly cut onion or garlic
- 5) slightly moistened tobacco

### Warts

—Dab castor oil on them during the day when you have a chance, and the last thing at night.

—Rub with a piece of garlic nightly. (Try combining the two.)



### *Boils, Ulcers*

—Poultice for: Boil bread (white may be best) in milk. Leave on area for about an hour. Discard. Do as often as can during the day; can leave on during the night.

**GARLIC** is a natural, harmless antibiotic; used as a curative for all types of intestinal problems and stomach distress. Chop up, add to drinks, salads, all kinds of cooked dishes. It is also well known as a natural alternative for high blood pressure (I can send more information to anyone interested). Can also be taken in the form of garlic-parsley tablets.

A folk remedy for treating virus and infections is 6 cloves of garlic. These can be chopped and added to green salad, or crushed and blended with butter and spread on bread which can then be toasted or just warmed in the oven. With the garlic, drink a glassful or hot water in which has been stirred 4 tbsp. of cider vinegar and 2 tbsp. of honey.

### *Tobacco Alternative*

—Powdered comfrey; can either be rolled as a cigarette or smoked in a pipe. Good for your lungs and body, in moderation.

### *Linament*

—Boil gently for 10 minutes 1 tbsp. Cayenne in 1 quart of cider vinegar. Bottle it hot. Use for all deep-seated congestions and sprains.

### *Massage, with Peanut Oil*

—For overtired, over taxed system: Gently massage body, especially back area. Take time — from 1/2 to 1 hour. Before bed, you can just wipe dry and leave on through the night; rinse off in the morning. Helps to tone and relax the system.

### *Travel Sickness*

—Put a sheet of brown shopping bag paper across abdomen before putting clothes on.

*Antidote for Poisons*, when the cause of poisoning is unsure.

—Ingredients: 1. burnt toast; 2. milk of magnesia; 3. strong tea.

The burned toast contains pulverized charcoal to help absorb poisonous materials in the stomach, the tea contains tannic acid to offset an alkaline poison; and the milk of magnesia is to counteract an acid poison. Together the ingredients provide *overall protection*. (Recommended by 2 Duke Univ. doctors.) You can keep the charcoal powder, milk of magnesia and tea bag ready in one place. Call a doctor, or bring to a hospital if necessary. (I suggest that you make a special note of, or copy this remedy.)

## HOUSHOLD

### *Laundry and Cleaning*

—Pine oil (e.g., Pinesol brand) is good, more ecological disinfectant than bleach or other chemicals. Arm and Hammer washing soda will clean better than most liquids and powders, and is odorless and cheap.

### *Bathrooms and Kitchens*

—A few spices make good room deoderizers; for sick rooms also. (Claimed to help stop the spread of contagious diseases.)

1) Boil cinnamon or cloves in water and let the steam penetrate the room.

2) Sprinkle rosemary or thyme in a hot sunny doorway or window and let the odor spread through the room.

3) Keep a bottle of eucalyptus or pine oil uncapped in room.

### *Scouring Powders*

—Be sure any you buy are unchlorinated — Bon Ami is one.

### *Cockroaches*

—Borax is the best. Put around moldings and cabinets. It will rid the house of roaches within a week and be good for about 6 months.

### *Flies*

—A few drops of sassafras oil sprinkled about the house keeps flies away.

I hope to be able to include other remedies and therapies in future issues. Peace and health,

—George

### Sources:

Eric Powell — "Health from the Kitchen"

Linda Clark — GET WELL NATURALLY

P. Kourennoff — RUSSIAN FOLK MEDICINE

Debbie Berson — "Heal Hoursef"

Edgar Cayce Readings

Gwen Lewis — BUCKSKIN COOKERY

Jethro Kloss — BACK TO EDEN

Robert Rodale — "Prevention"

Packaged foods and supplements are often cheaper through the mail. Send for brochures to compare. (Look at health magazines in drugstores for addressed.) Three to try:

Nutrition Headquarters  
104 W. Jackson st.  
Carbondale, Ill. 62901

Biorganic Brands, Inc.  
Long Beach, NY 11561

Natural Sales Co.  
Box 25  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15230

For herbs, try these:

Herb Products, Co.  
11012 Magnolia Blvd.  
N. Hollywood, Ca 91601

Nature's Herb Co.  
281 Ellis st  
San Francisco, Ca 94102

Indiana Botanic Gardens  
Hammond, Ind.

Luyties Pharmacy Co.  
4200 Laclede Ave  
St. Louis, Mo 63108

Haussmann's Pharmacy  
6th and Garrard  
Phila, Pa 19127

Astral Inc.  
165 Page St.  
San Francisco, Ca

Weleda Pharamaceuticals  
Spring Valley  
New York.



# The Commune Movement: a long way to go

If our goal is to create movement towards a more equalitarian, humane society how can we best utilize our energies?

Many of us came to the communal movement hoping it would provide an alternative to the system of hierarchy and competition, hypocrisy and violence which we were rejecting. Our childhood memories are full of death images — air raid drills, bomb shelter advertisements, "Good guy" cowboys killing "bad guy" Indians. We grew to feel the dichotomy between the myth of American democracy and the reality of the murders of civil rights workers, King, Malcolm X, two Kennedys, Jackson State and Kent State students. We wanted to be participating in a life-affirming society.

But the majority of us did not have an understanding of the macropolitical, economic and social forces that are the causes of oppression. Rather, we came to the movement prompted by personal pain and confusion. The 'alternative' promise of the communal movement was seen as a cure for our individual hurtings — the broken marriages and love affairs, the abortions, the meaningless jobs, the post-college identity crises, the pressuring parents. Others came to join a lover, a friend and second handedly bought into the communal life-style.

At first, the communal movement was an adventure, providing new experiences to explore. Energies were turned to intra-group dynamics and possible new ways of loving and trusting were tested out. Women, increasingly aware of their own power, sought liberating sex role definitions and later on men began their own consciousness-raising groups. Small food-coops were begun and even a few day care centers. Drugs, meditation, sufi dancing, massage, rock concerts, all sorts of encounter and counseling techniques emerged as personal and small group methods for changing our selves.

But the concentrated dosage of self-centered change pervading the communal alternative atmosphere did little to revolutionize the larger causes of

our oppression, much less aid others in our society struggling with domination. In fact, communal house problems mirrored the problems of most middle class families — who was to wash the dishes, take responsibility for the children (though surveys by N.C.P. show that communal transience contributed to few children being members of urban communes), whether monogamy should be the ruling norm.

The communes themselves reflect our privileged backgrounds — only a small minority of communards come from the lower class and during my contacts with over 150 communes in New England no third world people were present. This is not merely coincidental, for it results from our concern with personal *privileges* rather than concern for the basic rights for all — clothing, food and shelter.

The few organizations representing the communal movement did little to broaden our understanding of those political and economic issues which undermine any movement attempting to give the people power to shape their lives.

The New Community Project (N.C.P.) collective with which I worked for two years merely substituted the commune for the nuclear family as a way to achieve "the happily-ever-after-life". As one participant noted at a recent NOVA conference, "women and men come to communes to find or wait until they find a mate". While it is true communes may provide an alternative in the sense of looking for mates rather than mate, and a member of the same sex rather than the opposite, most energy is directed at working on personal oppression from only an individualized perspective.

The verbal and non-verbal behavior stressed at N.C.P. (and duplicated in many communes) created an atmosphere of superficial promise. We continually hugged people, both parties knowing the lack of genuine caring in the embrace. We cut off authentic conversational contact by prefacing statements with the manipulative, "I have a need".

The lack of genuine mutual support is also



evidenced by the rate of mobility of communal members. In a survey done by N.C.P. in the Boston area just 9 communes out of 200 had been together for at least three years.

As in most relationships, when the going gets rough in a commune there has to be a strong commitment to the worthiness of the relationship for a person to be willing to struggle through compromise and change. The commune as an alternative housing form has simply not been connected to a level of social change praxis that would give such struggle meaning.

What can those of us in the movement do now to create the longer range commitment necessary for *revolutionary* change rather than continue its reforming 'alternative' posture?

First, I think, we have to commit ourselves to the concept of conscientization: Learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality. This term was coined by Paulo Freire who worked with the peasants, in Brazil, emphasizing the need to develop group awareness (see George Lakey's *Manifesto for Non-Violent Revolution* for a more detailed explication). This means entering upon a course of reading-investigation of the nature of our present economic and political system: What fundamental principles are inherent in capitalism? How does it support a system of domination? In what ways are the personal oppressions we each experience the microcosms of larger manifestations of violence against human beings? What are the basic assumptions of socialism, communism, anarchism and can they be applicable to our situation?

Next, we have to support each other in developing the kind of self-discipline necessary to balance our own needs with our concern for the needs of others. This means accepting the premise that each human being is deserving of respect. Most of us have come from backgrounds where individualization reigns above all else. Living together, we have already begun to taste the pain of undergoing change to free ourselves from narrow self-interest towards being of service, loving others. In this way we both confirm the underlying unity of humankind and recognize the uniqueness of each person.

Lastly and importantly, each of us has to be aware of the contradictions within our personhood. We have to learn to see ourselves in terms of the movement towards the equalitarian, humane society we seek. In this way our criticisms of our selves and each other will be constructive and add meaning to our lives. (see W. Hinton's *Fanshen* for a description of the process of self-mutual criticism in modern China).

Many of us feel the limited nature of the present communal movement. It is up to us to move so we can grow.

(This article is in part a response to the pain and confusion existing in many of the communes I became familiar with during my work at N.C.P. It is also a response to the nature of the energy output of the N.C.P. collective from 1971 through spring 1973. Response would be very appreciated.)

Paula Rayman

## On Coming Out of the Desert

Recently Pat Wells and I joined 30 people for the Arica Institute 40-day intensive training. It was a growing experience for me, in which I found myself in a new spiritual context, here and now, with higher energy.

I was particularly impressed with the way the group formed to become a very close community. I entered the group with my usual judgmental tone — "I'm better (more experienced, higher, more sociable, in touch with my feelings) than he/she; I am not as important (famous, skilled, attractive) as he/she. . ." I paid more attention to the people who were "better" than I, and less to the unattractive folk.

During the six weeks we spent considerable time together meditating, chanting, sharing ego hang-ups, and giving personal feedback to one another's ego. I began to notice my judgmental feelings dissolving. We all had issues to work on. We were all on the same path. Dumping on someone else or myself merely brought me and the energy of the group down. By the end of the training I was amazed at the love I felt for every person in the group. Of course some of those issues were still there, but I was more able to focus on the essential beauty in every person.

As I return to NCP and consider the Arica experience in the context of community building, I have a few observations:

1. The Arica group was one of the tightest, yet most diverse communities I have ever experienced. Groups with a focused concern tend to be closer than more pluralistic groups; I imagine that a kind of spiritual center which is not rationally debatable may provide a more lasting focus than some other group centers. Studies of 19th century communes illustrate this, showing that religious communities far outlasted communities with other primary concerns.

2. NCP group building and facilitation have in part been based upon a contract-negotiation model of interaction, in which individuals make their needs known and agree on mutually beneficial action. The Arica experience made me more aware of the difference between a contractual relationship and a love relationship. I imagine that both styles are important. I am interested in exploring different styles of facilitation which would allow people to feel their essential contact, unity, and love unencumbered by verbal contracts. After the love is experienced *then* attempt to clarify verbal expectations, remaining spiritually in tune with each other.

3. Celebrational, spiritual experiences shared within a group tend to be cohesive. Revere Street joins hands and meditates for five minutes before dinner. Lee Street has monthly celebrations commemorating all sorts of religious and seasonal holidays. Rituals, which reflect individuals' commitment to each other and remind a group of its intentionality as a community, are important occasions for many houses.

—Rick Paine



# BOOKS



*APHRA, the feminist literary magazine*

Address: Box 893, Ansonia Station, N.Y., N.Y. 10023

Cost: \$4.50 for year (4 issues)

*COUNTRY WOMEN*

Address: 516 Eshleman Hall, Univ. of Calif., Berkeley, Calif. 94720

Cost: \$3 for 3 issues

*MOMMA, the newspaper— magazine for single mothers*

Address: P.O. Box 567, Venice, Calif. 90291

Cost: \$3 for year (12 issues)

*THE SECOND WAVE, a magazine of the new feminism*

Address: Box 344, Cambridge A, Cambridge, Mass. 02139

Cost: \$3 for year (4 issues)

These are new publications written by new women for new women, for all women. The *Libera* collective outrightly states she hopes she will be part of the catalyst for change in her readers' lives and this, too, is implicit in the other magazines' coming into existence.

On a political level, *Libera* deals with the contemporary woman as she joins with others in an effort to effect a change upon her condition. Emotionally, it explores the root level of our feelings, those beyond the ambitions and purposes women have traditionally been conditioned to embrace. One of our objectives is to provide a medium for the new woman to present herself without inhibition or affectation. By illuminating not only women's political and intellectual achievements, but also her fantasies, dreams, art, the dark side of her face, we come to know more her depths, and redefine ourselves. (*Libera* no. 3)

The names are all specially chosen. *Aphra* is named for Aphra Behn, 1640-1689, who was the first woman to earn her living by writing. *The Second Wave* title "was chosen to remind us that our movement started over a century ago and that we are in the second wave of feminists in an ongoing struggle." "*Libera* is the feminine form of the Latin word for 'free.' When spoken aloud, it resonates with 'libra,' the balance—inner balance, the equality of women and men." (*Libera* no. 1). *Momma, the newspaper/magazine for single mothers* and *Country Women* are self-explanatory.

Three of them are working collectives — *Momma, Libera,* and *Country Women* — and have expended energy (in several cases even postponed publishing an issue) in getting themselves together in their collective so as to better direct energies on their magazine effort.

Entries in these five publications share how a woman is, thinks, does, feels, hopes, dreams. The following article titles and excerpts show their variety and their forceful, radical, feminist expressions.

*APHRA*

"The Woman's House" — a story

"Manifesto" — a drama

"Matriarchy and Myth" — an article

"Mistress of the Animals" and "Our Lady, Solitude" — two poems

*COUNTRY WOMEN*

"There should be time in the country for creating . . ." — article:

Unfortunately it is possible to get into a place in yourself or in the community where the only thing you do is hard physical labor. And I find that I also need that kind of energy for writing poetry or songs or articles, or even in my journal. Mornings for me are my energy times and if I spend that time working in the garden or pruning or chopping wood or one of the many chores attendant to country living, it is very easy not to write at all. At least it is at first, but then a nagging sets in, a feeling of frustration that all the ideas I wish to express are not getting on to paper or tape, because the important things like irrigating the corn, thinning the carrots or culling the tomatoes have to be done now. So the poem can be put off, the typing can wait; there are children who need to be listened to and other women.

Certainly in the area where we are so adept — personal relations — there is the most seduction. The blood child come before, and far before, the creative child. The friend in distress before the poem or song. Whether this is "right" or not I don't know. It's a fact like the sun coming up every morning, or the rain. (vol. I, no. II)

Articles on jobs: "Working in the Mill" — "Fire Fighting" — "Fisherwoman" — "Raising Sheep" — "Simple Siding" — "Quiltmaking" — "Changing Oil"

"Woman-Identified Collectives are Nothing Less Than the Next Step Towards a Women's Revolution." Rita-Mae Brown"

"Knee Deep in Sexism" — article:

I live with five other people — another woman and four men — no children, no dogs. If this group seems a little over-balanced on the male side, it's true, and though they're some of my favorite men, I experience loneliness for like-minded sisters and hope some will come live with me soon.

We all share the work including chopping wood . . .



Yesterday I told one of the men I didn't want to work jointly with him because his pace was too frantic for me and I would be more comfortable working alone. (No. VI)

"On Our Meadow" — article:

Our meadow has been an answer to the close ties of an extended family without the usual hassles. Our meadow has six houses consisting of three women alone raising children, two nuclear families, our own extended family, and one man and woman without any children. Although our meadow has approximately three acres separating each house, the distance has only allowed us to share more experiences and be so much closer than neighbors who live on top of one another in the cities . . . Here on the meadow we live in separate houses, but share those things that allow us more freedom. We all feel the freedom that comes from knowing we can go on vacations or weekend trips, and leave home, animals and children with our neighbors. (No. VI)

"Visions and Revisions" — a journal:

While writing all this, I realized that deep down I believe that Peter has left me. That he waits only for another female body to fill the void. I always exist in this divorce between my body and my self. That's why it's so hard for me to deal with sex, a physical caress. I can't believe it is meant for *me*. Those breasts, that vagina, I disown at will — years of cultural conditioning make me hate and fear the femaleness of my body. I disown mine, live separately from it. Wish I was ugly, deformed, a man, anything but female. I never know if it is me who is being touched or some cultural fetish — breasts and cunt, the eternal triangle. I hate it. When Peter sleeps all night with his hands on my breasts I don't sleep at all, am in a state of panic and terror . . . I don't want to be The Breast (Playboy and Teubens rolled into one). I wish I had no body at all so that I would know that each caress was meant for me and not some abstract Female.

...

I am feeling a change in myself and how I relate to others. For the first time I understand what gay women have been saying about straight women — can *feel* when a woman's energy is for herself and other women, can feel how powerfully a heterosexual relationship affects a woman and the direction of her energies, am conscious of the dominance of male energy in a heterosexual group and the difference of woman energy. There are no words for this new knowledge. Something powerful has shifted in my perceptions. I don't need men, have given up hope of a relationship with a man, and I experience women differently than before. (no. VI)

## LIBERA

"Letter from a Sister in Vietnam" and "Vietnam: A Feminist Analysis" — two articles

"A Feminist Look at the Abortion Campaign" — article

"Female Heterosexuality: Its Causes and Cures" — satire

"Little Poems for Sleeping With You," "There comes an Unfolding" and other poems

## MOMMA

"Co-Parenting" — article

"Special Times, a Recipe for Contented Children" — article

Articles on legal rights and problems surrounding divorce, separation and child custody

"Momma Recommends" — double page column, regular feature

"Two Houses/One Family" — parallel articles:

The Mother (child psychologist, in San Francisco):

I deserve this vacation, I have flexibility, mobility again. I have fun with my kids when I see them . . . But I have to say that I never gave him a choice. It was done by force. If I had never stopped and said "Is it worth it," or hesitated, I would have been lost, I would have had to follow him wherever *he* wanted to go.

The Father (physician, in Los Angeles):

I'm getting a lot of credit for taking my kids. Men wonder how I do it, they are questioning for themselves. Women encourage me. Sometimes it's their impulse to mother me, help me out. But I've made a choice to take my kids. I want to do it myself.

## THE SECOND WAVE

"How Women Had Control of Their Bodies and Lost It" — article:

A. Some ancient herstory of midwifery

B. Midwifery in the Christian era Through the 18th Century

C. The Midwife as Witch: Woman in Control

D. 19th Century developments/outrages

"Self-Examination Techniques" — how-to article:

needed: a strong flashlight, a speculum, and . . .

"Dealing with Rape" — article

poems and book reviews

I, a reader, am trying to center my energies on what challenges me to change, what radicalized me: so as to help create a more soundly — peacefully, ecologically, creatively, spiritually — united world.

I am a changing person, interested in different lifestyles and radical alternatives open to me. I sit down with *Country Women* intending to immediately absorb all of the information and feelings.

I am a single mother, continually considering how best to relate myself-as-mother (of two young children) to myself-as-person. I read *Momma* straight through for information, recommendations, and support.

I am a creative and intelligent person. I am drawn to the clear article statements in *The Second Wave*. I am drawn to the artistic presentation in stories and drama in *Aphra*. I am drawn to the forceful graphics, photographs and poems of *Libera*.

—Barbara

*Great Gay In The Morning: One Group's Approach to Communal Living and Sexual Politics*, by the 25 to 6 Baking & Trucking Society, Times Change Press, 95 pp., \$1.75.

When I think about the ways that my life has changed in the past few years, two areas of consciousness come to mind: gay liberation and communal living.

There have been many books about communes, and the gay movement finally has its share of reading matter, but little has been written about communal living from a gay perspective.



In this little book, seven gay men and two lesbians write about their experiences in a commune which has been located in various urban and rural areas of New York State. The opening words state the group's purpose: "writing a book to tell people who we are, what we've done and not done, and how we are trying to get it together."

The book's authors are anonymous, though one knows there is no closetry involved here, but rather the feeling that the words, ideas and even experiences are universal rather than individual. Throughout, the reader can feel these jolly (but not naive) communards reaching out, as if to say, gently, "come with us." There's a feeling of great love, warmth and, above all, sharing in this book.

One of the authors says that she/he is uncomfortable as a writer: "Personally I'd rather bake you a bread. I'd bake you a loaf that smelled of a warm, happy kitchen filled with fourteen freaks sitting on chairs, a table and a washing machine, passing around joints, laughing at the day's happenings..."

*Great Gay In The Morning* is about joyful, beautiful things: It's about "a psychedelic garden of daisies, blueberries and love — bodies becoming one with the summer sunlight." It's about wearing each others clothes and patching them "until a faded pair of jeans looks like a medieval tapestry." It's about the ecstasy of dancing with "the music soaring through my body."

There are hard times among the good times, however, and we hear about some of them (though I imagine many more stories of tensions, squabbles and inter-personal disputes could have been told). Some of the hard times are from the past (the years of the closet), and some are from the present. For a while, the commune was mixed (both straights and gays), and conflicts ranged from the kitchen (who did the housework) to the stereo (whether to play hard rock or something soft and sweet). Eventually, the straights left.

This is a gay book about many diverse characters and events: crocheting and making beads, tripping on acid in snowy woods, feeding a houseful of pussycats, dancing to "Gimme Shelter" during a drug bust, going to gay demonstrations, love and lovers and monogamy, struggles with straight "revolutionaries," Christmas stockings, a Passover seder, a trip to South America, soybeans and farts, kazooes and guitars and tambourines, nude swimming in a mountain stream, meditation and Tarot cards, and much more.

There is a wonderful story by a gay brother of the time he was leafletting for a gay dance and encountered a Jesus freak.

A succinct essay entitled "Less Is More" tells about the economics and ecology of communal living: "Things that cost money are usually traps to get sucked into — ways of letting other people do things for us that we can do ourselves and really enjoy... We are preparing ourselves to live in a post-scarcity, egalitarian world-wide society..."

What makes *Great Gay In The Morning* so significant — one of the best gay liberation books we have so far — is its ability to express the ideas of gay liberation not in terms of abstract ideology but in terms of how people live together day-to-day in such a way as to help build personal and world freedom.

—Allen Young

*GUITAR ARMY* by John Sinclair (1972, Douglas), pb., 366 pp., \$3.95.

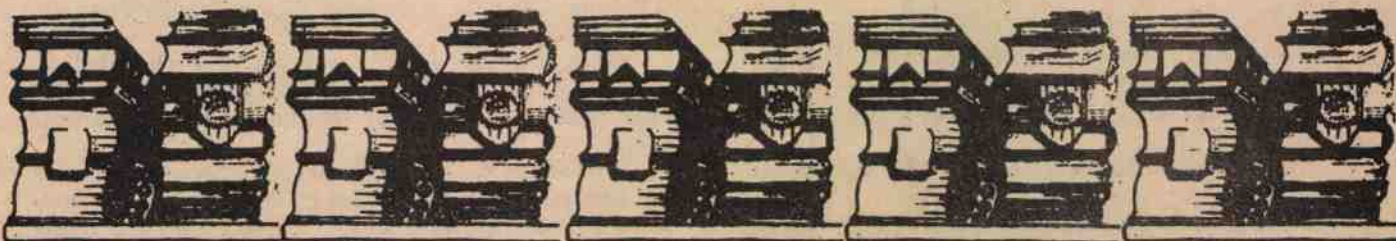
*Seven Arrows* by Hyemeyohsts Storm (1972, Harper & Row), 374 pp., \$9.95.

This is one of those strange reviews that combines two very dissimilar books into one review and discusses similarities.

American culture has had varying forms: the Plains Indians and the midwest revolutionaries of the late sixties — both gathered in their tribes facing extinction by the dominant culture that demanded conformity or death. In the case of the Indians death came by scalping; the cultural revolutionaries were jailed and harassed until the new-age tribe was besought with pressures that resulted in collapse.

Each book gives vivid descriptions of the violence in our society — 19th century and 20th century. Each is about the subjugation of the people at the hands of the ruling power. Each is a work of art, featuring two artists of the sixties who magnificently portray the colors of the rainbow throughout the pages of each book. The photos in *Seven Arrows* are beautiful; the mandala-like artwork of Karen Harris is fantastic. Gary Grimshaw in *Guitar Army* is a master new-age artist. Each book is male-dominated relating an idiosyncrasy of the respective cultures. Each book drags on at points due to style with Sinclair's rhetorical vernacular and with Storm's endless allegories.

*Guitar Army* is the story of John Sinclair and his radicalization; it is also the story of a youth culture that has its roots unconsciously in the blues music of Black America. Sinclair makes a case for the importance of music in turning on the children of the sixties and giving them a foundation for an evolving culture that is not shared by their parents. He discusses the history of the cultural revolution in the Midwest speaking from the vantage point of a founding father. (It was quite entertaining since I have similar





roots with an attachment for the same music and having lived in the same area.) Then, John details the many hassles that led to his evolving consciousness as a radical; complete with Mao phrases and bits of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Here's where the connection with communalism is introduced. Sinclair and his friends were the people that began the first communal living experiments in Michigan in the mid-sixties; these continue in Ann Arbor. They own houses in the city and live communally as a family more than a political party. Currently, the Rainbow Party, the name for their group, is going through more crises situations revolving around the continued hassles from the power structure in Michigan. After making many advances in the city and with political programs county and state-wide, the party is suffering and struggling to keep afloat.

On a broader scale, what John writes about is a new society based on a world-wide communal movement. However, his writing still reflects much of the disgust with the old society and is similar to the Black Panther style of the early seventies. With the attachment to leftist thought is the concept of violence as the ultimate end in our struggle for building the new society. This seems a little inconsistent with his other statements calling for the inclusion of everyone in the new society (Who's the enemy if everyone is to be included?). Much of the story of Sinclair and the development of the Rainbow Party smacks of infantile leftism and an outmoded form contrasted to the development of the left on the West Coast in the last

few years. His language, non-spiritual vibe, attachment to cultural heroes with guitars don't seem conducive to building a movement that will be all-inclusive, even within the rainbow nation (the term for people with new consciousness).

*Seven Arrows* is the first book by an Indian telling the story of how the Plains Indians lived; actually how their teachings were passed down throughout the generations. It's a learning book: Zen-like. Much of it is reminiscent of the spiritual quality of the people of India. The concept of Oneness and necessity for attaining completeness is at the root of their spiritual teachings. Much of this book though is about the violence that destroyed the Indian nation and ended the storytelling and the Way of the Shield. The Plains Indians were not into destroying those with whom they disagreed but rather into shaming them. Since they believed in the Way of Peace, murder was not in their life. That changed with the whiteman and his spirit water, thunder iron and all powerful good, Geessis.

The culture of the tribes of the Midwest Indians set them apart from the conquering whitemen. The Rainbow People's culture poses a threat to our established society. In both cases the structure of the "tribe" was threatened by external forces. It remains to be seen if those others of us in the second wave of the communal movement in this country will pose a threat to those in power. Our hope is in merging with everyone and seeking the communality while trying to resolve the possible polarities.

—Vince







## Some Thoughts on Christian Communes

Throughout history, there have always been some Christians somewhere who have captured that vision held by the first Christian community at Jerusalem, who attempted to live communally, holding all things common (Acts 2:44-45, and 4:32). The largest and most successful of these attempts is the Hutterian Brethren, founded in 1528. The Brethren today, interestingly, are experiencing a mounting flow of inquiries from outsiders, and even some conversions. My own experience is that college students especially find them somehow fascinating. I therefore asked one of the brethren, who prefers to remain anonymous, if he would write a short essay on what he feels his movement has to offer. Following is his somewhat edited reply, which I find worth passing on to others interested in communal living, particularly Christian communal living.

The Christian Commune consists of the directed energies of its members — the brethren and elders as well as children, and guests. It faces toward the world of the future. Its mission is to activate the Kingdom of God on Earth. It organizes its many fields of work with this mission in mind. All work is construed broadly as useful work, oriented toward a future world that enjoys a peaceful order; there, organization is decen-

tralized and autonomous; people have equal opportunities and the goods of life are produced and distributed to humanistic and ecological needs.

Emphasis is placed upon personal responsibility, regardless of the field of work in which a person is principally involved. In this way we may increase effectiveness of the members.

Membership in the community, a concept that embraces both elders and the common brethren, is open to adults of all ages and educational levels. Sincere seekers not yet able to make a total commitment are also welcome on a trial basis.

Christian Community is a 24 hour a day, 52 weeks a year endeavor. A person may join or leave freely at any time. Christian Community seeks to spread the light of the Gospel to all countries. This is done through missionary work and by assisting and affiliating with like-minded groups elsewhere, but primarily through the power of example.

Most of our people live in the U.S.A. and Canada at present. But our way of life differs sharply from conventional American and European ways. We are everywhere pilgrims, and in whatever country we find ourselves we are "something new," "a departure," "radical," "a real alternative."



### *Why consider a Christian Community?*

Mankind, having passed through families, universities, governments, businesses or churches, can agree on the reality: the institutions of the world are generally failing; the future of man is bleak.

The Christian Community seeks to reverse present failures by calling men to a new life, in conformity with the commandments of God, central to which is the aphorism, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." A full community is the best instrument available to man for this purpose. It can bring to bear on man's problems every discipline, every skill, every kind of person. It can live on little and travel far.

In an age when churches are failing and closing down, it is nevertheless logical and necessary to evangelize. For, though cries of anguish and defeat arise from hundreds of institutions of religion, we have yet to see a glad surrender to the inevitable, a great re-orientation promised and achieved. It is not contempt for the accomplishments of the past, but rather a confidence engendered from having experienced its successes, that bespeaks a true community as the means to an authentic futurism.

### *In what sense are we a Christian Community?*

A true Christian community is universal because of its comprehensive identification and mission. We speak both of the greater morality of God's Will and of its inevitability. Human solutions, on the other hand, inevitably fail. The Aswan Dam, an immense international feat of engineering, is a splendid example of human ingenuity and effort, but its productivity is already cancelled by the high Egyptian birth rate, and its effect in salinizing the Eastern Mediterranean has already destroyed one industry, the sardine, and threatens many species of marine life. The dustiness of the air above some Swiss mountains has doubled in a decade. All this has come to pass because man has trusted in his inventions instead of following the commands of God.

In outlook, in purpose, in concerns, in membership, and in services, a Christian Community should know no boundaries of nationality and place. The physical abode of the community may be a dear thing. But it should not determine the fate of the community, which should be to move out, both physically and spiritually, until it is a light to men everywhere.

### *How the inhumanity of man is confronted.*

The world is increasingly ravaged by a pestilence of impersonality and alienation. Man cannot perceive his tasks; he works like a blinded mule at the mill wheel. His workplace and abode are separated. He is ruled by remote powers. His pleasures and knowledge are more indirect.

In the face of this pestilence, so acutely perceived by youth, the community, with all its discipline, has a better way of life to offer: God's way. It must practice and teach a new kind of living that restores man to a healthful sociability in all phases of his life.

### *The failure of authority*

Everywhere, and in every institution, those who hold power are being asked: "Who authorizes you to influence our minds and behavior? Who tells you what

methods you may use to rule? Who gives you the goals that you impress upon us?"

The Authorities respond variously. Some resort to naked power, believing that, in a contest of wills, their wills can prevail. Some claim that the seismic condition does not exist; it is only "apparent"; if they can only get the agitated people to admit that revolution is an illusion, the revolution will disappear. But it is useless to force people to agree that the social world is unmovable; they will turn around afterward and say, like Galileo, "eppure si muova."

Other authorities, whether of the state or of the churches, believe that they can control the present through a strengthened emphasis upon the past. "What has worked before will work again. It needs only to be tried more energetically." But the human spirit cannot be vitalized by increased dosages of elections or by strict economies of budget and spending; nor can Christianity be preserved simply by more funds, more buildings, more conferences — more of everything.

### *Where does the Christian Community get its authority?*

The Christian believes in an authority that is universal, intelligent, and almighty: God.

The true Christian Church is a community whose members share, in a setting fully rationalized for the sharing, all their goods and services. They precipitate inside and outside their community those kinds of action that realize the vision. Whatever is determined to be truly incompatible with the vision, whether it be positively sinful or simply superfluous, is criticized and corrected. Whatever can maximize the diffusion of the Christian Community's behavior to society is strengthened and projected forward in time.

### *Who should belong to a Christian Community?*

In general, the more one grows in spirit throughout life, as a pleasant and elevating experience integral to one's daily life, the better it is for the individual and the community. The true Christian Community rejects the uniformity and artificiality of the concept of a monastic order. It is open to adults of all ages and sexes, of every social level, and at all avenues of individual character, who are moved by the Spirit to seek to know God's will and follow it.

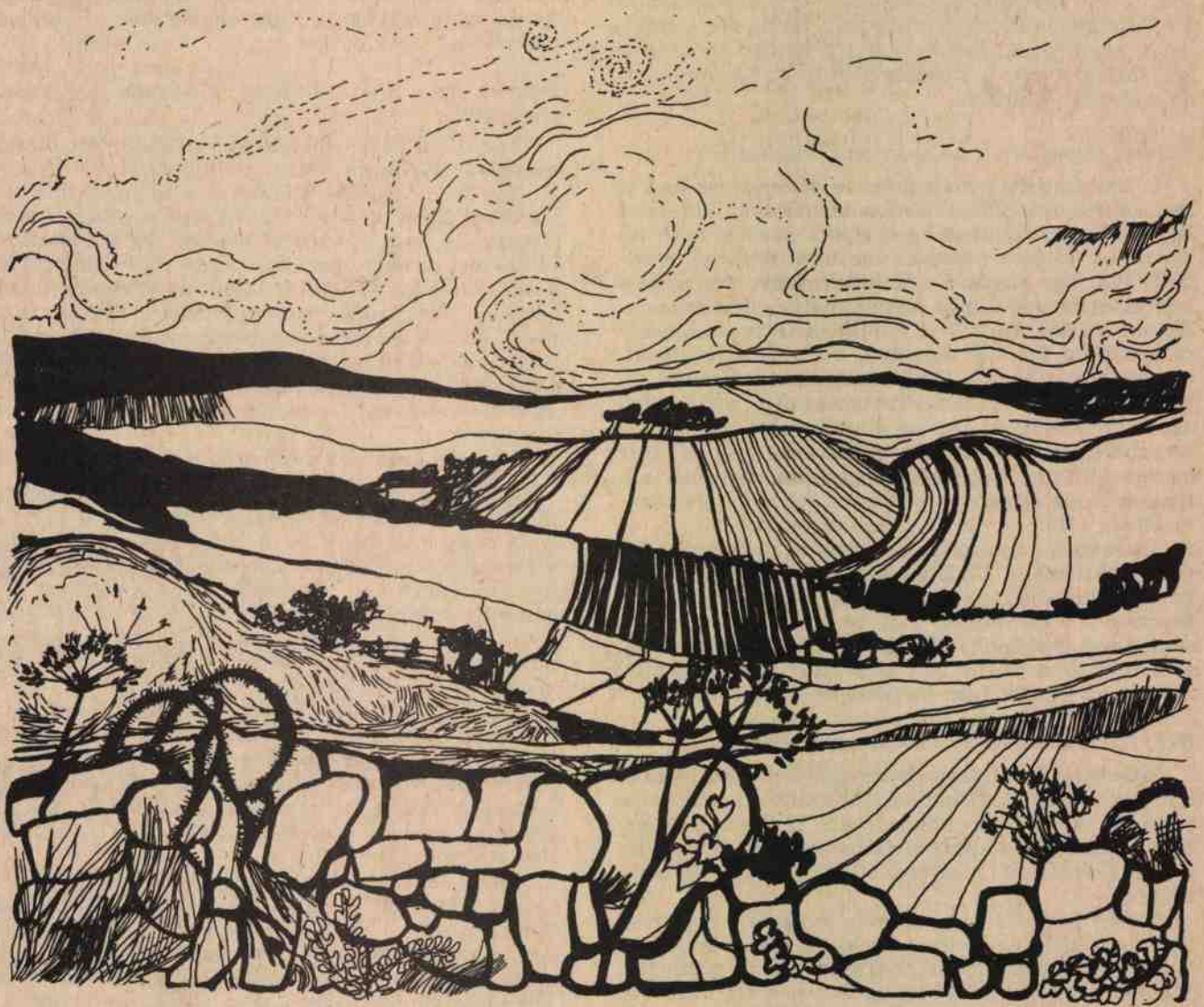
Twenty might well be the optimum age to join a Christian Community, for independence and maturity are well underway around this year. At this time young people can appreciate Christ's alternative to the responses of apathy or rebellion so natural in the imprisoning regime of modern society, as it is with the best aspirations of man.

Many universities are recognizing the needs for "adult education," "extension programs," and "refresher courses," all of them evidencing, in their titles and organization, the begrudging acknowledgment which academic establishments have accorded them. The Christian Community is in a sense a university, a life-time of learning God's will. Its task is to organize itself so that its structure frees rather than imprisons its members.

Enter the Ark before the flood overwhelms you. For further information, write or visit: Forest River Community, Fordville, North Dakota 58231



# BACK TO THE LAND





In this reprint from the English journal *Communes* (No. 39), the author defends rural communities against the charge of copping out on social problems. For the other side of the story, see Chris Elms' "Flight From Responsibility" in *Communities* No. 1.

In the eyes of some people, the community movement is tainted with an aura of "dropping out," of escaping from the real problems facing humanity. While there may be some truth in this charge for communities that fail to build their own economic base, it is the opposite of the truth for communities that support themselves from the land.

Indeed, it is the larger societies of the "over-developed" nations that are not facing reality, but are still failing to confront the basic problem of long-term survival.

Driven ever faster by the spurious visions of endless "growth" and endless "progress," these societies have become dependent on the use of a huge superfluity of machinery, so that their physical survival now requires a steady input of resources at 15-25 times the rate needed by people living simply, but comfortably, on the land. This rate of resource use just cannot be maintained, and should not be maintained in a world where two-thirds of the people remain impoverished and half are hungry.

It is high time that alternative, lower-consumption lifestyles, such as land-based communities of moderate size, began to be organized within the "advanced" (over-developed) countries. The need for such a return to more modest, more self-sufficient communities is stressed in the very thorough analysis contained in "Blueprint For Survival," published in the January, 1972 issue of *The Ecologist*.

A *Sunday Times* writer has suggested that this may turn out to be the seminal document of the 20th century, as the Communist Manifesto was for the 19th century. It calls for a complete reversal of the "conventional wisdom" on economic, social, political and agricultural problems.

It urges that we must move away from the cults of productivity, regardless of what is produced, and mobility (nothing going nowhere, but fast), and from the worship of mechanical power, all of which have dominated Western civilization since the industrial revolution (and have badly infected many areas of the East as well).

Instead, the Blueprint advocated a re-building of lifestyles around smaller communities, and a much lower level of consumption.

It would be wrong to give the impression that we need only drop all modern inventions and slip back into the 18th century—though we could do a lot worse than just that. However, what must be done first, and above all else, is to halt and then reverse the emptying of the people from the countryside into the cities.

The "conventional wisdom" has already persuaded most of us that the only kind of efficient agriculture is that performed by massive machines, with very few people working on the land (although plenty of men do boring work making and servicing the machines).

In fact, as the Blueprint points out, this kind of mass mono-culture is bad for the land, worse for the animals, and likely to prove disastrous in the long run as ever larger doses of inorganic fertilizers and ever more horrible pesticides have to be applied to maintain

yields. In fact, the highest yields per acre can be obtained by hand labor, using quite simple hand tools, and by people who have a love and respect for plants and animals, and for the soil.

They need to have skills and knowledge too, none of them too hard to acquire. Essentially, such people must get satisfaction from primary production, rather than from "making a fast buck" in some secondary, parasitic operation of trade, speculation, or the manufacture of fripperies. Finally, where people live close to the land, it is relatively easy to return all organic wastes to the land, thereby conserving its fertility and keeping the rivers and seas pure.

#### *The Waste We Could Save*

It does not take much analysis to deduce that a major portion of the resources wasted in mechanized societies go into moving people and things around unnecessarily. Decentralized living in smaller communities can eliminate this kind of waste, allowing people to live near their work, and arranging for each community to produce the bulk of its own basic needs.

People will need to get used to living more locally, getting to know their own area well, rather than taking distant trips to tourist meccas; at the same time, each locality can seek to attain and develop its own uniqueness, reversing the trend to uniformity that has been brought by the age of mass travel.

On rarer recreational trips, travel by foot, bicycle or sail should normally replace that by powered vehicles.

More than restricting our personal travel, we shall need to reduce our usage of products that come from far off. Not, it is hoped, completely; it would be a pity if we had to return to the days of the first Elizabeth when an orange was a curiosity in Britain.

But at least distant trade should be minimum, with temperate food products being exchanged for tropical, rather than paying for food (and fertility) by means of machine products.

One of the myths that we must dispense with as we move towards ecological survival is the belief that trade itself is a good thing, and the more exchanging we do the richer we shall get. This myth persists because poor and distant peoples have always been exploited by traders, generally backed by our troops.

In fact, trade is useful only insofar as some specialization and division of labor remains desirable. But trade is far less vital than basic production for local use, and an excess of trade, transport and marketing merely ensures a large number of non-productive people becoming parasitic on the productive community. On top of these parasites, those of government then arrive to control and supervise the excessive trade and mobility.

The existence of a temporary glut of a perishable commodity does not necessarily imply that distant trading is an ecological advantage. Where simple storage is not enough, it may be better to simply compost the surplus locally, thereby recycling organically and conserving fertility for a future season.

The growing of "cash crops," surplus to the needs of the community, should become the exception rather than the rule, and such "exported fertility" ought to be traded only against imports that will reduce the need for local crops, thereby helping to conserve local fertility.





### *Which Is The Way Back?*

How is it to come about, this decentralized, low-consumption, agrarian way of life? Only gradually, of course, and starting when people are ready.

To some extent, it could be said to have begun with the revival of Glencolumbkille, County Donegal, on the west coast of Ireland. There, over the last decade, a dying parish has been brought back to life and restored to a reasonable level of prosperity by the inspiration of the parish priest, Father McDyer, and the bootstrap-lifting efforts of 800 determined villagers.

If the migration from country to city can be halted on this rugged coast in this way, it can certainly be done anywhere where there are people willing to try. Keys to success in this case are a priority in reviving local social life as well as local industries, new and old, and a skillful use of cooperative economics.

And, distinctive of pioneer work in the post-industrial era, the machinery used in traditional industries is primarily powered by the muscles of the artisans, so that a minimum of external power sources is required.

For prototypes of larger land-based communities we still have to look overseas — to some of the Israeli kibbutzim and moshavs, and to the various groups of religious brethren running successful colonies in America (the Amish, Hutterites, Bruderhof). There is also, in France, a community of the Ark, and much could be learned by a study of the communes of China.

Even after 70 years, the researches of the anarchist Prince Peter Kropotkin still provide some of the most

clear and convincing proposals for land-based communes, together with assurances as to their practicability. In his "Fields, Factories and Workshops," published in 1902, he suggests that 200 families, 1000 people, could live very well on 1000 acres in England:

"On an area of 340 acres they could without difficulty raise all the cereals — wheat, oats — required for both the 1000 inhabitants and their livestock. . . They could grow on a further 400 acres, properly cultivated, and irrigated if necessary and possible, all the green crops and fodder required to keep the 30 or 40 cows which would supply them with milk and butter, and, let us say, the 300 head of cattle required to supply them with meat.

"On 20 acres, two of which would be under glass, they would grow more vegetables, fruits and luxuries than they could consume. And supposing that half an acre of land were attached to each house, for hobbies and recreation (poultry-keeping, horticulture, and the like), they would still have some 60 acres for all sorts of purposes: public gardens, squares, manufactures, and so on.

"The labor that would be required for such an intensive culture would not be the hard labor of the serf or slave. It would be accessible to everyone, strong or weak, town-bred or country-born; and it would be a delight to every human besides.

"The total amount of that labor which every 1000 individuals, taken from this or from any other nation, has now to spend in return for a livelihood which is much smaller in quantity and of worse quality. I mean, of course, only the technically necessary labor, not even considering the labor which we now have to give in order to maintain all our middle-people, our armies and the like.

"The amount of labor required to grow food under a rational culture is so small, indeed, that our hypothetical inhabitants would be led necessarily to employ their leisure in manufacturing, artistic, scientific, and other pursuits."

The technical obstacles, Kropotkin says, are small; it is merely that we fail to learn the practical arts that are needed. Those who would try today, now that the ecologists have pointed out the folly of the larger, high consumption societies that prevail at present, would do well to acquaint themselves with the necessary skills, and to look for a place to begin.

Example will convince far more than any number of words.





# I think that I shall never see A home as lovely as my tree

Cole Sekvy

Very few people realize how inexpensively you can live in the country. I didn't and was working in a large metropolis programming computers and making \$16,000 a year so I could buy a house in the suburbs when I saw my first issue of Mother Earth News. At first I was somewhat skeptical but after reading about Chuck Bartlebaugh's caboose houses (Mother Earth News No. 13) and Mike Oehler's underground house (Lifestyle No. 1), I began to think about getting out of the rat race. I wasn't turned on by the idea of dwelling in the bowels of the earth, and even a caboose seemed pretty earthbound to me, so I started to think of some other possibilities. I tried building a permanent hot air balloon kept aloft by heat from a manure burning furnace I'd built with a friend, and bought the air rights over a friend's property for \$50. We hadn't quite perfected the exhaust system on the balloon and Aremea, Tesbian and Lysistrata (my wife and two children) complained a bit but we'd gotten the stench pretty well under control when we were attacked by a pileated woodpecker during a snow storm.

He pecked three or four holes in our balloon and pretty well deflated our first plan for an inexpensive place in the country. We almost gave up when an idea hit us — if that wood pecker ruined our home — we would move into his. We went back exploring the woods on our friend's lot and found a group of six old trees with really beautiful holes.

We each set one up as a bedroom; used one as a living room and at first did our cooking in the clearing. With a little work and ingenuity we've set one tree up as a kitchen and are now all living comfortably together in the country. We gave our friend another \$25 for tree rights on his land, and are developing our own diet of grubs, moss, lichens, and Baby Ruths. I've quit work, but bring in some outside bread by working as a scarecrow in the summer. It's hard to believe that we ever spent eight years living in the city, and it's certainly clear that we never want to go back.

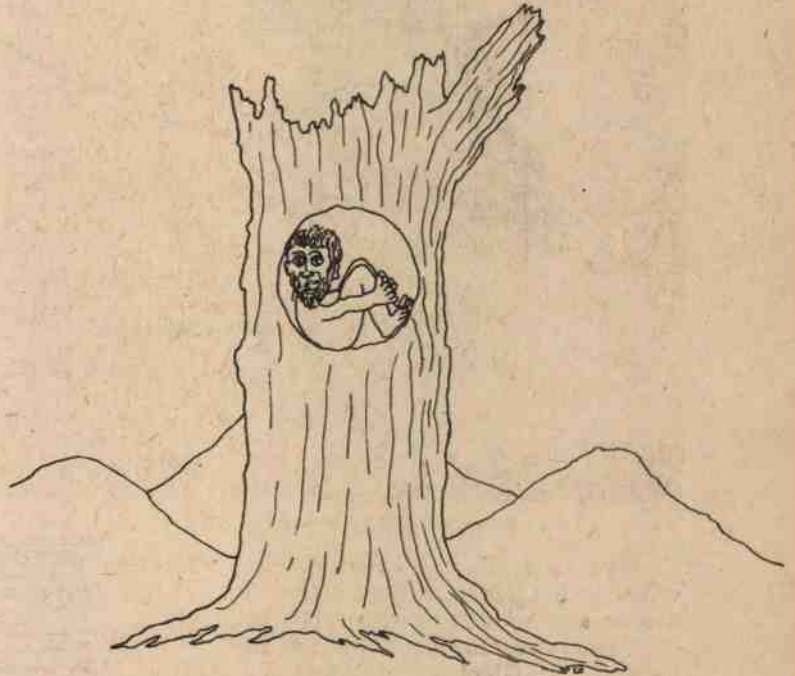


Figure 1- The author relaxing at home





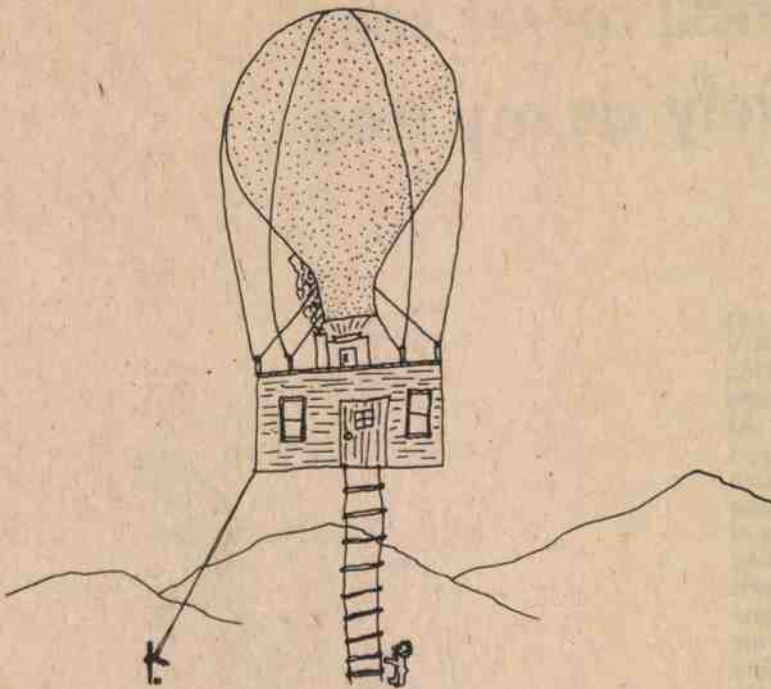


Figure 3- The balloon house



Figure 4- our plans deflated



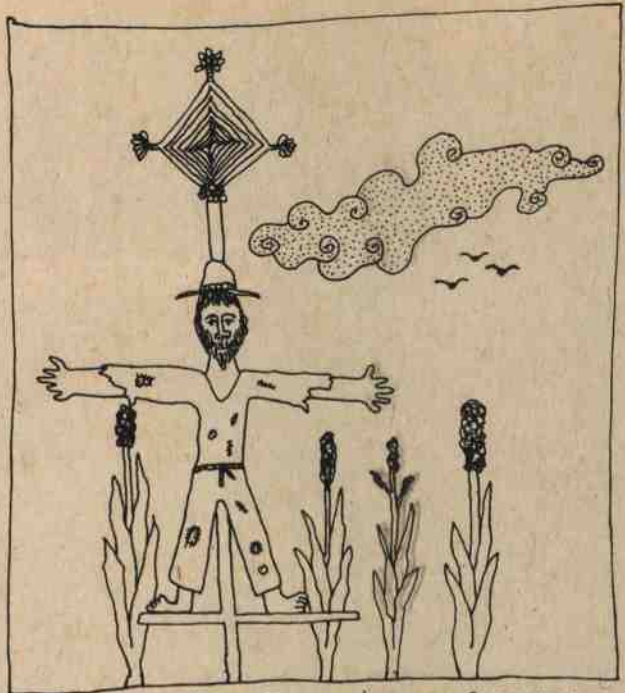


figure 7 - working as a Scarecrow

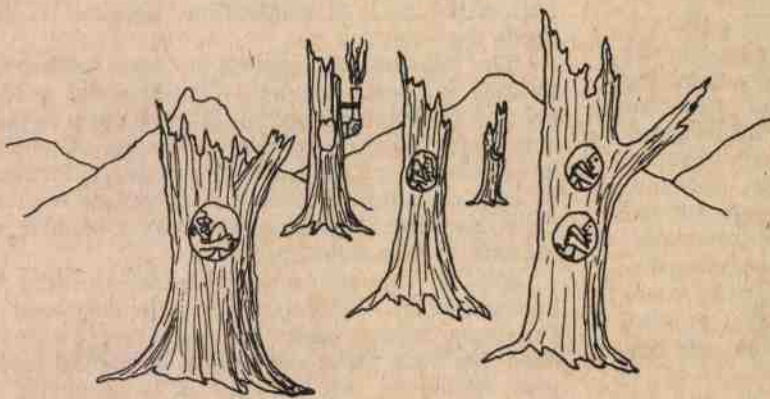


Figure 5- The author and his family at home





## Conferences '73

The social change side of the communities movement works toward redesign of the social environment on at least two levels. On the one hand, individual communities function as social laboratories, testing various hypotheses as to what forms of interaction and organization are satisfying. We can hardly expect to discover any one such form which will make everyone happy, but we may begin to discover some of the necessary conditions for successful communities. By learning from one another's mistakes and successes, as well as our own, we can begin to avoid at least the most common dangers, and to utilize tools which have already been tested.

On the other hand, there are some things about social interaction which we think we know already. On the basis of Western society's grand-scale experiment in individualism, and our own tiny ones in operating with a little help from our friends, it seems clear that competitive behavior isn't making it, and that cooperation, though often difficult, can be both a joy and a boon. Given these (tentative) conclusions, we can, while continuing research, begin taking steps toward actually influencing social design. If cooperative communities work well, cooperating federations of cooperative communities should work better, involving more people and creating a greater socio-economic impact through an increasing ability to provide for one another's needs.

We are now beginning to build such federations, even though their components, the individual communities, are still unstable and still being formed. The existence of federations will make the formation of still more communities, and the survival of existing ones, easier; from that point the organism will develop rapidly. Look out world!

Evolving effective social forms through experimentation and building cooperative federations are both heavily dependent upon effective communications. In order to structure our communities effectively (i.e., do things in ways that make us happy), we need to know what ways are working — or aren't — for other groups. In order to use our collective resources efficiently, we need information as to their availability. Magazines can help move information, but they're ungodly slow, and have trouble communicating some of the most important information — the feelings that flow among us. Personal contact — working, playing, and talking with one another — is the most effective way to develop the caring relationships which can be a large part of the basis of cooperation, because it's the way that's the most fun.

The following are reports on three different opportunities for such contact — alternatives conferences held by Project Synergy and Lime Saddle in the West, and Twin Oaks in the East — events at which high-level energy and information exchanges furthered the process of building the communications network and the cooperative federation required for creatively transforming the environment.

Another conference is scheduled for the Minneapolis area in September (see announcement on the Commune-ication page). Of those reported on here, only the Twin Oaks' conference happened before this year, indicating that the network is growing.

One way of seeing the communitarian society of the future might be as a perpetual conference happening simultaneously at locations all over the country, at which there is not only information exchange but sharing of energy and resources for the accomplishment of projects, some of them major and long term. We're getting there.



*Synergy: A Working Conference on Transitions and Social Change*, came together May 9, 10, and 11 at Stanford University for the purpose of significantly extending the growing communications networks among alternative institutions.

The conference was unique in both composition and design; participants were limited largely to persons already active in groups working for social change, with the expectation that all would serve equally as resource persons for one another, thus eliminating the distinction between those making presentations and those observing. Participants helped design the conference in advance by listing their needs and resources, and by proposing activities and discussion topics. In addition, the conference organizers developed several mechanisms for communication and feedback among all participants.

The more than 400 participants each chose to focus on one of 11 broad areas of interest, ranging from New Technology and Alternative Living Groups to New Options in the Professions and Interpersonal Relations. The mornings were reserved for discussions within the interest clusters, while afternoons were left open for arranging meetings between clusters as interdisciplinary interests developed. While some such cross-cluster meetings did occur, the arrangement was only moderately successful, perhaps because participants, being unaccustomed to self-designed conferences, failed to take initiative in setting up the meetings.

A similar problem arose with regard to another information exchange mechanism designed by the conference organizers which showed great potential, but wasn't utilized to the fullest extent possible. Through the use of the Resource One computer in San Francisco

and a remote terminal at the conference site, a system was available whereby each participant could have access to information about other participants whose interests related to their own, and could arrange meetings to share information. All the information collected for the computer was compiled in a 'Conference Yellow Pages' format for distribution after the conference.

It was not immediately clear that a comprehensive communications network among alternative institutions was established at the conference itself, though it is likely that the distribution of the "Yellow Pages" will help to establish contacts for which the heavy conference schedule didn't allow time. Perhaps more importantly, Synergy provided a significant learning experience, pointing up some of the areas which will need to be worked on if extensive cooperation among diverse social change groups is to occur. For one thing, it is clear that most of us need a better understanding of sophisticated information exchange systems, and of how we can utilize their full potential. It is increasingly apparent that energy, resources, and willingness to cooperate are available, and that the secret to utilizing them for social change is fast, accurate information as to their availability. While Synergy's design made such information potentially available, the participants seemed to lack the understanding, or perhaps the habits, to take full advantage of it.

Another apparent need is for discussion to take place toward a comprehensive overview of the alternative institutions/social change scene. Synergy's composition — people involved in working social change groups, seemed often to lead to a situation in which people with special interests were talking at one another, pushing their individual messages. At times







*Videotapes of the Synergy conference, as well as copies of the Conference Yellow Pages, are available from the organizers: Project Synergy, Old Union Clubhouse, Stanford, CA 94305*

The first west coast conference on communities was held in Mendocino Woodlands Park in June. Over 300 people attended the three day confab. Advertising by word of mouth, flyers posted in stores and on campuses and in national magazines brought people from all over the country and Mexico.

Like many such conferences in recent years, the focus was on commune-community formation, exchange of ideas, feelings and information on alternatives to conventional ways of living and on the creation of cooperative networks between existing groups.

The conference was jammed with scheduled workshops and meetings in an intense time of planning and talking. The workshops covered many aspects of social and personal change with the main emphasis on cooperative interaction.

**PERSONAL GROWTH** covered gestalt techniques, meditation, theater games in small participating groups. **PERSONAL HEALTH** focused on wholistic approaches to health through creative living as well as sound nutritional and therapeutic practices. **COMMUNE CREATION** brought up planning and honest communication as keys in dealing with work sharing, economics, sex roles, housing, membership. Communal frustrations focused on interpersonal communication and common frame of reference as keys to overcoming hassles. **FINDING YOUR ALTERNATIVE** helped people focus on what alternative was important to them and how people have to create their own. **CHILDREARING** was an exchange of experiences and ideas that can create supportive and loving situations for parents and children. **WOMEN IN COMMUNES** broke into small experience sharing discussions after a "crankie" cartoon presentation of how women can change their self and role images in marriage.

**GARDENING** covered broad areas of practice and theory including the spiritual benefits derived from the need to balance the elements air, sun and water with the earth. **LAND TRUSTS** and **LEGAL MATTERS** concentrated on specific information related to acquiring and holding land, emphasizing the value of good legal advice and working with officials. **ECONOMICS** focused on cooperation as the key in developing alternative economics with specific information exchanges and discussion of the interrelationship of money and human values.

**BUILDING** presented slide shows of dome construction and discussion of alternative building materials. The new **TECHNOLOGY** discussed video libraries, methane production, new building techniques, solar energy and much more. **COMMUNICATIONS** brought about solid exchanges of information regarding West Coast networking. **FEDERATIONS & SOCIAL CHANGE** was oriented toward bringing all social change projects together under a "Communergy" system.

In the evenings small and large groups gathered for more discussions. Communitarian Village, One World Family and Ananda Village made separate presentations.

this became almost a conflict situation, with various groups' directions being attacked and defended. In order to resolve this and promote a cooperative situation, there is need for a 'big picture' which shows how our various directions (alternate technology/simplicity of living; urban revitalization/rural experimentation; personal growth/social action, etc.) are all necessary and complimentary paths to total societal reformation. Each of us needs to see our own place in the total process, and how it relates to those working in different areas, so that we can coordinate our efforts and determine the most promising avenues for cooperation.

Ironically, an example of what can happen when synergy is produced was best displayed not in the conference itself, but in a connected event, the spring Festival, which opened as the conference ended, and in which conferees were invited to participate. Mimes and music, craft booths and alternate building structures, workshops and exotic food combined to produce a gay mellow environment in which conference participants could unwind after an intensive meeting schedule, continue to make new contacts, and learn new skills. The sun shone, balloons flew, and bright colors prevailed. A good time was had by all.



Meditation and yoga began the day for some and throughout the day meals were prepared and eaten, children cared for, the sound of the music drifted through the woods. The woodland setting, cool and cloudy skies, spontaneous sharing of work and play contributed to a strong feeling of shared community.

Specific results of the gathering included much interest in the Communitarian Village with eight folks returning to LimeSaddle (sponsors of the Conference and co-editors of *Communities*) to share work and join in village planning. Q West Coast communications network is in the beginning stages with Sid (Peace, Bread & Land) preparing copies of tapes of the Conference and Omedia editing the video. Others too are involved in developing an ongoing communications network.

As a result of the New Communities Conferences, two more gatherings are being planned at LimeSaddle; one in which plans for development of the Communitarian Village will be finalized, and another to lay groundwork for implementation of the Commnergy system — a federation of social change groups centering around the new communities.

A more detailed conference report and mailing list of participants has been mailed to all conferees. The Communitarian Village newsletter is now available by subscription — \$1 for five issues. Tapes of the Conference workshops and meetings will be available soon for \$1 for rental and postage. Anyone who wants to followup on information or plug in to cooperative networking is encouraged to write to LimeSaddle, Route 1 Box 191, Oroville, CA. 95965. Visitors must write in advance.

#### *Twin Oaks — June 28 - July 1*

It was a grand affair. Twin Oaks' experience at organizing previous conferences was obvious throughout. With the cars, trucks, campers and tents of every size and shape strewn in the meadows and woods and over 500 strong children, women and men communalizing about, there was an odd, colorful, festive-alittle restive-air. A well organized, detailed conference booklet was a handy companion in feeling out the planning, the area, T.O. buildings, people and all.

Unlike previous T.O. conferences, this year's workshops were very much other-directed, intercommunal efforts. Facilitators came from New Community, Nethers, Downhill Farm, VSC, Peacemaker Land Trust, Ithaca Project, Arica Institute, Ananda Marga, — and others. The workshops ranged from hard core economics, technology and legal concerns, to the other limits of interpersonal relationships and spirituality. An information and news board facilitated unscheduled free-flowing workshops and get-togethers throughout the conference, including discussions on Gestalt therapy, ambisexuality, massage, men's issues, et al.

Groups forming and individuals and communes looking for people were a primary focus of the conference. There were a considerable number of "unattached" people seeking information about communities and alternatives. Just as last year's conference sparked the beginning of new groups, this year's helped to give birth to two new communes in the T.O. area — Cedarwood and Change Farm.

Another group, Alternative Community, with members scattered throughout the country, got together for the first time at the conference and had discussions around their goal of a larger community of



upwards of 1000 people. Their group, the New Town people, and LimeSaddle representatives made contact on mutual efforts to establish village-sized communities in different areas of the country. We found our organizing ideas, our values and goals, very close — where not identical — and have made a commitment to coordinate efforts, as much as possible, in the communication and exchange of ideas, information and resources, as well as maintaining contacts with other interested groups, including Times Change, Perseverance Furthers and Oxbow Community. A mailing list of interested people — primarily East Coast — was compiled with the goal of exchanging ideas and interests with regard to a larger community; and maintaining contact through a rotating information sheet. Representatives from 28 existing communities discussed the possibility of communication and cooperation among themselves, and worked out a visitor, labor and project exchange agreement. A listing of participating groups and their available and needed skills and equipment was made available at the conference. A quarterly newsletter has just begun to coordinate and facilitate the effort. Their goal is to increase communication and strengthen reliance on each other over outside







sources of skills and resources. (Other groups that would like to be included in this pioneering effort can contact Spence at Oxbow Community, Rt 2, Chapel Hill, N.C.)

As a follow-up to this intercommunal focus, Nethers Community held a discussion in July covering possibilities for inter-group health insurance, and detailing the guidelines for setting up an intercommunity transportation system (revolving now around T.O.'s newly acquired school bus and the possibility of acquiring an electric truck.)

This intercommunal contact and exchange effort is fundamental to the whole movement for social change and federation. It is now in its embryonic stage, just beginning to bloom, and the potentials and possibilities are beautifully staggering. The developments from TO gave credence and a genuine sense of optimism to the dream of a national and eventually international federation of social and personal change, alternative communities. We will report on this area in *Communities* as it develops.

There were a few minor negatives at T.O. — Personal : the store bought breads and other food items (although for the most part the meals were fresh, nutritious and satisfying). General: There were no opening introductions before the whole group, of T.O.

people, facilitators or community representatives. It would have involved a lot of time but I think it would have been worthwhile in setting a tone for getting together and associating people's interests, specialties, group goals, hearing them talk briefly about these.

Then there were the typical hassles of too many things going on at once, the hectic pace, the impossibility of being able just to talk to everyone you'd like to ... or to even be able to meet them !

David and other T.O.ers has some afterthoughts about the conference and the ever-increasing size, and now feel that the logistics of handling over 500 people become too difficult. They are now considering the possibility of two conferences next year, with one focusing on existing communities — the sharing of their experiences — and the other designed to help people form communities and find places in existing communities.

So this year's conference may have been the last of a dying breed of "everything happening" affairs. The morning meditations, the Arica exercises, nightly music, singing and sufi dancing, and the endless rap ... rap ... rapping made a harmonious blend and concoction that was a little agitating to the senses and sanity at times, but ultimately soothing to the heart and soul.

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## What are you doing next summer?

- Fellowship of Intentional Communities — Pennsylvania  
3rd weekend in March at Tanguy Homesteads
  
- Twin Oaks Conference — Virginia  
4th of July Weekend
  
- Community Service Conference — Ohio  
2nd weekend in August
  
- School of Living, Heathcote — Maryland  
Labor Day weekend



# Cooperation

Claude Steiner

reprinted from  
*Issues in Radical Therapy*  
Vol. 1, No. 3

I'm writing this paper outlining the concept of cooperation as a guide to problem-solving group members who are in a couple with another person or in nuclear families into which they wish to introduce the interpersonal behavior which is called cooperation.

We white North Americans are members of a society thoroughly indoctrinated in individualism and competitiveness — traits which have been presented to us as desirable from early in our lives. We are told that, if pursued assiduously, individualism and competitiveness will lead us to happiness and success in life, and these qualities have become an integral part of our life scripts.

This mystification, which has as its main purpose to shape us into pliable workers easily exploited by a ruling class, is not only not the way to achieve happiness, but it is in fact the most specifically successful manner in which to destroy and liquidate our human potential for harmony with ourselves, harmony with each other, and harmony with nature.

Competitiveness and individualism are two most highly touted qualities of the "good" American; actually, they are a conspiracy to put our powers at the service of others rather than ourselves.

## *Individualism*

Individualism gives people the impression that when they achieve something it is on their own and without the help of others and that when they fail it is, once again, on their own and without the influence of others. Belief in the value of individualism obscures any understanding of the way in which human beings affect each other in both good and bad ways; thus it completely mystifies both oppression and cooperation. Individualism results in the isolation of human beings from each other so that they cannot band together to organize against the well organized oppressive forces that exploit them. Individualism makes people easily influenced and also easily targeted when they step out of line and begin to want to remedy their oppression in an individual fashion. Finally, individualism prevents people from validating their growing awareness of oppression with each other. The healthy paranoid suspicions which accompany demystification of oppression

are invalidated, and people are reduced to schizophrenia, each person in their individual, impotent, paranoid system.

*Individualism as a way of relating to other human beings, while highly touted, can, in fact, be a most self-destructive form of behavior.*

The above should not be misunderstood to mean that individuality, individual action or self-centered behavior is invariably wrong. I am simply attacking the notion that individualism is a super-trait, to be pursued at any cost. It is clear that some individuals and their individual actions have been of ultimate benefit to themselves and others. In fact, it is the clearly positive individual actions of certain scientists or politicians that are used by our educational institutions as show cases to highlight the value of individuality. But these examples are distortions and exaggerations of its value, for the purpose of instilling individualism and competitiveness in the young.

## *Competitiveness*

Individualism goes hand in hand with competitiveness. Since we stand or fall strictly on our individual efforts, it follows that we must think of everyone around us as individuals equally invested in succeeding and, in the mad scramble to the top, also necessarily invested in achieving superiority or one-up status to us. Being one-down is intolerable; the only alternative in our society is to try to stay one-up. Equality is not comprehended by us and often not even considered. Competitiveness is trained into human beings from early in life in our culture. Yet, not all human beings are bred into competitive styles of life, and there are some societies, some American Indians for instance, in which competitiveness is not seen as a positive trait. In an individualistic, competitive society a person who is not highly competitive cannot keep up and is going to become chronically one-down and eventually highly alienated. It is because of this that competitiveness persists in appearing to be a good trait, because it is impossible in our society to achieve any well-being without having very strong competitive skills. The only alternative to individualism and competitiveness which has potential for the production of well-being is collectivity and co-



operation between equals. But while we are well trained in the skills of competition, we know very little about how to cooperate or be equal with others. I have observed many situations (communes, relationships) in which people worked hard to cooperate and establish equality with each other. Most of these efforts collapsed, giving way to the well established and familiar competitive and individualistic patterns.

Capitalism thrives on individualism, competitiveness and inequality. Collectivity, cooperation and equality, on the other hand, have great difficulty in taking hold, with people reared in this society.

Competitiveness is based on the premise that there is not enough to go around of whatever a person needs. If the material needs of human beings are in drastic scarcity, it follows obviously that competitiveness is the mode for survival. If there is one loaf of bread daily to feed 20 families, it is pretty clear that all 20 families will starve. If a competitive member of this subgroup manages to obtain the whole loaf of bread for his family, that one family will survive while the others will still starve. The net effect of competitiveness in scarcity is actually a positive one for those who compete and win, and even for the survival of the species. But as scarcity becomes a thing of the past, as it is in the United States, competitiveness actually *creates* scarcity and hunger. The hoarding behavior which goes along with competitiveness causes certain people to have a great deal more than they truly need, while large numbers of others, who could be satisfied with the surplus of those few who have, go without. Competitive, hoarding behaviour is based on unrealistic anxiety based on fears of scarcity. Oppressive as he is to others, the hoarder is himself oppressed by it.

I first experienced the relationship of cooperation to scarcity when in the Santa Cruz mountains as a guest of the Resistance. One evening everyone sat around in a large circle in the center of which everyone had placed the food for dinner. To my scarcity-oriented eyes it did not appear that there was enough to go around. I was alarmed and scared by the prospects of going hungry and in great conflict about the situation. Portions of food began to be passed around the circle, everyone eating from them as much as they wanted and passing them on. The food circulated over and over, and to my amazement, I found that there was actually enough food to satisfy me quite fully. Yet my experience, because of my scarcity-oriented, competitive and individualist training, was one of anxiety and alarm about not being fed. As food went by me I took larger bites than I needed; I felt guilt about this; I schemed about ways in which I could make certain kinds of food return to me; I worried as food went around the circle as to whether it would reach me again. I ate more than I needed and was, in short, unable to enjoy the meal because I was so driven by fears of scarcity and feelings of competition.

At the next meal, however, I allowed myself to trust that there was enough to go around, and I experienced for the first time in my life the clear sensation of plenty and satisfaction based on having enough on the basis of cooperation rather than on the basis of getting a big enough portion in a competitive situation.

The above anecdote is to illustrate how we are not

only mystified into being competitive and individualistic but into believing that competitiveness and individualism do in some way bring us benefit, when in fact at this point in our development as human beings the opposite is true.

Competitiveness is taught us from an early age by our parents, but especially in school. Sports, grades, tests, are all training exercises in competitive skills — mock security situations that prepare us for the business world, for the assembly line, for the job market. Competitiveness is taught to boys in its most blatant form; girls are taught to compete in more subtle, psychological forms.

### *Power Plays*

The basic interpersonal operation with which individualism and competition are brought into practice is the power play. A power play is a transaction whereby a person obtains from another person something that he wants against that other person's will.

Power plays can be crude and involve actual physical coercion or can be subtle and simple ways in which people talk or mindfuck each other out of things that they want.

The most crude power play is simply one in which a person grabs a loaf of bread and then harms her if she tries to get it back. The same effect, namely the taking away of bread, can be obtained by mental, psychological means, which are, however, equally power plays and which have the same outcome. This type of power play could make use of the victim's fear rather than force since no physical force is really applied, or it can be carried out by arousing guilt or shame so that a person willingly gives up what is rightfully hers. In any case power plays have the effect of taking away

**Competitiveness and individualism . . . are a conspiracy to put our powers at the service of others . . .**

what is rightfully one person's and putting it in another person's hands. Relationships based on power plays immerse people in a miserable, unhappy series of skirmishes, battles and major wars in which everyone but maybe one always loses.

### *Cooperation*

How then are we who live in a society in which there is plenty to go around, to take advantage of this plenty? The answer is cooperation. Cooperation is a mode of interpersonal relations which, based on the assumption that there is no scarcity of basic needs (food, shelter, space), provides a mode in which everyone can have everything they need.

One very good context in which to learn and struggle against individualism and competitiveness towards achieving cooperation is in the couple. The situation in which two people are in an intimate, long-term rela-



tionship is a situation in which the seeds of individualism and competitiveness cause great trouble and can be successfully defeated. Individualism and competitiveness are best pursued as a person standing alone. If one has no close ties to anyone, one hardly notices how individualism and competitiveness are destructive forces. It first becomes clearly destructive in a couple or family situation. Because the couple is the most available and protected laboratory for personal relationships and a situation for which people have a great deal of energy to struggle, cooperation is most

**The tendency to use power plays . . . is coupled with the inability . . . to know or ask for what one wants . . .**

easily worked on in a couple. Also cooperation is easiest between two people. Thus, this article devotes most of its attention to cooperation between two people.

Two people who decide that they want to enter into a cooperative relationship need to agree on several things:

1. That there is between them a satisfying quantity of what they need from each other. This agreement is not necessarily always obtainable since in some cases there isn't enough to satisfy both of them. For instance, with respect to sexual needs, one person may want to have sexual intercourse twice a day, and the other person may not want to have any sex at all. When the discrepancy between what people want is so large that there can be no compromise, there is in fact a situation of scarcity which cannot be remedied. In the above situation it's not very likely that a cooperative compromise can be arrived at. However, in most situations the discrepancies are not so large, and a cooperative compromise can be arrived at. A more common situation might be the one in which one person wants to have daily sexual intercourse while another person would prefer to only have sex every third day. Here, based on the assumption that there need not be scarcity, compromises can be arrived at such that both people can feel satisfied. For instance, one couple in such a situation agreed that the person with larger sexual needs be willing to masturbate while the other person held and gave her loving strokes. This took the pressure off for both and eventually equalized their sexual wants.

We have found cooperation of this sort tends to bring about a plentitude of what might at first have been scarce. The above exemplified how artificial scarcity comes about. This couple had a "sexual" problem which could easily have become complicated into a case of "impotence" for the man as he became more and more anxious due to her sexual demands, ending in complete scarcity of sexual strokes for both. The "problem" however was based on their strict adherence to stroke economy rules which does not allow sexual self-stroking, especially in the presence of an-

other person. But as he asked for what he wanted and she compromised, they broke down the stroke economy and created sufficient and satisfying sexual strokes for both of them.

2. Given that there is enough to go around, the next agreement is that both of the persons have equal rights to satisfaction and agree to a contract which involves them equally in cooperating.

A person may be aware that there is enough to go around and still not be willing to share and struggle to bring about the equalization of what there is. For instance, sex role scripting causes relationships between men and women to have built-in inequities which, on the whole, favor the man.

For example, it is expected that women will do a larger proportion of the housekeeping even if both are employed, but certainly if she is not. She may work at home as long and hard as he does at his job but it is assumed that he is entitled to more leisure time than she. If she asks for equal leisure he might agree that he gets more but be unwilling to equalize it based on his male privilege.

On a more subtle level, men are encouraged to expect to get more nurturing strokes than they give. Typically, when confronted with this inequity, they acknowledge it, but don't work to change it — once again, they hold on to their privilege.

The inequities are not always in favor of the man, however. For instance women expect men to do most of the work in their sexual life. Men are supposed to initiate, direct and successfully complete sexual relations. When this inequity is pointed out women often balk at giving up their privilege.

One couple's struggle for cooperation developed as follows: She wanted nurturing and caring strokes when she got sick or was afraid. He knew this and even though he knew what she needed he did not comply with her needs. He also refused to work on the problem on his own accord. He would give her the strokes when she asked, if she asked "nicely," but never initiated nurturing. He didn't show any interest or put any energy in sharing the strokes he had for her.

For a while she tried to deal with the problem by withdrawing her strokes for him, but this only created

**. . . the two-person situation seems an almost indispensable first step.**

further scarcity and did not solve the problem even though it equalized the flow of strokes.

Eventually they worked the problem out by a mutual giving up of privilege. They agreed to the following: He would work on his difficulty with giving strokes to her if she worked on her jealousy about his giving strokes to other people including other women. He became willing to give up his unequal share of her strokes, and she became willing to give up her unequal share of him.



3. The effective establishment of a cooperative relationship is also based on the agreement that power plays are not an option under any circumstances. Power plays are based on the assumption of scarcity and competitiveness and are the antithesis of cooperative behavior and must be given up as a method of getting what one wants in a cooperative relationship.

This point seems simple at first, but it turns out to be one of the most difficult cooperative agreements to honor. We are deeply immersed in fears of scarcity and thoroughly trained to use power of one sort or another to get what we want. Threats, sulking, yelling, banging doors, discounting, and so on are more accessible to us as approaches to what we want, than discussion and negotiation. Both partners need to be on the lookout for power plays and willing to call them and stop them as soon as they happen.

4. It is necessary for cooperation to exist that everyone in the situation ask for everything that they want 100% of the time. (See Wyckoff, "Between Men and Women" in IRT, I, 2, Spring, 1973.) The tendency to use power plays to get what one wants is coupled with the inability to know or ask for what one wants clearly and openly. The reason for this is that in a competitive situation to reveal what one's needs are is to warn one's competitor of where the demand is going to be so that fears of scarcity for the supply

will be aroused. As a consequence, people in a competitive, individualist situation are thoroughly trained and indoctrinated into not saying what their wants are, and for good reason, since to express one's needs will immediately decrease the supply of what is needed and create further scarcity of it. However, in a cooperative situation, to ask for what one needs is a basic requirement for satisfaction. Given a context of willingness to struggle against competitiveness and individualism, to say what one wants is the first step to getting it. It will immediately enlist the interest and energy of the others to provide satisfaction of those wants. In the struggle for cooperation one of the biggest problems is that people either will not say what they want or are not actually in touch with it and eventually become resentful because they don't get it.

Paradoxical as it may seem, to ask for *everything* that one wants 100% of the time seems an individualist and competitive move, yet it is an essential aspect of the struggle against competitiveness and individualism. One only needs to understand that to ask for what one wants 100% of the time is not the same as to grab, to outfox, to cajole, to mind-fuck people out of what they want; it is simply stating one's position, a position with which everyone who has stated theirs can cooperate and negotiate.

I do not mean to imply that in a cooperative situa-









# GRAPEVINE

## *Commune Directory*

The directory of existing communities which was printed in the first issue of this magazine is being revised for publication this winter. If your group would like to be listed, send us a brief description giving name and address, the nature of your community, how long you have been together, how many people live there, and anything else that seems important.

West Coast groups should mail their copy to Vince at Lime Saddle, Rt. 1, Box 191, Oroville, Calif. 95965. If you are located east of Big Muddy, send same to Will at Twin Oaks, Rt. 4, Box 17, Louisa, Va. 23093. We'd like to have this info submitted by the end of December.

Let us know if you are actively seeking members. We're also preparing a pamphlet with names and descriptions of communes which are open to more members.

With the only thing rising faster than taxes being apartment buildings and shopping centers, the directions in which one may roam in search of useable land are becoming less numerous.

Just as a 50-mile radius of Birmingham appeals to our group, surely realtors, industry, and land speculators have been eyeing this same land through capitalistic eyes. Apparently most feel that 50 miles will discourage others from having the same idea as ours.

I think we should be aware of the mob complex when dealing with what other people think. Because, just as soon as one or two households make the retreat from urban life the other masses will follow like sheep. One has only to consider the Shelby County, Pinson Valley, Irondale, and Leeds area to see the trend. What were once beautiful woodland homes are now part of huge development areas. Once again the people are plagued by the identical things they chose to leave behind.

As with any lifestyle, there are going to be two possible outcomes: life or death. I can't imagine a group wanting to stay in the situation such as mentioned earlier. So, that brings us to my thoughts. Buy land as close to Birmingham and try to make a go of it for as many years as is convenient for us. When the heat gets to us, sell our land at somewhat of a profit and with our years of experience behind, and a desire to find our final home before us, pack up and move. Say maybe to the Amazon Valley, Northern Africa, or maybe some little island in the Pacific. Idle thoughts you say . . . remember Highland Ave. used to be a suburb.

I don't want to make a mistake by being in a hurry, but each day the possibility of being trapped in Birmingham for a long while becomes more vivid. Those of us who live in Birmingham now, look out your back window, "Where's the backyard, Ma?" — Alabama Communities Regional Newsletter, c/o Peter Robinson, 1108 S. 29th St., Birmingham, Ala. 35205.

One of the things that is facing all of us in the inevitable social change that is taking place is the need to find ways to make the transition from a centralized highly competitive and violent society to a decentralized cooperative and non-violent society.

The present group of people living here in fellowship and operating the Center, at this time is very interested in making a start on organizing a new and stable constructive community on this 80 acres owned by Bhoodan Center. We are particularly interested in families with children and people who are dedicated to the building of the new society through constructive action. It is surmised that the first two or three families who undertake this will participate in the formation of the initial community arrangements.

If you are interested in coming together in Constructive Community based on decentralized cooperative non-violent ideas, please contact the Committee for Community at Bhoodan Center.

Volunteer help is urgently needed now at Bhoodan Center with current projects. A few people can be very helpful by offering help with the building of the new residence, in the garden, cutting of firewood for the coming winter months, office work, printing of literature and odd jobs. All help is greatly appreciated. Hope you can come up in the future. The most urgent help is needed before winter arrives. See you then. Thanks. — Bhoodan Center of Inquiry, Star Route, Box 81, Oakhurst, Calif. 93644.

The Akron Ohio Ghetto area does not look much different from similar areas in other American cities. It is an old residential and commercial area from which white business and most white people have moved out, leaving shabby and rundown, sometimes boarded up, buildings, the crowded poor, much unemployment, and much crime. It is here that I found one of the most exciting community endeavors I have seen. As Dale Miller guided me around the centers of the project in which he has shared, called by the acronym



from its name "Food in Ghetto Houses and Tenements," I saw both the miracle and the human tragedy from which the miracle was growing.

What Dale showed me happening in the Akron ghetto was so different from what I know of elsewhere, yet so logical and possible of reproduction, that I felt people ought to know of it.

Operation FIGHT demonstrates in practice one of the fundamental aspects of our philosophy at Community Service, that the opportunities for significant progress and achievement are far more dependent on our own vision, character and capacity to live and work together than they are on outward circumstances.

We often fail to see what is right at hand that we might do to build a better life for ourselves and mankind. Dale Miller and his associates in a most unlikely circumstance have taken the first steps toward pioneering the development of the new society, and then kept faith with its promise. Dale's story is, I believe, representative of potentialities all of us face in our lives in one form or another.

Operation FIGHT is a community services organization that works to alleviate problems and to upgrade the quality of urban living. We offer direct help to people who have crises in their lives in the areas of food emergency, housing problems, legal problems, etc. We work cooperatively with many other groups and agencies and also rely on the gift of time of dedicated volunteers. We have initiated and sponsored the following programs to answer unmet needs:

- The Berth, coffeehouse and cultural center.
- The Akron Free School, in its third year of free or Summerhillian educational choice, receiving statewide and national notice as a model for educational change.
- "Fix-it", offering home repair without cost to poverty families.
- Creating equal opportunity for minorities; for example, just having achieved bonding and groundbreaking for Ohio's first Black General Contractor and Akron's first Black Excavating Contractor.
- Advising and effectuating the first Personal Recognizance Bond program in Summit County and providing education and counseling regarding Personal Recognizance Bonding.

**YOU CAN HELP.** We need volunteers, donations of food, clothing, and household goods. Please call 376-3448 or 253-9282, or write Operation FIGHT, Room 205, 380 E. Exchange St., Akron, Ohio 44304.

Community Service, Inc., is a non-profit organization devoted to serving the interests of the community as a basic social institution. It invites membership and support from persons with interest in this field. — Community Service, Inc., Box 243, Yellow Springs, Ohio 45387.

Harbin Hot Springs is marvelous land to begin with. Over 1,000 acres, the best hot baths I have ever been to, a valley by itself yet with easy access, two hours north of San Francisco. Plenty of fresh water as well, for swimming, drinking, and agriculture.

The community has only been going since June. It is a fluid situation where any new person can be-

come a leader right away, as there has been no chance to develop a tight community (the people here, 15-25 of them, did not know each other before coming).

There are lots of buildings, structurally strong but needing work. The main kitchen is not installed as yet, so people have to cook on their own in fireplaces or on portable stoves. One group of cabins has a functioning common kitchen.

Decisions are made, if not by general consensus, by a group of seven community members, a two-thirds vote being necessary to make a decision. This group will probably enlarge with time.

There is only one important rule or requirement, that everybody meet a certain minimum standard of productivity. That standard is work for 1 to 1½ hours every day (depending on speed of work) or its equivalent; or the payment of \$30 per month per adult as a contribution, plus some kind of helpful effort of one's choice. Really pretty reasonable. You can still come if you are broke or have a hangup about work, as long as you are willing to help in some way that is needed.

The philosophy of the place is to have a community that builds itself, centered on a magnificent property rather than on ideology, with a minimum of controls (to avoid the pitfalls of so many other communities). Such pitfalls are:

1. Accumulation of freeloaders and crashers. Productivity requirement and its enforcement eliminate this.
2. The hassles centered on a community kitchen: who does the work, the standards of cooking and cleanliness, etc. We expect to have each person free to cook for himself, with a communal kitchen as well and a choice available between the two.
3. Pressure exerted on members by an ideology that is more important than the individual, or a big Daddy who runs everything. Neither of these exist at Harbin and members are free to spend most of their time on their own needs and creativity.

Most of us are interested in growing. I certainly am.

We have room for lots more people. — P. O. Box 82, Middletown, Calif. 95461. Telephone (707) 987-3747; keep trying.

—Bob Hartley

A nightly one-year certificate program of study is open to all students at the International Pioneer Academy of San Francisco. The program has the objective of educating the conscience and intellect of prospective social and world leaders. This course of study is excellent training for positions of leadership in any international or intercultural setting.

Courses in Principles of Life, Comparative Systems, Philosophies and Religions, Law in Contemporary Political Analysis, and Contemporary Politics and Economics will be offered. There are three quarters in the scholastic year, with appropriate holiday vacations. Each quarter will last 10-12 weeks.

Each class will meet one night per week for two hours. Tuition is \$36 per class per quarter; the full program is \$135 per quarter. In cases where there are difficulties meeting costs, scholarships and work-study



programs can be arranged.

In view of the broad nature of the program, any undergraduate major is recommended as a preparation for the year's course work given by an international staff of distinguished professors.

The International Ideal City Project of the International Re-Education Foundation, a non-profit educational and cultural organization, will serve as a practical laboratory for the application and testing of these ideas.

Apply for the program now. — International Pioneer Academy, 44 Page St., San Francisco, Calif. 94102 (415-861-2641).

The fall term at Koinonia will be held Sept. 20 through Dec. 20 and offers an opportunity for individuals and families to live in community. Koinonia is a 22-year-old spiritual and learning center located on 45 acres in Baltimore's Greenspring Valley. In addition to the seminars and workshops herein described, the Koinonia term also offers opportunities in community living (such as common meals, work, and gatherings, spiritual disciplines (meditation, yoga, worship), and volunteer service in the metropolitan area. Also, individuals participating in the term are invited to offer courses and share skills with the community. The comprehensive fee for the term is \$700 per person. Non-resident students are welcome to participate in the first four courses listed below.

Myth and Meaning — a study of universal mythic patterns

Afro-American Religious Experience

Pottery

Spiritual Journeys

Photography as Creativity

Individual music lessons

Basic two-harness weaving technique

The Secrets of a Happy Life

Communication-Personal Growth Group

—Koinonia Foundation, Box 5744, Baltimore, Md. 21208.

Lime Saddle has gone through a lot of changes since our last article, a year ago. Some of the original people have left and several new members have joined, making our permanent population 9 adults (5 men and 4 women) and 5 children. We've been working on every other issue of *Communities* — trying to make things a little better all the time, and we're still running a small farm (4 milking goats, 6 kids, 20 chickens, and a large garden that has been supplying us with wonderful melons, corn, tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, and lots of other vitamins and good meals). But our main energy for the past few months, and for months to come, is being directed towards Communitarian Village. If you recall, in *Communities #3* we had an article on Communitarian Village — our proposal for a large village-sized community of communes. It may have seemed like just another idealistic proposal but the Village is moving closer to reality every day.

In June we held a conference in Mendocino about communal living and social change, and to discuss our ideas for the Village. Over 300 people came. We learned a lot from each other and it was good to meet all kinds of people who shared a common goal and desire: community. Well, there were quite a number of people at that conference who expressed commitment to the Communitarian Village idea, and said they would like to become a part of it; so in August we sponsored a week-long conference (here at Lime Saddle), this time for only about 60 people. In that week we came a long way in getting to know and trust and feel good about each other, and we made some definite plans for the Village. As a result of the conference, we have 36 participating adult members of Communitarian Village, 15 children and 10 associate members.

We have established interim sites — places where people can live until we actually move onto the land. At the moment we have Lime Saddle, Rattlesnake Gulch (a meadow in part of Lime Saddle's 20 acres that was unused previously), Orange House (a house in the town of Oroville, Calif.), and the Village of Arts and Ideas' house in Berkeley, Calif. — along with several private spaces for individuals who could not move yet.

We have two cottage industries started — a Soyburger business (look for GRUB Soyburgers at your favorite health foods store soon!) and an alternative structures business — low cost, efficient housing (similar to geodesic domes, but movable, and we feel more practical and aesthetically pleasing). Although Lime Saddle is still the center of Village planning, everyone has taken responsibility for some aspect of planning/building/communicating so that the importance and authority of Lime Saddle can be minimized.

It is very exciting to have all this happening and to know that we are building a real alternative; a community — an effective and meaningful model for personal and social change. Of course there is still confusion and disagreement — we all share goals and some dreams in common but we are not all of one mind — and hopefully never will be! For some people, education/communication is the primary concern of the Village; for some it is political/social change; for some it is their own and others' personal growth and relationships. Some people are more adamant about their beliefs and desires than others, which produces arguments and hassles. We have many of the same problems as we would have in "straight society" — for example, how to deal with economics, with rearing children, with our own and others' sexism. These problems do not disappear simply because you have a group of good, caring and loving people — although these things do make the solutions easier. We still have our biases, and even though we do want and intend to live peacefully and happily with each other, we still must deal with the usual personality conflicts, problems and disagreements; we're only human after all!

For many of us these past few weeks and months at Lime Saddle have been times of drastic change. Changes in thoughts, feelings, needs, desires, lifestyles. And change is not always easy, as we all know. Some of us have never lived communally before and some of us (one of us at least) have left behind people and



places we love in order to commit ourselves to a new life adventure. An important goal of this new lifestyle is to harmonize two often divisive and confusing human conditions — our desire for maximum individuality, on the one hand, and our desire for the closeness, warmth and sharing of other people, of community, on the other. We need both of these things to be Whole persons. And if we can build a community of Whole women and men, adults and children, then we have made a big step in the right direction—towards changing the present state of our society.

We would like to hear from more people who have similar community ideas and goals; who are interested in learning more of what we are doing and in becoming part of it. We are now beginning to work toward establishing more interim sites in N. California and possibly Oregon. Write and tell us about yourself, how you feel and see things. — Lime Saddle, Rt. 1, Box 191, Oroville, Calif. 95965.

July 28th we were nine months old. I figured that made it a good time to say a little about what we've been doing so far.

We are 18 now, many have come and gone, but we are growing, stabilizing, and slowly coming together. We expect to be 20 by New Year's.

The conference came and went with a lot of excitement, but probably more smoothly than most of us anticipated. No new community formed, but so far two of the conferees have become North Mountaineers and several more are considering applying.

We have moved to Richmond. With the feeling that 4½ hours a day commuting was something we left behind in New York City, and with our financial stability sliding, action was called for. The urban base concept, an idea that's been around since the beginning, suddenly became a reality. We rented a house in Richmond for Outside Workers. There are five there now, plus a rotating housemother every week. Everyone comes home on weekends. So far there are a lot of things to work out, but we now have the big city as a second home.

Coming soon: a new improved spring and water system, a goat barn, and insulated outbuildings.

How we make decisions at Helms Deep (the Richmond house):

Frank: We ought to throw this couch out the window. (Hours pass.)

Kenn: That was a good idea, Frank.

Frank: What?

Kenn: Throwing the couch out the window. It's much easier than carrying it downstairs. (Minutes pass. Frank, Kathy, Jim, and Bill retire to the infirmary to remove a splinter from Kathys finger.)

Jerry: It would be interesting to throw the couch out the window.

Kenn: Yea. You want to help me?

Jerry: Sure. Let's take the mirror off.

Kenn: Yea, and these drawers too. They can be repaired.

Jerry: Oh! You're serious.

Kenn: Of course. (Kenn and Jerry struggle with the couch as the others return.)

Frank, Kathy, Jim, and Bill: You can't do that!!!

Kenn: Sure I can. It's much easier than carrying it downstairs. Watch that no one's coming down the sidewalk. (The couch is three-quarters out the window.)

Frank: There's a cop. (Everyone hides but the couch while the cop slowly walks his beat.)

Kenn: He's gone. Back to your positions.

Frank: You can't do it. It'll never fit.

Couch: Crash!

—North Mountain Community, RR 2, Box 207, Lexington, Va. 24450.

In May and June we held our first Forum meetings in Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and San Francisco. Perhaps 1,000 people attended. Slides were shown of the three townsites under consideration and a lot of questions were asked and answered as best as possible — including some pointed questions about finances and control. We all got a chance to find out who else is interested in the project, and were well pleased to see the equal age distribution. The overall feeling at the meetings was warm and enthusiastic, with an eagerness to get started on the nitty-gritty.

Money is always a delicate subject. Originally we intended to finance initial costs through loans from a few individuals, and of course land sales. Now we are going to modify our program somewhat in response to Forum members' concerns and suggestions. One of our members observed that with 2,500 members, a \$10 donation from each would cover the initial planning costs of \$25,000. Certainly not all of our members want to fork up \$10 in addition to the subscription they have already paid; but then again, perhaps many would be willing to make much larger, tax-deductible donations to the Forum or the new community organization, especially if it were applicable to land purchase at a later date. We would like to establish some program to raise a significant portion of the planning budget through small and large donations, thereby distributing financial exposure and control.

We don't expect to raise the entire planning budget by donations, and we have requirements for \$10,000 within the next few months. Instead of borrowing a large amount, some of our members have agreed to lend the project \$1,000 each on a year's term and 10% interest. Their return is finite and their primary motivation is a belief in the project and a desire to see it succeed. Again, exposure and control are distributed.

Chuck DeDeurwaerder, highly competent land planner and professor at Oregon State University, has been commissioned to prepare land use studies. He and his staff are now surveying the topography, hydrology, geology, soils, and vegetation of the site to verify initial estimations of the suitability of the site and to provide the necessary information for developing a base plan to present to the county planning commission. The approval of the planning commission is the largest single issue yet to be resolved and, assuming all goes well, we expect to obtain approval of our plans by November. Thereafter, plans will be drawn for water, sewage, power and access systems for the first 50 homesites. Approval of these detailed plans could be secured by



March and construction of community systems could begin in April. Throughout the fall and winter we will be developing home plans and financing and construction arrangements with those people in the Special Program who are ready to move as soon as possible, and first construction on these homes could begin as soon as May. Of course many things could happen to delay or prevent these developments, but we fully expect that the project will proceed in just this manner.

Early in June we sent out invitations to all Forum members to find those interested in seriously exploring the possibility of residency. So far over 100 individuals and households have joined the Special Program, which is really the forerunner of the community residents' organization—a combination homeowners' association, community development corporation and interim town government. Beginning in July, we will be going onto the site together, addressing the details of housing and livelihood, participating in the preliminary land planning, and putting together articles of incorporation and by-laws for the community organization.

The *Land Package* is now in preparation with pho-

tos, maps and complete information on the site and surrounding region, and will be sent out at the earliest possible moment.

Meanwhile, we can say that the ranch comprises 1,400 acres surrounded on three sides by Bureau of Land Management forest—an entire small valley opening southward onto a large lake. The lake offers swimming, boating, fishing, two small campgrounds, minimal residential and *no* commercial development. The property rises at a moderate slope northward, so just about any place on the ranch has beautiful views of the lake and the wooded mountains to the south. Included in the property is the top of the highest mountain on the lake — a great spot for a community park and retreat. Annual precipitation is 39 inches, including about a foot of snowfall. Summer high temperatures run about 74-82 degrees and winter lows around freezing. The growing season is 221 days.

So far, all elements of the project have come together beautifully. It's been heart-warming to meet so many people who share our dreams and want to work together to make them real. — Pahana Town Forum, 629 State St., Santa Barbara, Calif. 93101.





# REACH

We are a group of fruitarians planning to colonize in the tropical mountains, in land as free as possible from gas pockets, major fault lines and fallout. Our main belief is a simple one: that by returning to the living waters of an exclusively fruit diet the Body-temple is healed physically and spiritually as well as the earth (returning to a production of fruit trees).

We are planning a gathering in late December, probably in the south, and would appreciate any addresses you may be able to give us of interested persons or organizations. It is our goal to form a union so that we may work together from one or two major areas, to better achieve our goal. We would also like to begin a newsletter, publishing the major prophecies of earth changes (i.e., the fall of capitalism in the near future).

All information on *Survival Into the 21st Century*, a book soon to be published by Victor Kulvinshas of Hippocrates, can be obtained from the Institute.

We seek knowledge so that we may live in law. (natural) Corinthians 15:46: "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual." — HIPPOCRATES HEALTH INSTITUTE, 25 EXETER ST., BOSTON, MASS.

"Alternative Community", or "AC" (general consensus is that we want to change our name), came into being when one of our members travelled around the Northeast, seeking a commitment on the part of people to writing one another, collecting some money, and planning for the creation of a "village-town" size new society of sorts. Our group corresponded sporadically with one another during the last nine months, but generally did not seem to be "planning" on any scale that we had hoped to.

So we had a summer conference and made it coincide with Twin Oaks' now annual gathering, and there we seemed to put things together a little better. We are currently planning to all move physically together by next summer. Right now we have about 12 solid members and several others with varying degrees of "interest-commitment."

New Town is a much closer group that grew out of the now defunct New City project in Boston. There are presently about 10 members, four of whom are also in AC. Several members of the group are currently living together, and the whole group has been con-

cerned with planning for the creation and growth of a large rural community.

The two groups are currently working to join one another in this undertaking, and we plan a joint meeting in late September. — ALTERNATIVE COMMUNITY, 173 CEDAR HILL AVE., NEW HAVEN, CONN. 06511.

I have just purchased 80 acres in the hills of West Virginia, near Buchanan. The land is excellent, part of an old farm and apple orchard. The entire plot for the most part rolls along the top of the mountain, which has an elevation of 3000 ft. The view is truly spectacular. The cabins all have electricity and water and even kitchens and bathroom facilities. There are also 10 hookups for people with house trailers.

Well, the situation is this: although I'm only 21 I was able to buy this due to the death of many family members. So at the moment I am living here alone with the people who used to own it and their granddaughter and husband. They plan to move out in another month or so.

I know the unlimited potential of this land, yet I pray that those persons who have had enough of the "other" (i.e. cities, greed, capitalism, and general rip-offs) will come ready to commit themselves. A commitment to this life and the laws of nature and nothing more. That might sound strict and perhaps it is, but this is what I hope will develop with those who want it to.

There is much more work that has to be done in all facets of real country living. If the existing cabins can't handle the influx of people, well, we would build some new ones — all the lumber, water, etc., is here.

Last year I lived in India for several months with Sathya Sai Baba. So, to be honest, my prayers are such that spiritually directed persons will come and have a living lifestyle that will only serve to bring them further up the path. This is why all bickering over money should be avoided. So if you think you are ready — and you are — then come. Then it will mean that you were meant to come, and, through the mistakes, and differences, all will be well.

If you have any questions, call or write me. What is here cannot develop without you, and you must understand that and act accordingly. Love. — MICHAEL, BOX 30, HACKER VALLEY, W. VA. 26211 (304-493-6421).



I am seeking to live year round at an Organic Farm, natural health resort, or some kind of vegetarian retreat — in or very near mountains rich in vegetation and where winters are very mild.

I would like my own room and bathroom with shower. My time will be spent reading, mountaineering, exercising, meditating, and organic gardening.

If you can meet my needs, please advise me what you would require of me.

I am a free thinker searching for the reasons behind human existence, endeavoring to seek out where we came from, why we are here and where we will go from here. I would appreciate an early response. — MEL DUCAT, 937 E. 56th ST. (3C) BROOKLYN, N. Y. 11234 (212-346-7287).

I am trying to set up a community of alternative living for all ages. I need people who wish to help.

The core group to be 12 to 20 (all ages), to buy or build a structure that can expand to incorporate:

1. Summerhill type school for the young human beings, for learning experiences of living, relationships with self and others, experiencing feeling, experimenting, etc.

2. "Open," "Free" school for adolescents, teenagers, to promote an environment to want to learn, not one that is forced down their throats. To expand the mind enough to encompass learning because it's there, because it's fun, fulfilling, exciting, rewarding, and giving.

3. Vocational school for all ages, to learn new skills; this is a more practical adaptation of experiences of frustrations, to learn something new and useful and/or fulfilling.

4. A cultural and Education Center for all people to focus on the New and coming and the "way it is" and the way "it can be." A Place that is open, warm and a place to exchange ideas and feelings and to grow with aids (i.e.: darkroom, ceramic shop, auto repair shop, bookkeeping courses, constructions for home use, cabinet making, knitting, macrame, silk screening, music, dancing, art, theatre, gardening and landscaping, etc.). Whatever talents and space we have to give, that will promote enjoyment and leisure.

5. HUB (economy) cooperative, buying, selling and manufacturing.

- A. Tuition (small) from above schools and services.
- B. Manufacturing: silk screening fabrics, tee shirts, posters.
- C. Producing an imaginative product that takes little work or skill (i.e., calendars, aprons with simple design, handiwork, arts and crafts.
- D. Handiman Co. (all-around repairs).
- E. Auto repair clinic.
- F. Electronic repair clinic.
- G. Music teachers.
- H. Dancing school.
- I. Summer camp.
- J. Food gardening in conjunction with a co-op
  1. To form an association with other co-ops
  2. Sell to students and their families at good

price (all people interested in this).

- K. Retail store for above mentioned outlets.
- L. Distribution Co. for above mentioned outlets.
- M. ETC. (you fill in your skills or ideas).

Initial Needs: PEOPLE: teachers, academic, skilled workers in all different fields, a lawyer, a medically skilled person, and any other person who fills the following requirements:

1. Needs love.
2. Can give love.
3. Angry at the culture that needs alternatives.
4. Angry enough to WORK to make a good life for his fellow humans as well as for himself.
5. "Giving" rather than "taking" people.
6. If you can compromise to make another happy.
7. Willing to use Capitalist techniques to undermine the Capitalist system.
8. Willing to work, build, create products for sale at low prices to counteract the established criteria of "wealth".
9. Help young beings grow into productive ones, not to be formed into stereotypes, with frustration, neurosis, etc.
10. Feel that all people are equal (young, old, bright, dull, color, background, etc.), and by a happy environment they can become happy and productive also.
11. Can learn every day of your life.
12. Don't have to run away, but can stand up with us to fight in suburbs that need our kind of people desperately, as here the need is great.

I have \$35,000 as a start. Of course this is small but the goal is the important thing. I feel that a government and structure are important, not just to give security to those afraid of such an endeavor but to build a foundation to stand on. I am very flexible, so the consensus would be the government. Please call or write and let's get started. — "NU FOCUS" JUDITH STILES, 79 MAPLEWOOD ST., WEST HEMPSTEAD, N. Y. 11552 (516-IV5-8794).

We are Paul (23), Phyllis (22) and baby Mariah, who will be travelling soon in search of an atmosphere in which our family relationship and a true community relationship might grow. We aren't seeking a hide-away but rather an alternative by present-day society. A commune having social contacts to work with or change the community at large would be of interest. Humanistic relationships and co-existing with nature are prime concerns of ours. We hope that by spring we will have found a home for growing in and out of ourselves sharing life's experiences with others.

We have no religious preferences, but feel that time — for individual meditation and interpersonal encounter is healthful. We have studied and prefer vegetarianism for ourselves. We aren't into using drugs — we feel that they are detrimental to our communication. We are accepting of others' personal preferences.

Phyllis enjoys creative sewing, painting, sewing clothes, making bread, preserving food and healthful cooking. Paul has graduated from college, including student teaching and tutoring 5, 6 and 8 year-olds. He would like someday to teach in an alternative



school. We are both anxious to experience organic farming, carpentry, carving, sewing, other art forms, craftsmanship abilities and work that may support your community.

If we sound like your family's type of family and you are interested in having us visit and possibly join you, please let us know more about your main concerns and way of life.—PAUL, PHYLLIS & MARIAH GALE, RT. 2, BOX 65A, GARDNERVILLE, NEV. 89410.

**BUY YOURSELF A TOWN.** There are ghost towns in California, the land is very cheap. Houses are already built. Old, needing repair, but livable.

One such place you will find in the middle of California, near what seems to be Tulare Lake. (Tulare Lake having been long since leveed into a mere mud puddle.) The name of the town is Stratford. I lived there in the days of my youth more than 45 years ago. It has hardly changed since then.

There is a highway leading into it from the east, another freeway passes it a mile away to the west, near Kings River. Kings River, incidentally, provides good fishing when it has water in it. Camping too, if you can fight mosquitoes.

The young folks always left, because those that did not like farming could not find anything else to do. Only a handful of old-timers remain. The houses are run down but livable. There is a grade school, no high school, but a bus takes students to Lemoore or Coalinga. Electricity and water facilities are established.

There is no industry in the town. That's where you come in.

In the spring the wind blows. In the summer the temperature goes to 115 degrees. Are you tough enough? Then you can make it there. When one is young one can make it anywhere if the incentive is strong enough.

**A HYPOTHETICAL PROPOSAL:** A farmer is ready to retire. He wants his land to continue to produce, although he can no longer keep up the work or oversee hired help. He also wants to live in the house he owns.

A group of young people volunteer to move onto the farm and work it, seeking always to make the land produce to capacity. A contract is drawn up as follows:

The youth group will farm the land on a cooperative basis for five years, establishing a work-credit system among themselves. The contract includes a runner that should the owner die before the five years are up the land automatically goes to the group.

The contract also says that the group shall maintain the owner in his own house for the rest of his life. If facilities exist so that one or more elderly people can move into the ranch house as paying guests, the money thus turned over to the working group can be used for upkeep on the farm.

After five years the group will have proven their sincerity, and have enough work credits so that the farmer can deed the land to the group clear of encumbrance.

Further details can be worked out. I suggested this last year and had some favorable letters from some older folks who liked the idea. Work with the elders if you can. There are things, including advice, you can use. There is one such arrangement already being successfully worked out in Minnesota. Ranches generally have lots of living space. A large main house and other smaller buildings once occupied by hired help.—DULCIE BROWN, 436 GLENN AVE., FRESNO, CALIF. 93701.

I/we are into starting or joining an intentional community. I'm interested in getting together two things: a commune, and a community of communes. Depending on what the responses are to this letter, I'd like to join with one of the many communitarian villages forming here on the west coast within half a year, or carefully plan the project over a 1-3 year period, perhaps living on a temporary piece of land. I'm careful about jumping into anything, because I want to make a lifetime commitment to create and sustain a community that I can call home in clear conscience.

During this period I would of course follow very closely Lime Saddle's Communitarian Village project. Their article and two pamphlets I have written are a pretty good expression of where I have evolved to. There are so many aspects of community that are important that I find myself bogged by all the reading and creative planning to be done. So, I'd like to share the work with other folks. It's incredibly exciting!

There are a number of causes which naturally combine in an example and social action community (utopian), such as: equality, Black and 3rd world liberation, women's lib, sexual freedom, birth control, zero population growth, nutrition, preventive medicine, ecology, organic growing, encounter, vegetarianism, peace, spirituality, etc. A fuller expression:

1. Economic self-sufficiency. If we must get into capitalism (materialism), then let's at least do it with products which are essential, ecological and humane. Excess organic food is a first consideration.

2. Social and political action. The alternative culture is growing rapidly in many areas of northern California. Definite possibility of getting into city, county and congressional district politics.

3. Avoiding aiding the corrupted uses that the majority of tax money goes to. Educational, religious or charitable non-profit status of different parcels of the same piece of land, to avoid property tax. Avoiding income tax by not having a large enough annual income. Avoiding sales tax through trade, and making or growing our own.

4. Organic gardening. There are various techniques we can use to make it much easier.

5. Eventually a doctor, dentist and lawyer. Ideally the doctor will be knowledgeable about homeopathy, osteopathy, chiropractic, massage, etc., concentrating on *prevention* and acting mainly as a resource person—helping people to take care of themselves.

6. Accredited high school and grade school with free-school atmosphere. We'll probably need teaching credentials for this. Perhaps some free-university seminars on organic gardening, communal living, etc.



7. Friendly interaction with the outside community.

8. Giant resource library covering all related information.

We have a very definite source of land: 350-1000 acre parcels in different parts of California. Very cheap (\$10/acre). Bread for other things at first. It would be very helpful if each person brought \$500-\$1000 to start out.

Write to me/us for more information, and any specific questions, suggestions, criticisms. Lots of love — TED OLSEN, P. O. BOX 701, KENTFIELD, CALIF. 94904.

I'm living at the Lime Saddle commune, and one of the projects I'm working on is to establish communication between alternative living groups (communes, villages, and communities), and women and men in prison. There are women and men in prison who are interested in corresponding with individuals involved with alternative lifestyles. Because here at Lime Saddle we have extensive communication with alternative living groups, it is an ideal resource center. Prisoners can initially write here, and we can turn them on to specific information they are interested in, and to particular groups they wish to correspond with. I think individuals in alternative living groups can open new vistas to some of the women and men in prisons by corresponding with them, and letting them know of the alternative to returning to the streets.

Along with this I am setting up a fund that people can send money to for the purchase of books and magazine subscriptions for prisoners. For prisoners who are interested in keeping up with what's going on with alternative living, they must have access to books and

publications related to the subject. If you feel you would like to contribute and/or know of people who would, send checks or money orders to: PUBLICATIONS FOR PRISONERS. Also, if you would like to correspond with prisoners, let me know. Send to: CHRISTIAN RYVLIN, C/O LIME SADDLE, RT. 1, BOX 191, OROVILLE, CALIF. 95965.

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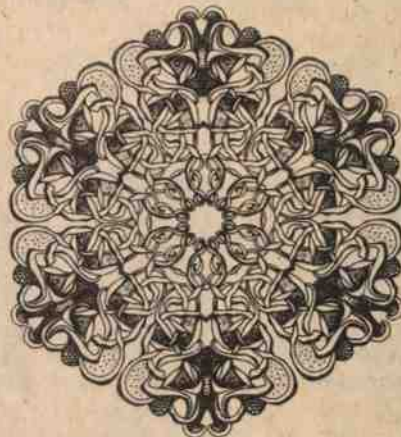
OHANA ALOHA is working toward becoming a self-supporting community of about 10 to 12 people on one and one-fifth acres of blessed land on windward Oahu. We raise and grow our own food with a respect for the nature of living systems. At the same time we are developing a small industry for aggregating capital for the community and members.

Our buildings have private rooms for the 10 to 12 people, plus a library, family room, community kitchen, and large outdoor dining-living lanai (terrace).

We place great stress on time for creative, self-fulfilling activities. An art studio and meditation center are in the making. Our community acts as a center for our lives and leaves us free to pursue other interests including education and travel.

Ohana Aloha is much more than just a place to live; it is a place for people who wish to experiment in the creation of an ideal society. We want the best possible environment in terms of beauty, spirituality, communication, health, ecology, learning, fun, peace, and individual fulfillment.

We are interested in new members of varied ages and races — people who are already high in terms of personal development — who are ready to give and receive a lot. — SAMI, OHANA ALOHA, 41-665 KUMUHAU ST., WAIMANALO, HAWAII 96795.



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# Country Women: a Magazine

for women living with other women  
living with men  
living alone

for women living in the country  
for women who want to move out of  
the cities

Country Women is a survival manual  
a creative journal

Country Women is Full, it is filled with consciousness raising, with support for women struggling out of roles. It drags you into the excitement of being a woman. It introduces tools and 'how to dos'. It presents alternatives. It invites and coaxes women to try the unknown, the traditional male tasks, to find their creative selves and to take time for their creativity. Country Women begins to build a sistership of feeling among country women.

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Albion, Calif.  
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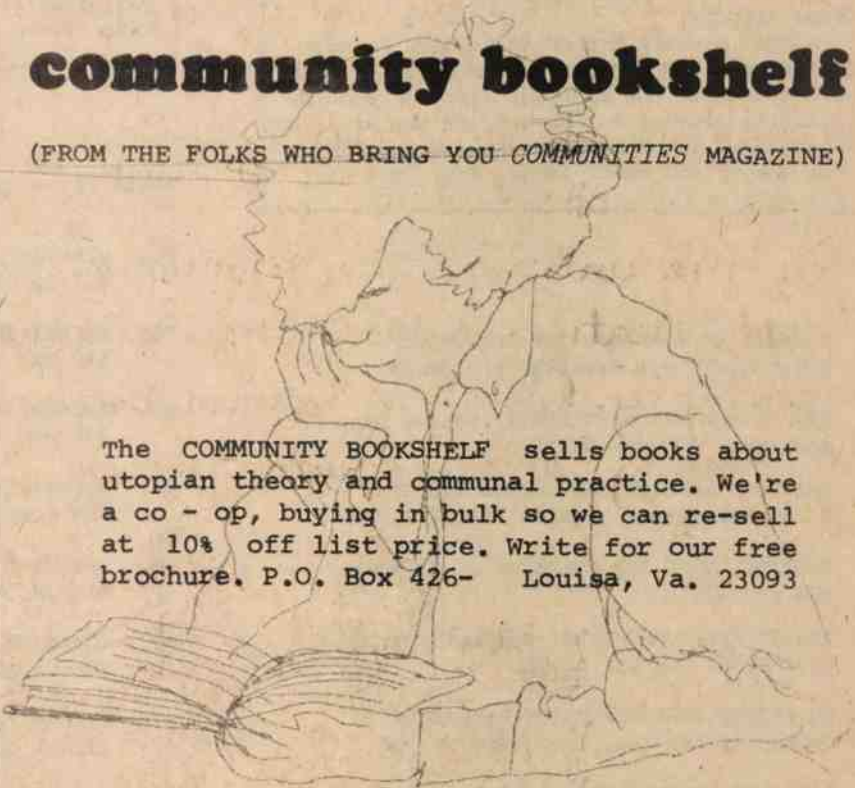
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## community bookshelf

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# COMMUNITY BOOKSHELF

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- A5. A WALDEN TWO EXPERIMENT/ Kathleen Kinkade  
Twin Oaks 271 pp/ \$7.15

### UTOPIAN VISIONS

A 19th century French Socialist, Fourier, wrote the visions of his Utopian dream in this book. It became the spark of life for some 40 communities founded in the U.S. on the basis of his writings, yet Fourier never saw the fruits of his theory and their labor. Why? See B1.

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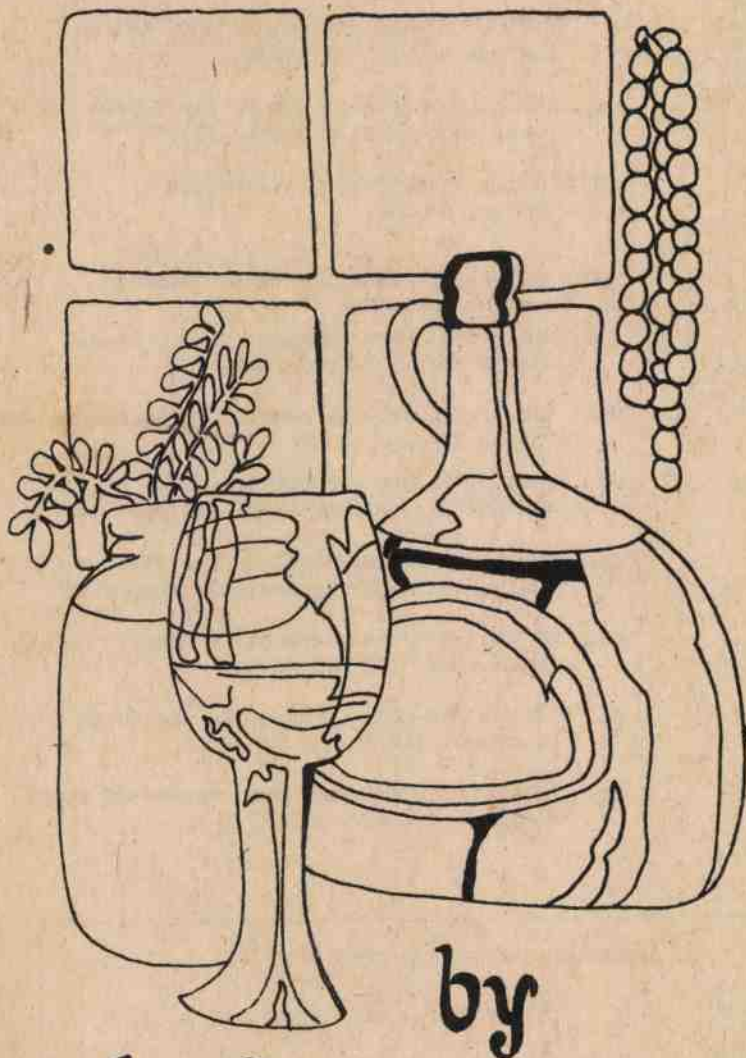
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