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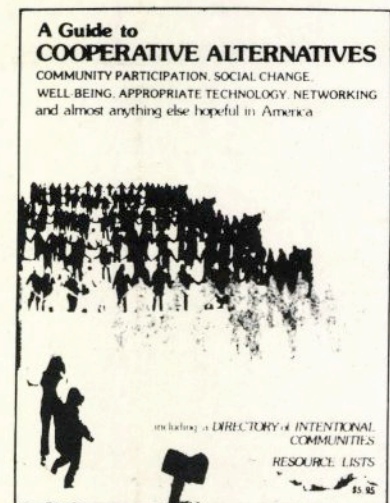
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Cooperation

Spring '84

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SIGNPOSTS



I keep going to these conferences — sometimes to present something I'm supposed to know about, sometimes to learn. Inevitably I get into some odd conversations.

At the Friends of the Third World Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana, I was playing ping pong Saturday night (after opting out of an interesting, but endless meeting on Nicaraguan coffee distribution in the USA). My partner insisted on dropping the ball with the same hand he served with. As he was a Liberian, I thought it might be out of unfamiliarity with the game, so I carefully instructed him how to serve using both hands. Stubbornly he persisted. We were well into the game before I realized he only had one hand — the other was prosthetic.

We were bunking in the same room, and the next morning we had a wonderful conversation about how he'd lost the hand, and the spiritual changes he'd gone through to survive.

But most of what conferences give me, and as an editor I try to pass on, are the signposts, milestones, and billboards to help us revive, redirect and place ourselves. I get a line on where things are going, meeting the

folks who are exploring the alternatives, looking over their materials, listening to the many languages they speak.

At the National Conference on Citizen Participation, I had lunch with Ann Evans (a frequent contributor over the years) and Todd Lefko (who has an article in this issue). Ann is mayor pro tem of Davis, California and Todd is active in DFL politics in Minnesota. Both are Mondale supporters and they were talking "national-political."

The content of the conversation was the maneuverings behind and for a woman vice-presidential candidate to run with Mondale. Somewhere in the process of deciding on a viable candidate, my sense of proportion asserted itself: "Hey, folks, this is a nice parlor game, but it's not real, is it?"

And as they both stared at me puzzled, I realized that not only was it real to them, but that from the inside perspective of that particular culture/language this conversation was a small but real part of how decisions do get made.

Those languages get more sophisticated over time. When I first met Ann in 1977 at a Consumer Co-op Alliance Institute, she was Consumer Co-op Specialist for Jerry Brown's Department of Consumer Affairs in Sacramento; editor of the California co-op magazine, "Jam Today." At that point she could talk "local and regional co-op" and was just learning "national Co-op"; knew "state bureaucrat" but not yet "local official."

Each language represents a shorthand, and a set of assumptions about the world that allow people to quickly communicate with peers. The sophistication, duration and intensity of the conversation will be determined by the participants.

Look at it this way — the language and implicitly shared assumptions allow intellectual exchange on complex subjects which is intuitive,

playful and efficient. Not much different than musicians or dancers meeting for the first time.

In this magazine, because people are usually speaking from their own practice, readers get at least the flavor of their "language." We hope that's useful and interesting. It's a long way from the majority media which pitches everything to the language and assumptions of a mass audience.

And you thought we just didn't know how to write.

And it is indeed a long and winding road

Following a short fella wearing a ten gallon hat into the New Economic Agenda Conference, I realized two things. First, that he had to be Jim Hightower from Texas. Second, that the last time I'd been to the Shoreham Hotel was for the inaugural ball of another Texan, Lyndon Johnson, almost twenty years before. Jim Hightower's speech which we've reprinted is about the best manual for how to run on progressive issues I've heard.

I first met Richard Parker at the New School for Democratic Management in 1977 when he was Managing Editor of "Mother Jones." An excerpt from his theme paper from the Economic Agenda Conference, "Towards a New Economic Agenda," states the progressive position more formally than Jim does.

Todd Lefko offers a brief, useful essay on electoral empowerment through the citizen participation movements.

Three recent books came across my desk at Co-op America, from which we have taken excerpts that I think will interest you. "The Best Investment" is on land trusts, and "Going Co-op" on co-op apartments. Both are based on the experience of their authors, and offer practical approaches. My photographs, from a visit in 1980 to the "MLC" co-op, accompany "The

Best Investment." The third book, "Community Dreams," is a delightful speculation about a future I'd like to live in, filled with inspiration for outrageous acts of common sense.

"Reflections on Kibbutz and Surrounding Society" is an excellent analysis of a longstanding and successful model of cooperative/communitarian development.

NCCB Board Recommendation

Jim Gibbons' most recent appearance in these pages was a year ago with an important article on comprehensive cooperative economic development. As the founder and president of Consumers United Insurance Company, he helped create a worker-owned and managed business that has served consumers well, and invested wisely in low-income cooperative housing. He has been nominated for the National Consumer Co-op Bank Board, and I feel he would be a strong force for the NCCB achieving its potential as a development bank.

And congratulations to Tom Condit, the present board, and the bank staff for moving the NCCB in a direction where it's worth caring who gets elected.

Editors to the Letters

After eleven years of publishing, we have not found enough of you (or you us) to legitimately sustain a publication. That hasn't stopped us in the past (though if you've noticed our frequency has been declining), and we don't plan on stopping in the future. But...

Melissa, Chris and I got together in New Haven recently to assess the magazine's future. Here's what we see as our options:

1. **Co-op America.** Co-op America has an individual membership of over 5,000 and growing. Not only is it committed to a cooperative, socially and environmentally responsible way

of doing business, but it has an organizational membership of several hundred which includes many of the most progressive groups in the country.

Co-op America will shortly need a membership magazine which presents the works of its members as part of a grass roots pattern of development. Potentially "Communities" (with or without a name change) could fill that need, while continuing to provide long-time readers with reports on a full range of cooperative/communitarian experiments. Readers have already become familiar with Co-op America through several articles and the inclusion of two catalogs. With a guaranteed base of members/readers, the future would be assured.

2. **Merger.** We have had conversations with "Community Jobs;" a new magazine, "Changing Work"; and there are other newsletters and membership groups where some kind of combined publication is feasible. The question is would merger mean a dilution of editorial policy which would badly serve our readers.

I occasionally have fantasies about the merger of half a dozen sympathetic publications, and a deeper and more comprehensive look at alternatives that might emerge. But there's nothing concrete right now.

3. **New Energy.** Whether in marketing or editorial, Melissa and I have been less involved the past few years. A year ago, Melissa left Twin Oaks and I've been wrapped up time and half with Co-op America. But there are other folks out there. We just had a letter the other day from an interested additional editorial/publisher with reasonable background and skills.

New subscriptions have been helped by Co-op America's marketing. Further aid and comfort could come through financial contributions (we are tax exempt) or discovery by a national figure like

the Statue of Liberty could change the whole picture.

4. **Persevere.** If all else fails, Chris Collins has developed a style which makes "Communities" production possible at minimal cost, and enough material flows past me to make for a hopefully interesting publication. Besides, by next fall I'll be ready to do an issue on relationships I've had in mind, featuring "The Great American Life Group in the Sky — Ten Years After," and I wouldn't miss that for the world. Please send us your responses and suggestions as well as any personal thoughts or contributions on relationships. We'll print them in the fall issue.

Paul

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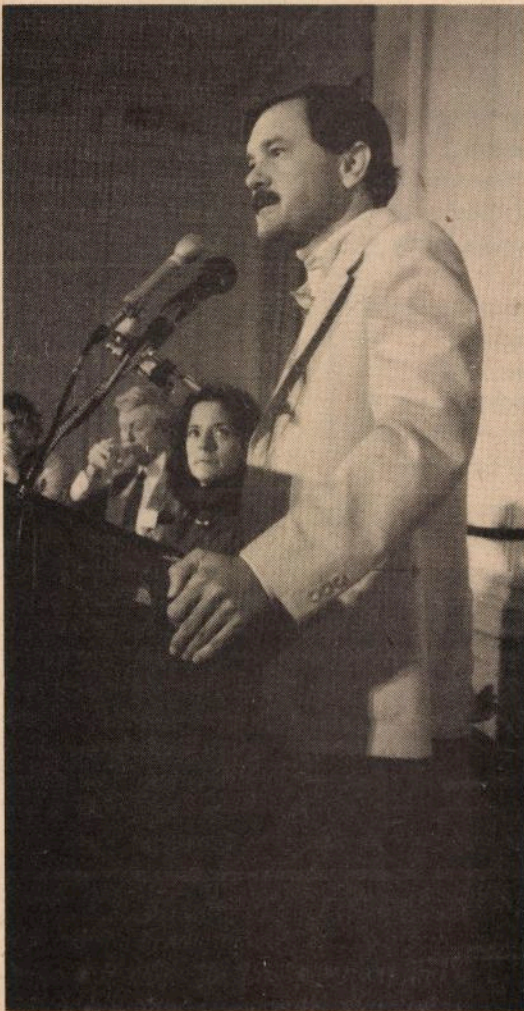
Community Publications

Cooperative — Paul Freundlich, Melissa Wenig and Chris Collins and Twin Oaks Community, represented by Audrey Hirsch

In the fall of 1983, Ann Beaudry of the Economic Education Project invited 350 progressive politicians, journalists, academicians, etc. to discuss a new economic agenda for America. The focus was the Democratic Party in the 1984 elections and beyond. About half of the invited met in mid-January at the Shorham Hotel in Washington, D.C.

Excerpts from Jim Hightower's rousing speech and Richard Parker's background paper are presented here.

Passionate Candidates at a Grassroots Level by Jim Hightower



Jim Hightower

By God, this is more inspiration than church this morning, listening to these distinguished people. I like it. I'm pleased to bring up the rear; I imagine you'all are wanting to bring up your rears too so I won't be too long taxing your patience here. But I'm proud to be back on the program with so many of my friends.

We've been a part of this battle a long, long time together. Though I've been out in the hustings the last few years, it kinda doesn't matter where you are in the progressive movement. We continue to stay linked up. Good folks from whom I've learned a lot over the years; received inspiration; stolen more than one idea; some of you worked in my campaigns in Texas; a few of you even sent campaign contributions which touched my heart more than I can tell you, and you knew right where to find it. I appreciate that.

A few of you out there even became figures in my campaigns, had your names tossed around, probably unbeknownst to you by some of my opponents. I was of course, "the candidate of the East Coast radicals." According to my opponents, strange names like Ivanhoe Donaldson and Gar Alperovitz were supposed to have been mainstays.

One of my opponents even said that there had been a secret meeting at Duke University to plan my campaign by Caesar Chavez and Ralph Nader and someone else, I think it was Pinky Lee.

But the fear mongering didn't work. My friend Larry King who's a Texan and a writer who lives in Washington, D.C. now, he called after my primary victory year before last and I said, "King, It's just wonderful. They called us perverts, they called us Communists, they called us everything in the book and the people didn't mind." He said, "Hightower, it might be better than you think. The people bought it and they like it."

I really wouldn't go that far. But the Progressive Movement has been around a long time. We've got to stick together; we've got to plan together, as we're doing here; and we've got to keep winning together.

The Progressive Movement cannot apologize for being progressive. And I'm afraid that over the last decade or so we kind of got ourselves in that situation.

When I began to run down in Texas, people would say to me, "My God, you can't talk stuff like that, you're going to have to moderate your view. You're going to have to get over in the middle."

But a friend of mine said, "Hightower, there's nothing in the middle of the road but yellow stripes and dead Armadillos." So no need to be there.

Talk issues, talk sense, talk solutions. But above all, talk progressive. Now people say, oh my, oh my, you just

From America's Economic Future

Progressive Leadership Conference

can't do that. America is a Conservative country.

Oh boy. It is not. And you know that in your personal experiences. I don't mean just those of you who have run, but those of you who are doing the kind of organizing that's represented in this room. People aren't ideological at all for the most part.

They're neither Right-Wing or Left-Wing in any ideological sense. I don't believe you could find 20% of Texans who identify with an ideology. They are not conservative. They are people who are hurting and they're mad about it. They're disgruntled Mavericks, is about as good a way as I know to describe it. If you give them a choice between saying, are you a Conservative or are you a Liberal, they'll say Conservative because that's the noble tradition of our country from Thomas Jefferson.

You ask somebody like my old daddy who's a business man down in Texas, whether he's a Liberal or Conservative, he'll say Conservative. But you talk to him about the utility companies and what they're doing to him; you talk to him about what the oil companies are doing; ripping off profits like that; talk to him about what the big bankers have done to small business people like him; you got as angry a guy on your hands as you're gonna find in this room right here.

People are mad. And they want some solutions. They want some solutions so badly that they voted for Ronnie Reagan in 1980. Ronald Reagan is not a Conservative, he's a Right-Wing Radical. Redistributing the wealth faster than anybody since Hughie Long. Of course, in reverse from the way that we want to go.

The Reagan election is not a victory for Conservatism or moderation, it shows people are ready, they want some action. And you don't meet Right-Wing charismatic politics with a piece of milk toast. You got to have Democrats who are willing to go out there and be just as aggressive.

You got some pundits up here in Washington, D.C., and various campaign managers, who say that Democrats have got to nominate an "Ike like" figure because if they don't they're gonna scare off the Southern voter.

What are we, a bunch of namby-pamby wimps down there? I mean, Hughie Long is the South. A culture that has about 15 different kinds of chili peppers to put on its breakfast eggs, is not a moderate culture. It's a slander on the South.

I am from the South. You're not going to win the South by tiptoeing through it.

I have a little personal example. When I first started campaigning in 1980, I went to a Northeast Texas town, making my normal circuits there, and hit the local newspaper editor. Received a full dose of his wisdom there

for about 30 minutes, in which he said that I wasn't going to be worth a damn. "You're too hot and people here are conservative and if you don't moderate your views, you can pretty well write off this area."

So I went around town, and ended up in the AME Church with a group of Black leadership and I asked them about that. I said, "Well, maybe I am wasting my time here and ought to move on down the road. What do you think?"

And one guy said, "Oh yes, I've read that man's paper. I know him. Every morning, I get up, I pour myself a bowl of Post Toasties and read that man's paper. That way I go to work with nothing on my stomach and nothing on my mind."

So, we can't worry too much about what the pundits say. What you got to do is go on out there and do it. And that's what we did.

We organized the Black ministers, and a couple of trial lawyers in that town, and a group of mad, angry farmers there, and I carried the county with 61% of the vote. And that's what we've got to do, not just in 1984 in the Presidential race, but that's what we've got to do in all of our battles.

We've got to be Progressive. We've got to organize our forces. And we're doing that in the South.

Look at who's won. The sweep that we had in 1982 in Texas is not just poor old Hightower here. Ann Richards is our State Treasurer, getting a few more votes than I got for example. Gary Morro's the Land Commissioner. Jim Maddox is the battling Attorney General that we've got down there. We even got a Governor who is different than the normal Right-Wing retreats that we've had in the Democratic Party down there in the past. So we've got a fundamental sweep in Texas government there.

It just happened in Louisiana, where Edwin Edwards won against all kinds of money and all kinds of attacks on him. He spent a lot of money himself and had a lot of fun doing it. It was Edwards, remember, who said that he wouldn't say that the Republican incumbent was slow, but it took him 90 minutes to watch '60 Minutes.' Edwin is in the Governorship today down there now.

Jim Hightower is the agricultural commissioner for the state of Texas, former editor of the "Texas Observer", and probably the most electable, progressive populist in America.

But a friend of mine said, "Hightower, there's nothing in the middle of the road but yellow stripes and dead Armadillos."

Over in Mississippi, they had a sweep there in another place that you wouldn't expect to be a bastion of Progressivism, including the Governor who basically ran against the utilities.

Bill LaLane told me, "They keep saying I'm a one issue candidate. Just the utilities. I'm not a one issue candidate. I've got a lot of issues. There's the telephone company, the gas company..."

The point is if the Democratic Party will send into the South a passionate unabashed Democrat, somebody who by God, kicks the door in and nails the Democratic principles to the wall, and shouts, "Y'all come;" by God, we will. And the masses will come.

You don't win by tiptoeing around the issues. Say what you think and then take it to the people. And when I say the people, I mean all the people. Not just the bean sprout eaters. We got to get the snuff dippers out there as well. And that's the kind of politics that Michael's talking about or that Fred Harris talked about years ago when he said, "It's hard to have a mass movement without the masses."

The people are ready. It's not just a few Liberals and malcontents who are mad at Reganomics. The vast majority of the people in this country have got a bone to pick with Reagan. He promised us all a seven-course dinner and has delivered it only to the rich few.

The rest of us, we know what that seven-course dinner is now. It's a possum and a six-pack. All the people know that.

I represent the farmers in Texas. As conservative a group

of people as you ever want. But those farmers are mad out there. Under Reaganomics they've had 3 years in a row of declining farm income. For the last 3 years in Texas the cost of producing every single commodity we produce in Texas exceeded the price that the farmers received for it. Wheat — they're getting \$3.60 a bushel on wheat that cost \$6.40 a bushel to make. Now that's pretty easy arithmetic for a farmer to figure out.

They've seen cut-backs in all of their programs. Their price program but also soil and water conservation, rural transportation, rural telephone, alternative fuels, and energy, minority and small farmer programs — cut-back, cut-back, cut-back! Farmers cut-back but they go to the supermarket too, and they don't see any cut-backs at the supermarket. Steak keeps going up while beef prices go down.

And now we've got the National Administration saying to the farmer, "You're only solution is to take a lower price on what you get."

If ignorance is bliss, these guys must be ecstatic! Farmers understand that. They know that something's wrong and they're ready to be with us.

Working families, small business, main street business. The greatest rate of bankruptcy for small business last year in the United States of America than any year since 1932. They understand there's no recovery for them. Poor people, poverty rolls on the rise.

40% of union members in Texas voted for Ronald Reagan in 1980, 40% of them. Now they understand.



A culture that has 15 different kinds of chili peppers to put on its breakfast eggs, is not a moderate culture. It's a slander on the south.

There is no Union member more than one paycheck removed from poverty and they got that figured out. And so they ain't going to be any Union members voting for Ronnie Reagan in 1984. And that's why we got the chance to beat Reagan.

Minorities, Civil Rights Commission, or the Civil Whites Commission when they get through with the damn thing there.

1982, we had a huge increase in turn-out in the State of Texas because we had candidates like Ann Richard, and Jim Maddox, and Gary Moore going to the people saying things that made sense to them.

As a result, the Black community and the Mexican American community and the laboring community voted. And I mean voted and voted and voted. They stood in the rain and voted.

We had a rainstorm come all throughout the State of Texas, come at exactly the worst time of the day for our voting people, meaning in the afternoons when they were getting off work. We thought literally we might be washed out by the rainstorm.

But in Dallas and in Houston they ran out of ballots at the Democratic precincts at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, so many people had voted. They stood in the rain for 3 hours and waited until they brought some more ballots in there to vote.

And they're gonna do that again in 1984, if we got anything to say.

Our theme here at the conference is to build a base for change; we don't have to build a base for change. The base is there, waiting. Waiting on you, and waiting on me to come forward. There's an old time country singer, Bob Wills, Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys down in Texas. They had an old time song that sums it up about as well as any. Had a verse in it that went like this, "Little bee sucks the blossom, but the big Bee gets the honey. The little man picks the cotton but the big man gets the money."

And that's all Reaganomics adds up to. It's just Hooverism warmed over again. If you're an international banker, or you're a munitions maker, you're a conglomerate or you're a coupon clipper — you get cash. If you're anyone else, you get toys for tots.

People don't want charity, they want government on their side. It's got to deliver and that's been the problem.

People during the New Deal days were not mad at government because the government was doing something that was tangible and was beneficial to them. And that's what we've got to begin to do again. We've got to organize the people around progressive issues carried by passionate candidates at a grassroots level.

Not just in a Presidential race every four years, get

involved in the local races. That's where our base is. Mayoralty races, County Commissioner races, County Judges, Land Commissioners, Agriculture Commissioners, governorships — that's where power is.

You get real power in this little office. I had a campaign theme we stole from a moving company in Austin, Texas: "If we can get it loose, we can move it." And we got it loose and now we're moving it.

But the challenge to progress is not to win the offices, the challenge is to govern. To show that if you win the offices, it makes a difference. That life is different, that life is better and that government serves a constituency that has not been served in the past.

This little obscure, small, slumbering agency that I took over, Agriculture Department of State of Texas. You wouldn't think there would be much, but there are 600 employees there. Twelve district offices, a state airplane, for God's sake, to fly around in. Automobiles, telephones, tools to go to work with. A little dab of power here and there, and things that you can just go do.

Turns out I regulate all the herbicide and pesticide use in the State of Texas. Interesting little bit of power. Certainly gets the attention of the Dow Chemicals of the world that come around, want to see me now. We talk to them, and we have a whole different approach to it than has been there in the past.

For example, we hired a few scientists who might look at their statistics differently than have been looked at before. We're in a battle now over this E.D.B. stuff that's in our food products because of the grain fumigations around the country.

In the area of marketing; farmers are hurt and they're continuing to be hurt because they get a low price selling to a middle man who sells at a high price somewhere else.

So we're able to create new marketing channels. Local ones, little bitty stuff like creating a farmer's market system in the State of Texas.

Very simple idea. Just a simple little old farmer's market for farmers to come in and get a price higher than they would otherwise. Consumers come in, get a cheaper price. All the money stays in the local economy. It works.

It's not going to move the stars, but it delivers cash money for people and it's working. We put 4 in last year. We're going to have another 6 in this year. We're going to have a whole system established.

We moved into the international market to allow grain farmers and cotton farmers and livestock ranchers to be able to sell directly. I've established my own relationship, not waiting on the Governor or the State Department much less, to go to Mexico, to go to Israel, to establish relationships that are now paying off.

One guy we fired said, "Well after Hightower's through there's not going to be any male Anglos left." And I said, "There's going to be one."

We're going to develop a conservation water plan in the State of Texas. It's going to like up with Governor Anaya over in New Mexico and with the Mexican Government because we all share the same desert. And we're going to have Israeli technicians coming over and working with us on that water plan to develop it.

You don't have to go ask permission of somebody to do it, you just use the resources, a \$20 million budget, that you've got at your disposal for a chance to put these things to work.

We can do other important things like hiring people. About 70% of the new hiring that we've done has been Black, Mexican-American and women. And that's a change in agriculture. I can tell you that.

One guy we fired said, "Well after Hightower's through there's not going to be any male Anglos left." And I said, "There's going to be one."

These state offices give you a cauldron of experimentation.

We've developed a new agriculture development bond program because farmers need to move forward in the marketing system. They're getting 28 cents out of the food dollar. Obviously, the money is in processing but they can't get loans from the banks for that. So we created a new bond program that will allow them to get financing to form cooperative processing and marketing facilities.

Onion growers, for example, getting 8 cents a pound on onions, that's beneath the cost of production. But we don't process any onions in Texas. So we're selling 8 cent onions to Chicago, where they make them into onion rings and ship them back to us at \$1.33 per pound. That doesn't make any economic sense at all. Onion ring technology is not very complex. So now they got a little pool of capital and we're going to have that process in there.

We convened a meeting of the Black farmers in the State of Texas. All the Government's ever done for Black farmers is to issue the occasional report that says Black farmers are declining in America. That's real useful to them.

So we convened a little meeting at the State Fair. It turns out I run the food and fiber pavilion at the State Fair of Texas which gets a million and a half people coming through — so we brought Black farmers in.

They've been led around in circles all these years. We thought we'd give them a free ride on a merry-go-round. They could enjoy the ride for a change at least. We had a meeting on the future of the Black farmer there, where we said, "What does it take? What do we need to be doing?"

And we got members of the Legislature there, and we

got Texas A & M there, and we got resources to go to work on their credit problems, their marketing problems, on their development problems.

Now we'll go into the next session of the Texas Legislature with a coordinated program to do something.

Again, my point is that these little offices give us some tools to do something. Once you're in government, no matter what size of government, you can do it!

Franklin Roosevelt, when he first won office in 1933, brought his staff in there and said to them, "Do something. If it works, do it some more. If it doesn't work, do something else."

And that's what we've got to do as a movement. Not just toss out ideas but find ways to see if that will work. My message to you today is very simple: It is just keep fighting.

We're doing more than you think. We're winning more than you probably think. It is the movement that is important. Not the 1984 Presidential race, not poor old Hightower here in Texas, or any other single candidate anywhere, — but the development of a grassroots base that can spawn dozens of candidates like myself all over this state.

We can't quit because they never quit. They're over there at the White House right now. They're at the country clubs, on the golf courses, in the conglomerate board rooms, figuring out how to get rid of the Hightowers of this country. They're never going to quit. They never take the short view, they're always taking the long view. And it is this long view that is essential for us as a progressive movement.

This is not a new movement. Not a new movement at all. A lot of the people in the audience are young but I see some of the older faces. This has a noble past and it's got a promising future. It is that long tradition that we're continuing to build on.

I'll leave you with this thought on Martin Luther King's birthday: one of the better politicians who ever existed is a man named Frederick Douglas, and he said this a long time back, "If there is not struggle — there's no progress."

Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. This struggle may be a moral one or it may be a physical one or both moral and physical but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did and it never will.

People may not get all that they paid for in this world but they must certainly pay for all that they get. Let's get ours in 1984. □

From America's Economic Future

Towards a New Economic Agenda

by Richard Parker

Excerpt from keynote paper for the Progressive Leadership Conference on America's Future, held in Washington, D.C., January 13-15, 1984. It is the result of an ongoing process involving 60 economists and policy analysts who have given generously of their time and expertise in responding to written drafts and attending regional discussion meetings throughout this past year. An earlier draft, prepared by Lenny Goldberg, summarized the initial meeting held in San Francisco in October 1982.

This is not a final draft, since the discussion and debate that this paper in intended to stimulate will continue to explore and present positive new proposals. This election year is a crucial time to involve citizen leaders from across the country in the critical debate about national economic policy which will shape your future.

We invite you to join us in this process.

Richard Parker is the former managing editor of "Mother Jones" magazine, and a long time progressive theoretician and entrepreneur.

The complete text of "Towards a New Economic AGenda" is available from the Economic Education Project, 25 Scotland St., San Francisco, CA 94133. Please include \$1.00 to cover handling.

IT IS AN IRONY of bitter proportions that in the coming months we will see a President stand for reelection, announcing the "success" of his economic recovery program—while nearly a fifth of America's plant capacity stands idle, while one out of four working Americans has experienced unemployment in the past 12 months, while massive federal deficits promise to run throughout the decade, and while inequality grows steadily worse. Yet that is what we face—the cost of letting a President restore our economy to a growth level less than 60% that of his predecessor.

But whatever the irony of the President's misplaced claims, there is a more bitter irony still: it seems that all too many of his critics are ready to accept his claim. In the shortest of short-term political calculations, Democratic Party leaders and pundits are worriedly trimming their already timid criticisms of Reaganomics. Congressional leaders who did little to oppose implementation of his economic program are now unwilling even to attack its consequences. Presidential candidates become vague when asked for their alternatives. Party leaders nervously consult their pollsters, hoping to discover whether a majority of voters will applaud a decline in unemployment to 8% — or remember why it rose to 10.5%.

Yet in their caution lie the seeds of disaster — not only for the Democratic Party, but for the nation. To let the President frame the debate over America's economic future on the basis of this month's inflation rate of last quarter's employment numbers is an error of immense proportion. For the lesson of the last ten years has not been that America is caught in a series of periodic yet mild adjustments, but that it is in the grip of something much more foreboding. The U.S. economy is going through massive structural changes — changes in its labor force, changes in its industrial structure, changes in its competitive position, changes in its previously acknowledged power in the Western world. The middle class is shrinking, the poor are growing in numbers, and the resources of government are increasingly being diverted from providing human services toward constructing the means of mass destruction. In such a world, not to challenge the President at the most fundamental level is an unconscionable mistake — economically, politically, morally.

If we are to recover lost freedom and gain material security, it should be obvious we cannot simply look to politicians, or the routine changes of Administration as the key to solving our problems. Government will ultimately be a tool for change, as it has been in the past; but if we seek solutions entirely in the context of government, without first creating the vision of a more just society and the commitment of citizens that will outlast any individual

leader or administration, then we will not succeed.

Instead we must look to each other, and the associations we have already formed that lie outside the confines of government. Observers of America since de Tocqueville have always seen the propensity to join as a distinguishing feature of our democratic society. To labor unions, churches and synagogues, teachers associations, cooperatives, small business, women's, environmental, civil rights, and citizen action groups, we must turn — for they, most of all, must forge first the vision, and then the new policies from which a new kind of governance can be built. Taken together, they represent a majority of Americans — and it is in terms of the majority, for the majority, that they must gather to act. Self-interest must be served, but above all, those particular interests must reflect the needs and hopes of the greatest number of Americans possible.

A development specialist, looking at the plight of the Third World has remarked that all too often hoped for improvement has failed because the policies of change follow "logic," but seldom the "logic of the majority." The *logic of the majority* in a nation like ours, cannot sustain the self-interest of industrial polluters who pour deadly toxic wastes into our rivers and skies, but can support the self interest of environmentalists who seek clean air and clean water for the nation. The *logic of the majority* cannot endorse corporations that would abandon plants and factories for overseas sites, leaving millions jobless, thousands of communities ravaged, and entire regions of the country in decline. But it can fight for the rights of workers, their unions, their neighborhoods and towns by at least offering advance notice, job retraining and relocation, and adjustment support. Wherever possible, it can offer industrial restructuring that sustains existing jobs and existing communities by changing or diversifying product lines to meeting the growing challenges of new world and domestic markets. The *logic of the majority* would not oppose both growth and change, but must challenge the logic of powerful economic interests that would seek to lay the burdens and suffering of such change, as they too often have done, on the weak, the vulnerable, the infirm, and the poor. A transformation of American society into the new age of computers and information will be a hollow achievement if millions are left in low-paid, low-opportunity, often deadend worlds as the janitors, clerks and key punch operators of that brave new future.

The principles of the majority

There are five key values upon which a new coalition of leadership must build in this country. Those values are

embedded in the long course of our human past, but accurately reflect the needs of the present and future. Unlike the esoteric language of elites, they speak not to a few, but to the many and promise the opportunity to work for a world in which the majority can find a future of its own.

The first of these is freedom

Without freedom, there is no democracy. While today America has much freedom, hard won and well cherished, it needs more. The test of a society like ours is the continual press to expand the freedom of the greatest number possible. Yet our material world constrains that freedom. Economists insist that our choice between labor and leisure determines how many hours we work. But who among us believes that in our society the unemployed have chosen leisure? Or that a skilled worker, whose job is lost to foreign competition, chooses lower wages and longer hours, with fewer benefits and less security. Who believes that citizens choose to live in a town where they must drink polluted water or breathe smog-choked air because they prefer such things, if given the freedom to choose an environment protected from such debasement?

We need freedom as a cornerstone of any plan to renew America, because Americans understand freedom as their most elemental right, just as they understand that such freedom remains an abstraction when the right to work, the right to earn a decent living, the right to feel secure in one's home, one's community, and one's nation are denied. We need to pledge ourselves to the restoration of those rights in order to ensure our freedom.

Second, we need equality

Much has been written about the impossibility of equality, but goals are not programs, and principles are meant to be more than descriptions of the lives we lead. When America's founders declared that we are "created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights" no one presumed that America was a society of equals. But equality has since then been too easily dismissed, too quickly derided — and now needs to be restored. In the nineteenth century, the writer Anatole France observed sarcastically of his society that "the rich and the poor are equally free to sleep beneath bridges." The same could be said today — and then as now, it is, of course, the poor and homeless who sleep beneath the bridges, who seek the foodstamps, who wash the dishes and sweep the floors for a minimum wage or less.

Inequality denies us too much. Today 6% of Americans

*In the first half of this decade one trillion dollars
will be spent by this Administration on
instruments of destruction.*

earn as much income as the entire bottom half of the population; 1—1½% control more than a third of the nation's wealth. As a result, we end up paying enormous amounts merely to hold the consequences of that inequality in check — for welfare, to control crime, in special compensatory education programs; the list goes on and on. We pay in a second way, too, as that concentrated wealth seeks investment in non-productive tax shelters, overseas ventures, or in speculation in stock market index futures or real estate that inflates the cost of housing.

The classic argument is that equality threatens efficiency, that wages paid reflect “the market” or that the poor could work if they wanted to. But how, then can one explain the OECD study of Western non-communist nations that shows all of the 12 countries which now have higher per capita incomes, and which outperformed the United States economically in the last decade, all had a lower level of inequality? How does one explain why Japan, considered the most efficient of modern industrial powers, provides its workers greater benefits and security, yet pays managers a third to a quarter of their U.S. counterparts? Or the fact that in the work vs. poverty debate, that half of the poor in the U.S. *do* work — but at minimum wages? Or the repeated experiments which show that the unemployed poor, when offered work at reasonable wages, consistently choose to work. Clearly something is reversed in the debate over equality and efficiency when one tries to oppose two principles which the evidence suggest go hand in hand.

Third, we need security

A society cannot reasonably pursue the goals of freedom and equality without offering security. But the continuous cycles of the economy — the recessions followed by recovery followed by recession — undermine security, leaving higher unemployment and higher inflation in their wake. We need to seek programs that provide secure wages and stable prices, that allow people to purchase homes at reasonable rates, that guarantee decent levels of health care and job safety, that create an environment that protects both people and natural resources, that offer work to all who want it at fair wages, and that allow for changes in community and regional economies without leaving devastation in their wake.

Setting a goal of security is especially important now. In addition to the internal fluctuations of the American economy, the nation is now being opened up to the world economy — introducing new levels of complexity and challenge. As corporations follow their own logic, shifting increasing resources abroad, introducing new products and

processes here, as banks increasingly lend overseas instead of at home, as investors channel their wealth wherever it will yield the greatest return, whatever the consequences, we need to reassert the logic of the majority.

We must also seek security at an even more fundamental level: spending on military solutions has grown out of control. In the first half of this decade one trillion dollars will be spent by this Administration on instruments of destruction. New weapons systems — from the MX missile to the Trident submarine to new forms of chemical warfare — are being churned out at an unprecedented pace. Who can seriously accept this Administration's argument that such massive increases in the stockpile of arms will enhance our well being? If security is a fundamental principle, then we must seek a reduction in arms spending, move toward a mutually verifiable nuclear freeze, and redeploy the huge quantity of resources and talent currently poured into risking the planet's death into means for enhancing a secure and peaceful life.

Fourth, we need community

To preserve a human scale, to give back to individuals a sense of connectedness and purpose, we must foster community wherever we can. All too often in the past, conservatives have claimed community as one of their values — arguing that in the growth of government lay the destruction of neighborhood, family, and association. But in truth, it has been the practices of conservatives that have all too often been at the root of the wholesale destruction of community. Massive shutdowns of factories have devastated cities and towns alike; the poverty and humiliation of unemployment has eroded family stability; the unalloyed celebration of mass consumption has displaced older values that once gave a different and richer meaning to public life.

To reconstruct a different world, we must seek greater independence and self-reliance for communities, encouraging decentralized solutions wherever we can. Simply concentrating more and more power in fewer hands — whether corporate or governmental — will not solve our problems. In areas such as energy, food production, housing and job creation, our local and regional leadership must become more able to define and respond to needs, generating not only their own programs but also adapting national programs and policies to fit the unique character of their regions and localities.

On a separate level, but tied intimately to smaller-scale notions of community responsibility and leadership, must come a larger awareness of the global community. Much of the economic disruption and suffering of recent years has

Merely helping the poor pay their debts to the rich will not foster the long-term internal growth to create a stable international community...

come from global changes — in oil prices, bank debt and investment decisions — over which even the nation as a whole has been able to exert little control. If we meet the challenge with a beggar-thy-neighbor response, ultimately both we and our neighbors will pay the price. Industrial countries like the United States can help restore worldwide growth in a systematic fashion, or we can sponsor short-term domestic recovery at the cost of our allies and much of the Third World. Merely helping the poor pay their debts to the rich will not foster the long-term internal growth to create a stable international community — and we will pay the price not only in lost trading opportunities, but also in increasing mayhem and repression for which we will all ultimately pay a much higher price.

Finally, there is an even deeper sense of community — one almost completely lost in public discourse today. As our world has grown increasingly governed by numbers and quantities, as competition for jobs, security, identity and career have gripped our lives, we have lost sight of our fundamental interdependence as human beings. Even to speak of our mutual obligations to one another is to risk being reviled as naive or passe. And yet, if satisfaction and pride about our lives is some final test of being alive, we cannot surrender to the “realists” their right to define the terms of our world. To live our lives as frightened cogs in a vast machine of production, to fear all but a few because they represent a threat, is to cast us back into the darkest and earliest stages of human life, and to reject what humanity collectively holds out to us and our children.

Finally, we need efficiency

In a rapidly changing world, values which reflect the past but fail to incorporate the future are doomed. The rhythm of capitalist industrial production, for better or worse, organizes our lives — we no longer follow the seasons for planting and harvesting, or roam open lands in search of game. In factories, offices, shops and schools, time is carefully segmented, highly rationalized and geared to the task of producing goods and services for a market economy.

We are also in a period of great transition, as a new age seems to be growing: computers, high technology, the instantaneous transfer of information around the globe are all harbingers of this change. Taken together, they hold out great promise; but with them goes great risk — risk that in the transition to this new age, the pain and suffering for some will become unbearable, and for many unconscionable. In previous transformations of real proportions, such pain and suffering has been the all too visible cost. No one can look at the Industrial Revolution and agree with its

noble prophets about the benign nature of that change. Nor can one look at the partial record to date, and conclude that this transformation will go smoothly. The steelworker made redundant by new technology, the clerk who spends eight hours a day entering numbers into a video screen with only the promise of doing the same thing 20 years from now, the junior-level manager fired because that function is now filled by remote computer terminals linked to central data processing — all these men and women know that the start of the new has been uneven in its consequences.

Economists, in their textbook world, look to price and profit as the measure of efficiency. But price and profit are only one set of measures for efficiency, and often inefficient ones at that. Business analysts, for example, have noted that the Japanese often content themselves with much lower annual profits, but are able to sustain those profits over long periods of time; American managers, by contrast, strive for high annual profits, only to watch that profitability fluctuate wildly over a number of years with changes in the economy and their own market. Which is more efficient?

Or consider the allocation of inputs which are difficult to measure by price, such as non-renewable natural resources, or outputs such as health costs created by toxic chemicals whose effects appear only 10 or 20 years later, or the lost opportunities of children whose school went underfunded because resources were used for a new missile or submarine. All of these examples represent theoretical or statistical calculation problems that even economists admit cloud their simple models of efficiency.

What we need to create is a notion of majority efficiency, which likewise recognizes varying possibilities of definition, yet adheres as closely as possible to what we earlier called the logic of the majority, as well as the principles of freedom, equality, community and security previously defined.

Is a particular tax policy efficient for the majority — that is, does it enhance or diminish equality? Is a new mining or forestry program efficient for the majority if it permanently depletes already scarce resources, or worsens pollution? Is a military budget efficient for the majority's security if it emphasizes offensive over defensive weapons, or adds to the stockpile of nuclear arms? Should the decline of a particular industry simply be left to “market” forces, when positive alternatives, ranging from industrial restructuring to job retraining and community reinvestment, exist?

Such ways of thinking are, in fact, less a departure from conventional notions of efficiency than they first appear. In the Sixties and Seventies, as economists examined

environmental issues, they articulated the concept of "cost-benefit analysis, with expanded externalities." For example, a manufacturer often produced goods at a low price because he was free to dump the toxic waste in a public river at no charge. But the consequence was that the public paid a high price — in pollution, health costs, lost wages and economic opportunities. Economists finally recognized that applying some cost to pollution cleanup was necessary to reflect the "true" cost of the product. But how high that new cost would be depended on how clean the river was expected to be and who was making that judgement. Once various solutions at various prices were established, not by the economists or the manufacturer, but by the community and its leadership who sought clean water, the tools of economics could become positive instruments, not the painful regulator, of the majority.

A notion of efficiency, defined in terms of freedom, equality, community and security can explicitly expand previous, "narrow efficiency" notions, by recognizing the breadth built implicitly into any such notions — and retrieve from both the closed language of economics and the closed power of business the "efficiency" that previously ignored the needs of the majority.

How such principles could be applied

In a culture such as ours which values both the pragmatic and the real, principles without application will be tossed aside. Lacking concreteness, they can be ignored — and both the issues they raise, and the future they hold will submerge once again into a debate among elites, experts and power-holders, whose interest and abilities have helped create the current crisis.

What follows is, therefore, an attempt to apply the principles of freedom, equality, security, community and efficiency. It poses the problems that heretofore have been the province of specialists, in language that explicitly reaches out to the greatest possible number of Americans. It offers avenues — not "solutions" — by which the debate over our problems can be returned to the realm of democracy, addressing our "crisis" using the logic of the majority.

First, we need growth for all Americans

A program for growth that will:

- produce massive reform of the tax structure, one that restores greater progressivity to our tax codes, close the gaping tax expenditures favoring non-productive investments, and strengthen enforcement to assure that tax avoiders not escape their share of the tax burden.

- press for comparable worth as a national wage goal, not only to close the intolerable inequities between men and women, but also between job categories that have left women, minorities, and the working poor to pay the price of economic discrimination.
- launch major public and private investment to rebuild America's eroding infrastructure, continue expansion of pollution controls, and expand opportunities for education, not only because each of these areas requires attention, but also because they can help generate both jobs and consumer demand.

Second, we must offer Americans a secure defense

Not a defense which threatens our security — which we have now. The question of the military is an economic as well as a political question, and the Democrats have allowed this Republican President to engage in as crude a Red Menace debate as possible. The cost is enormous: we are now spending more than a billion dollars a day on the military, and that figure is steadily rising. It is going for weapons systems we don't need and that won't likely work, that will further destabilize the strategic balance, and will prepare us for war we shouldn't be fighting. The President should not only declare war on waste and useless weapons systems, but should also use his inaugural to begin a longer debate that this country has needed for years — on our military priorities and posture, and what America's role in the world ought to be.

Third, we need planning for competition

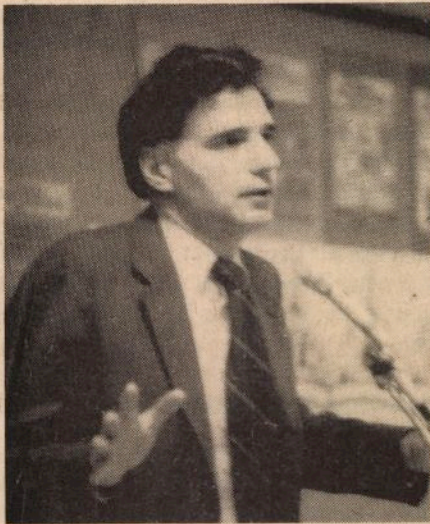
In the last year or so, "industrial policy" has emerged as an alternative to Reagan's supply side and monetarist proposals, especially as a means of dealing with industrial decline and international competition. Republicans and conservative Democrats have attacked it as more government intervention, but in truth it attempts to rationalize and rise above the existing, haphazard interventions that have contributed to our current crisis. A wise, and forward-looking President can begin the dialogue with Americans that can bring about planning for competition and a democratization of the ways we set out economic priorities.

With those three themes as a guide — Growth for All Americans, a Secure Defense, and Planning for Competition — we believe a future Democratic President can give coherent and forceful answers to our most pressing problems — and open debate on the values that ought to be shaping our common lives. □

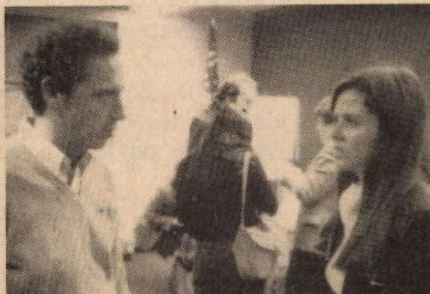
POLITICS AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION



Wade Rathke, ACORN



Ralph Nader



Bill Cerone, Superintendent of Schools of Santa Barbara, CA talking with Ann Evans, mayor protém of Davis, CA.

Elements of a new political coalition are forming in the United States. Activists in neighborhood, peace, senior, environmental and other social change organizations are developing political strategies along often parallel courses. Implications for political change through activism of millions of citizens have the potential to deeply affect American institutions. The extent of this impact will be dependent upon whether a coherent sense of philosophy and movement can be developed.

The growth of this potential coalition will be difficult, but is essential if a redistribution of power is to occur in our nation. Our success will be determined by our efficiency, understanding of power, and the creation of effective networks and communications structures at both local and national levels.

Politics is an essential element in any society. Too many of our members have either been apolitical or antipolitical. We can no longer afford the luxury of a philosophical separation of our beliefs and methods of social change. We must recognize in a democracy that if electoral politics is not at the forefront of social change, many of our activities become exercises in discussion rather than exercises for institutional affect.

What is required is broad education of our members in political organization and coalition development. A lack of trust in government and many of our institutions exist. However, there is no vacuum in politics; if our friends choose not to act because of lack of faith in the system, control becomes easier by others.

What we as social activists need to realize is that while power may not be equally distributed, the right to vote is; and this becomes our channel for empowerment.

What factors are essential for development of our coalition?

First, clearly defined and understandable issues become basic for public action, whether we seek to pass

legislation, elect candidates or educate a nation. The type of issue assists in determining which action steps are required and what type of capacity exists for change.

Second, what is the climate for change? The climate becomes central to the determination of strategy, for we organize differently in the 1980's than we did in the 60's. We have seen change in both the types of coalitions and the forms of organizational methods required for success.

We have watched both the central issues and the way those issues are presented change. Many of us have lived through civil rights, poverty, environmentalism, feminist and two or three peace movements. The impact of new technologies, including communication and information systems, the growth of political action committees on the right and left and the magnitude of political expenditures have forced new organizational strategies.

Third, changes in the climate have reflected changes in the tenor of political discussion. Coventry Patmore speaks of the necessity of the "traditions of civility" in politics. This "tradition" is not evident in many current political discussions. In the old days, we would argue and shout at meetings and then drink and laugh afterwards with those compatriots with whom we had just argued. Now, we rarely drink with opponents, and generally speak only to those with whom we already agree.

It has become difficult for us to separate people as individuals from the issues they represent. There has been a lessening of compromise and an increase in the suggestion that compromise represents a lack of commitment to our positions.

Politics is based upon long term relationships and the ability to compromise and seek common ground. This year's enemies are often next year's coalition. Lines of communication must remain open if long term relationships are to be possible.

by Todd Lefko

Todd Lefko adapted this article from his presentation at the "National Conference for Citizen Participation, Recreating Government." Todd is a leader and activist in the Democratic, Farmer-Labor Alliance in Minnesota.

This ability for lessened points of agreement is partially due to the fact that our political interests are expressed in groups and numbers, rather than in individuals. How many votes can you represent (or claim to represent) becomes our coinage. I remember a speaker proclaiming "I represent 30,000 Jews in Minnesota." I thanked him for his efforts and suggested I was capable of representing myself. The strength of political action committees with permanent staff, newsletters, national mailing lists, computers and the ability to produce thousands of protest letters and large contributions have formalized group confrontation. Peer pressure works against individual action to seek common ground. We have created national systems that seek to sustain themselves and often act unrelated to what we in the trenches are seeking to accomplish.

We face a system with increasing national special interest groups, some of which are ours. To some degree, we must learn to master this game, but with the perspective that it is not the formal organization we seek, for confrontation sake, but the establishment of common ground to develop policies, joint action and programs for our people.

What becomes necessary for development of coalitions and political perspectives for the 1980's. First, we need to develop a broad agenda with points of agreement. We lack a clearly defined philosophy for this new movement. Many agree upon some broad ends, such as freeze, citizen participation, environmental action, worker participation, equity and social justice. More thorough definitions of these issues would demonstrate a number of definitions among our members. We have not clearly defined the means to achieve these for more than segments of the movement. We need for communication and discussion among differing elements of the potential coalition to determine goals and define both

means of achievement and common ends.

Second, we need to develop the means to bring our philosophy to fruition. Development of political skills in organizational techniques, fund raising, door to door and strengthened mailing lists are necessary. The one thing we have is access to millions of workers. Campaigns are either labor or capital intensive. Most of our groups will never be accused of buying elections; but we do have access to dedicated people willing to work.

Third, we must become more than just another special interest group. We need to define a broader context to our program. We need to understand the concerns and address where legitimate the arguments of those with whom we disagree. Many of our opponents raise valid concerns. Democracy, if it is effective, is based upon more than power relationships and seeks to address concerns of minority views.

We need to counter the climate of distrust and incivility. We need to respect the views of others and seek to understand their ends, while striving to achieve ours. We need to counter the negativity of many of the political action committees with positive discussions of our vision and with creativity and labor intensive activities.

We must recognize that our strength is in numbers of activists and our dedication. Many of our participants are new to political action and face a major problem with disappointment if their ends are not readily gained. We should communicate that politics is a long term process and that some defeats will occur. At election night parties, those new to politics are often wild with joy or deep into defeat, depending upon the outcome. Those of us who are in for the long haul are in the corner, already discussing the next election. The process goes on. It is difficult to explain to newcomers that sometimes in the

ashes of defeat you structure the organization and train the individuals who will bring eventual victory.

We should recognize that it is often easier to organize around causes than individuals, because the goals are clearer and results often more easily defined. Individuals often do not turn out as office holders as we had hoped. However, activists must appreciate that it is individuals who make policy in a representative democracy. In some cases, it has been an unpleasant choice of the lesser of evils and it shall remain so, until some of our members have the courage to put themselves forth as candidates.

The basic issue we face is whether you accept what is, or seek change. Electoral politics is one of the access points for change in policy. A friend was convinced to run for county board because he realized it was easier to affect welfare policy as one of a majority than remaining on the outside and seeking to influence others.

It is within local politics that we shall have the greatest initial impact. Local politics responds more easily to labor intensive efforts. It requires a greater variety of skills and opportunities for participation. Much of politics is drone work. Few of us enjoy licking the thousandth envelope, or making the hundredth phone call, but that is what wins elections.

The movement of neighborhood and local civic action groups into politics is the precursor of the future. In many cities, local activist coalitions are replacing political parties as organizers, issue developers and the provider of candidates. At some point in the future, these groups have the potential to become forces in national politics.

But this potential, both locally and nationally will not be fulfilled unless we develop our skills for coalition building, a common agenda and an understanding that joint action for the long process are necessary elements in our political success. □

THE CO-OP CHOICE

costs are not limited to a rent payment. If you are part of a co-op or condo, you must attend regular meetings to make these decisions. You can no longer call the landlord and complain; now you are the landlord.

Ownership means a substantial investment from which you cannot just walk away. You have to find a buyer willing to pay the price. When recession hits or bad times fall on a particular housing market, you may be stuck or face a considerable loss if you need or want to sell. If your plans in the near future include moving, expanding your family, or shifting expenditures from housing to other costs, then buying may not be right for you at this time. Ask yourself if you will be willing and able to live in the same place for at least three years.

Ownership is not for everyone, although it is evident that the substantial majority of Americans want to own their own property.

You can't talk about co-ops today without comparing them to condominiums, and vice versa. They are

Going Co-op is available from Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 02108. The price is \$9.95 plus \$1.25 postage and handling.

THIS CHAPTER concentrates on the personal choice of going co-op. We examine some of the factors that may be involved in your initial decision about buying into a co-op, then we explore different types of co-op and co-op members.

Making the Decision

Perhaps too much emphasis has been placed on the financial incentives to buy a home, a condo, or a co-op in these inflationary times. The arguments for buying have focused on inflation and taxes. To many people, housing has become primarily a good investment as well as a tax-sheltered one. Put down a little, borrow a lot, take some tax breaks, and hope that when you want to sell it the house will be worth more than you paid for it. Home is where the investment portfolio is.

Let's step back from the financial argument for a moment and consider the many other aspects of homeownership. Ownership means control—the ability to control how you live. It means security—the safety of knowing that you will not be displaced or impoverished by another person who controls your home. It provides identity—the home is an extension and an expression of your personality.

At the same time, ownership carries with it a large set of responsibilities. There are many maintenance tasks you must do regularly yourself or pay someone else to do. There are bills to be paid—and your

the two most common forms of multifamily homeownership. Cooperatives have existed in the large urban areas of the United States for most of this century; condominiums are a more recent phenomenon, growing in popularity in resort areas during the 1960s.

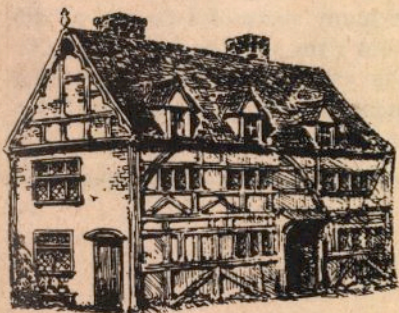
Co-ops and condos have become popular because of their lower cost and convenience. They are less expensive than single-family homes because they are smaller. Many co-op and condo buyers can afford only smaller units and seem to prefer their convenience and reduced maintenance requirements. Demand for both condos and co-ops has grown, causing many rental buildings to be converted. In response to the number of the conversions and displacements, state and local governments have enacted laws limiting conversions and tenant evictions.

Both the co-op and the condo offer a legal means of common ownership. In a condominium, members legally own the air space of their unit as well as a share of any common space and land. A co-op member, in contrast, owns part of a corporation, which owns the building. The corporation in turn provides the member with lease rights to occupy a unit so long as the member household belongs to the co-op.

Too much can be made of the legal differences between these forms of ownership. The type of ownership most common in your community probably depends for

the most part on the history of multifamily ownership in your area and the preference of lenders.

We feel that the case of condominium ownership has been overstated. Convinced that Americans need to own something tangible, developers extol "private ownership of air space" to promote the condo as the substitute for single-family ownership. Many lenders also have developed a preference for condos because the risk of the project is spread among many mortgages and several lenders. But the consumer — the critical participant as far as we are concerned—is not given any real advantage by the separate mortgage and the concept of owning air space. In fact, there are some significant disadvantages to the condominium owner. Condo buyers have to qualify for an individual mortgage, which can be an obstacle to the first-time borrower. Separate ownership of air space somehow creates the illusion for condo owners that their neighbors cannot affect them and that they can close the door and shut the others out. Nothing is further from the truth: condo owners need each other very much. They share walls; they share



The Co-op Choice is the second chapter in Going Co-op by William Coughlan, Jr. and Monte Franke.

floors and ceilings; they share entrances and hallways; and, like it or not, they share lifestyles and rules for living. The argument about owning one's own air space is a dangerous marketing illusion that creates a mistaken, possessive attitude instead of fostering the cooperative attitude essential to peaceful shared living.

Co-ops, on the other hand, have one mortgage for the entire building. Individual members do not have to qualify for an individual mortgage. And, most important, co-ops do not create any illusions about members' ability to ignore their neighbors; rather, the co-op devotes considerable attention to creating and fostering a social democracy, the ideal basis for living in a shared environment.

The difference in the way a condominium and a cooperative make decisions is critically important to understanding the two concepts. In condos, voting rights reflect investment. If you own a larger and more expensive unit than someone else, your voting power is proportionately larger. Co-ops are democratic in decision-making: each member household has one vote, regardless of size or investment. No single household is granted extra influence.

Co-ops have to limit absentee ownership to comply with IRS requirements; in doing so they usually foster a better living environment. Condos have no such legal restrictions. As a former or current renter,



you know that a structure allowing absentee owners can create many problems for tenants.

The co-op member's right of occupancy is protected by a proprietary lease. A member must violate some term of the occupancy agreement to lose the right of occupancy, and a member can lose that right only after the situation has been reviewed by the co-op's democratic decision-making body. Since each member votes in the election of the body and helps set the rules, members' rights are doubly protected.

The Basics of a Housing Co-op

Housing co-ops are businesses. They are in the business of providing the best possible housing at the lowest possible cost. More important, co-ops are *a way of doing business*. Every co-op, regardless of its size or type, must exhibit certain characteristics to be called a housing cooperative. From the following basic characteristics, individual co-ops evolve.

Shared Ownership — Co-op members own the housing in which they live. They typically own it through membership in a corporation specially created and limited to the cooperative ownership. The corporation owns the building(s), and the members own shares in the corporation. The number of shareholders equals the number of units.

Unlike condominium owners or single-family homeowners, co-op members do not own their living units individually. As a co-op share-

Home is where the investment portfolio is.

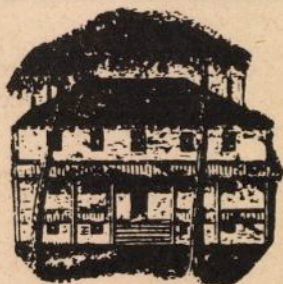
holder, each member has purchased the right to occupy one of the units in the co-op, governed by the terms of a *proprietary lease*. The member retains the right of occupancy so long as his or her household meets the conditions of membership, abides by the rules of the co-op, and pays its share of the operating costs and fees.

Because the cooperative corporation, and not the individual members, owns the property, the corporation obtains the mortgage. Each member purchases shares of stock in the corporation to raise the money for the down payment on the property and then pays to the co-op a portion of the monthly mortgage and operating costs.

Democratic Decision Making —

Co-ops are democratic enterprises, and decisions are made by the membership. The body of shareholders (members) holds the power to make most decisions and does so by voting in general meetings. Each member household has one vote.

For practical reasons, the share-



holders assign most of the day-to-day decision making to a board of directors, elected from the general membership. The board conducts regular (usually monthly) open meetings which members can attend and participate in.

Meetings of the full membership may occur only once or several times a year for policy decisions. An annual meeting is required, and other meetings may be necessary to make certain decisions—including by-law changes and annual budgets—that must be voted on by the membership.

Participation of Members —

A housing co-op is operated by and for its members. It is in the best interest of the co-op to have an educated membership, so that members can make informed decisions. Knowledge is power in co-ops, and participation expands knowledge.

Because a co-op depends on each member to meet both the financial and the participatory requirements of membership, it must carefully select new members and prepare them for membership. Orientation of members involves full disclosure of rights and responsibilities, acquaintance with other co-op members, and opportunities to participate in co-op activities. In addition, co-ops typically have ongoing programs of education and organized events at which members can interact.

Limited Equity — The original cooperative — started in Rochdale, England, in 1844—operated on the idea that the invested money of its members should receive a limited dividend. Through the years most co-ops have continued to adhere to this principle., protecting members' investments from losses as well as prohibiting excessive profit.

Unlike other types of co-ops, housing co-ops do not pay regular dividends because they provide

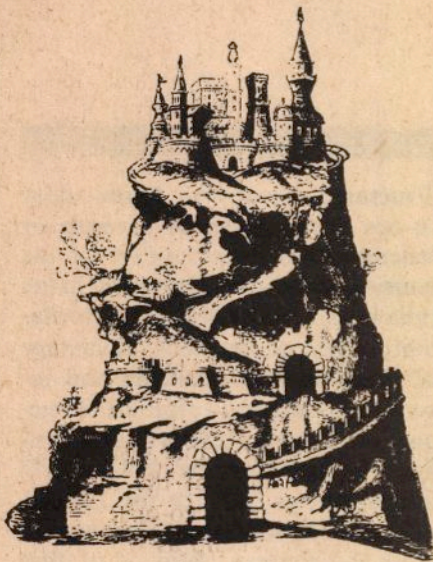
housing at cost. The limited-equity and dividend principle instead applies to the value of the membership. Limited-equity co-ops limit the price of membership as well as the price members can obtain when they sell.

Not all of today's housing co-ops follow the limited-equity principle. As we explain later, some allow their members to buy and sell memberships at whatever price they can command.

Size of Co-ops

When E.F. Schumacher suggested that "Small is beautiful," he noted that popular economic, scientific, and historical theories viewed evolution as a natural process of moving toward order on a larger scale. His thesis was that there must be a social balance of structures and organizations for different scale for people's different purposes. We take the argument one step further: people need structures of different scale for the *same* purpose.

Housing co-ops come in all sizes. There are two-family co-ops and there is New York's Co-op City, which houses more than 60,000 families. To suggest that there is some universally appropriate size within that range would be to ignore the many successful co-ops of different sizes and the individual lifestyle preferences and the varied kinds of housing available in different communities.



On the West Side of Manhattan, five families are operating their building as a small cooperative. Their building was owned by the City of New York, but the tenants purchased it under a city program to promote co-ops. According to the co-op's advisers from the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board, "This group had family ties, which meant they were close before they entered the program, but the co-op seemed to draw them even closer together. In fact, they appear to operate more as a family than as urban neighbors."

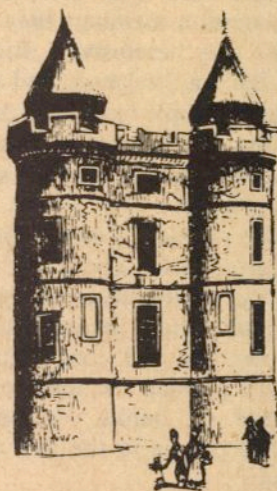
When they began managing their building, one of the members recalled, it seemed as though they were always meeting. The meetings weren't formal; they were held over dinner, snacks, or drinks in one of the apartments. The co-op members decided to do some interesting things. Maintenance tasks were assigned to the men, and the women painted the halls and decorated the halls and decorated the entryway. A divorced mother was assigned the management and bookkeeping tasks, for which the co-op paid her a small fee to supplement her limited income. The members also decided to reduce the monthly charge to one elderly woman and credited her baby-sitting as part of her contribution to the co-op.

Most small co-ops—those up to

fifteen units—operate in a similar fashion. Meetings do not resemble corporate board meetings: they are informal social gatherings, and business talk is squeezed in between conversation about children, vacation plans, and car repairs. Most management and maintenance activities are done by the members themselves. Members allocate the work by volunteering or by assigning tasks to those who have the skills and time.

In contrast to the small co-op, the Benning Heights Co-operative in Washington, D.C., is a 474-unit townhouse development spread out over 22 acres. A small group of tenants organized the co-op and bought the forty-year-old development in 1982 when the original owner decided to retire. Nearly three-quarters of the existing tenants decided to join the co-op.

The co-op has nine members on its board of directors. The directors take turns staffing the co-op office during evenings and weekends. They also have organized the townhouses into twenty-nine courts, each of which selects a court captain to represent members on a council. In addition, each building selects a building spokesperson. About sixty members take active roles in the co-op organization.



You can no longer call the landlord and complain; now you are the landlord.

The co-op has committees for fund raising, membership, building rehabilitation, youth programs, and a monthly newsletter. The committees are responsible for about one co-op-wide activity per month. Recent activities include a Halloween disco, a trip to the racetrack, yard sales, and a May Day festival.

Large co-ops such as Benning Heights or New York's Co-op City may not be appropriate for everyone, but they do offer certain advantages. A large co-op can be thought of as a series of smaller, informal co-ops. This is especially obvious in Co-op City, where there are literally hundreds of social groups and special-interest groups that, as one member put it, tend to "honeycomb" the co-op and its members. Small-group identity within the larger co-op is important, perhaps even more than the singular identity of Co-op City. The informal communication networks rival formal lines of communication for mobilizing opinion. The co-op is really a full-service community.

Types of Co-ops

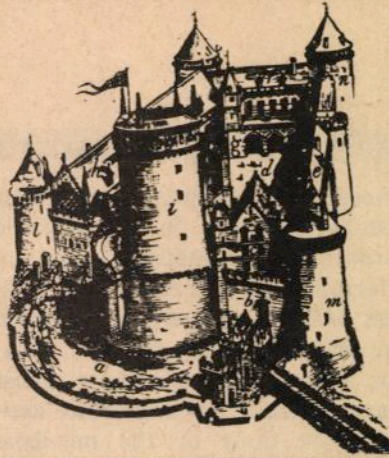
Size is one of the major determinants of the character of a co-op, but it is certainly not the only one.

Each co-op is unique because of its members, the community in which the members live, and the co-op's rules of operation, among other factors. There are four major types of co-ops: the investment co-op and structured co-op among older models and the mutual housing association and full-service co-op, prevalent among co-ops that have appeared during the last ten years.

Investment Co-ops — Many large apartment buildings on both the East and West Sides of Manhattan have been converted into cooperatives by and for the well-to-do. The co-ops, like nearly all real estate in Manhattan, are very expensive. Their acquisition cost and their monthly carrying charges are high. It is common for members to have to borrow the money to purchase membership, so they face monthly personal mortgage payments in addition to their co-op carrying charges.

Apartment ownership via the co-op corporation has existed in New York City since early in this century. The co-op idea was first brought from Europe by unions wanting to provide decent housing for workers as an alternative to city tenements

Co-ops are democratic in decision-making: each member household has one vote, regardless of size or investment.



and was later adapted to the high-rise apartment buildings of Manhattan. Developers recognized that in the tight housing market in Manhattan they could command a very high price for a building as a co-op. The value of parts of the building to many small investors became larger than the value of the whole to a single investor.

The demand for co-ops remains strong in New York because of rising property values and the attractive tax benefits of ownership. The rising value of co-op memberships is keeping pace with the value of other real estate investments. Many people purchase memberships purely as investments often with the intention of subletting rather than occupying their unit. Tenants are also taking advantage of the opportunity to purchase their units at a discount with the intention of quickly selling the unit at market rates.

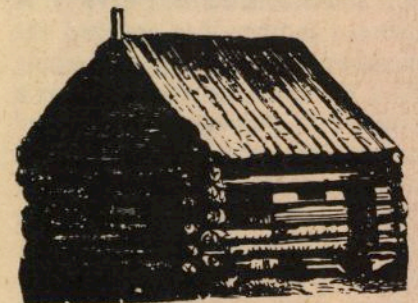
Because of the high cost of such co-ops and their legal control over who becomes a member, they have become very exclusive. Richard Nixon, Barbra Streisand, and other well known people have been turned down by investment co-ops for nonfinancial reasons such as security and privacy.

Outside of New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and a few other cities, the investment co-op for middle- and upper income families is less common and condominiums are more popular because of the preference of banks, developers, and other people in the real estate business.

Structured Co-ops — Many older co-ops were started as a result of federal government support of the housing co-op idea. Grounded in the principles of stability and affordability, these co-ops took advantage of direct federal financing and insurance programs to establish homeownership opportunities for families. As of November 1982, HUD insurance was in force for 122,734 units in 1,009 housing co-ops across the country. Also as of that date only 25 insured co-ops (2 percent) had defaulted, with ownership assumed by HUD through foreclosure.

To ensure the success of co-ops and the security of its investments, the federal government requires that assisted co-ops be carefully structured. Standard by-laws, subscription agreements, occupancy agreements, and other forms have been developed by HUD for these co-ops. These documents provide for a very strong board of directors. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development actively monitors the co-ops' financial operations and imposes strict requirements on record keeping and the maintenance of reserve funds.

Pine Grove Village in Lexington, Massachusetts, is a five-year-old mixed-income cooperative sponsored by the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. The announcement of available units brought applications from more than 600 families. Rents were very reason-





able: in 1982 a three-bedroom unit rented for \$394 per month, heat included. The co-op offers convenient access to metropolitan Boston for work and shopping and to one of the state's best school systems. Co-op members include whites, blacks, and Hispanics. There has been only one vacancy in the co-op's five years, and a waiting list of 140 still exists.

Mutual Housing Associations — Some co-ops are set up primarily to spawn other co-ops. A nonprofit or philanthropic group sets up a central organization, usually called a mutual housing association, to generate capital and provide support to groups who wish to start a co-op. We are aware of mutual housing associations in Detroit, Minneapolis, Baltimore, and Boston, as well as one that is just starting in Walla Walla, Washington.

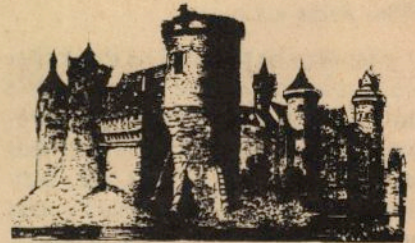
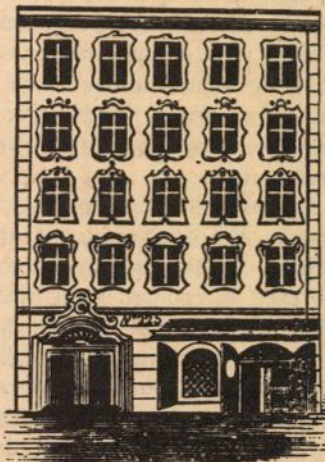
Growth-oriented co-ops are most common in Europe. The best example may be the mother-daughter societies in Sweden. The mother co-op acts as developer of daughter co-ops. The daughter co-op, depending on the needs of its members, may contract with the mother organization for development services, management services, or technical assistance on a variety of co-op issues. When the daughter co-op is operating, it becomes a member of a federation of co-ops that supports future development activities of the mother co-op. The co-ops contribute membership fees and services

*Knowledge is
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to assist in the development of more co-ops. They also start savings accounts for children of member families so they can afford to join co-ops as adults.

Common Space, Inc. is a nonprofit development corporation established in 1977 by sixteen Minneapolis neighborhood groups to develop lower-income family co-op housing. It is controlled by a community-based board of directors whose members represent several inner-city neighborhood organizations, other nonprofit community developers, and the low-income housing co-ops sponsored by Common Space.

Common Space provides a variety of assistance services to groups that want to convert their current housing to co-ops. Its organizers work with tenants to explain the co-op structure and to organize the co-op corporation. Its staff helps new co-ops plan the finances for acquisition and rehabilitation and assists co-op members to take an active role in the rehabilitation. The staff also provides training in co-op management and bookkeeping. By October



1980, Common Space had been involved in the successful conversion of five cooperatives with a total of ninety-six family units.

Common Space activities are not limited to bricks and mortar. It also provides public information through a variety of media—publications, conferences, networks, lobbying, and special events. In 1981, it convinced the Minneapolis City Council to allocate nearly \$4 million to a low- and moderate-income housing construction program. It provides housing management services and has set up a share loan fund for families that cannot afford memberships in assisted co-ops. And it provides ongoing assistance to all its co-ops.

Full-Service Co-ops — A more recent type of housing co-op begins with housing services for its members and extends itself into other enterprises. Some housing co-ops have generated food co-ops, optical services co-ops, co-op pharmacies, co-op laundromats, cooperative health clinics, co-op recreational facilities, co-op day care, co-op cable TV stations, and credit unions.

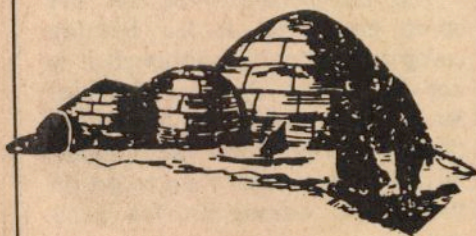
The membership base for the co-op enterprises is the housing co-op's membership, although it is not limited to that membership. Such co-ops sometimes take additional members from the community, who then often want to get on the co-op's waiting list for occupancy.

Who Joins a Co-op?

You may be tempted to think that we assume all people are alike. We do not, but it is difficult to introduce all the subtle differences that income, education, cultural attitudes, type of neighborhood, and ethnic identity can bring to a co-op. A co-op that works for one group will not necessarily work for another. Many of the distinctions between co-ops are due to class-related characteristics of the members; and many co-ops are successful because they achieve a class identity among their members.

Elderly — No matter how severe inflation is, it affects some groups more severely than others. Rising prices take their greatest toll on those with fixed incomes, such as most elderly citizens. Consequently, senior citizens are prime candidates for co-op housing. Many co-ops are established for and by the elderly, and they can be enormously successful.

It is important for co-op groups whose members include the elderly to keep in mind the special needs of the elderly. The elderly are not as mobile as younger people; their units should be more convenient to exits and elevators. They also may need some assistance with certain activities and may greatly appreciate planned social activities that include them.



The rising value of co-op memberships is keeping pace with the value of other real estate investments.

But even more important, co-op members should realize that skills acquired over a lifetime do not disappear with retirement. The elderly members of a co-op are potentially its greatest asset. They often have time to donate to many of the co-op's work tasks. Some have skills from years of business experience to help in the management of co-op affairs; others have had years of experience maintaining a home. The possible skills the elderly can bring to a co-op are numerous.

Students — Student communities often contain many idealistic people who have the spare time, energy, and commitment to work for non-monetary rewards—all characteristics that make them ideal candidates for co-ops. Co-ops also make sense for students, because they can be structured so that sweat can substitute for limited incomes. Strong student co-op movements exist in large campus communities such as Ann Arbor, Michigan; Berkeley, California; and Austin, Texas. Other smaller communities such as River City, Iowa, and Oberlin, Ohio, have also supported strong student co-ops.

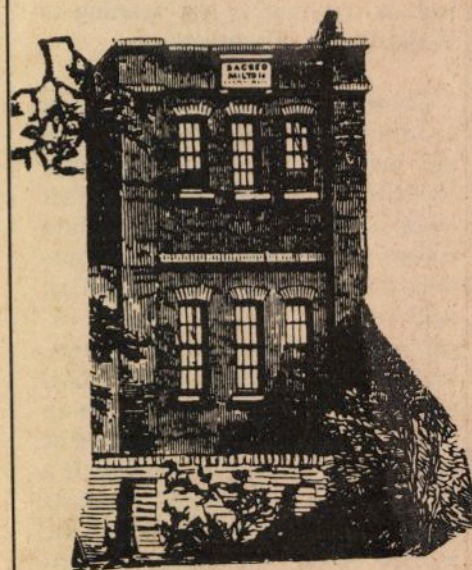
A major problem for student co-ops is the transience of their members. Most students are in school and the co-op for a limited number of years and they frequently want to leave town during school breaks. Student co-ops thus have to structure themselves for turnover. One student co-op in Montreal solved the problem of turnover by



turning itself into a hotel every summer—one of the least expensive in the city.

The North American Students of Cooperation (NASCO, 4312 Michigan Union Building, 530 S. State St., Ann Arbor, MI 49109) has substantial experience with student co-ops in all parts of the country, and has assembled an impressive library of publications for student and nonstudent co-ops.

Upper Americans — Eric F. Goldman, a Princeton historian, has defined as "upper Americans" college graduates now in their twenties, thirties, and early forties who grew up as part of the 1960s protest against middle-class American society. Though few are poor, the group is not characterized by income. It is defined by education and cultural choices. Goldman suggests that the group's members were educated in East Coast schools and in California and that they prefer wine and vodka





to beer and bourbon. Whatever their choices, the group is now of substantial size and exerts considerable influence in society through both business and cultural organizations. Goldman estimates that they account for about 15 percent of the population.

A large portion of this group is now entering the housing market looking for ownership and investment opportunities. Being both trend setting and well educated, this group should be attracted to the co-op alternative. Brought up through the movements of the sixties, they learned that cooperative efforts require work. They recognize the tax incentive to own rather than rent, but they also want other investments. This group can make the housing co-op a well-known alternative.

Middle Class and Working Class — A middle-class community that includes lawyers, accountants, and business people does not lack managerial talent for co-ops. There is also a great likelihood of homogeneity. Working-class communities seem to have a higher tolerance for diversity and a greater mixture of people, including elderly, students, and young families. The availability of affordable housing draws all these groups together.

The middle and working classes can be expected to embrace more structure in their co-ops and in their relationships among members. Flex-

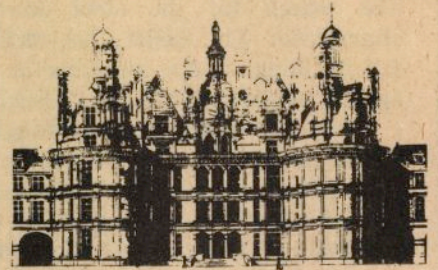
ibility within the co-op will be more clearly preferred by upper Americans.

The main differences between a working-class and a middle-class co-op usually result from the different skills of their members. The middle-class co-op may be better run because members have business skills, but the working-class co-op may achieve important savings because of the electrical, plumbing, carpentry, and mechanical skills of its members.

Mixed-income Co-ops — Good inexpensive housing is a critical need for the working poor and for welfare families. Co-ops have demonstrated that they can fill this need. The successful mixed-income co-ops across the country have some common elements: involvement of the members from the start, careful training of members in management skills they have never had the opportunity to develop, and strong systems of accountability.

There are both successful and unsuccessful (that is, surviving but not thriving) mixed-income cooperatives. Mixed-income co-ops gener-

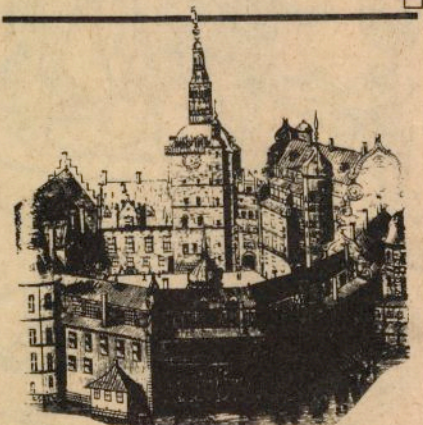
*When they use
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ally are sponsored by nonprofit groups which, while well-intentioned, often are inexperienced. New members often are unprepared for the differing lifestyles that the mixed-income families may introduce. Successful co-ops are able to use the democratic structure of the co-op to work out differences.

Mixed-income co-ops have learned that education and communication are critical. Many low-income members initially do not understand the difference between their co-op and previous rental situations. When they use “as much hot water as possible” in order to get their money’s worth, they are still thinking like a renter. Training and early clarification of roles is critical to the success of such a co-op.

Having charted some general observations about co-ops and co-op members, we realize that we have not covered every type and every person. We’ve identified only those types with the most direct connections to co-ops. Each individual has to decide what type of co-op and co-op members suit his or her needs. □



The search for the ideal community must not be abandoned. The belief that shrinkage is inevitable is self-fulfilling. If our mindsets go sour, if we accept the agenda of slash and burn, we hold a ticket to desolation.

When the battle is being fought between those who would cut back services and scuttle community and let the chips fall where they may, and those who count themselves "progressives" for shoring up the same doddering system one more year, then those of us who care about our own communities may legitimately look for another battlefield. We can say your agenda is not mine, your options are not mine, and we will find new options of our own.

There is not one way, but there are many ways. There is the way of organizing within the current system. There is the way of sneak inside attacks. There is the way of systemic confrontation, this with multiple hues. There is the way of charity, for those who can afford it. There is the way of self-transformation, for those who can afford that. There is the way of preventing nuclear war, so that some ways will be viable. There is the way of alongside, of feeding off the resources of the present system, until your system grows strong. There is the way of attempting life free from the system altogether, though that's hard to do.

Community Dreams is a way. Its way focuses on tinkering with the equipment, on altering the mindset with which we see our communities. It offers options, partial visions, on approval, for review.

This way assumes that we want to be powerful and to control our own lives. It assumes that as governments cut back, our home communities and neighborhoods will become more important — more needs will be met there. It assumes that we will have to take more responsibility for

our home communities. And it infers that we are most likely to find power and control, and gladness and joy, closest to where we live.

Community Dreams is a collection of small-scale, local-level ideas which can be set in motion in most communities by yourself and the people you know. There are exceptions. But generally speaking, the ideas here can be implemented with relatively little money, technical expertise, physical equipment, government intervention, or time. They rely instead on cooperation, trust, openness, sharing, and strength of will.

Some of the dreams related here are fictional — really dreams as far as I know. Others are factual, based on personal experience, or on what people have told me, or what I've read about. Others are hybrids, centaurs, and mermaids. The boundary lines between fact and fantasy are blurry, which makes little difference in this case, for this is not Scholarship, and the truth-value of these dreams is not at issue. What's at issue is sparkle. And especially at issue is convertability, practicality, for *Community Dreams* is meant to be a book of practical utopias.

Some dreams mentioned may seem tame to you. Others may hover at the edge. But mainstream to one is margin to another; our experiences, like our communities, are not complete nor uniform. So we need deeper channels for importing ideas. We need more idea markets and more shipping lanes. We must broaden the horizons, lower the barriers, find new ways for making connections and for looking at our communities with fresh eyes. Fantasies, guided explorations, extended dream voyages can help us do this.



This excerpt from 'Community Dreams' is only a small selection from the book. If you enjoy what you read, 'Community Dreams' is available directly from Impact Publishers, P.O. Box 1094, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. The price is \$8.95 plus \$1 shipping.

community dreams

ideas for
enriching
neighborhood
and
community
life

bill berkowitz

The point is not that every single dream can or should find its way into your own community. We respect won'ts, can'ts, and yes-buts. But figure two, three, five percent slip past the censor and into the big dream theater. Figure you match five percent with five of your own. Figure that a few make it onto the real life playing field. If you as reader were to take a *single* idea from this book or from your imagination and put it into operation where you live, that could be magnificent. The goal for you as dreamer is to seek the right dreams for yourself, free some more of your own, find your moment, and make your move.

I can hear another objection, cutting deeper this time. The most elegant street life, for example, the most spectacular festivals, the most careful attention to personal or communal beauty will not stop thievery, or end social brutality, or find people jobs, or housing, or raise people's incomes, or improve public health in as yet proven ways. One may argue (though misleadingly I think) that these first-named preoccupations, which we have embraced, are more frequently associated with lives of poverty and desperation. We are then advocating Band-Aids at best, bonbons at worst, in a society crumbling at the center.

Yet I believe this is not so much an objection to dreamwork as a statement about social structure and its resistance to change. Tear-stained limits bound any intervention. Reformers will meet their wailing wall. Most interventions fail, or fade away fast. Only a handful yield enduring and desired change; only a thimbleful change which is also widespread. It is hard, rock-bottom hard, to leave a lasting mark on one's community, much less society. And so it may be wise to honor any actor, simply

for acting, apart from goals and technique. Those can be easily taught.

Still, the fact is we need more community dreamers and more community dreams. When others talk of shrinkage, we must be countercyclical and talk of utopia. We must talk utopia to those we meet and those we teach. We must train new generations of utopians to rise in our places.

Utopia has a bad name in our society, a sign of the times. Utopians, they are foolish, and also vaguely dangerous. Yet would you not live in the utopia of your choice? And if you would, will you then blot it from your mind? How much less will you settle for? Are you willing to take one step, or another?

Steps must be taken, for dreams alone will get us nowhere. At some point, community dreams must be converted to reality. The mechanics of conversion are not for this book, belonging rather to the literature of community organization, written down and yet to come. Conversion will take skill; but however much skill may be needed, the drive to get going must be no less strong. Skill must be accompanied by will. Skill training must be accompanied by behavior modification of the spirit.

To modify means to look for inspiration. Inspiration is your option-maker, you dream generator. Inspiration should be treasured wherever it is found, and it is found in silence and in conversation and in falling leaves for one ready to receive it. May we be ready, and ready to share it and fan its flame.

A few years ago, on a wall in the Cathedral housing project in Boston, boarded up, beaten, the worst of the worst, next to "Freddie as Mr. Kool," I found painted these words which lifted me and helped me write:

Dig inside yourself
See what you find

It could be something
You buried and kept buried
For a long time

Brothers and Sisters
Bring your buried treasure
To the surface of life.

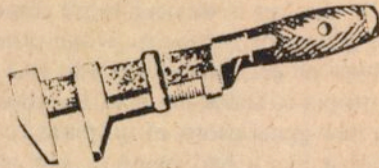
Skills

Ten in the morning on a side street in town. New building going up. A bricklayer, working with mortar and trowel, putting up a side wall.

A small crowd gathers, a blend of men and women, young and old. The bricklayer turns:

“Now, when you’re putting up a wall like this, what you want to do is to make sure that . . . You start by . . . And when you’ve got that lined up, then you . . .”

This is the Tuesday morning bricklaying lesson, brought to you courtesy of your local construction company.



Wednesday, it's welding, Thursday carpentry, Friday electrical wiring. Topics change from time to time; a schedule is posted. If you want to learn a skill, or just watch, all you do is show up. If you want to practice, sign up for the apprentice program where you work for free, or sometimes a dollar or two an hour, under supervision. Kids of all ages try this on vacation.

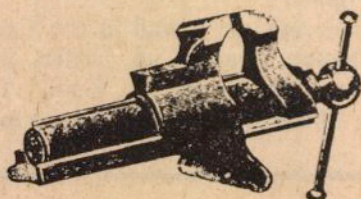
The University of the Sidewalk keeps people on the streets.

• • •

At the newspaper office, the Home and Garden Editor sits by the phone.

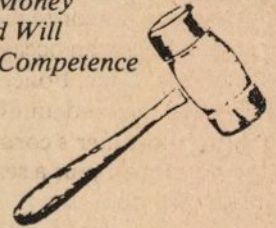
Today is phone day, and his phone starts ringing before the appointed hour. How do I install tile grouting? Should I prune my fruit tree this time of year? The radiator leaks all over the floor. Why is my paint peeling?

He is Miss Lonelyhearts of the building trade. When



the afternoon is over, he has answered 52 specific home repair questions, matched another 19 callers to local suppliers, referred seven callers elsewhere, and promised another five he'd get back to them. That's his homework for tonight.

*Save People Money
Create Good Will
Raise Community Competence*



Who wants to learn all these skills? Well, you don't have to learn. You can pay for services, just as always. Or you can trade:

I'm calling the skills bank to make a withdrawal. "Hi, I'd like to find someone to put in a new window." The bank gives me numbers to call; I make arrangements. The guy comes over; I can tell he knows about windows, whether or not he's a professional glazier. I watch and ask questions. He figures his time, which comes to 1½ units. I sign a receipt, he sends it to the bank, which makes a withdrawal in my name.

I make it up because I'm a tennis coach and people call me for lessons. I sign their receipts and balance my account. Nice how you can get many of the services you need without paying for them. And how you can parlay one skill into receiving a whole bunch of others.

Skills banks, or skills exchanges, are easy, in that the skills are already there, in the community. What it takes is organization, to break down inertia, and to set things up so that people trust each other enough to exchange skills fairly.

• • •

The pipe burst at 3:00 a.m. The awakened homeowner calls, and someone appears within the hour. A clever entrepreneur has organized a small squad of moonlighters into a 24-hour repair service. They carry beepers, for they are house doctors on call. If it can't wait till morning, and sometimes it can't, you can get it done now.

It will cost you. That is, unless you have taken out home repair insurance, a form of black thumb protection. You pay a set policy fee, according to the covered items. There are merit ratings, and high risk pools.

Neighborhoods

The newsletter under my door tells me what's going on in my neighborhood. It has short news notes and a calendar of events (special preview of upcoming yard

sale; party for Blossom Street residents this Saturday night). There are editorials, rebuttals to the editorials, letters of thanks, letters of outrage. John is moving Monday, could use assistance. Please keep your dog off my lawn. A free classified, a lost and found, things to give away, the neighborhood association minutes and agenda. Favorite recipes and fix-it tips, a few one-liners, an occasional cartoon. Real estate transactions. Police logs. New business ideas. Birthdays and anniversaries, anonymous suggestions, the old-timer's corner. Who's New (baby and adult divisions), plus a scattering of out-and-out gossip and innuendo.

It's mimeographed, and it's only four pages every two weeks. Though it's artistically ragged, and grammatically impure, there's nothing I look forward to reading as much. It makes me feel I belong here.

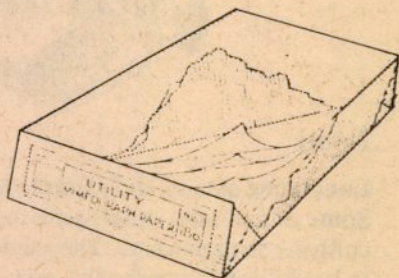
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Would people pay an average of \$10 a year (sliding scale) for 24 yearly issues? After a free issue and trial run, yes, they would. Questions now: Should the newsletter take ads? Should it expand to eight pages? Sixteen? How big can it get without losing the neighborhood feel and intimacy that made it a success in the first place?

• • •

When I first started looking for a place, the real estate people gave me a neighborhood brochure, which told me who lived here, what went on, some neighborhood advantages. A promotional piece, but straightforward, not puffed up. I felt drawn in.

The brochure came with a pocket-size directory of services and resources, places and people to contact. And the real estate people, who are linked with the neighborhood association, will take you on neighborhood tours. They'll also give you copies of the neighborhood newsletter, plus the names of some folks with varying points of view, signed up on a list, and ready to talk.



I first knew my neighborhood was special when I rented my house. The historical society came by with the house's genealogy, the list of people who had lived there before me, done up like a family tree. Common practice around here, even for people who rent. A

labor of love for sure, and done very gradually, but once the tree is done pretty much forever. As I became rooted in the past, I felt more responsible for the present. Thank you to the older people around here, for all your work.



• • •

The neighborhood assembly is the hub of what goes on around here. I'm a member, just like everyone else. The assembly meets weekly, to raise and act on any issue of neighborhood concern.

Anyone can come, anyone can talk, and anyone who's been at two of the last three meetings can vote. In practice, people tend to appear when they have something in particular to say or bring up. There's also an elected group of nine members who are obliged to be there, who generally want and take on more responsibility, but who don't have any more voting power. It's a hybrid system, but it works out well.

Last week's meeting, for example, featured discussions of unleashed dogs and off-street parking, the report from the tree-planting committee, a possible education grant application, and proposals to relocate the neighborhood machine shop and to expand the cooperative grocery store. The big kids were cautioned not to crowd the little kids' playground space. A few referrals to the community mediation panel were made, and a couple of new informal task groups started. Next week will be the semi-annual municipal performance review; more people will be there then.

• • •

No two neighborhood associations are quite alike. Some have set up 24-hour emergency volunteer services, visitation programs for the sick and infirm, and goods exchanges with neighborhoods nearby. Others run neighborhood study groups, sponsor job-matching programs, and deliver the inter-office mail. A few concentrate more on cultural affairs, give out block awards, and make small grants from their dues.

Most associations belong to the city-wide confederation of neighborhoods which meets once a month to discuss common issues and share new ideas. The associations are also flanked by a network of smaller and more social block groups.

Of course, much of what happens in the neighborhood is informally generated and doesn't involve these organizations at all. But our experience is that the added-on formal structures stimulate more informal ones, which can then get formalized, if

there's the need. Formal and informal feed each other, and both serve the common good.

My neighborhood association is powerful not only because it represents the neighborhood, but also because it gets money from the city council to provide services. Neighborhoods are registered governmental units, with charters, by-laws, the whole works. The combined associations account perhaps for half the town budget. With that money, they are responsible for their own parks and park maintenance, for trash collection, for their branch library, for their recreation and school programs in part, and for whatever extras they want. It's their job to rank priorities, fix budgets, and spend money wisely. Most of the spending is usually done via a contract system, with competitive bidding. The association sets the standards, drafts the contract, hires the vendor, monitors the performance, pays the bills, and decides whether or not to renew.

But there's more than one pathway to neighborhood power. Where I used to live, neighborhoods got vouchers instead of cash, a sort of scrip they could use each year for purchasing services. Then they got bonuses based on how well they did at meeting goals agreed on with the town. (Bonuses went to neighborhood projects.) Also, the association in the next neighborhood over levies a voluntary, graduated tax for small neighborhood programs, over and above the money it gets from the city council. My friend's association goes one step further by directing its voluntary tax dollars to local charities.

Now, industrial recruitment we leave to the Chamber, the big boys. But a group of us has taken responsibility for recruiting small businesses. We keep our eyes and ears open, and when we see a need for another hardware store, or an electronics shop, or a new pharmacy, we'll set to work on finding one, maybe using the multi-media promotional package we designed for those occasions, sometimes even encouraging our neighbors to go into business for themselves.

If it's a question of something which may alter the landscape, even a little, or even if you're not sure, you do have to file a neighborhood impact statement, which has to pass through our neighborhood zoning group. Yet if there's really a need to change the zoning pattern for a desired business — or to protect our residential property — we can usually get it done.

The photographer is coming around this week to take pictures for the neighborhood yearbook. Let's be

approximately serious here. Soon you'll be able to see what that couple down the street really looks like, and if so and so is getting older. The yearbook is a big seller. It helps people get to know each other, just like the freshman register at college. The pictures strengthen the neighborhood by giving people faces. Faces lead to greetings. Greeting leads to meeting. Ice is broken; connections are formed.

The upshot of all this activity is that my neighborhood is more self-sufficient — for we produce more of our own goods; we provide more of our own services; we know what our resources are and where to find them; we've developed talents we didn't have before; and we're less dependent on outside forces, on the turmoil of the outside world. Within pretty broad limits, we can take care of ourselves, and as a consequence, we're better able to take care of others if we need to.

But what is more, my neighborhood is a place where I feel grounded and secure. I'm known, I'm recognized, and I'm accepted. My neighborhood cloaks me, comforts me, keeps me snug on the inside. Someday I may choose to cast it off and leave it behind, or put it in storage, or give it to someone else. Maybe I will. But as long as I take good care of it, it should last me forever.



Food

Lunchtime at City Hall. Employees head for the roof. Some sit and talk, others strip and sunbathe, others cultivate their gardens. The gardens grow in what used to be children's sandboxes, now hauled skyward. Other parts bloom in rain barrels, hollowed-out oil drums, beaten-up wastebaskets, planters of all sizes and shapes. Vegetables grow on half the roof's surface, and keep the workers below in produce through the summer.

Some sections of the roof garden grow vertically, or hydroponically, without soil. Others employ French culture. They are space-intensive, lovely to look at, the art of the state.

The community garden surrounds the solar greenhouse.

Next to garden and greenhouse is the community canning factory.

Much of the produce, fresh or canned, goes to the warehouse.

The warehouse ships to the cooperative stores.

Bruised goods and surplus are for the food bank.

Inedible residue is for the compost pile. (Some is trucked back to farms for animal feed.)

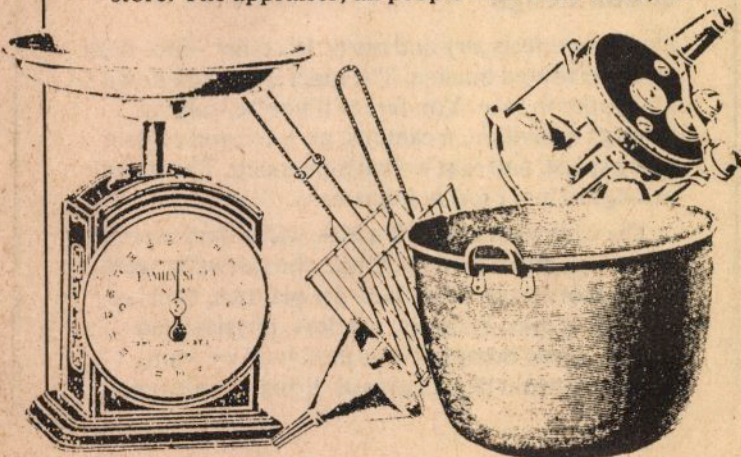
The compost returns to the gardens.

The town has created a food chain, its own ecosystem.

Exchanges

Walking down Exchange Place, you pass by bins full of office supplies, cleaning products, garden equipment, baseball cards, video game cartridges, posters, records, power tools, building remnants, plumbing fixtures, paperback books, hardcovers, magazines, bicycles, bicycle parts, skates by size, skiing gloves, football pads, sawdust, pewterware, Tupperware, Hummel figures, carnival glass, old bottles, postcards, lamps, stamps, coins, cassettes, canned tomatoes, toys, comic books, games, puzzles, clothing, cooking utensils, cosmetics, and no-account scrap.

Exchange Place is a thrift shop supermarket, opened just this year. A large rented storefront, counters and aisles. The difference is no cash registers. You bring in an item, an appraiser assigns a dollar value, take it or leave it. Takers get scrip, good for anything in the store. The appraiser, all people who work there, are



community volunteers. Since no money changes hands, there's less incentive for partiality. Let's call this Model A.

There are variations. Model B is a membership organization with staff paid in scrip. Model C trades in cash. Look at these models; then add your own.

Feature	Model		
	A	B	C
Storefront?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Membership required?	No	Yes	No
Membership fee or dues?	No	Yes	No
Get cash for selling?	No	No	Yes
Pay cash for buying?	No	No	Yes
Take what you need?	No	No	No
Method for setting value?	Appraiser	Appraiser	Appraiser
Paid staff?	NO	Yes (scrip)	Yes (cash)
Items accepted?	All	All	All

No, we rarely use money here. Money is an instrument of mass society; we're in the post-monetary era now. Most of the time, we use tokens instead. One thousand per year are given to each man, woman, and child.

You're right, you can't buy anything with them, in the traditional sense. But you can exchange them for whatever you like. You have to remember, though, that these tokens are good only in our community. The next town over is more primitive than we are, and still uses gold stars, I think.

We're proud of our token economy here. We've begun to create our own economic system.

Centers

At the stroke of 9:30, the record store changes into a coffeehouse. The record bins wheel back to the corner. Folding tables and checkerboard cloths spread out. The espresso machine starts steaming as the house lights dim. New customers arrive. Tonight's blues group begins to warm up. They'll autograph records, and dedicate this one to you.

Street life

Off duty, the streetwalker notices little kids sitting under a tree listening to an old woman. She is telling stories about when she was young, adding a few of her own. Imaginations and truth blend together. Today the old woman is culture-bearer and day care center. The kids are rapt. They will sit until dark, and they will remember.

In the streets, there are street vendors and pushcart

peddlers, fortune tellers and gossip mongers, jugglers and child magicians, a clown polishing her act.

In the streets, there are wandering minstrels and roller skaters, sound trucks and amateur hours, inner observers and happiness dealers, kids playing tag.

In the streets, there are pony rides.

In the streets, there's a speaker's corner, with poster schedule and rules. There are white-gloved and helmeted people on platforms directing traffic on hourly tours.

In the streets, there is entertainment for the theater-goer, humility for the proud, solace for the lonely, a continuous and embracing support system.



When it's winter and cold, there are advantages to a climate-controlled shopping mall. The mall becomes main street. Street life moves inside.

After hours, the stores close down, but the mall stays open. A pickup foam-rubber soccer game starts at one end, an evening fashion show at the other. There are sight readings, prayer meetings, college classes. Later on a dance band moves in — great acoustics — and the dancers party till dawn.

Economic development

The Dedham Diner has to move down the road, but has no money for moving expenses, and who in hell will finance moving a diner? So you go to your customers and borrow from them. Promissory notes at \$100 a pop, redeemable in cash or in store credit with a bonus. The diner sells 50, takes the \$5000 and moves. Here is a people's loan association, trusting in a successful business.

The ad hoc association can become a permanent revolving loan fund. The loan fund can become a credit union. The credit union can become a bank. The bank can be formal or informal, physical or spiritual, inside or beside the law. Mindset is the charter ingredient.

Local banks loan mostly inside the community. They set aside low-interest funds for new community projects. Imagination is mandated. The low-cost loan applications are put out for public comment;

comments and decisions are kept up front.

Some banks specialize. The First Shepherd's Bank, for example, specializes in Christian causes, and draws on biblical authority. Most depositors tithe. The tithers vote on directors, and the directors vote on causes. And so this bank finances one of the most active social service systems in the country, both through loans and direct distribution of profits.

The First Latin Bank is not too far behind. The Veterans and Libertarian Banks are in the planning stages. The area socialists wonder what their bank would look like. At First Idealist, you pay back what you can.

Energy

The electric company decides to become a public utility, and holds elections for its board. Ballots are mailed with the electric bill. Each month offers checks and balances.

The company gives back bonus bucks for the installation of energy-efficient appliances. These are coupons, good for reductions on future utility bills, which come in various types and denominations, its Solar T-Bills among the most popular.

The utility rate structure itself has been turned upside down. The price per energy unit gets costlier the more energy you use, not cheaper. What's more, there's a menu-full of rate structures you can buy into, just as with the telephone. You can buy bare-bones service, for a bare-bones price. You can get time-of-use rates, where you pay less for using power at off times of the day. You can change rates according to the season. You can order a la carte or table d'hote. And you can choose conservation-incentive rates, which give you rebates for reducing your total consumption by fixed percentages from last year's.

Urban design

Downtown feels airy and open. It's quiet, since most traffic is routed outside. The quiet slows you down — it's harder to race. You feel as if you're walking through a pavilion, a campus, an extension of your living space, and that's what's intended. The street belongs to me; I feel at home here.

The walkways are built a little wider than usual to encourage street activity. Once, the sidewalks were linear speedways. Now there are planters, benches, flowers, kiosks, statuary, vendors, physical and psychic speed bumps. Three mph is all we want.

Every several blocks squares bring people together.

They have fountains, gardens, fragrance, alcoves in the shade. Even the street furniture — the cushioned sofas, the contoured tables — makes people feel comfortable. The overall design helps people to relax and look around and make contact with each other.

Health

Many of the health care professionals in the area have formed their own health maintenance organization. Their HMO sells stock: it's publicly owned. Because it is more accountable and more passionate than its larger competitors, it tends to offer more service for less money.

In any case, the community attracts professionals who believe in integrating holistic and traditional and sociocultural approaches to health. All these caregivers are paying more careful attention to each other's work. The disciplinary lines are blurrier. The inservice meetings are livelier. The referral network is broader and tighter. More healing energy is directed outward — a citizen's advisory committee makes sure of that. Another task force is updating and enlarging the Hippocratic oath.

Safety

Madison, Wisconsin, news item: In an effort to prevent street crime, the city votes aside funds to subsidize cab fares for women returning home late at night.

Every Saturday morning, for years now, the anti-nuclear group holds a vigil in the plaza. They just stand. The police chief takes a turn now and then, as a witness of his own concern. The civil defense officer, though, is a regular member. His job includes planning for nuclear disaster, but he knows what bombs can do, and to him antiwar and civil defense and public safety are one.

Festivals

At dusk, the masked ball begins. Main Street is blocked off — no admittance without full costume. The masquerade has started. Dancing to waltzes and old-time hits from the Golden Treasury. The air is redolent with courtliness and charm. The band asks the dancers to join in, and two thousand masked men and women sing. Prizes are given as the dance winds down: if you recognize your neighbor, let him know, and he is out, or vice versa. Don't guess wrong, for that's your elimination. The last couple to be tapped

are King and Queen of the ball. They mount the stage, as familiar voices shout congratulations.

A fireworks display co-sponsored by the cooperative savings bank and competing units of the National



Guard and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which are looking for something to do on weekends. Every degree of sky lights up, while the band plays on.

Midnight, masks come off. Torchlight processions back to the neighborhoods. Block parties are gearing up. Intimate parties, if you care to go. Smaller pickup bands. Toss all the kids' shoes into one big outdoor pile. Build a bonfire in the middle of the block and toast marshmallows. Make your own music. Pass around the good stuff. Sleep when you must. The pancake makers are back at their trade, mixing batter for those who will still be awake at the second dawn.

On the Sabbath, it is quiet. The stores are closed. Most people stay around and save gas. They visit each other, go to church, walk in the woods, and reflect. They are renewed.

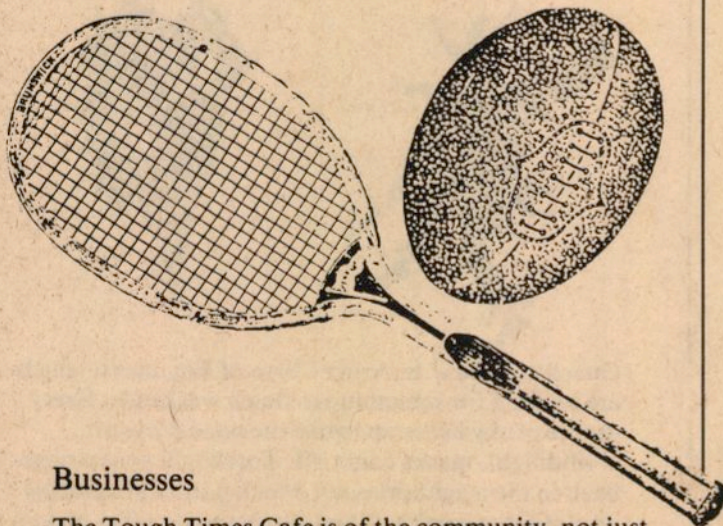
Recreation

The jogging course at the airport (blue stripe on the floor) takes in all the departure gates from Northwest to Eastern. Finish with a workout at the airport gym. Locker and shower combinations, towel included, only a dollar. Catch your plane relaxed and refreshed.

Most of the time we're first in line for a play street permit. It's our street, after all. We play the standard street games and the sports-pages sports. Basketball on the court we hot-topped ourselves. Living chess with 32 live pieces. But everyone comes onto the street to play volleyball. That's about 30 on a team, no side or end lines, and unlimited hits. Sometimes two volleyballs at once.

Then, once a year, the multi-street olympics, a full-weekend event, with opening games ceremony, an

olympic runner with torch, uniforms, flags, anthems, medals. Giant games of dodgeball and cops and robbers. Fire escape climbing. Long-distance marbles. Hopscotch for the little kids. Plus the traditional pentathlon of boxball, stoopball, Chinese handball, stickball hitting, and running bases.



Businesses

The Tough Times Cafe is of the community, not just in it. The community supports the bar; therefore, the bar supports the community. Its owners decide to turn a third of the profits toward community causes. One year it hosts a spectacular party, food and drink on the house. The following year it gives rebates. The next year it donates to a community charity. The year after that it makes matching grants and thinks of turning itself into an independent foundation.

Following the leadership of the bar, other businesses begin profit-sharing. The record shop donates records to the library. The vegetable stand gives to the food bank. The building supply puts up a park bench. The

shoe store, tying in with the voter registration campaign, gives away sneakers to new registrants and tells them to vote with their feet.

The merchants meet later and decide on other private sector initiatives. They will give five percent of their profits this year toward the operation of the downtown shopping bus. Next time, maybe they'll find another cost-effective model. They're ready to profit-share with the town, trusting that the town is ready to profit-share with them.

Arts

Pickup folk dancing in the park. The phonograph plays music of all nations. The mood is active and brisk, zestful and dignified. Traditional enjoyment, where all can join in, for heritage is open to anyone.

Dance Free Friday night. Pump all the poison from your system. The music is taped, a new tape made each week by one of the Dance Free Collective. All musical styles and paces. Dance with others; dance by the mirror; dance with your self. Drink orange juice. Join in a circle; snake through the room. Heat up, let yourself go. Find your dancing nature, and set it free.

Families

If the block is close, there are block eyes on the street. People know the neighborhood kids and watch over them. Children feel adults even at a distance. More often than not, their spell is positive.

Godparenting is also in fashion; a child may have a dozen. Little ceremonies are common. Some block members, out of duty or boredom, become godparents to all kids on the street. Others act the same way, without need for the trappings.

You have read about my dreams: I would like to read about yours.

Across America, I believe there are thousands of community ideas like those mentioned here, but different and often better. Yet many of them are secreted, forgotten, half buried and left for dead. They don't get publicized because their creators are not writers and because they wouldn't know how or where to publicize them outside of their own communities. There's also no incentive for doing so. How can we provide one?

I envision a sequel to this book, richer and more exciting than this one, of community dreams and real community actions of your own. I see a network of dreamers from coast to coast. I'd like to find a place for regular publication of new community ideas as they are thought up and implemented. We can start right here.

So I ask you to send me your dreams and your realities, in a paragraph or two or more, in whatever form makes most sense for you. What new ideas have worked in your community? What could work if given a chance? Be fanciful, or specific; let your mind run free.

All replies will be acknowledged. If there are enough, I will try to arrange for their publication, with proper credits to contributors. If you take a step, a bank of dreams may be closer than we think.

Address your response to:

Community Dreams
Impact Publishers
Post Office Box 1984
San Luis Obispo, California 93406

Thank you.

THE BEST INVESTMENT

Going It Alone or With Others

by David W. Felder

Going off into the middle of nowhere by yourself, to do everything by yourself, is not my idea of living a good life. I don't feel any need to prove that I can live without other people. Maybe I could, maybe I couldn't, but it wouldn't be much of an existence. I actually live in a community of about a hundred people who have formed an intentional community. People here live with all the advantages of civilization and few of the hassles. We are able to live better on less.

Advantages of the Community Route

When you get many households together to form an alternate community, a tremendous amount of purchasing power is created. Suddenly there is enough construction going on to support members of the community as carpenters and to form a good sized construction company. The financial arrangements for the co-op can employ someone as a bookkeeper; the job of running the development can employ someone as a coordinator. Childcare for a community of one hundred families can provide someone with work. With ingenuity dozens of jobs can be created. One woman in our co-op supports herself by making lunches for many of the people who still work outside the co-operative. It is reasonable to expect that as soon as a hundred families get together in an alternate community, jobs will be created for twenty-five people — people who will be on their way to an independent, simple lifestyle.



More than a quarter of the inhabitants of the M.L.C. have been able to drop out of nine-to-five jobs. All the co-op members are getting out from under making payments on their homes. More than half live in homes that have no mortgages. These economic benefits are overwhelming, but even more important are the spiritual benefits of living in a loving community.

I have had some of the greatest highs of my life from being with my neighbors at our community meetings. Seeing beautiful children playing together in our community center or having a Thanksgiving meal with a hundred others in the community gives me a wonderful feeling. The emotional ties that we have forged are something that cannot be measured. The community route to a simpler lifestyle, forming a community with others, can give you spiritual benefits you cannot obtain by yourself.

Many of the books on how to do it alone are based on the premise that you can only be self-sufficient if you do everything for yourself. So these books describe how one family can do everything for themselves. But they forget why people want to be self-sufficient in the first place. People want to have things set up so that their lives are not dependent on the economic cycle of boom and bust, and more recently, so their lives will not be threatened if the oil supply is shut off. Doing everything for oneself is one way of insuring that all the necessities of life are at hand. The community route is another way of achieving the exact same goal.

With the community route all the

necessities of life are in the community rather than in each household. People are able to specialize and to trade the things they produce. Through the use of barter people can insulate themselves from the uncertainties of the larger economy.

Deciding on the Type of Community You want

There are as many different types of communities as there are motivations for changing one's life. The *Commune Directory* published by *Communities Magazine* lists survival groups, yoga retreats, religious, aesthetic, and environmental groups; collectives that publish books, grow food, and ones that run seminars, free schools, and health institutes. As diverse as these groups are, they display only a few different forms of land ownership. Land can be owned by one wealthy individual who allows people to settle at his or her pleasure. Land can also be owned by an organization, by the individuals in the community, or with a combination of private and community ownership.

Many communities are started by wealthy individuals with individual motives. One person may happen to own a large farm and want like-minded people as neighbors; another may own land and be unable to make payments without involving more people. A rich person may want to be a guru and may believe that forming a community is a way of securing followers. Someone else may want to live in the country and may prefer to do so in an intentional community.

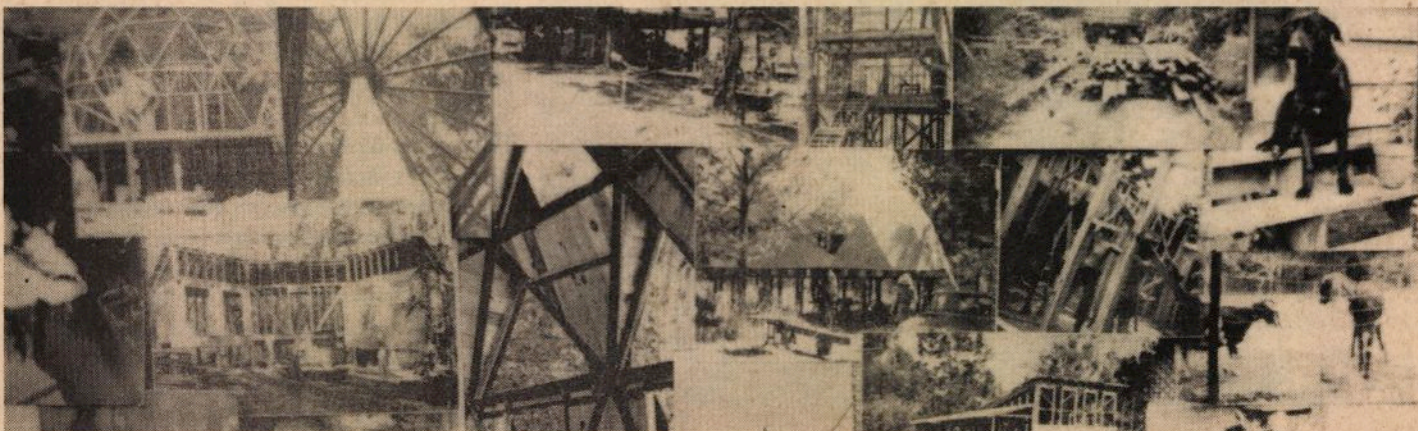
One obvious problem with having a community on land that is owned by one individual, or one family, is that

you end up with a class system in which the rest of the community can end up resenting the owners. The owners have all power over decisions because they own the land. If someone displeases the owners, they can force that person to leave. A community that exists on land owned by one individual cannot be a community of equals.

A second ownership scheme is to have land owned by an organization. Communities are sometimes organized around religious, political, or philosophical organizations. Individuals in these communities do not own the land they work, and when they leave the community they lose all claim to the land they helped improve. One exception is in the case of land corporations.

In a land corporation, the corporation owns the land, and individuals buy shares in the corporation. An individual receives the right to build a home on the land of the corporation. Of course he or she must try to find a spot that is not too close to other individuals' homes, and there has to be a mechanism to resolve difficulties regarding this. When a person wants to move on, they must sell their shares back to the corporation at the price the corporation decides.

The advantage of a land corporation is that it is a simple ownership structure. It does not require deeds, surveys, and the like. It appears ideal where there is a huge tract of wilderness that everyone wants to retain as wilderness. Problems arise when people want to move and get back what they spent on their homes. Buying into a land corporation is at best risky



for individuals who don't want to lose what they have.

A third ownership scheme is to have land owned entirely by individuals. This is what we usually have in the larger society. There is nothing communal about this, and individual land owners in cities, on farms, and sprawled out in suburbia have little of the feeling or benefits of community. The advantage of individual ownership is of course that a person can sell his or her land and receive a payment of money and energy put into improvements. The fault is that having entirely individual ownership precludes a sense of community.

A fourth ownership scheme allows for the development of community while also giving individuals the benefit of private ownership of land. Each individual, or family, owns at least one private acre, and the entire community shares in the ownership of common land. The price of common land is included in the price of the individual acres, so when people sell their private acres they receive a price that includes both the private and communal lands.

Land co-ops, unlike communities owned by one wealthy individual, allow the possibility of creating a democratic communal government. Unlike communities that are owned by organizations, land co-ops do not require conformity to a set of religious, political or philosophical viewpoints. In land co-ops individuals who may not be united in any other way can get together to buy land. If individuals decide to move, they can sell their land for whatever they can get: a feature that is not possible with

land corporations. Land co-ops have all the advantages that come with individual ownership plus the features of community which are lacking in normal developments.

Most people dream of achieving financial independence. People in our community have no illusions that they will be able to do everything within each household; they only hope that all the members of the community together can be independent of jobs outside the community. Our land co-operative tries to help members gain financial independence.

Financial Independence is a Community Affair

A hundred households, each having a yearly income of \$10,000, collectively have a million dollars a year coming into their community. Most communities don't do much with these resources because the money also goes out of their community.

Any time co-op members can buy something from another member of the community, rather than giving money to one of the chain stores, wealth is kept within the community. A good place to begin is with the most immediate needs of the community members — housing and food. A community of a hundred families has tremendous resources which are spent on both these needs.

As soon as the co-op is organized and people start building homes, tremendous resources are made available for people to earn a living building homes. Before joining the co-op people had been spending at least one-fourth of their income on housing. Figuring an average income

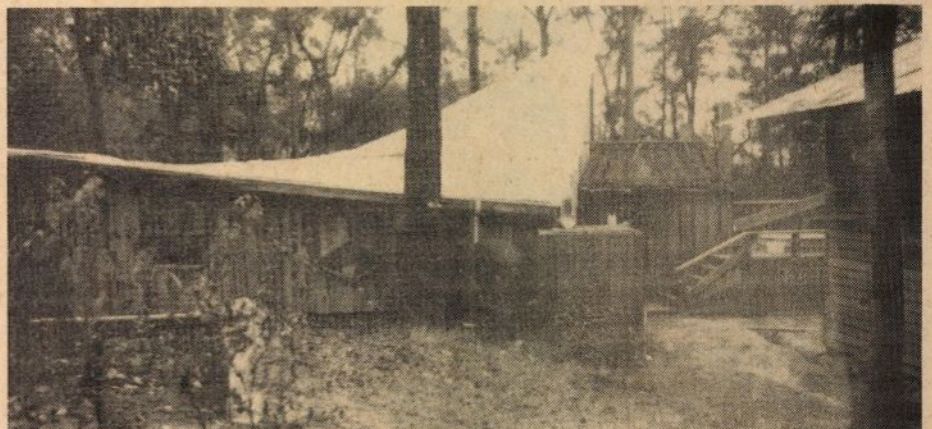
of \$10,000, this means that people have a quarter of a million a year to spend on housing. Actually there are much greater resources because each household could borrow \$20,000 from a bank for homes which would generate over two million dollars. With two million dollars you could theoretically hire everyone in the community to work at constructing homes for a year, since labor costs are approximately half the cost of construction.

Community Based Businesses

Construction Companies — A large construction company which is based in our community got its start building homes in our land co-operative. Some members of this company actually got loans for the homes which they built, which means that they borrowed money to hire themselves to build their own homes. After the company got started it moved on to doing homes throughout the area, and more recently it started a solar home development adjacent to the land co-operative. The total amount of building done by the company during the last year was in excess of a million dollars, which makes it one of the largest in our area. Sixteen of the thirty-four members of the company and all its officers but one are members of our land co-operative.

This company, Mad Dog Design and Construction, has been doing pioneer work in creating energy efficient homes. Their methods include the use of extra exterior walls, called envelope construction; the use of barrels filled with water to retain heat, and most commonly, the use of

This article is excerpts from 'The Best Investment' by David W. Felder. You may order the book through Wellington Press, P.O. Box 13504, Tallahassee, FL 32308 by sending \$10, which covers postage, handling, and any sales tax that may apply.



glass on a southern exposure. Their houses work — they save energy. In fact mad Dog is so confident of their houses that they have introduced the Guaranteed Maximum Energy Bill. They guarantee in writing that a family of two buying a house in their latest development will pay no more than an average of \$50 a month (\$600 a year) for total electric and gas usage. The figure is \$60 a month for a family of three. Their guarantee is truly a revolutionary concept in home construction.

There are several other construction companies owned by community members. Accuracy Ltd., Inc., recently converted a house in town to apartments. Neil Ryder Construction and Design, Inc., is currently developing two new subdivisions in addition to building houses. Live Oak Concepts, Inc., has done home remodeling and recently built a convenience store in a unique style that uses post and beam construction. They call their style "cowboy modern."

Independent Carpenters and Cabinet Makers — There are many individuals who enjoy construction work but don't like to work with a large company. Several such persons are able to earn a living in our community doing work on their own schedule. I hired a couple of my neighbors to work on building my house. The final trim work was done by a co-op member who does fine cabinet work. These individuals worked when they wanted and kept track of their time. My neighbors who work in this manner report that they usually have all the work they desire.

Contractors for Painting and Landscaping — David Tolley is a painting contractor. His company did a fine job spraying a special solar reflection paint on the roof of my house. I buy all my plants from a neighbor who has a company called "Growing Concepts, Inc." They do natural landscaping and outdoor woodwork, including decks, porches, and fences. This company has provided occasional work for up to six people.

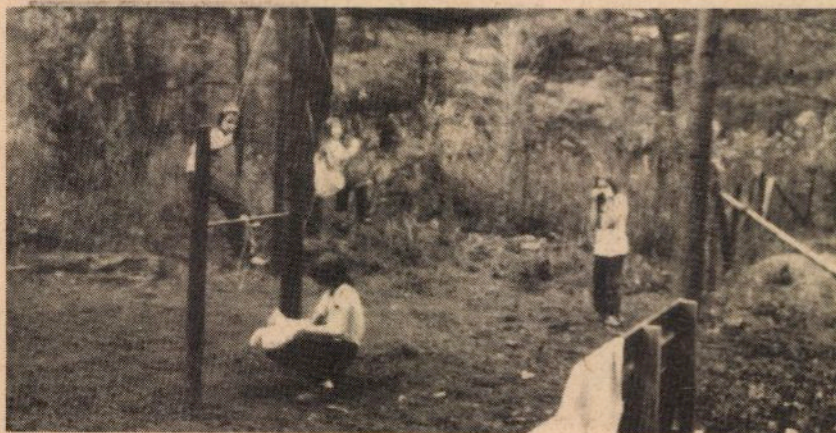
Brown Bag Lunches — Along with shelter, food is a basic necessity that can support someone. During the transitional phase, and to some extent after, individuals will be working in town, and those individuals will have to eat lunch. One enterprising co-op member started a business making brown bag lunches. On my way to work in the morning I pick up my lunch in our community mailbox and pay \$2 a day for this service. The lunches are the best organic fare and well worth the money; besides, I'm happy to help a fellow community member gain financial independence. By making twenty lunches a day, which takes two hours every morning, this co-op member is able to earn a hundred dollars a week, which she finds quite adequate for living in style on the co-op.

A Bakery — There are many part-time businesses that people can start which can potentially become full time. Several people get together on Sundays to bake bread. The bakery is not primarily a money-making operation. People get much more than just money from baking bread together.

Food Co-op and General Store — People in our community are also active in co-ops throughout the area; in fact members of our community have worked as the co-ordinators of the largest food co-op and general store. A couple of individuals are able to support themselves by working for these co-ops, and many members of our community gain discounts on food and supplies in return for working at the co-op stores. These co-ops also provide an outlet for us to sell produce and products from our home cottage industries. Members have sold pottery and wooden tool boxes in the co-operative general store.

An Alternative School for Children — The Grass Roots Free School is based on the teachings of A.S. Neill expressed in his book *Summerhill*. The school teaches children to function in a democratic society by practicing democracy. All rules, except those related to health and safety, are made on a democratic basis with children and adults having one vote each, and the rules apply to everyone equally. After being a member of our land co-op for many years, the school's founder, along with six other co-op members, started another land co-operative to serve as the home of their school. They purchased forty-five acres, four of which are for the school. The school, which serves thirty-five children, is staffed by seven part-time employees and volunteers.

Specialty Shops — Several shops in town are owned by co-op members. The Unicorn Shop specializes in



natural fiber clothing, dancewear, toys, flowers, and gifts. Food Glorious Food sells both fresh and frozen dinners and lunches. People can eat in or take out. Their specialty is fresh wholesome food with no preservatives. Those who want fresh food without cooking can pick up any number of dinners or have Food Glorious Food provide catering services. A third store is the Morning Glory Shoppe, which sells woman-made clothing and gifts.

The Morning Glory Shoppe is a project of the Morning Glory Collective, a woman owned business. This business started when four women in our community and three from the alternative community at large got together to sew. They made enough from selling clothing and embroidered shirts at local craft shows to start other endeavors. In addition to the shop, the Morning Glory Collective is trying to organize women crafters and markets woman-recorded albums, womanmade quilts, and a product of their own called an Everywoman's Calendar. Their beautifully illustrated calendar allows a woman to record her body rhythms. Those using it say it gives them a better sense of self-awareness. You can get more information on the calendar by writing to the Morning Glory Collective at P.O. Box 1631 in Tallahassee, Florida 32302.

Another product developed by a member of our community is the Birthing Doll. The Birthing Doll is a twenty-two inch silkscreened ragdoll that delivers a baby by regular delivery or Caesarean. A child can pull the baby out to see where we come

from, and even detach the "umbilical cord." This doll has been mentioned on the Johnny Carson Show and on wire services by the UPI and Associated Press. It has also been mentioned on the B.B.C. and on television in France and Italy. Information on the Birthing Doll is available from Monkey Business, Box 20001, Tallahassee, Florida 32304.

Small Scale Farming — Individuals have been able to supplement their incomes by selling fresh produce from their home gardens. Sometimes produce is sold immediately to neighbors. As I drive home on Long and Winding Road in the co-op, I check a sign my neighbor puts up advertising what he's selling. Whenever I need what he has, I stop because I know that his produce is organic and his prices are reasonable.

Some report that one problem with buying produce from neighbors is that people have a hard time just buying produce without chatting for hours on end. When they arrive home with their vegetables, they find that it's much later than they'd like: their day is shot. Unconsciously, and often consciously, the time spent is thought of as a cost of getting the vegetables, so people tend to just buy in town. The lesson of this is that it is desirable to have a market either on or off the land with set times for buying and selling.

It didn't take long for one of my neighbors to sell his crop. Tom has a set offer from his next door neighbor for all the corn he can grow. The family that buys the corn has a freezer, so they can enjoy fresh corn all year round. They freeze the corn

immediately after picking to preserve the vitamins.

Honey — Several co-op members keep beehives and enjoy a harvest of fresh honey. To start out you plant trees that will nourish your bees. We have been planting tupelo trees for several years and they are taking root. Everyone has their own special dreams of what they would like to do with their lives. Somehow our dreams don't seem to fit existing jobs. There are many people who would like to do things that would benefit society; but instead they end up working at jobs that don't use their talents. In a land co-operative you can share dreams and hopefully bring them to fruition.

Making the World Better

After our basic needs have been taken care of, after we have our homes paid for and enjoy financial security, most of us humans want to do something to improve this world of ours. We hear the news and realize that humanity, and indeed all other life on this planet, is threatened with destruction. I think that most of us would like to help change this situation. Living in a loving community can help you become active in making a difference because you can draw on the energy of others.

Historically, many social theorists, including Karl Marx, have criticized the view that one can change the larger society by forming an intentional community. I believe that the criticisms given in the past of utopian attempts do not apply today. This is apparent when we consider why the utopian societies did not have much of an impact in the past.



David W. Felder

Utopian Communities: Past and Present

Previous communities did not change society because the outside system was able to go along as it had been doing. Those who went off simply dropped out of the mainstream, and their passage had no effect on the rest of society. Oh, it is true that many creative ideas can be traced to communities like Oneida, but such communities had no effect on the body politic. People were able to drop out, and they did so. Society was able to continue as before, and it did so. And the one had no effect on the other.

There are many factors today which nullify the traditional criticisms of alternative communities. First the mainstream society is in trouble; it cannot continue as before. Our alternative communities are providing alternatives not just for the members of these communities. They are providing alternatives for everyone in the areas of energy and fighting inflation with a simpler lifestyle.

A second factor that is different today is that we cannot drop out of mankind's problems no matter how much we may want to. When the Shakers formed their communities, they did not have to worry about nuclear bombs or ecological disasters. Today our lives are threatened no matter where we live on this planet. People in our community are more aware of these dangers than most people. We work actively to promote change that will lessen the threats to life on our planet.

A third factor that is different is that we are not simply dropping out of society; we are building a society of our own. The approach of a land

co-operative differs from the individual approach to dropping out in that we are forging a new community with new institutions that support our community. We do not pretend to be able to do without people but instead are forming complex networks with support groups all around us.

Unlike the groups of the sixties which united people only in the area of ideology, we are uniting people together in their very livelihoods. Ours is not a unity of one aspect of our existence but a unity in every aspect. People in the movements of the sixties had to sell themselves on the labor market and take the trappings that went with their establishment jobs. We are providing people with new alternatives. There are now many people who have dropped out of the establishment.

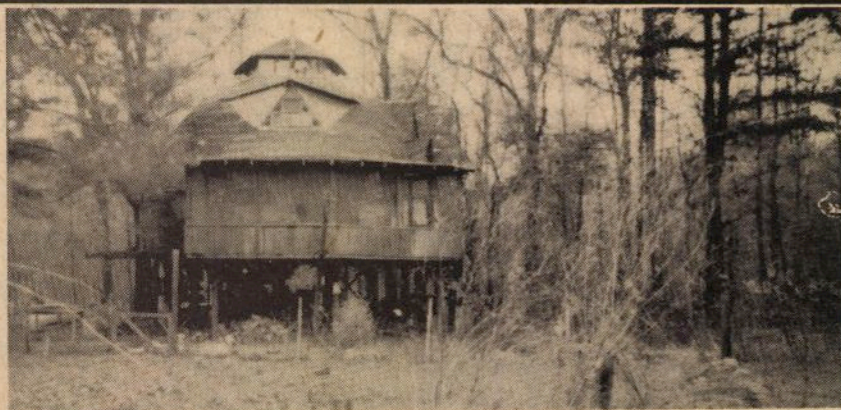
Marx criticized the Utopians for believing that they could change people by just changing their ideas. He believed, like Feuerbach before him, that man is what he eats. As Engels stated at Marx's funeral oration, Marx discovered that man must first of all eat and produce before he can think. The error of the sixties was the people's minds were won over, but they still had to sell their bodies. Those who bought those bodies claimed those minds. Today we are listening to the admonition that people must first of all eat, and we are making it possible for people to eat without selling themselves.

We are forming the core of a new society within the womb of the old. I say the core because not everyone who will work for change will come from alternative communities; but many of the leaders will. The leaders will be made up of the elements that are free

of the control of the established forces, just as the leadership of the civil rights movement came from the only institutions not controlled by whites — the black churches. The alternative communities perform a role which is analogous.

We are living the ideas others only talk about. Members of our community are pioneers in the Appropriate Technology that E.F. Schumacher preached. We have deschooled our society, as Ivan Illych urges — members of our community design houses and run businesses without the dubious benefits of diplomas. We are redoing economics by strengthening the household economy and helping to unravel the centralized system of exploitation as we get free of it. We may not be rich, but we are no longer among the poor who are rendered helpless to improve their own condition. As soon as we bought land in our community, we gave ourselves the power to improve our own lives and the power to effect change in the larger society.

I'm getting used to doing the impossible. It's easy when you can find a dozen close neighbors who are willing to listen to you. Intentional communities provide an atmosphere where things become possible. I never did construction work, but I ended up building a house. I never had any money, but now I have investments. Now I've written a book, so I'm an author. My neighbors are doing the work of contractors, architects, farmers, and executives, all without being certified. We are turning our dreams into reality. We are creating an environment in which all things are possible. □



Letters

Sirs or Ladies,

Recent issues have been without any letters-to-editors column. I feel that a magazine about intentional communities (which are co-ops) should give its readers a means of feed-back. Otherwise views expressed by authors of articles are stated without readers' comments.

Unfortunately that puts the magazine in an authoritarian category with such publications as the *Readers' Digest*.

Also, a letters-to-editor column makes a magazine more interesting because of causing it to contain a greater variety of people's thinking.

There was a sexually neutral pronoun *co* coined for use in place of *he* or *she*. I wish *Communities* would continue/resume its use.

R. Baker

Dear Friends,

Your issue No. 60 of *Communities* is superb — every article. Thank you for all efforts that go into the gathering, selecting, preparation, distribution, etc. — a huge job much appreciated for the excellent finished product! Congratulations.

The article "Pueblo to People" was informative and inspiring, but did not list an address if one wished to support its work.

In appreciation and gratitude and may your holidays be joy-filled and the New Year bring continued success and expansion.

Warmly,
Sarah Kahn

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CM

FOR ANYONE interested in the study and development of intentional community, whether past or present, the existence of the National Historic Communal Societies Association (NHCSA) may be a very welcomed and invaluable circumstance. The potential of a future increase in the general awareness and understanding of intentional community may be commendably served by the activities of the NHCSA, as the association seeks to increase its growth and development as a respected, scholarly source of information about the effort to build the community lifestyle. As printed in the association's journal, *Communal Societies*, "the purpose of the Association is to encourage the restoration, preservation and public interpretation of America's historic communal sites and the study of communal societies past and present. We attempt to facilitate communication and cooperation among scholars, preservationists and communitarians."

The historic site of the New Harmony community in southern Indiana was host to the initiating conference of the NHCSA in November 1974, and in October 1983 the association returned to New Harmony for its tenth annual conference. The theme for this conference was, "World Utopian Communities: Past and Present," which represented a much more comprehensive inquiry into the very broad field of utopian or communitarian studies than the association's prior emphasis upon historic American communal societies has here-to-fore effected. This expansion of the association's orientation represents both a likely strategy to increase the appeal of the association to academic, historical and other interests, and also a challenge and encouragement to those who are and who may in the future be involved in communitarian studies. As there is much more information available about 19th century American communities than about those currently in existence, a new emphasis on the part of the NHCSA may serve to encourage researchers to direct more of their efforts toward inquiry into this subject area. We may hope that the NHCSA will prove to be effective in expanding the amount and quality of information available about contemporary intentional community settlements and lifestyles, and perhaps there-by at least indirectly aid their growth and development.

Although there were no general presentations at this year's conference on developments within the American intentional community movement as a whole, several speakers noted that some of the largest communities today are experiencing major transformations. The Farm in Tennessee, Stelle in Illinois, and God's Valley in Indiana all are experiencing, to various degrees, the transformation from individual leadership to more of a group process, or shared leadership governmental system. The Farm and Stelle have each adopted aspects of democratic process, and God's Valley is still in the process of searching. East Wind Community in Missouri has recently completed its change from a simple manager/board-of-directors governmental system to a more complex manager/committee/division/board-of-directors government which permits more individual involvement and control over work areas and social programs; a system similar to that of the Israeli Kibbutz movement.

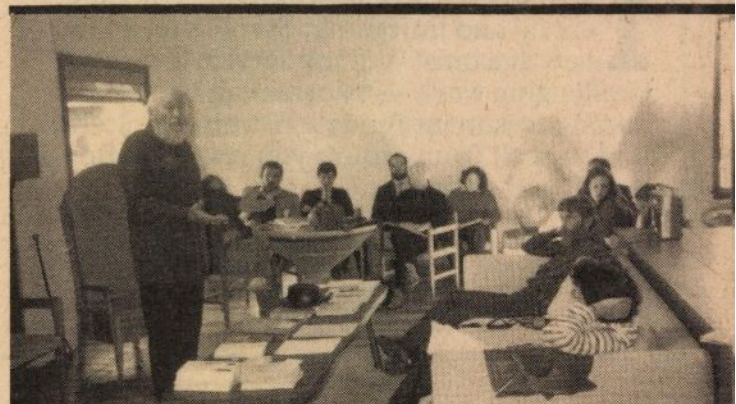
All communities experience change, and for the most

Contemporary Communities and the National Historic Communal

part it would likely be beneficial to each community to have an awareness of how others have experienced the issues, challenges, and sometimes even threats to survival that invariably accompany the effort to build social alternatives. At the New Harmony conference, a presentation was made on the six-member Federation of Egalitarian Communities which for seven years has built a community network encouraging members of communities to share their experiences, and learn how each particular community approaches various issues, such as architectural design of common buildings, labor and governmental systems, industrial growth, collective child care, and even particular traditions of celebration. This kind of network has proven valuable and exciting among the somewhat homogeneous egalitarian communities, and similar benefits may be experienced if such a network were to be established among other, more diverse communities. Such networks of communities do exist on the coasts, the Network of Light involving New England communities, and the Earth Communities Network on the West Coast. The Mid-West could develop a similar network, perhaps beginning with those communities which have had some contact with one another through the NHCSA conferences.

1984 will be the third year in a row that the NHCSA will have met in the Mid-West. The 1982 conference was at Shakertown at South Union, Kentucky, 1983 at New Harmony, Indiana, and the 1984 conference is planned for the historic site of the Amana Colonies in Iowa. If there is sufficient interest evidenced at the Amana conference among the attending representatives of contemporary Mid-Western communities, plans may then be made to begin annual meetings of a Mid-Western communities network, gatherings perhaps being hosted by different communities on a rotating schedule. Programs of benefit to all may be encouraged, perhaps the simplest being labor exchanges, and joint outreach conferences.

It is the potential for interaction among communities



by Allen Butcher

Societies Association

toward their aiding each other's development, however, that most encourages our participation in networking activities. As is well known, communities sometimes fail, so the more information we may have available to us from other experiences, particularly those of other communities in our present modern era, the greater understanding we may have of what may facilitate our permanence, and what may not. Indeed, we who live in community are the real experts; we have first-hand knowledge of what community is and the dynamics involved. The study of nineteenth century communities may reveal some truths relevant to our experiences, but the modern, 1980's world is quite different in many respects, and so are the communitarians. The documentation of the experiences of contemporary intentional communities and the observing of their development through the future represents one of the major areas of activity for an association devoted to historical awareness. Increased on-going contact between existing communities, and between communities and the NHCSA may be very beneficial to all concerned.

We might expect that members of the NHCSA would welcome the growth of inter-community connections as a result of participation in their conferences, as such a project would likely increase the involvement of contemporary communitarians in all aspects of their association. To date, such involvement and representation has been quite small. A very general estimate of the total number of people involved in the New Harmony conference would be two hundred people. Out of that number only three presentations of existing communities were made (Stelle, God's Valley, East Wind/FEC). By contrast, there were perhaps ten persons from monastic orders present, along with one Kibbutz representative and one person from the Unification Church. The majority of the perhaps fifty different presentations made were by people who had studied or were experts on various historic or contemporary community organizations. Most of the persons in attendance were students or professors of utopian studies



or other related university programs, directors or curators of historic community sites, and a few former community members and descendents of members of historic communities.

The NHCSA conferences generally succeed in making available a wealth of material on the communitarian experience. To give an indication of the range of material presented at this year's conference, we may review some of the presentation topics. In addition to the three mentioned presentations by existing communities, this year's conference encouraged representation from community movements outside of the U.S. The presentations made included those by persons from Japan on "Contemporary Japanese Communes" and "The Impact of Owenism Upon Japan", from China on "The Nature of Chinese Communes During the Cultural Revolution" (including an American's report on "Chinese Communes: A 1981 Visit"), from Israel on "The Economics of Kibbutz," and from Scotland on "Owenite Restoration in New Lanark, Scotland."

Other topics were: "A Decade of Change at New Harmony: 1973-1983," "Urban Religious Communes in Chicago," "The History and Function of Communes in America," "A Survey of United States Historic Communal Sites that are Open to the Public," "Fourierism in France and the United States: A Comparative View," "The Foundation of St. Meinrad Archabbey, 1854-1870," "Shaker Spiritualism and Salem Witchcraft: A Comparative Investigation," "Sex Roles in the New Religions: A Comparative Study of Two Groups, Unification and Krishna," among many others. In addition there were slide shows on various topics, tours of the New Harmony buildings and exhibits, and of the collection of the Center for Communal Studies at the Indiana State University Campus, keynote and endnote addresses, meals and social gatherings organized in different locations, and a particularly beautiful morning meditation and presentation of the Harmonist Chorale at New Harmony's open-air "Roofless Church."

The Historic Communal Societies Conferences are wonderful educational and social events, valuable to people new to the subject of communitarian life, and to those who are currently living in community, as well as to those who study communities. The NHCSA also has great potential for doing more than merely discussing the past, but may indeed have a role to play in the future of the communities movement. The gradual development and expansion of existing communities, and any potential increase in the general interest in communitarian theory and practice of even a fraction of that experienced during the years just before and after the year 1970, would find a great reservoir of information about communitarianism available through the NHCSA. Perhaps also if existing communities were to form an active network through the auspices of the NHCSA, then in addition to a source of information, communitarians would find active encouragement as well. □

Picture at left — Daniel Wright, founder of God's Valley in Indiana (Lois Wright is the first woman seated at left) presents the founding ideals of his community.

Reflections on kibbutz and

KIBBUTZ HAS NEVER existed for its members alone. Unlike most communes, Kibbutz did not think in terms of withdrawing from the evils of the surrounding society, but rather as being the spearhead of a new society. From the very beginning, the idea of kibbutz has been intricately interwoven with the idea of "Halutzit" — pioneering, both in the sense of laying the foundations for the national revival movement of the Jewish people and at the same time for the establishment of a better and more just society. Of course, it did try above all to put its own house in order, but at the same time kibbutz members have always considered it their duty to be active politically and socially, trying to influence society at large.

But how can this be done today, when the kibbutz movement constitutes only about 3.5% of the total Jewish population of Israel and when the ruling values of Israeli society are not only different from those of the kibbutz but to a large extent diametrically opposed to them?

So far no simple answer has been found to this problem. Kibbutz members do continue to be active in public life, but the impact of such activity alone is not very large. There is, alas, a very grave danger that estrangement between kibbutz and the surrounding society may become worse as time

goes on, and more and more people grow up who have never really understood, let alone experienced, what kibbutz is really all about. That is exactly why this question has recently been placed as a major problem on our agenda.

It must be admitted that one can have no illusions about turning the majority of people in the country into members of kibbutz. Obviously, most people today either cannot or will not live in a full collective. Nevertheless, the kibbutz is one of the few forms of economic and social organizations which has some answers to the problems of modern society that cannot be found elsewhere.

To understand why, we must first take a very brief look at modern society in general. It is my contention that capitalism is dead — but did not get a decent burial. After being for a long time on its deathbed, it finally passed away in the Great Depression of the Thirties. True, many people believed that it had a remarkable recovery during the first 20 years after World War II — thanks to Keynes and to the New Deal, whose lessons were well learned and applied. But the fact is, that this was no longer real capitalism. The self-regulating market had disappeared, government everywhere was involved more and more in the economy and less and less depended on private initiative. In any

case, for reasons beyond the scope of this article, the boom could not and did not continue. There followed a series of new economic crises. But perhaps worst of all: there emerged a society no longer based on classical capitalist economy but still professing to most aspects of capitalist ideology, a society in which man was left without purpose and feeling of belonging, a society which has been called "The Lonely Crowd" in which the individual suffers from severe feelings of alienation.

Yet old-time socialism, too, had no relevant answers to the new problems. Nationalization, class wars, re-distribution of incomes, etc. — all had been tried at least partially and although they could register some major achievements they have been found wanting. Indeed, the Welfare State could be proud of what it had done. There was less misery and poverty than ever before, incomes had been redistributed in a more egalitarian fashion, the right of man to subsistence and the duty of organized society to provide it had been recognized, poverty was no longer considered a crime or a lack of industry by the individual, but a failure of society. Yet the Welfare State did not succeed in removing the worst evil of modern society: Alienation. On the contrary, since the Welfare State socialized only con-

surrounding society

by Asher Maniv

sumption but not production, there was an even greater dependence of man on the "Establishment", even less purpose in life than before. If in the past socialism found it necessary to fight above all against exploitation, now — though exploitation still exists — alienation had become the major problem.

The other great socialist panacea — nationalization of the means of production, distribution and exchange — had similar results. Again, one must point first to its achievements: maximalization of private profit was no longer the primary or the only purpose of production; profits (if there were any, and in many cases it was the unprofitable enterprise that was nationalized) could be used, at least in theory, for the benefit of society as a whole. But very often alienation of the worker was made even worse. Instead of the old-type private entrepreneur, the worker was now faced by a faceless bureaucracy — very much like the ones in large modern private corporations. The basic idea underlying nationalization did not lose its justification, but labour-management relations did not change much for the better, it did not achieve the free and equal society socialism always aimed at and in Marxist terms, it did not fundamentally change production relations.

Alienation everywhere became a

more acute problem also because of the technological development of our times and the spread of higher education. The frightening prospect of Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times" has, on the one hand, become obsolete by modern technology and on the other hand, man himself is no longer ready to be just a number in a production line. He wants meaningful work, a job he can identify with, respect for his personality and a possibility to develop his capabilities. He is being educated to expect democratic rights which, to a certain extent, he enjoys in politics, but are denied to him at his place of work.

To achieve those aims man has to become master of his own fate, no longer to be the object of management or "establishment" imposed from above — yet without return to the evils of old-fashioned capitalism, which brought about so much misery. This is the new challenge both for socialism and for democracy today. Socialism has concerned itself for too long almost exclusively with macro-economic relations, with class struggle, ownership of the means of production, etc. It must now turn back to the one factor for who all this was supposed to serve: man.

As for democracy, if it intended to grant all adults the right to participate in decision-making, then this must apply to all walks of life — especially

to those realms where decisions are closest to the daily life of man, i.e. at his place of work and in the community where he lives. It is hard to understand why the democratic citizen is allowed to participate in the election of his government but is denied the same right in the election of his board of directors. He may make mistakes in both cases but is the former really a less responsible task? During the last 130 years democracy has gradually progressed in width until it achieved universal suffrage — it must now progress in depth and extend the democratic process to all spheres of life.

To do that, there is need for new types of economic organization, or structural changes in existing ones. And indeed, it is significant that a number of such ideas have been put forward during recent years all over the world and here and there even been put into practice. It is by no means necessary to base ourselves on any one fixed mode. On the contrary a lot of experimenting may be necessary in many different ways — worker ownership, self-management, extension of productions and service cooperatives, communes, kibbutz — but in spite of the divergences between different systems, it will be found that they all have at least some principles in common and can, indeed, learn from each other.

It is hard to understand why the democratic citizen is allowed to participate in the election of his government but is denied the same right in the election of his board of directors.

This is where we come in. Not everybody may want to live on kibbutz. But kibbutz has some answers, based on the ideas outlined above, to the problems of new types of social and economic organization, which Israel is in need of very much. These may be useful to whoever tries similar ideas in other parts of the world.

Let us specify at least some of them, without, of course, claiming this to be a full list:

1. Diffusion of power: This is one of the most elementary principles of all democracy, but for some strange reason the one domain where concentration of power can be most dangerous — the economy — is simply overlooked (or perhaps intentionally disregarded) by modern political democracy. Most democratic regimes pride themselves on their division of power between various arms of government, of their “checks and balances” of parliamentary control etc., but nowhere is power as concentrated as it is in private business or in the nationalized public sector. Let us not forget that economic power carries with it also considerable political power and social status. Kibbutz, like any other organization, cannot be run without entrusting authority to someone, or more to some than to others. But authority in kibbutz carries with it very little real power, certainly no exclusive power, and it is under constant restraints of checks and balances. Indeed, kibbutz may even have somewhat overstepped its mark, for the fact is that there is no real competition for management positions; kibbutz members have to be “drafted” by majority decisions, often against their will, to accept office.

With all its possible shortcomings, this system at least ensures that power does not corrupt.

2. This is directly connected with a system of non-hierarchic management. In spite of the progress of democracy, hierarchy is still deeply ingrained in the minds of man today. But hierarchy is not only undemocratic, but also supremely unefficient. Instead of creating a feeling of mutual responsibility for the common enterprise, it makes for attitudes of “us” against “them”; instead of cooperation, it encourages confrontation; instead of participation in decision-making, it turns the individual into a small screw in a large machine, having no personal stake in its success. Hierarchy means “passing the buck”; it means an inevitable bottleneck, where decisions are up; it means shirking responsibility by the “lower ranks” and breeds what has been called “the bicyclist’s attitude” — to kick downwards and to bow upwards. Kibbutz, of course, is built on the principle of cooperation and full collective responsibility. And in contrast to a rather widespread notion, kibbutz has proved that participatory management can go hand in hand with economic success. The fact is that economically (especially in agriculture) kibbutz has had achievements unparalleled anywhere else.

3. In order to achieve a full measure of participation, there is need for a combination of direct and representative democracy. Direct democracy on the Greek city state model has, of course, its faults. It is not only unrealistic in modern mass society, but may also distort the process of deliberation. However, we are not dealing here with mass society. In

economic and social organizations like the kibbutz, the individual cannot feel himself fully involved and consequently cannot fully identify unless he takes a direct part in decision-making, at least on major matters of principle and on those levels which concern him directly (what is sometimes called “shop-floor level”). This must, of course, be combined with elections of representatives on higher levels. In kibbutz, the highest authority is the General Assembly (which convenes usually once a week) and members have a direct say also at their place of work. At the same time, the daily running of kibbutz affairs is entrusted to a large number of elected committees and office-holders.

4. Participatory organization depends, however, not only on formal institutions, but to a large extent also on two-way channels of communication which encourage informal relationships. The search for new forms of work organization is widespread nowadays in many parts of the world and by no means restricted to cooperatives or collectives. But certainly, the old type of the industrial “line” with its supervisory structure, specialization and standardization, is most detrimental to the idea of participation. The kibbutz, in any case, instituted a system of what socio-technical reformists call “the autonomous working group” a long time before modern social scientists dreamt about it. Work at the kibbutz is organized in a system of semi-autonomous “branches” which have an elected manager, but (if they are run properly) have continuous formal and informal consultation of all their members about jobs to be performed, targets to be reached, organization,

... one can have no illusions about turning the majority of the people in the country into members of kibbutz.

technology, work structures, etc. etc.

This system is closely connected with another principle vital to participatory organization: rotation at both ends of the scale — rotation of responsibility and management positions as well as rotation on the performance of unpleasant, dirty or routine jobs. The more we have of the former, the greater the feeling of involvement and identification of the members with their organization, while the latter is the only way to achieve a feeling of equality amongst the members (at least until technology will make those jobs altogether superfluous).

5. Another reason for this type of organization is what Dr. Schumacher called in his famous book, "Small is Beautiful". One simply cannot identify with a huge faceless giant. This is done not only for the autonomous work group inside an organization, but also for each organization on its own. For a very long time, modern economists were obsessed by the unquestionable material advantages of large structures, but the result was total disregard for the individual. The solution advocated by Schumacher is one of semi-autonomous units integrated in a larger organization. This is exactly what kibbutz has done. Each kibbutz is run by its members alone (and though in the past there was much internal discussion about the optimum size of kibbutz, today most kibbutzim want to grow, but none has exceeded the limits for close social relationships). At the same time, kibbutzim have set up a number of super-structures for economic cooperation between them (some of which, it must be added, have created new problems which deserve separate con-

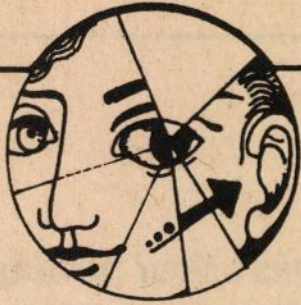
sideration).

6. There is, however, a snag in all such systems: there exists an inherent conflict between decentralization and concern for the common interest. On the one hand we want self-governing autonomous organizations, in order to avoid alienation and promote democratic responsibility. On the other hand, socialism has always maintained (and rightly so) that care must be taken of society as a whole. Unfettered autonomy may indeed lead to some kind of "collective egotism", different only in degree from the individual selfishness of classical capitalism.

This may very well be a conflict which can never be finally solved, one which we must learn to live with. But dialectically, it may result in a desired synthesis. Both aims are vital to free human society — all we can strive for is some kind of equilibrium. Experience has shown that this is possible, if together with small autonomous units there is some kind of roof organization, itself democratically elected by its constituting units whose task it is to represent the larger interests of society without unduly interfering in the daily life of its units. In the case of the kibbutz this task is performed by the national kibbutz movement. Kibbutzim have the duty of allegiance to decisions of the movement, but the movement is not some outside monster; decisions are made by majority vote of their own elected representatives. Similar experience, it may be added, can be found in the history of producer cooperatives. In the long run, cooperatives succeeded only if they had set up a roof-organization to coordinate their activities.

7. Last but by no means least, kibbutz has proved that man in modern society need not necessarily be only one of a "lonely crowd", that given the right social environment, man can once more have a feeling of belonging, without returning to pre-capitalist structures and that economics can be made to serve man instead of man becoming a slave to "economic needs". Economic organizations in modern society are man-made, but very often they have lost their human face. They have become "rationalised", mechanised, "scientifically-run", profit orientated — all may be desirable (at least to the minds of some) but all mainly at the expense of the individual. Kibbutz, like other modern attempts of human-orientated social and economic organization, has reinstated the individual as the pivot of its activities and has shown that this does not conflict with economic success, but even helps it.

To some it may seem a paradox, but it is true nevertheless: I live in a collective, because nowhere else have I found so much freedom for the individual, so much scope for his development, so much possibilities for his individual self-expression and self-fulfillment. This does not mean, of course, absence of conflict between the individual and society or between individuals amongst themselves. I doubt, if that is even an ideal to strive for. But it must mean that while the declared aims of capitalism — absolute freedom for the individual — had opposite results, there does exist an alternative to modern mass society. □



RESOURCES

If after reading this month's *Resources* column you decide I've gone off the deep end — forever lost in a world of fantasy, strategy, magic, and mathematical probabilities — you're right! Over the last year I've become obsessed with the idea of using games as entertaining teaching tools. I've been reading a dizzying assortment of books and publications covering both the recreational and educational dimensions of games as well as their contribution in ritual, therapy, and communication. And I've been playing games — from simulations to role-playing games to (ugh) wargames. Although I've

been greatly disappointed and disgusted by the glorification of violence, greed, and "looking out for number 1" philosophies in most of the games commercially available, they haven't dampened my faith in the potential for games that teach positive values.

Animal Town, *Global learning*, and others are making noble attempts at creating games with goodness, but their games still don't have the level of engrossment and multi-dimensional learning potentials of the fantasy role-playing environment. If high school and college students are flunking out because they're

sinkign all their time and energy into *Dungeons & Dragons* black hole, why not design role-playing games that educate as you play them? It's much more interesting and fun than sitting through lectures.

If anyone has designed games of this type or has modified existing role-playing games to include more options for conflict resolution and educational game goals I'd love to hear from you. "Each of us has, somewhere in their heart, the dream to make a living world, a universe." — Christopher Alexander.

Happy Gaming,
Gareth Branwyn
404 N. Nelson St.
Arlington, VA 22203

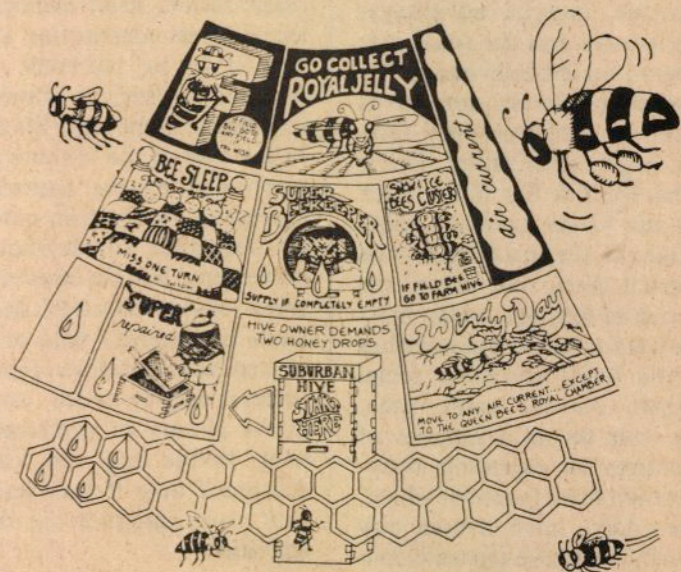
Cooperative Games

Animal Town Game Co.
P.O. Box 2002
Santa Barbara, CA 93120

Animal Town Games is the inspirational cottage enterprise of the Kolsbun family. Husband, wife, and children are all involved in the design, production, play testing, and marketing of these innovative family games. Products offered by the company promote understanding and respect for the earth, cooperation, self-sufficiency, conservation, and peace. *Nectar Collector* (\$16.00 Boxed Game) is an educational boardgame about honeybees and life in the hive. In *Back to the Farm* (\$19.00 Boxed Game) the object is to build a small, organic family farm in rural America. This highly educational game presents all the ins and outs of small-scale farming, animal husbandry, and neighborly cooperation. *Save the Whales* (\$25.00 Boxed Game) and *Madison Avenue* (\$18.00 Boxed Game) are my personal favorites. In *Save the Whales*, the playing group works together to save the eight great whales from

extinction. The game cards offer players plenty of information on the whales' plight, the system that is destroying them, and how we can help prevent the whales'

becoming extinct. The game equipment includes nine beautifully crafted nickel-plated sculptures of the whales and a catcher ship. *Madison Avenue* was de-



signed to bring to the players a better understanding of the advertising industry and the effects it has on our personal and planetary health. The game contrasts the Madison Avenue consumer image with that of the "Briarpatch Alternative" — small business, simple lifestyles, shared ideas, etc. This game is funny, enlightening, and a valuable antidote to the brain-drain of our passive T.V. culture.

Animal Town has recently expanded their line to include positive alternative games from other (mostly small-time) designers. They also carry books on cooperative gaming, storytelling and old-timey radio cassettes. Their 62 page catalog is an experience in and of itself with plenty of family warmth, cartoons, anecdotes... and, oh yeah, game descriptions. A quotable from its pages: "Do not take life too seriously, you will never get out of it alive." — Elbert Hubbard

EarthLove

c/o Phoebe Reeve
6810 Murray Lane
Annandale, VA 22003

When Phoebe Reeve returned to the U.S. after four years of residence at the Findhorn Community in Scotland, she wanted to communicate what she'd learned about co-creation and earth stewardship to others. *EarthLove* was created as a facilitated board game and group experience centered around our interactions with the kingdoms of nature and how they affect the quality of our lives. Players learn about cause and effect in and between kingdoms, and about humanity's role as custodian of these ecologies. Players share personal experiences about nature, themselves, and others, as they move through the kingdoms towards the game's goal of oneness with all life.

The elvish Phoebe Reeve facilitates the games herself, as the Game Deva, rewarding players with glittery little trinkets, blessings, and other magical fare. Guar-

anteed to reanimate the earthchild in all who partake. Write for a brochure and schedule of events.

Global Learning Software

40 South Fullerton Ave.
Montclair, NJ 07042

Global Learning produces imaginative software dedicated to offering global perspectives. Their computer games give players an opportunity to compete against a challenge, not against each other, develop problem-solving skills, and learn to work collaboratively. The four games currently available (for Atari 800, Apple II, and IBM PC) are: *Turnovers*, a game where players "build bridges" between each other; *Cooperative Mazegame*, a chess-type game; *Harvest Time*, which describes itself; and *Mountaineering* (being revised), which simulates this thrilling team sport. All games sell for \$19.95. Write for more specific information on the games and the organization behind them.

Simulation Games

North American Simulation & Gaming Association [NASGA]

c/o Dr. W. Thomas Nichols
Box 100 Westminster College
New Wilmington, PA 16142
\$25.00 membership/yr

NASGA was created to facilitate communication among persons interested in the use of simulations and games for education. NASGA provides members with a forum for exchange of ideas, information, and resources through their publication *Simulation and Games*, annual conferences, and opportunities to design, test, use, and evaluate new simulations and games. A valuable network for anyone seriously interested in this fascinating field of active learning environments.

Firebreaks II

A War-Peace Game
c/o Ground Zero
806 Fifteenth St., NW Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20005
\$15.00 (Game kit and updates)

Created by Ground Zero founder Roger Molander, *Firebreaks II* is a simulation/role-playing game designed to put common folk in the driver's seat of a mock nuclear confrontation. The playing group divides up into Soviet and American

advisors coping with an international crisis that could escalate to a nuclear showdown. *Firebreaks I* was played by over 5000 groups last April as part of Ground Zero's overall educational efforts during Ground Zero week. The new simulation is a simplified and improved version of its predecessor with an entirely different crisis scenario.

As the promotional material states: "*Firebreaks II* offers no simple solutions. But it will give your group a firsthand look at how nuclear war might actually begin. And, in this election year, it can provide valuable insights into the 'firebreaks' (defusing strategies) our national leaders could use to keep nuclear war from occurring."

J. Games

Box 276
Barnstable, MA 02630
\$15.00 per game

Game designer Judith Barnet has created three games in a series called *Global Rescue*. *Who Needs*

Enemies is a world hunger game where teams of players represent factions in the developed world and in a hypothetical developing country. The players' objective is to end world hunger by the year 2000. *Nukes or Cukes* is an economic conversion game which teaches possible alternatives to a bloated military budget. Players experience huge budget numbers, conflict over priorities, and the art of compromise. Several variants included allow for different levels of play (teams, individuals). *Asphalt Bullfight* simulates the typical inner city drama which follows when city planners propose a new highway or other "renewal" projects. *Bullfight* teaches community dynamics and is designed to be played over several weeks allowing teams to develop plans and strategies for implementation.

J. Games will also design simulations for any other issue you might want to interact with in a game format. Games include rule book, score sheet pads, cards, charts, and all items necessary for play



Role-Playing Games

Role-playing games (or RPG's) have been defined as "any game which allows a number of players to assume the roles of imaginary characters and operate with some degree of freedom in an imaginary environment". The best known game of this type is TSR's *Dungeons and Dragons*, although there are hundreds of other games available outlining an assortment of fantasy and sci-fi worlds. The basic format is simple — a group of players roll dice and consult charts and background information to construct a fantasy persona they will take on for the duration of the game. A game referee, who is a combination god, story teller, and playwright, outlines the situations the players will be faced with and what the consequences of the group's actions will be. Most games have a quest-type scenario similar to the plots of many fantasy

novels — someone to be rescued, a sword or magick item to retrieve, etc. It is no wonder this game type has a reputation for its addictive levels of engrossment. The simulated realities, often executed with no more than pencil, paper, and dice, can create a theater of the mind engaging enough to seduce even the casual reality chameleon. Those unfamiliar with the game form should be forewarned that most FRPG's currently available are primarily focused on violent conflict involving wizards, elves, starship troopers, demons, aliens, and other archetypal characters slugging it out in a perpetual struggle over money, magickal implements, and other objects of envy. While I don't think this obsession with power and the amassing of wealth is very healthy, especially for the mostly young people who play, numerous other benefits make

playign worthwhile. Strategy, cooperative decision-making, role-playing, art and math skills, and "world modeling" are all justifiably cited as the educational dimensions of play.

It is my contention that the RPG "language" could be easily transposed into any situation where a group wants to learn more about a specific environment (historical period, world view, etc.) and role-play in that setting. The current goals of these games may be excessively hedonistic, geared towards a young, predominately male audience, but the basic game mechanics could have far-reaching educational potentials. And on top of all these justifications, I have to admit I've thoroughly enjoyed playing these games just as they are. Here is a list of books and games that I found particularly interesting:

Through Dungeons Deep:

A Fantasy Gamer's Handbook
Robert Plamondon
Reston Publishing Co.
Reston, VA 22090
.323 pg. HB, 1982, \$18.95

This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the various fantasy games and the basics on how they're played. Plamondon proceeds step-by-step through the creation and role-playing of characters, the possibilities for adventures, and how to play the referee (or Game Master). The most popular games and the larger circulation fantasy game magazines are critically reviewed. Worthwhile reading for anyone new to fantasy gaming or those curious to know what all the commotion is about.

Shared Fantasy:

Role Playing Games as Social Worlds
Gary Alan Fine
University of Chicago Press
5801 S. Ellis Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637
283 pgs. HB, 1984, \$22.50

Sociologist Gary Alan Fine has written a fascinating ethnography about the lives and collective fantasies of the fantasy gaming subculture. In scholarly yet sensitive detail, the author outlines the important aspects of play, the sociological



make-up of the participants, and the benefits claimed by game players. Fine examines educational value, the escape provided from mundane reality, the sense of efficacy and control the games allow, and their role in the acquisition of social skills by the players. While many players scoff at such analysis, stating fun as their only motivation and benefit, this book offers much food for thought to us squares who insist that analysis is not incompatible with experience. For those seeking validation of the positive aspects of RPG's, this book makes a convincing argument.

Dungeons & Dragons

TSR Hobbies
P.O. Box 110
Lake Geneva, WI 53147
Basic Game \$12.00 Advanced \$39.00
(3 HB Volumes)

D & D is the original and by far the most popular FRPG. Geared towards a younger audience than the other games listed here, it focuses primarily on pirate and plunder combat with hundreds of ridiculous monster foes. Since it is the oldest and the most successful role-playing game, there is more material available on, or about it than its successors, and the products are of a high (read slick) quality. I started with *D & D* but, if I had it to do

over again (rules for RPG's are extensive) I'd probably choose a different game system, such as Runequest. (See below).

Runequest

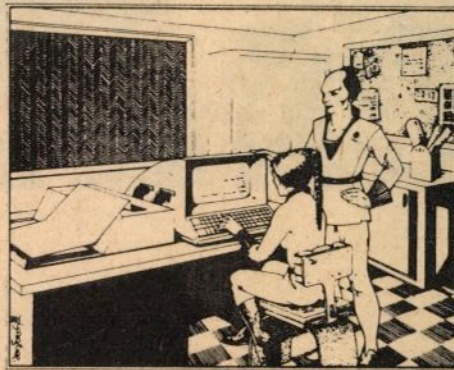
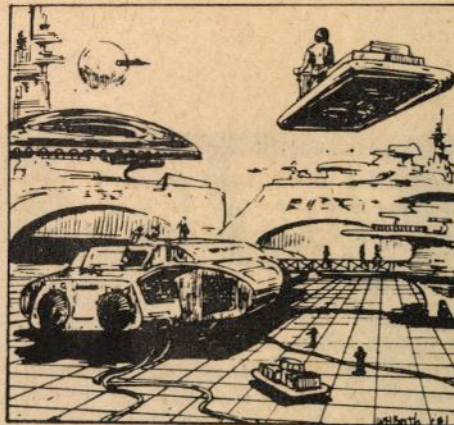
Chaosium, Inc.
P.O. Box 6302
Albany, CA 94706-0302
\$20.00 Boxed Game

Runequest is a slightly more mature RPG that delves deeper into the history, religions (Rune cults) and cultures of a fantasy world called Glorantha. Role-playing is more sophisticated than in *Dungeons & Dragons*, as is realism and attention to detail. Numerous interlocking supplements available help flesh out the world and its inhabitants. The graphic design is second to none, without the fluffiness of TSR's products. I'd recommend this game to anyone wanting to explore the role-playing and "world simulation" aspects of this type of game.

Call of Cthulu

Chaosium, Inc.
(see above)
\$20.00 Boxed Game

Call of Cthulu, recently released by Chaosium, is one of the more creative games to enter the market in the last few years. Totally removed from the usual game worlds of medieval fantasy and space sci-fi, Cthulu takes place in the world of H.P. Lovecraft's stories and mythos. Players take on the roles of a team of occult investigators (private eyes, journalists, mystic sects) who travel the



world of the 1920's to search out and destroy the Great Old One, Lord Cthulu, and his demonic minions. Compared to other RPG's, Cthulu has a more sleuth/mystery flavor, with many clues, riddles, and whodunits. This is a very well designed game which, characteristic of the producer's style, emphasizes role-playing and thoughtful action. A 32-page Sourcebook on the 1920's covers significant personalities, economics, travel, and a timeline for the 20's. Also provided are maps, record sheets, an introduction to role-playing games, and a 100 page Rulesbook.

Traveller

Game Designers' Workshop
P.O. Box 1646
Bloomington, IL 61701
\$15.00 (HB Book)

Traveller is probably the most popular science-fiction RPG. The manufacturer writes: "Traveller is a set of rules describing a complete, consistent, yet open-ended universe. Within the framework of the rules, players lend their own imaginations to the game as they react, evaluate situations, and decide on courses of action." Some of the interesting features of *Traveller* include world creation (size, ecology, cultures, governments), starship design, and interplanetary diplomacy. The game system is flexible enough to provide a perfect setting for "Utopias in Space." Journey to Anarres, anyone?

Miscellaneous

Other games we received that may be of interest:

Mach: The First Colony

Michael Lange
Alliance Publications, Ltd.
#13 Sunset Circle
Bettendorf, IA 22722
\$18.00 Boxed Game

Mach is a role-playing game set on another planet populated by six races who have taken refuge there. Conflicts have degenerated into anarchy and isolationism. The game is set up to be role-played with a variety of plot lines — mysteries, explorations, war, adventures into unknown territories, etc.

Star Trek

FASA Corp.
P.O. Box 6930
Chicago, IL 60680
\$25.00 Boxed Game
Star Fleet Battles
Task Force Games
Amarillo, TX 79107
\$17.95 Boxed Game

For all you closet Trekkies out there who've always fantasized being beamed aboard the Enterprise "to seek out new life and new civilizations", these two games will provide the necessary coordi-

nates. *Star Trek* is a role-playing game and contains extensive background information on the setting and the characters involved. A deck plan book included in the game contains complete floor plans for the Enterprise and several other spaceships. Rules cover character generation, skills, Federation laws, planet creation, and everything else necessary for play. *Star Fleet Battles* puts you at the helm of a starship where you must respond to many of the confrontation situations between alien races that appear in the T.V. show.

Consulting Detective: Sherlock Holmes
 Sleuth Publications, Ltd.
 689 Florida St.
 San Francisco, CA 94110
 \$25.00 Binder

This is an informative and very challenging game set in the style and times of Holmes' Victorian London. Players act as Baker Street "irregulars" who are called in to help Holmes solve the case. You are presented a mystery to solve, and then it is up to you to trace the evidence through the streets of London (with a map and street directory), interview suspects (in a booklet of testimonies), search newspapers (provided) for clues, and put together the facts to reach a solution. The design, writing, and quality of the mysteries is all top-drawer, and quite successfully captures the Holmesian and Victorian spirit.

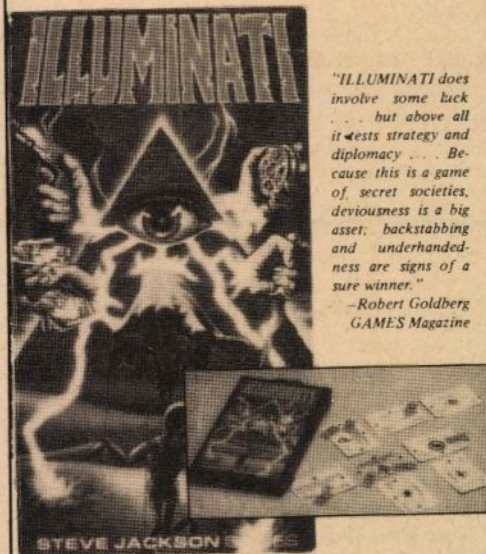
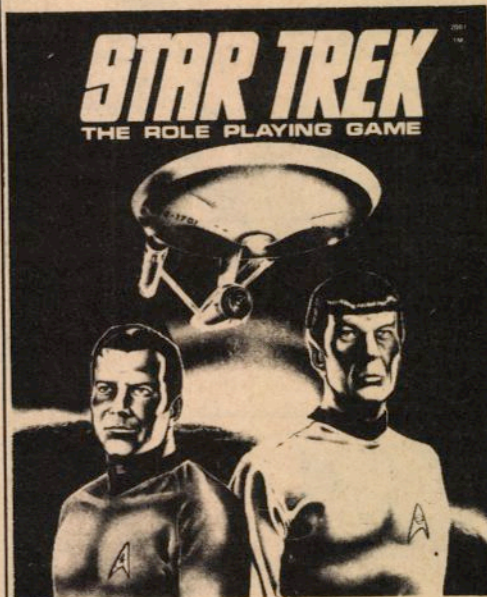
Riddle of the Ring
 Fellowship Games
 P.O. Box 12634
 Columbia, S.C. 29211
 \$20.00

A playful family game based on Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Provides plenty of adventure, player interaction and fun in a warm "down-home style".



Illuminati
 Steve Jackson Games
 P.O. Box 18957
 Austin, TX 78760-8957
 \$6.50 Plastic Pocket Box

All you paranoids, conspiracy buffs, and fans of Shea & Wilson's *Illuminatus!* take note. Steve Jackson Games has produced an innovative card game that simulates the power struggles, backstabbing, and schemes for worldwide domination of the dreaded Illuminati. Are they a communist conspiracy, a secret society of politicians and multi-national magnates, or perhaps aliens from another world — Atlanteans? Play *Illuminati* and find out! Each player chooses a different Illuminati group and then attempts to control other organizations necessary to fulfill their specific group's plan for world conquest — one of the few games designed where cheating and ripping each other off is an acceptable form of play — hey, just like in real world politics!



"ILLUMINATI does involve some luck . . . but above all it tests strategy and diplomacy . . . Because this is a game of secret societies, deviousness is a big asset. backstabbing and underhandedness are signs of a sure winner."
 —Robert Goldberg
 GAMES Magazine

Special Feature

Living the Dream:
 A Documentary Study of Twin Oaks
 of Twin Oaks Community
 Ingrid Komar
 Norwood Editions
 Norwood, PA 19074
 366 pgs. HB, \$27.50, 1983

The first volume in a series entitled "Communal Societies and Utopian Studies", *Living the Dream* is the long-awaited "update" of Kat Kinkade's 1974 effort, *A Walden Two Experiment*. Many people through the years have talked about contemporizing the Twin Oaks story for all those armchair communalists and students of Utopia. But not many people had the courage to tackle the tangled web of Twin Oaks' complexities.

Ingrid Komar originally conceived her book as a close look at the inner workings, the joys and struggles of creating the Twin Oaks lifestyle. It would focus less on the ideology and organizational structure of the group and more on the individual's efforts to integrate these values into real life. In other words: getting down to the nitty-gritty. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your interest in new age soap operas (personally I'm still waiting for the really scandalous tale), this original focus was expanded to include plenty of information on Twin Oaks, the institution. The oscillation between intimate narrative and academic study is not always smooth reading, but the ping-ponging effect does provide a stimulating journey through the various perspectives from which one can view the "realities" of Twin Oaks. T.O. is itself a collage of theory and practice, simultaneously a home to eighty (or so) people and a world famous social experiment. *Living the Dream* mirrors this sometimes schizophrenic reality. The social focus of the original plot is still evident in ample coverage of group rituals, sexual relationships, and lots more of the people-to-people process. Organizational nuts and bolts are detailed in chapters covering government, economics, visiting and membership, meetings and planning groups, and the ongoing struggle to identify the community's mutual values. The appendices include reproductions of T.O. bylaws, membership agreements, and resource information.

Chapter Twelve, entitled "Conclusions — The Utopian Question Remains" is Ingrid's admirable attempt at scrutinizing her experiences and knowledge gained during her three-year participant/observer study. From her observations and conclusions she extrapolates lessons deemed important to the greater body of humanity working for social change. Since I lived at Twin Oaks for six years and was greatly involved during the period this book was written, it is difficult for me to discuss objectively the "accuracy" of Ingrid's analysis. I do not mean to imply that Ingrid's conclusions are totally off-base or are not indicative of problems and potential solutions Twin Oaks is faced with. I just want people reading her to keep in mind the complexities and diversity that marks T.O.'s social and political systems. A host of inferences can be drawn from even the most astute observations. The residents at Twin Oaks, former members, and outside observers all have different, vastly different views on the T.O. puzzle and its solution. After a six-year residency, I would point to a slightly different set of issues that need to be addressed to insure a healthy future for the community. But mine or anybody else's opinions are just that and do not invalidate Komar's point of view; I only seek to temper the weight of her pronouncements.

The main issue she thought important to discuss in the concluding essay addresses the question of "what is egalitarianism", and whether T.O. has opted for a crude form of pie-slice equality that is outmoded if not downright immature. Komar's recommendations for change are perhaps best described by the adage "to each according to their needs, from each according to their abilities" — a statement just in print but difficult or impossible to administrate in real life. Not to say steps in that direction should not be or are not already being taken in T.O.'s cumbersome careful manner. One thing I learned at Twin Oaks (life in general?)

was that changes occurred through lots of hard work over a long period of time and even then the desired evolutionary momentum was often painfully imperceptible.

This book is not without its highest praises. Ms. Komar makes no apologies in expressing her deeply felt passion and commitment to the lifestyle and core values of Twin Oaks. She provides a far reaching and inspiring inventory of all that is great about Twin Oaks. She exhibits an endearing ability to place the experiences of Twin Oaks in a larger context, expanding and revitalizing even the most trivial daily occurrences. One thing that visitors and new members have always done for T.O. is to reanimate the Utopian dimensions of the lifestyle so often lost in the fog of day to day existence. *Living the Dream* provides a refreshing dose of this awareness of simple pleasures and forgotten accomplishments.

Lest we forget why we've chosen the path of creating alternative futures, Komar writes:

"It is hardly a question of whether or not the Utopian problem is interesting. The question of what constitutes Utopia and how to achieve it is sufficiently provocative to command all our powers of body, mind, and spirit for as long as we live. In the nuclear age the solution of this question has become a matter of life

and death — for us personally; for our generation; for its successors; for the beautiful fragile planet on which we depend for life; for all future life as we know it."

Living the Dream is an important contribution to that body of literature that examines the people throughout history that have struggled to answer the Utopian question. It is valuable and affirmative reading for anyone who contemplates or strives towards "a world that works for everyone."

The greatest disappointment in this book is the manner in which it was published. The text is merely reproduced typewriting, poorly bound and not very attractive. There are little to no graphics, headlines, photos — and no jacket. For the academic price of \$27.50 this product is a joke. One of the drawbacks of this lifeless treatment is that it seems to stiffen the narrative. This same book appearing with a colorful jacket, typesetting, headlines, and a photo section, would create a totally different experience of its contents. *Living the Dream* deserves a lot better treatment than it received from Norwood. It is important that the book be promoted so that it can "go commercial" and upgrade its image. If you can afford it and want to help support a worthy effort — buy it. I'm sure it would greatly appreciated. Please encourage your local libraries to purchase it also.



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Combines self-reliance, independence, ecology, personal growth, security. Not communal nor cult.
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ponderosa village

Rt. 1, Lot 17-3
Goldendale, WA 98620
509/773-3902



REACH

Reach is a free readers service of Communities magazine. Listings should be 50-150 words in length, typewriting preferred. We reserve the right to edit. Dated material requires a minimum of six weeks lead time. Feedback on responses to listings, as well as donations, are welcome.

Dondi, Twin Oaks

Groups Looking

☆ Looking for a community? Let me tell you about mine: Shannon Farm. We found our land in 1974 in a central Virginia valley at the eastern base of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Nearly ten years later I continue to be amazed at the beauty of my surroundings. Our 57 members (21 women, 23 men, 13 children) range in age from infancy to 70+ years. Most of us have been here four years or more and intend to remain, sharing our lives and dreams.

We own our land in common. Though we have built 17 homes we have no lot boundaries: the care and destiny of our 500 acres rests on all our shoulders. This inescapable fact creates an embracing tension which challenges and binds us.

We are deeply committed to an egalitarian society: we use consensus decision-making (patiently), rotate leadership positions, and keep committee membership open at all times. We encourage each other as we discover our own answers: in our lives and our relationships. A weekly conflict-resolution study group researches and practices methods of cooperative problem-solving.

Note: we do not practice community-wide income-sharing. You will have to support yourself and find a place to live (probably off the land at first).

Interested? Write to me:

Peter, Shannon Farm
Afton, Virginia 22902

☆ Dorea Peace Community is located in Northeastern Wisconsin on 89 acres of primarily wooded land. Living in harmony with this land is an important focus of the community. Rooted on this land are passive-solar homes, community workshop, space for sojourners and guests, vegetable and herb gardens, orchards, a windmill and meditation huts.

We believe the most urgent problem facing the world today is militarism and the probability of nuclear war. These problems are perpetuated by the consumptive lifestyles of developed nations and their drive to maintain military and economic superiority. In order to move in the direction of Shalom this community hopes to grow as a model of alternative lifestyles. Witnessing to our faith, our choice is to say with our lives, "It is still possible to hope." Our first priority is working toward disarmament. We include in this action resistance to the federal war tax, draft counseling, non-violent conflict resolution, direct action for social justice, and disarmament education.

For more information write or call:

Dorea Peace Community
Rt. 2, Box 161
Turtle Lake, Wisconsin 54889
(715)268-8748

☆ Mariposa School/Community has opportunities for a teacher (lower elementary grades), a bus driver, and a maintenance person.

Our small rural community is located three miles west of Ukiah in Northern California. Eight of us live together on 63 wooded acres providing the support and nurturing of family life. Together we operate a small alternative school and sprout farm, sharing the income and living expenses from these endeavors.

We are a collective, decide by consensus, with a philosophical base of non-violent social change, feminism, self-management, ecological/holistic consciousness. We're far from perfect, somewhat work-oriented (from a love of our work), but constantly growing. Of course we are looking for similar people — who have

experience in community living or a strong desire for community — and a clear commitment to community building/personal growth/social consciousness. If this is appealing to you, write:

Mariposa School
Box 387
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707)-462-1016

☆ We are deeply involved in a most interesting adventure — *creating A Whole New Age Village!* The concepts behind our community are self-reliance and independence, with interaction and cooperation. We are creating a satisfying place to live now that can provide security in case of serious problems — economic, social, war, or whatever the future holds. Our village is not communal, nor a religious cult. In all respects we stress individual freedom and responsibility. We hold seminars on self-reliance subjects and meditations for personal and spiritual growth. Our aim is to live in tune with nature and with each other, both of which involve being more in tune with ourselves.

Our community has been in existence for 3 years. It is located in a stable agricultural area in south-central Washington State on 1000 acres of woods and meadows. 22 people live here now, with more to come. 5 acre homesites are available for individual ownership, some with views of snow-capped Mt. Hood.

Our newsletter and information are available on request.

Larry and Meg Letterman
Ponderosa Village
Rt. 1 #17-30
Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-3902

☆ Circle has just purchased land for Circle Sanctuary. This 20 acre wilderness site is located in the hills of southwestern Wisconsin (USA) about 30 miles from Madison. Pagans from many groups and traditions throughout the United States and several other countries have helped

Circle Sanctuary manifest through their donations of ideas, labor, skills, blessings, and funds. Donations are especially needed now that the land has been purchased to develop Circle Sanctuary as a retreat center for Pagan visitors and as a wildlife preserve, re-establishing and protecting endangered species of animals and plants. A free flyer with details about this project is available upon request by writing Circle at their new address:

Circle
P.O. Box 219
Mt. Horeb, WI 53572

☆ Integrate the best of urban and rural lifestyles with progressive political and social values in one of six established rural communities. Nonsexist, nonracist, gentle cultures based on cooperation, equality and environmental concern. For free information (donation appreciated), write:

Federation of Egalitarian Communities
Twin Oaks Community
Box F74-C
Louisa, VA 23093

☆ For a stimulating, yet lasting and wholesome family life consider group marriage: a lifestyle that brings together groups of best friends who share ideals and future visions for mutual growth and good times. We value partners equally, communicate openly, enjoy long lasting relationships, and are looking for more good friends. Write to get to know us and to network. Please send SASE.

Alternative Relationship Center
P.O. Box 3912
Eugene, OR 97403

☆ We are a group of people aware of our interdependent relationship to the land, striving to live in harmony with nature and developing a community spirit among ourselves and with other people. We see the land trust concept as a realistic way to fulfill these intentions. In addition, we believe that the land trust approach is one of the most effective ways to balance the need for preservation of farmland, open spaces, forest land and areas of natural beauty while enabling responsible people the opportunity to derive the benefits of living upon the land in a productive and ecological way.

It is the goal of the New Hampshire Land Trust Network to become a regional land trust organization acting as an umbrella organization that will provide assistance, organizational and legal frameworks, education and other services to individuals, communities and other organizations creating land trusts or similar concepts.

We need people-people who want to become involved in a concept whose time has arrived. People who are willing to help in any way they can by sharing their insights, time, talents and financial resources. People who are aware of their own higher potentials and see the benefits and possibilities that land trusts can provide in their own lives and in the lives of future generations.

For more information please don't hesitate to write or call us. We will be organizing meetings, gathering resource materials, networking, and looking for potential leaseholders.

New Hampshire Land Trust Network
Box 578
Barnstead, NH 03225
(603) 776-8381

☆ Dandelion Community (est. '75) is 9 adults: 8 full members and 1 provisional member. We live on a 50 acre farm in southeastern Ontario. We are a member community of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities. Our land, labor, and other resources are held in common. We are non-sexist, non-ageist, non-racist, non-violent. We value open communication, cooperative decision-making, a healthy diet, and our system of sharing labor equally.

We grow most of our food, and with the help of 2 cows, make most of our own dairy products. We support ourselves through the sale of our handcrafted hammocks and hanging chairs. We are trying to become more self-sufficient.

We have no spiritual affiliation. Any member can believe what co wants as long as it doesn't interfere with the basic values of the community as a whole. We are interested in growing and are looking for new members.

If you are interested in visiting Dandelion or would like more information about Dandelion, write us, or call (not collect please).

Dandelion Community
R.R. #1
Enterprise, Ontario
Canada K0K 1Z0
(613) 358-2304

People Looking

☆ I'm a freelance writer, an American citizen and Canadian resident. I have six years' experience writing for alternative and standard journals. I would like to network with others in English-speaking North America who are seriously interested in bringing alternative visions into

the standard media (e.g. high-circulation magazines, film, and TV).

Joel Russ
R.R. #1
Winlaw, BC
Canada V0G 2J0

☆ I enjoy work, both mental and physical, and would welcome the opportunity to learn new skills and acquire additional knowledge while utilizing my existing skills and knowledge in a way that would benefit the group.

I seek a group that cares and shares on a personal level, while respecting the uniqueness that each of us possess as individuals.

Please give me an idea of what your group is like, its beliefs, and what arrangements are necessary for an initial visit.

Arnold Weinstein
204 Old Mill Road
Buyrm, CT 06830

☆ We are a family of 4, including 3½ and 1 year old children, looking for a cooperative community, preferably multi-cultural and cross generational. Community outreach programs are something we find valuable to all. We are vegetarians, with experience in house construction and organic farming. Alternative education is an important consideration for our children, as well as spiritual matters. We'd like to hear from groups or individuals interested in this way of living. Write:

Margy and Lee Campbell-Marder
318 Pirrung Ave.
Bisbee, Arizona 85603

☆ We are a friendly couple with an 8 month old daughter looking for a community to join. Our needs are that it be partially or totally self-sufficient or that it is located in commuting distance to an area where jobs can be easily found. Also we would like there to be other children and possibly a cooperative school.

The skills we have to offer are massage, meditation, vegetarian cooking, machinist work and some construction. If you are interested in us or have any leads please write or call.

Jean and Tom Garrett
35 Newbury St.
Somerville, MA 02144
(617) 623-3973

Publications

☆ The book written by one of our members when our community was just

five years old, *A Walden Two Experiment* by Kat Kinkade, is now out of print, but for a limited time we can offer our friends the softcover edition for \$7.50, including postage and handling. If you request it, you may have an autographed copy.

A new documentary study of Twin Oaks Community, covering especially the years from 1979 through 1982, is hot off the press. This book, *Living the Dream* by Ingrid Komar, is available now in hardback. This book regularly sells for \$27.50, but we can offer it to you for \$25.00, plus \$1.00 for mailing/handling.

Both books, ordered together, are offered for \$32.00, total.

Send check or money-order to:

Rena/Books
Twin Oaks Community
Louisa, VA 23093

Conferences

☆ *War Resisters League Organizer's Training Program, July 21-30, 1984.* A program to train organizers in the nonviolent movement. Political philosophy, current issues and techniques of organizing are explored through discussions with experienced resource people and personal sharing. The ten day/nine night program in Andover, New Jersey culminated with participants speaking on Wall Street in New York City during lunchtime. Cost \$220. Maximum participants 20.

To receive an application (application deadline June 1, 1984) and brochure, contact:

WRL
339 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012
(212) 228-0450

☆ Greetings from Short Mountain Sanctuary! We are: a) a working farm with primitive facilities; b) a 200 acre sanctuary nestled in the hills of Tennessee; c) a place of clean air and water; d) a learning center for natural living... and un-natural acts!; e) a theatre collective; f) an amazon acres/homo haven in need of support; and g) all of the above!

Short Mountain is a mountainside sanctuary, a 200 acre healing space, where we can learn to trust each other and begin once again to feel our bonds with the earth. Our Gatherings are times of sharing, caring and learning. We operate on a system of shared work responsibilities. The idea is that if each person contributes a few hours of their time to keep the event running smoothly, everyone will have

time to enjoy themselves. Feel free to sign up for any one of the exciting work shifts that will range from child care to kid feeding (goats, that is!). And who knows who you'll meet while chopping onions.

Primitive camping facilities will be available. Bring a tent or tarp. Please remember cooking stuff — pots, pans, etc. Please let us know your needs. We are encouraging folks to be self reliant in bringing their own food. Be prepared for pot lucks. 2 meals a day will be prepared at the main cabin. The cost is \$3.00 a day, or a bulk food contribution, plus your voluntary cooperation in the meal preparation or clean-up. Bring your own plate, cup, bowl and utensils.

Children are encouraged to attend. Very young children are basically the responsibility of whoever they come with. If there are enough children, some kind of child care will be arranged by interested individuals.

If this interests you, please drop us a line for current conference dates or visiting possibilities.

Short Mountain Sanctuary
Rt. 1, Box 98a
Liberty, Tennessee 37095

☆ The Lisle Fellowship takes pleasure in announcing a two week program focused on fostering and strengthening *nurturing families*. It will be held in Ketchikan, Alaska from August 15-29, 1984.

The purpose will be not only to "learn about families" — and how they can enhance their lives as nurturing communities — but also to *share in the experience* of family life and enjoy the richness of significant interpersonal relationships among the various components of the Lisle "unit."

Lisle is a voluntary non-profit organization which seeks to improve the quality of human life and contribute toward world peace through improved human relations between and among people of different cultures. Since 1936 Lisle has sponsored 150 summer and year-round groups in 13 nations and has over 3,000 alumni/ae in more than 60 nations.

A Lisle program integrates experiential learning in the host community with cooperative group living, structured dialogue and the evaluation of intercultural issues within a diverse group of students and older adults. In this program the emphasis will be on experiencing the commonality and uniqueness of persons and families in a context of sensitive sharing and seeking.

Singles, couples, families of all ages and those persons with grown families are invited to participate. The program is open to all who share a concern for the

quality of family life. Participants will be of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Lisle veterans Mark Kinney and Joyce Hardin will provide the structure and continuity of the group's life and Virginia Satir — the renowned family therapist — will be the special resource person for the final five days.

For further information write to:

Dr. Mark Kinney
University of Toledo
2801 West Bancroft
Toledo, OH 43606

☆ The 1984 National Pagan Spirit Gathering is being held in June in Wisconsin. The theme of this year's gathering is Shamanism for the New Age. A free brochure with details will be mailed in late Spring to those requesting one. A special weekend meeting for leaders of Wiccan covens and other Pagan groups to share ideas and experiences in teaching and leading group rituals is being planned in conjunction with the Gathering. Please contact Circle for more details.

Circle
P.O. Box 219
Mt. Horeb, WI 53572
(608) 924-2216 weekdays between 10 am and 2 pm central standard time

☆ Merriam Hill Center is a school for adults interested in studying and practicing the art of community, teaching skills for understanding groups, organizations, and communities.

We focus on contemporary intentional communities, as well as more traditional ones, which embody a wide spectrum of spiritual, economic, social and technological approaches. We believe that these self-directed communities are learning skills that can benefit other social groups and individuals.

Merriam Hill Center created the *Learning Exchange Program* to further the understanding of and among three intentional communities: Auroville in India, Findhorn in Scotland, and Arcosanti in Arizona. The purpose of the program is to understand community through direct experience by study in small groups.

Learning Exchange groups spend several weeks participating in the lives of these communities, working and playing as they learn new ways of living together, new ways of being human together, new evolutionary possibilities for the world's societies.

Upcoming *Learning Exchanges* include:

Arcosanti, Arizona: May 27—July 13, 1984

Auroville, India: August 12—November 17, 1984

Findhorn, Scotland: October 26—
December 14, 1984.

If you are interested in joining a Learning Exchange, or would like more program information, contact:

Registrar, Merriam Hill Center
129 Raymond Street
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 354-3431

☆ You are invited to the First International Iyengar Yoga Convention to be held August 24—September 2, 1984 in San Francisco.

The convention will gather together students and teachers of Iyengar yoga from all corners of the globe to share ideas, experiences and techniques. B.K.S. Iyengar himself will be present, in his first visit to the United States since 1976. There will be continuous classes, lectures, demonstrations and panel presentations by senior yoga teachers from around the world.

Housing during the convention will be available. A block of rooms have been reserved for convention participants at the Hotel San Franciscan. Convention headquarters will be there. Registration for the convention will be available at the beginning of 1984. A complete brochure with a list of classes, lectures and demonstrations, and information on fees and housing, will be available at that time. Enrollment for classes and most other events will be limited, so early registration is strongly advised. Write to be placed on our mailing list to receive further information:

Convention
c/o Iyengar Yoga Institute
2404-27th Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94116
(415) 753-0909

☆ We announce the 11th International Human Unity Conference, July 19-22, 1984; The Healing of the nations: A Personal Purpose.

This year's conference is being held in the USA, in the heart of Boston at Simmons College. It will accommodate up to 650 people from many countries. Every year this conference is sponsored by a different organization. This year's host will be the Whole Health Institute, an international non-profit corporation headquartered in New Hampshire.

HUC 84 will be a focused gathering of people from all walks of life whose primary concern is integrity. The conference will explore avenues and attitudes for the expression of integrity of living, for fostering the essential oneness of humankind, and for expanding the natural beauty of the human spirit.

This conference is *not* designed for individuals or groups who wish to promote their organizations or their doctrines. This conference is not designed for people who are searching for happiness, health, wealth, or wisdom. This conference is not designed for those who are prone to argument and habitual criticism. This conference *is* designed for mature, balanced people of integrity who know something of leadership, people who can blend with others and people who can uplift atmosphere by their very presence.

The conference will include forums, workshops, recreational sessions, small group activities, and whole conference sessions. Each participant will have a part in creating the experience of the 11th International Human Unity Conference.

HUC Administrative Office
Rt. 3, Box 87
Epping, NH 03042
(603) 679-2211

☆ The Fellowship of Intentional Communities Meeting at Barnesville, Ohio, April 13-15, 1984, featuring Conflict Resolution Workshop with Marianne McQueen.

Each year Community Educational Service Council, Inc. sponsors an informal meeting of people from intentional communities and people interested in them the day before its annual business meetings. This year this gathering will be at Olney Friends Boarding School at Barnesville, Ohio. There will be an opportunity Friday night for people in communities or people interested in learning about them to hear from each other about a variety of different types of communities.

Saturday morning and afternoon, we will have the workshop on Conflict Resolution. The workshop will include discussion by participants of conflicts in which they and their communities are involved. The latter part of Saturday afternoon there will be an opportunity for attendees to visit Raven Rocks Community which is about 18 miles from Olney. It is the home of the "Locust Hill" underground solar-heated house, in process of being built.

Community Educational Service Council Inc., formerly the Homer Morris Loan Fund, is headquartered in the Philadelphia area. It will hold its annual membership business meeting Saturday night, April 14 and its annual directors' business meeting Sunday morning April 15. CESCE is a small organization with a limit of 25 active members and an unlimited number of associate members. It has for the last 30 years lent small sums (\$3,000 or less) in short term loans to intentional communities to enable them to start small businesses. This will be an

opportunity for those communities which have a need to send a representative to get acquainted.

Community Services, Inc. is co-sponsor of the FIC meeting this year. Community Service was started by Arthur Morgan 44 years ago to help people understand the importance of the small community to the growth of the qualities we wish to encourage in our society. C.S. carries on concern for both improving the quality of life wherever one lives and aiding people to find or start intentional communities. It has a mail-order book service and holds a conference each year on some important aspects of community. The FIC meeting will be an opportunity to get acquainted with some of its work. Write:

Community Service, Inc.
114 East Whiteman Street
P.O. Box 243
Yellow Springs, OH 45387

☆ Twin Oaks Community announces a two-day conference — "Women in Community: Empowering Ourselves" to be held June 1-3, 1984. All women interested in learning community skills and networking with a diversity of women are welcome. Highlights include: workshops, campfires, swimming, a sweat hut and a coffeehouse. Outdoors, women-only camping and vegetarian meals provided. \$23 — \$30 for the conference — sliding scale based on income. Partial scholarships available. For more info and registration contact:

Robin Moulds
Twin Oaks Community
Louisa, VA 23093
(703) 894-5126

Information

☆ The Madison, Wisconsin Equal Opportunities Commission has recently appointed a Task Force on alternative families. The purpose of the task force is to study and make recommendations for legislation to provide some of the legal rights of families to groups which do not now have them, in such ways as housing, health insurance, authorization of medical treatment, etc.

As a member of the Task Force, I am trying to find out about any similar laws or regulations which have been adopted, or considered, anywhere in North America. If you have information about any such activity, I would appreciate it very much if you would let me know about it.

Robert West
Department of Chemistry
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706 USA

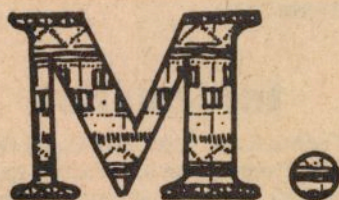
☆ Incorporated in 1982, the Institute for New Economics is a charitable research organization undertaking comprehensive studies on issues of sustainable economic development. Founded by a variety of professionals — a lawyer, an anthropologist, a political scientist, and a practicing businessman — the Institute uses economic, ecological, anthropological, and legal tools in its concern to harmonize three areas of importance to democratic society: (1) a stable path for economic development; (2) the enhancement of native cultural values and ecological preservation; (3) the strengthening of the local community base.

More information on the Institute or on the Native Economic Development Project can be made available on request.

Institute for New Economics
4551 West 15th Ave.
Vancouver, B.C. V6R 3B3
(604) 228-8339

☆ Community Living Experiment — Are you considering a change in personal lifestyle? Do you want to know what other alternatives are "out there?" Are you interested in experiencing and exploring different models for community living?

Consider joining us for a one-week experimental workshop in community July 6-13 at Sevenoaks Pathwork Center. We will talk about community issues, visit



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M. 306 N. Brooks Madison, WI 53715

some successful alternatives, and live as a community for a week. Whoever comes will form the community for the week, and we will set up our own personal and group daily agendas, and make group decisions by consensus.

The week will be co-led by members of five rural Virginia communities, most with over five years experience, and each with a very different focus, lifestyle, and expertise. *Twin Oaks* is a bold experiment for a large number of people in egalitarian economics and non-sexist social interaction, based on ideas from the book, *Walden II*. *Springtree* is a smaller, more intimate and family-oriented group. *Shannon Farms* is a large-scale experiment in land and resource sharing for independent family groups. The *New Land* is a cooperative farming community surrounding the Monroe Institute for Applied Sciences and appeals especially to people interested in the work of the Institute and who are following their own non-sectarian spiritual paths. *Sevenoaks* is a small residential community growing out of a larger spiritual community in the D.C.-Virginia area with shared experience in the Pathwork, a psychological and spiritual approach to personal growth. *Sevenoaks* is also a center for personal and spiritual growth which sponsors workshops and conferences, and is open

for individual retreats and group rentals. During the community week, participants will have a chance to visit each of the communities represented, as well as to interact with their representatives who will be sharing the week's experience.

While all final decisions about format will be decided by the assembled community of participants, we propose the following: mornings will be either a field trip to one of the communities represented or a discussion group on some topic central to community living: 1) economics — degrees of sharing, 2) different models for decision-making, 3) keeping interpersonal relationships clear, and 4) ways of

relating to the land. We'll also do some work on the land here, and have time for personal retreat and relaxation. In the evenings we will probably have personal sharing groups, including time for clearing out interpersonal difficulties, and musical sharing, or campfires, or meditations, or charades, or whatever we want!

Participants will have comfortable accommodations, usually shared, with shared bath. Some people may camp, at a lower fee. Food will be communally prepared, and our spaces and our children communally cared for. Children are welcome to be part of the experiment, but parents will need to take major responsibility for their care. *Sevenoaks* is an especially lovely retreat center, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with sweeping mountain vistas from most rooms, footpaths through acres of woods, a swimming pond with sand beach, and a river. An ideal spot for a vacation combined with learning and experimenting with new ways of living.

Cost: \$225; less for campers. Half-price for children 3—16 (under 3 free).

Sevenoaks Pathwork Center
Route 1, Box 86
Madison, Virginia 22727
(703) 948-6544

YOURS ABSOLUTELY FREE!

The Keristan Islands Introductory Handbook

The Keristan Islands intentional community features nonseparatist feminism, shared leadership, hip religion and "polyfidelity" (faithful, committed, intimate relationship structure for nonmonogamous adults). Discover "Culture Sculpture" (design of an ideal learning and living environment) and the Network Clearinghouse for Community Organizing.



All this plus much more! Send for your free handbook today!!

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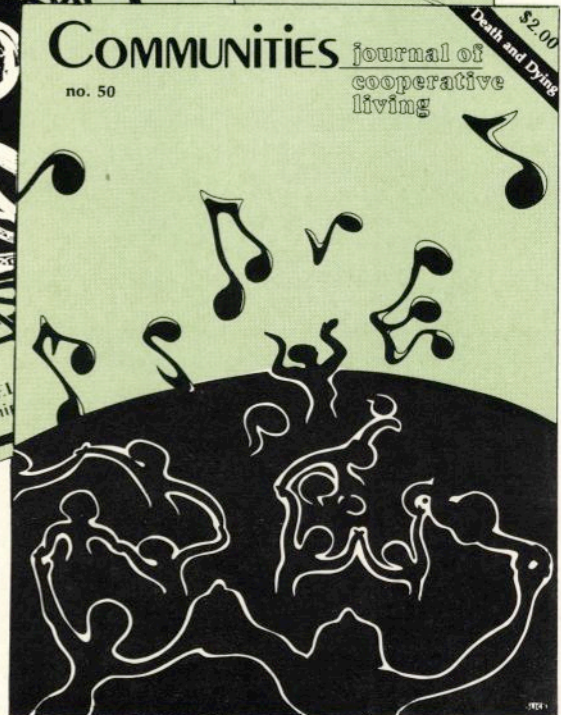
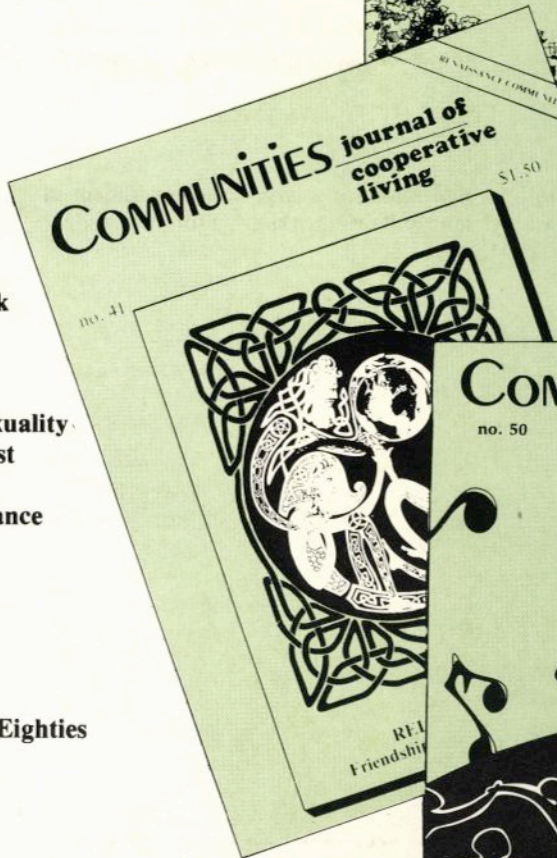
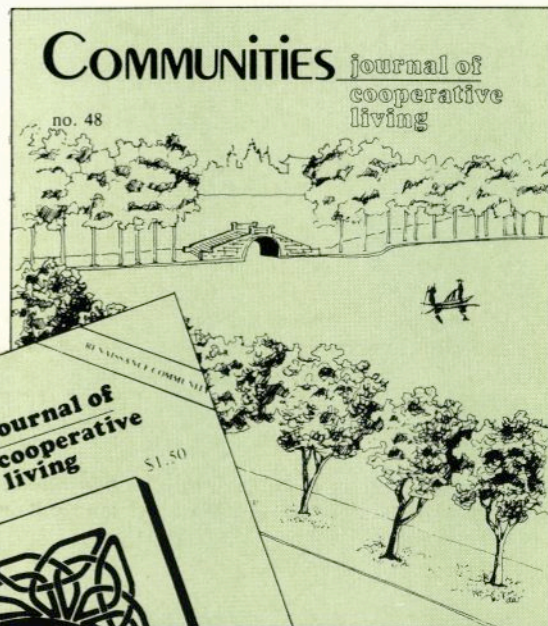
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