

*Adventures
In
Subversion*

Flyers and Posters, 1981-85

Anti-Authoritarians Anonymous

*Oh! Press
San Francisco*

A critical reader is on the lookout for what can be ripped off and improved, and cares little for what can't. For example, we're constantly watching for new ads that can be modified so as to replace their affirmation of existing conditions with a negative charge.

In the same way that we have taken artistic elements and transformed them in a spirit of destructive playfulness, we imagine the ultimate social transformation as negating the commodity—and our present impoverished condition—by *playing* with what “should” be regarded as off-limits or beyond touch. When we *give* away everything we now have to guard and produce for managers and owners, the realm of freedom and creativity is inaugurated.

It doesn't take much to make a poster or flyer. We've financed this project mostly with money from regular plasma donations. When it hasn't been possible to afford typesetting, we've simply typed the text, then blown it up or reduced it at a copy shop and printed it with a graphic (\$25-\$30 for 1,000 8-1/2"x11" sheets).

Along the way we've received generous assistance from a number of people. Thanks go first of all to Jim Dandy, who printed “The Enchantment of Nuclear Destruction” as a large, two-color poster, still available free at our address. We would also like to thank Alice Carnes, Rachael Carnes, Kathryn Clearwater, Suzy Downs, and Feral Ranter for assistance in editing, contributing text, suggesting graphics, calligraphy, or artwork. Special thanks to Oh! Press in San Francisco, which donated the printing.

“Passing Thru” was reprinted from *Ideas for Setting Your Mind in a Condition of Dis*Ease*, an excellent pamphlet available from Falling Sky Books, 97 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2H 5C1, and “Midge and Cindy” came from *Modern Citizen*, P.O. Box 02455, Detroit, MI 48201.

Dan Todd
John Zerzan

The Bad Seed: How Dishonest Children Killed Growing Firm

* * *

Young Salesmen Kept Funds
Owed to Seed Company;
'Part of the American Way'

September 30, 1981

By JOHN HELYAR

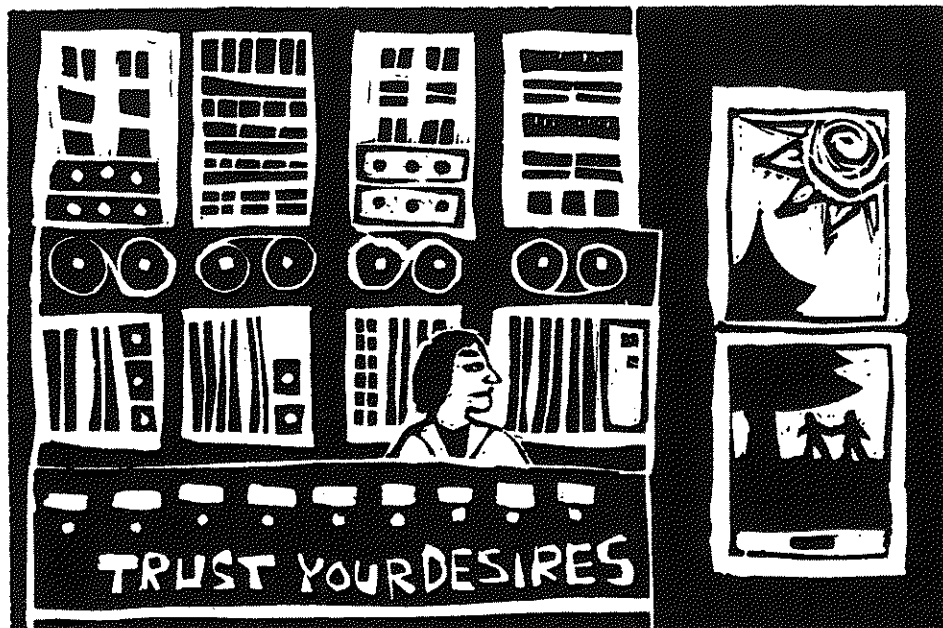
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

LANCASTER, Pa.—American Seed Co. has gone out of business, overwhelmed by the dishonesty of grade-school children.

It is a sad end indeed for a company that introduced generations of the nation's youth to the ways of free enterprise. In ads featured in every juvenile publication from *Boys Life* to *Batman*, it held out this offer: Sell packs of garden seeds and split the proceeds with the company or win prizes. "For more than 60 years, we are proud to say, selling our garden-tested seeds has become a part of the American way of growing up," this year's catalog introduction says.

To more and more youths, however, the American way was to order the seeds, scurry around the neighborhood selling them at 60 cents a pack, and pocket all the money. The company's idea was for the kids to send back 40 cents a pack or return all the cash and get a prize. This year alone, unreturned money cost American Seed about \$600,000 in sales, or nearly half of what it collected in revenues. That doomed the company to its fifth straight losing year.

Some might call it a disgrace; some, a sign of the times. American Seed decided to call it quits.



The word is getting out that folks are no longer interested in continuing to reproduce this brutalized and brutally empty society. An erosion of the core values necessary for its survival is already far advanced, and the desperate if feeble response of Reaganism has already flopped.

In recent years the idea that there is a positive value to a lifetime consumed by wage-labor and shopping seems to have evaporated. Productivity (output-per-hour worked) has been declining since the mid-70's. Unions are unpopular and increasingly a formal part of corporate management, called upon to shoulder more of the combat against the anti-work syndrome of absenteeism, contempt for authority, drugs, turnover, etc.

Since the '60's elections attract fewer and fewer voters; the humiliation of helping to install one's masters is widespread. Shoplifting and all manner of evading taxes are soaring phenomena. Since mid-1980 over 500,000 19- and 20-year olds have said 'no thanks' to mandatory pre-draft registration. An 80-year old trend is now reversing itself in the high schools, as the dropout rate climbs.

The anti-human garbage of a rotting system — from factories to computers to freeways to neutron bombs — must be destroyed and will be destroyed. The riots, lootings, and burning in Zurich, Amsterdam, throughout Britain, and in the cities of Germany in the past year will come to America. And it won't come soon enough for us. Breakdown begins at home.

The society that abolishes all adventure makes the abolition of that society the only real adventure.

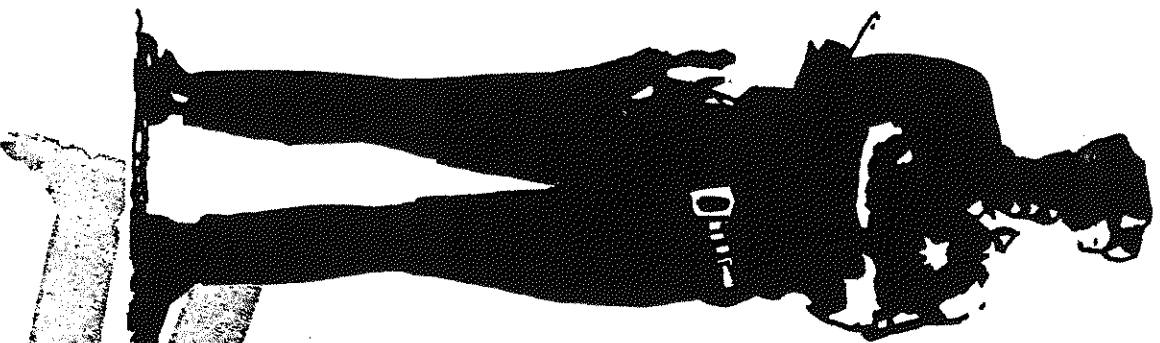
Individuality Constructs Itself By Destroying What Bars Its Way

Which is the more unspeakable, Jonestown or seeing our each moment die in unfreedom? The void which is spectator-consumer society renders every horror commonplace.

But the moorings of this empty work & pay captivity are being assaulted; the human organism turns away from the programmed death-trip in many ways.

Alienation leers at itself as punk rock and job-burnout mock "normal" life and the work ethic. Nearly all employees steal from work, looting is universal whenever possible, everyone loathes politicians. We have no energy to invest in our own degradation. Everywhere there is enlavement to the commodity, however the gut-level opposition is mounting. At its base, class society begins to totter. Habit is its best defense, but imagination causes the tremors announcing its impending collapse.

Against every effort of the old world, from the pathetic embrace of a mythical past by the Right, to the "participation-in-power" lures of the Center, and the archaic workism of the Left, the essential claim of life to play and creativity can triumph, if our disrespect for all these forms of slavery is great enough.

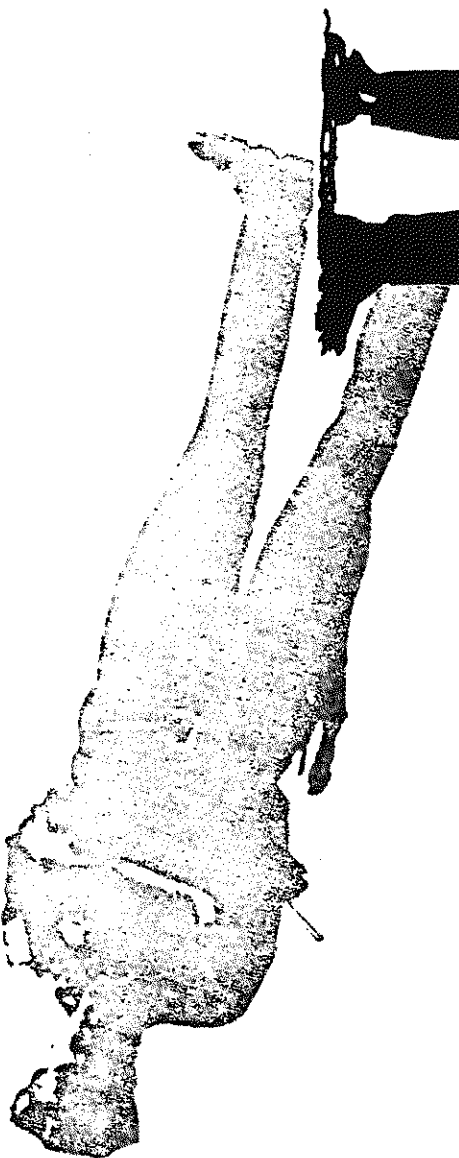


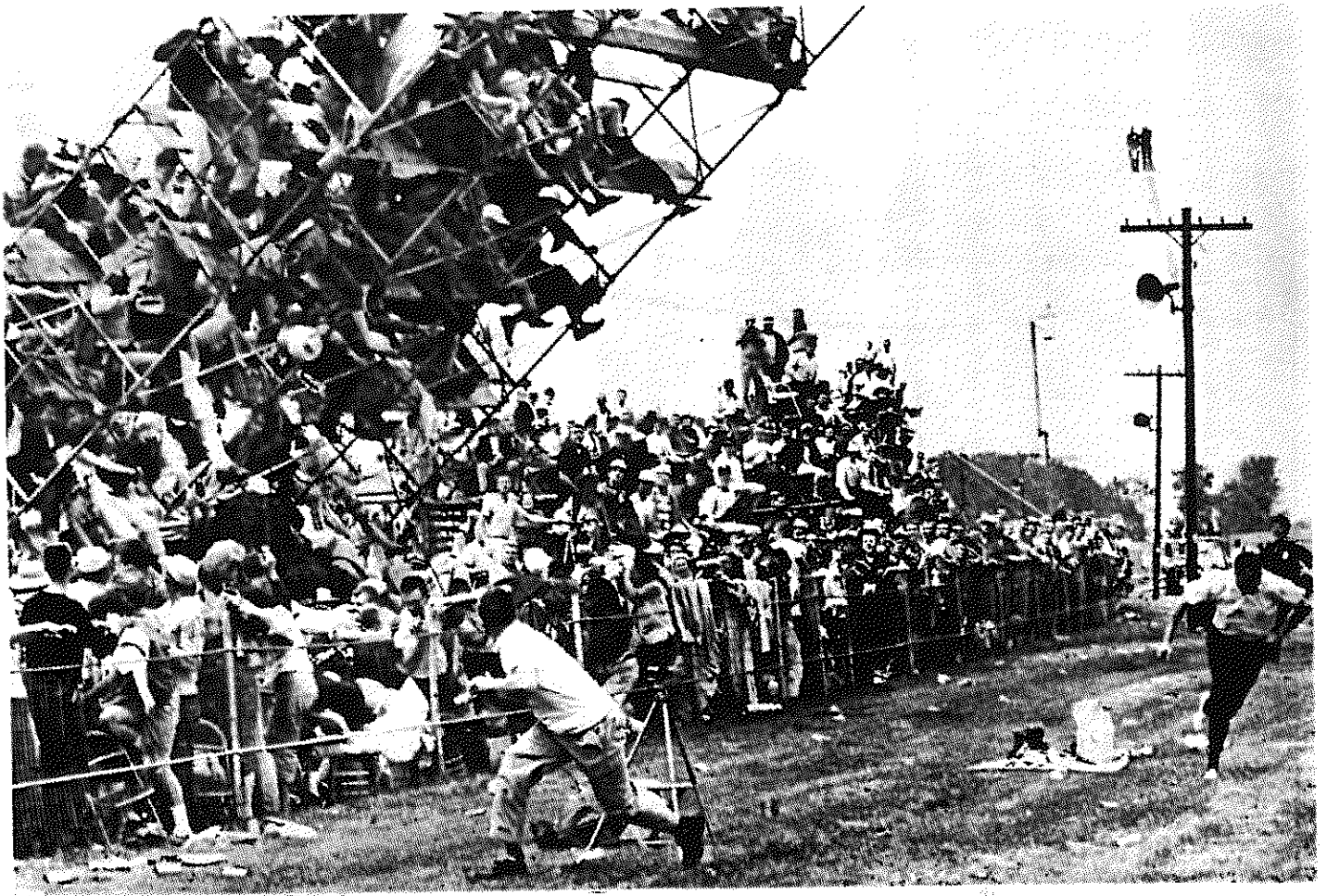
Dear Abby

Dear Abby: The shock of freedom works miracles. Nothing can resist it, neither mental illness, remorse, guilt, the feeling of powerlessness, nor the brutalization created by the environment of power.

When a water pipe burst in Pavlov's laboratory, not one of the dogs that survived the flood retained the slightest trace of his long conditioning. Could the tidal wave of great social upheavals have less effect on individuals than a burst water pipe on dogs?

—Yours for Anarchy
Dear Anarchy: I couldn't agree with you more. Thousands of years of living in the shadows will not withstand a week of revolutionary violence.





MERCALLI SEISMIC SCALE (1931)

- I Not felt, except under exceptionally favorable circumstances. However, dizziness or nausea may be experienced.
- II Felt by a few people, especially on the higher floors of buildings, and by sensitive or nervous persons.
- III A shock strong enough to be felt by a fair number of people and for its length and direction to be distinguished.
- IV During the day felt indoors by many, outdoors by few. At night some awakened. Sensations like a heavy body striking building, or the falling of heavy objects inside.
- V Felt by nearly everyone and recognized as an upheaval. Awakens many or most sleepers. Frightens a few people. Heavy consumer goods unstable.
- VI Felt by everyone, indoors and outdoors. All sleepers awakened. Clocks stop, homes abandoned by many.
- VII All run outdoors. General fright and alarm. Damage negligible to well-built structures, considerable in those of poor design and construction.
- VIII Damage considerable to all but specially designed structures. Fall of factory stacks, church towers. Auto driving disturbed.
- IX Partial or total destruction of buildings and offices, with shifts from foundations. Fright and alarm approach panic.
- X Ground cracks appear, rails bent, water splashes over banks. Lines of vision altered. Freeway interchanges collapse.
- XI Panic is general. Few, if any, structures remain standing. Underground pipelines completely out of service.
- XII Panic is general. Damage total. Objects thrown upward into the air.

NUCLEAR MADNESS . . . VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN . . . RIGHTIST MURDER IN EL SALVADOR . . . LEFTIST FASCISM IN POLAND

Today there is a sharp escalation of issues that call for our protest. There is no doubt that these outrages must be ended.

Our everyday, unspectacular confinement is also very much “at issue” — and is not necessarily confronted by responding to apparently separate affronts to decency.

Basically indecent is selling our lifetimes away to purchase survival, a proposition that is everywhere losing its appeal. It may even be that militancy over pressing issues is the last, best diversion from what lies beneath all the issues — the emptiness of daily routines.

One yawns in the face of a professor, shoplifts instead of paying, is unable to face another day lost at work . . . It is impossible to be fully diverted from paycheck/price tag captivity. We are steadily assaulted by it and try to draw away.

The social order becomes more palpably oppressive. All the marches can't cover it up.

... AS WE JOIN MIDGE AND CINDY, CINDY HAS RELUCTANTLY AGREED TO CONSIDER JOINING THE WORKFORCE; READ ON ...

Darling, I'm really glad you decided to think about joining us— though it's not as if you could really choose not to anymore, is it? Not without a lot of other people joining you, anyway.

And believe me, with everybody's increasing dependence on a global productive system that each succeeding moment seems more out of their control, the likelihood of that happening gets smaller with every passing day, so why even think about it?

Besides, you don't have to give up much—just your curiosity, your creativity, your capacity for critical thought... oh, and of course, mostly your *time*—8 hours a day of it, 5 days a week, 50 or so weeks a year for about 30 or 40 years of your life... plus, of course, everything you produce, and, ah, your right to decide what to produce and what it gets used for after you produce it.

But just look at what you can get! You can buy this, or anything else here you want, anything you see! Isn't that marvellous! And you can even buy things you can't see, like a life-style, or a sense of well-being, or the admiration of your neighbors and co-workers for your stereo, or your car, or your clothes, or your house, or anything!

And then there's all the good television programs, movies, records, concerts—so much great entertainment being produced for our consumption.

Admittedly you can't buy back your time, but what would you do with all that time anyway? I know I'd just get bored, or worse yet, *frightened*, if I had to wake up every morning and decide what I was going to do with my life that day. Besides, face it, this is the way life *is*, so what can you do about it?

You can say "no,"—darling.

Why not get together with some friends soon and say NO! Say no to the draft, or work, or religion, or authority figures, or school; say no to television, patriotism, political ideologies, any of the thousand and one ways in which this society keeps you from realizing your own needs and desires. You'll find the more you do it, the more you'll like it!

**JUST SAY "FUCK OFF."
YOU'LL GET
A LOT OF SATISFACTION.**

THE ENCHANTMENT OF NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION



The possibility of total destruction through nuclear war corresponds to a condition of ruin everywhere that makes such destruction attractive. And in the absence of opposition that contests *everything* about the existing social order, only the eruption of nuclear war can be expected to put an end to our present flattened lives.

To work for a freeze on the number of nuclear weapons is ludicrous. Our lives are already frozen in the routines of work or the debasement of having to look for it. Nuclear weapons are merely the most absurd and increasingly costly burden of the obsolescence of national borders. And when the State maintains a condition where entire populations may be destroyed at once, that condition must be abolished by entire populations destroying the State once and for all.

Behind the State, however, stands the force of habit, and behind the habit of work forced by the dead weight of hierarchical society stand the military and police powers of the State. When the social passivity induced by spectacular diversions, religion, culture, specialized knowledge, ideology, isolation and resignation to a life that remains always somewhere else begins to crumble, these powers provide the prisons, psychiatric wards, forced labor camps, massacres, death squads and torture centers necessary to preserve order.

For class society to perpetuate itself through automation, it becomes increas-

ingly necessary to impose austerity and discipline through military force. But the process is different everywhere, and not always savage or direct, as in Chile and Poland. The language of the military is command and obey, and the computer language of the Department of Defense (sic) will probably be the language of most programs within a few years' time, says a Danish computer scientist (*Computer Decisions*).

More important ultimately to the preservation of order is that automation now makes possible a computer terminal at the lowest possible level: every household. Passivity assumes a fixed character and overtakes the mobile isolation represented by the automobile, which has perhaps been the most significant contribution thus far to the perfection of separation accomplished by capitalist society.

As capitalism extends its automation in every direction, our forced participation, as always, is presumed. The terms are changing, but more will be expected of us. As one management consultant put it, "Nowadays, many functions of an effective manager depart radically from the standard philosophy and principles of supervision. For example, decision-making involving the staff has to be participative and representational rather than centralized or unilateral. . . . The new approach requires that employees take greater responsibility and initiative in their work."

Where the apocalypse is always present, the present is always apocalyptic. Now on-

ly the adventure of abolishing all that destroys us little by little every day is worthy of the effort. And if work isn't killing us, why are we being paid to do it?

In the sermons, symposiums and well-mannered marches of the peace activists, the word "survival" is heard again and again, but the question of whether survival is worth having is not addressed.

The decision to live is a political act, and so is the use of words. Where people have to work, so do words, and where the machines of society process words, the minimum demand of words is to submit the society of machines to the process of play. Desire, conscious of itself, advances, and the realm of words becomes a liberated zone. The terrain changes constantly—the zone must ground itself everywhere or be reclaimed. The project begins with each person, but dies in isolation.

The end of time is the unlawful inheritance of the time of the end. "All pleasure desires eternity," said Nietzsche, "deep, deep eternity," and until time is forgotten it remains our master: time is indeed money.

What has been represented remains to be realized—for ourselves or for our supervisors. Everything has been said—now it must be created and discovered.

One more effort. Workers, if you want to be Adventurers!

*Don't mourn for me friends, I've
won't for me never
For I'm going to do nothing for you
and ever
English workingmen's movement,
early 19th century.*



Technology. We know that it offers no evidence whatsoever of having any sympathy for the nature of the world, and has nothing to do with human desires for an earth on which to dwell.

We're the people who create it, perfect it and make it part of the American dream. We bring you the computer, which touches all our lives in ways we can hardly begin to imagine. And who can say what lies ahead?

Let us take you along. Surrender to the pressure to play video games. Help us realize alienated humanity's dream of nature completely tamed. Remember: you too may soon have your own computer!

Our project is the complete isolation of people from the earth and their reduction to a uniform, disciplined workforce. The universal language of the machine is now carrying us toward a global network of cybernetic planning. As more animal species and tribal languages are extinguished each year, look forward to new, more exciting video adventures!

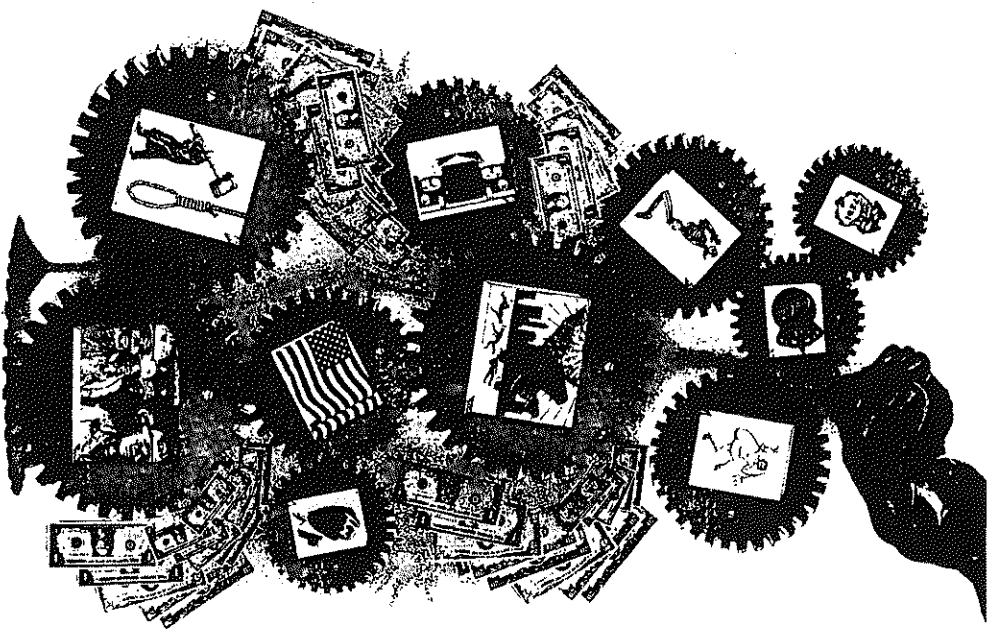
To those who say that the planet is being destroyed, that our gleaming plans rest upon slavery in the mines, factories and offices, that the computer replaces living speech with an ugly, impoverished language, we answer: you will not stay away from us for long.

SPERRY  UNIVAC

We understand how important it is to program your desires.

THE OFFICE
AUTOMATION
SYSTEM THAT
RECOGNIZES
PEOPLE WOULD
RATHER
NOT BE
AUTOMATED.

IT WON'T
BE SPARED BY
PEOPLE WHO
RECOGNIZE
THE PRESENT
AUTOMATED
SYSTEM WOULD
RATHER
NOT BE
ABOLISHED.



 Data General

Passing Thru

Almost ten years ago I became a seeker after truth. I needed to unravel the mysteries of my own deformed and painful existence. But when I looked around I felt only cruelty and dread.



My hopes, and fears draw me on with their relentless momentum. Fantasies of love and anger, sex and violence, revelation and death haunted me. And I was held back by the most fragile of bonds.



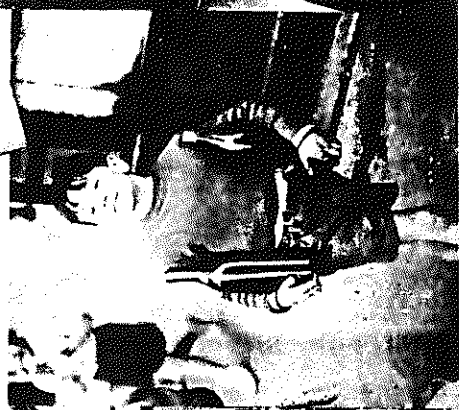
I used philosophy, politics, psychology, and literature as a mirror in order to understand my own place in the world.



But my work was always outside of me. My energy, creativity and humour were taken from me and I was given a few dollars in exchange.



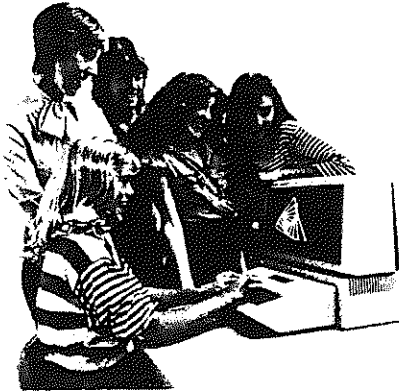
And now? I despair often. What are our lives, our love and our communities when weighed against the banalities of daily life and the outrages perpetrated daily by the powers that be. But the politics of the coming holocaust and the seductive lure of the guerrilla option notwithstanding, we must add our blows to those already raining down upon this most vicious of all regimes. I await the day when all shall arise shouting! "We've had enough! Let us begin our re-creation!" *



So I bode my time; learning and growing, reaching out to others, slowly seeing and creating the possibilities of a real human community.

So I stepped outside the routine. I got my money any way I could. But I was known for my opposition and hate, not for my lust for life and love of others.

IT'S TIME KIDS STOPPED READING AND STARTED USING STRONG LANGUAGE.



"Descartes tells us that monkeys could speak if they wished to, but that they prefer to keep silent so that they won't be made to work. In 1907, the Argentine writer Lugones published a story about a chimpanzee who was taught how to speak and died under the strain of the effort."

The Book of Imaginary Beings

It's no longer possible to ignore the connection between keeping words in place and people kept in their places: libraries, classrooms, factories, churches, prisons, museums, shops, offices and armies.

Without words the infinite subjectivity suppressed in each person could not have been torn apart as an abstract object and worshipped as "God." This abstraction begins with--and always conceals--the ancient opposition between the imposed misery of existence for necessity's sake and the desire for life with abandon.

The present order maintains a constant expectation of ever more dazzling and intriguing diversions to come--an expectation seen as more patently false with each passing day. What maintains the present order, however, is the lingering hope--just as false--that "justice," "peace," "democracy," "equality," "human rights," "international cooperation" and the "appropriate use of technology" will somehow be realized by the political maneuvers of those whose permanent vocation is calculated protest at each new injustice or contradiction they discover, or more usually have thrust in their faces.

But the more realistic "socialism" appears in its licensed attempt to better plan the absurd horror of advancing civilization, the more ridiculous capitalism defining itself as spectacular utopia makes it appear.

The spectacle accelerates the disintegration of social bonds by pitilessly mocking every value in its ceaseless refinement of novelty, the official opiate of the disillusioned, but at the same time speeds up the creation of an opposition which finds its true identity only in the mockery of all values and the determination to stop at nothing less than an end to the imprisonment of automated lives. Better the entire economy destroyed altogether than a single worker bored or humiliated for even a moment!

In societies where words remain the first and last impediment to speech freed from the totalitarian commodity of information, they can be relentlessly played back as cruel jokes and sly tricks necessary for the consciousness of passivity to overcome its own passivity at each step. I create myself out of words, and that creation immediately opposes me to everything besides the words I use, just as fraternity creates itself only by opposing all the immediate, false oppositions of competing parties, nationalities, religions, corporations, fashions, and ideologies that confine humans in a wasteland of isolation and madness.

All the separate forces that have combined to render words free from all meaning are terrified by the absolute freedom in the realm of words: that freedom now barely contains the immense subjective wealth once granted to God but waiting still to be pillaged in an insurrectionary and unpredictable festival of idleness, pleasure, adventure, and play.



"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said, in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean--neither more nor less."



"The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many different things."



"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master--that's all."

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

A WARNING TO THE BOREL



We understand how bored you are with the drab monotony of everyday life.

You hate the jobs we make you take to get money, and have nothing but contempt for us.

It's obvious that you increasingly reject our morality, along with all restraint. You steal from us, lie to us, break our laws, mock our culture, sabotage our technology.

We tolerate "rebels" with all sorts of causes, but you laugh at them. What you seem to want is revelry without any cause at all.

We recognize every "revolution" to make sure you and your friends won't break out of line everywhere at once, your only goal unlicensed pleasure.

We're afraid you'd rather be burning banks, looting malls or smashing computers than going to work — our demands are what really bring out the violence in you.

This game has gone on long enough. Either you win or we will.

Notice to Employees



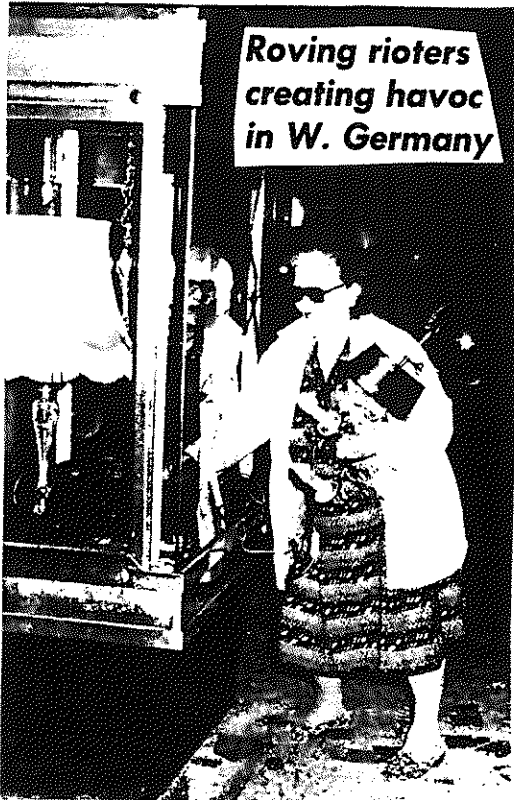
M A F I A U N I O N C A L L S I T Q U I T S

After serious consideration of the challenges and responsibilities involved in representing you, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters is henceforth no longer in the business of speaking for you and will no longer be deducting dues payments from your payroll checks.

It seems that the era of free money, collected from docile, woefully underpaid workers, is coming to an end. The Teamsters is, of course, a project of organized crime, with all our presidents for several decades convicted gangsters and swindlers. This obvious truth is perhaps the primary cause of a rising tide of worker hostility, putting into serious doubt our continued role as mediator between you and management.

Like other unions, we have conducted phoney strikes--like last year's--intended to provide a safe release of the frustrations you feel as you sell your lives and energies to purchase survival. But with zero credibility, not aided by our support for Reagan, we have decided to be content with the millions of dollars we have already taken from you and get out while the getting's good.

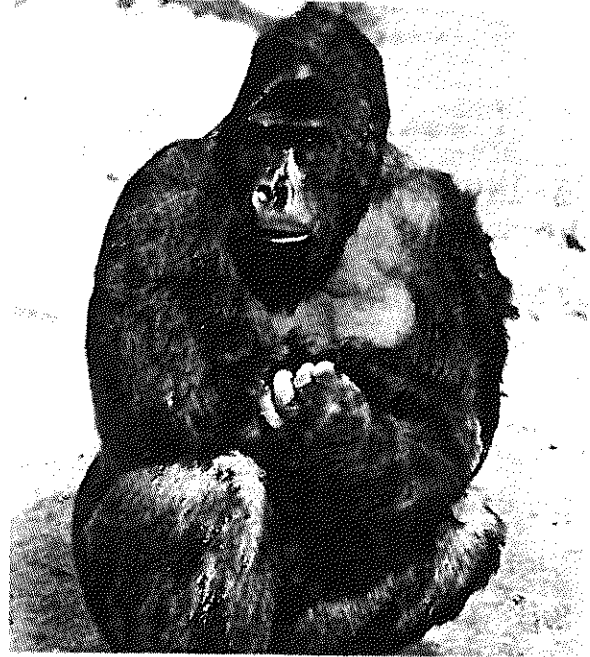
We recognize that when our members begin to consider acting on their own and refusing the condition of passive victims, it's time to look for greener, more reliable pastures. But it has been nice. Thanks.



**Roving rioters
creating havoc
in W. Germany**

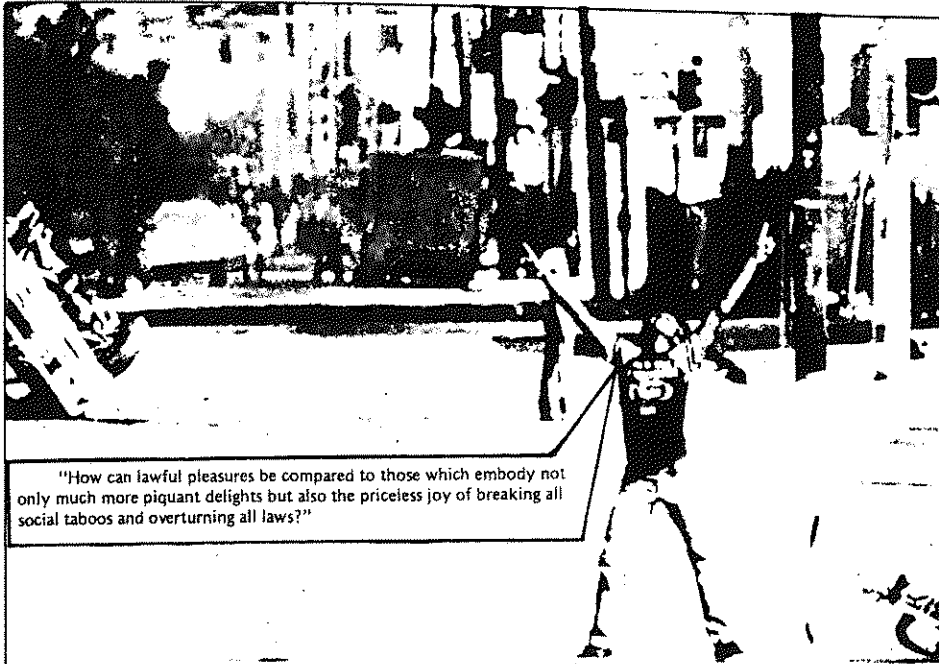
As part of a class project, three high-school students, Gayle Young, Chris Mader and Scott Deerfield, got permission from the store manager to rip things off in full view of customers. "They must have taken \$300 worth of merchandise," said Richard Baran, the students' marketing teacher. "There were more than 100 customers in the store during the three hours, and at least 50 of them saw the whole thing. Many of them were standing next to the shoplifters. They got one dirty look, but the rest of the customers either looked away or walked away. I'm totally amazed.

Supermarket bosses find checkout gal gave away \$200,000 in free food



The morose expression of a zoo gorilla suffering from boredom and loneliness

"Fear like the plague the unruly guerrilla spirit, the arbitrary actions of isolated detachments and disobedience to central authority, for it spells doom," Lenin once warned.



"How can lawful pleasures be compared to those which embody not only much more piquant delights but also the priceless joy of breaking all social taboos and overturning all laws?"

"Broken Windows make favourable conditions"

Governor Hughes said after his morning inspection tour that he had found the 'holiday atmosphere' among the looters most repelling.

AN APOLOGY FROM THE PEOPLE WHO STAGED THE FAST FOR LIFE

It's embarrassing, but we have to admit how right you were to laugh at us. The Fast for Life was an insult to your intelligence, and our absurd claim that the Fast has led to a "political break in the momentum of the arms race" deserves nothing but contempt.

Most of our support came from institutions—churches and universities—known for the servility of their members. The self-satisfied impotence of non-violent protest matches perfectly this docility, at a time when so many others are ready to refuse the miserable roles and conditions allotted them by this society.

It's true that political hacks at every level listened politely to our "demands." And at a time when politicians are universally despised, we reinforced their authority by giving them this chance to show how reasonable and concerned they are.

More importantly, in using our spectacular sacrifice to make "demands" on Power, we hid the truth that only by the real sacrifices everyone makes each day does Power continue to exist. Now we know that only the demand for an end to all the sacrifices imposed on daily life is truly radical.

A totally unnatural world of tedium and deprivation, where love and play do not survive, is crumbling. The Fast for Life was just another brick in the wall holding it together.

Bon appetit!

We'd like to see

AN APOLOGY FROM THE MISGUIDED MISCREANTS WHO - CALL THEMSELVES ANTI-AUTHORITARIANS ANONYMOUS

e.g.: It's embarrassing, but we have to admit that we've been wasting our time sitting around doing nothing but shooting down other people's sincere efforts at building a new society based on love and caring. While piously claiming ourselves not to be part of the problem, the only thing resembling a solution that we have offered consists of an attitude of snide hostility toward others and some simplistic mouthings about such ill-defined generalities as "Power," "servility," and what is "truly radical."

With our smartly-designed posters and handbills we had taken it upon ourselves to tell everyone else how it really is. Our chief truth was that nobody's doing anything right. Out of this profound insight was supposed to issue—*something*; we hinted that it would be a new world of real freedom "where love and play . . . survive." We never said how love and play were going to grow out of the seeds of arrogance, condemnation and obnoxiousness that we so liberally spread before the eyes of this community.

Amidst our sophisticated indictment of Power, we failed to notice that all our arguments were made on the same level and thus no better than that which we tried to rally contempt for. We campaigned against the stranglehold of Power by speaking in terms of "authority," "docility," "servility," "contempt," and "demands." We completely missed the fact that the Fast for Life, as an example, was based on an appeal to peoples of the world, not "demands" of authorities. We were so immersed in our view-of-how-not-to-view-the-world that we couldn't see things happening on levels other than power with any clarity.

It was a college town experiment in booklearned anarchism. Our egos rode high on the thrill of advocating an anti-sanction society, pushing the traditionally impermissible. To hell with whether it would ever catch on or actually increase the value and joy of life on earth. It was fun to be the most notorious on the block.

As we looked closer at the real transformative energy of nonviolent sacrifice—the great truth pointed to by key societal movers and shakers throughout history—we saw that we were like kids throwing rocks at a stray dog: a pointless act of mean aggression. Meanwhile, the Satyagrahis of the world are interested in putting forth food, and inviting the hunger and fear to depart. To all involved in such nonviolent gestures, we now sincerely say:

Bon appetit!

Anti-Anti-Authoritarians, Identified

viz., The Upfront Wellknown Workers
for an Open & Peaceful World

To obtain a list of our names and roles played, please write:

P.O. Box 1524, Eugene, OR 97440

An Outsider's Guide to Bizarre Local Rites

The organized local images of opposition to the dominant order have this much in common: a complete poverty of vision, owing to the fact that, understanding nothing, their boring partisans feel desire for even less.

The Fasters for Life (Dieters for Headlines, more like) responded to our flyer which imputed to them a public apology for their lame and pious gesturism, by upholding, in their counter-flyer, every characteristic we accused them of. As if to validate our picture of them as well-behaved sheep who bleat piteously only for one completely unradical request—survival at any cost—the pacifist camp exhibited their mellow-speak and lack of passion by calling us arrogant, negative, judgemental, etc. and explicitly defending humble, happy-face self-sacrifice. Apparently there are those who will always politely supplicate themselves before authority (and TV cameras) and never have the urge to transform everything.

It seems tiresome to remind our well-financed activists that the nuclear weapons (and only too many of them at that!) they incessantly salivate over could—with the destruction of State power, nowhere on their agenda—be dismantled in a matter of weeks, if that long. This becomes a real possibility insofar as their prayers, vigils, letters to elected officials and boring demonstrations are seen as laughable submission.

The RCYB, or Really Confused Young Bourgeoisie, as the punks have aptly put it, are classic Marxist-Leninoid zombies. Although it's possible that the Brigade, and their parent, would-be commissars of the RCP, is a government project intended to completely discredit the idea of revolution, it is more likely that their rigid ridiculousness is a function of severe emotional disorders.

More successful in their efforts to support the line of bureaucratic-totalitarian regimes from Cuba to Poland and Russia is the front group, Eugene Council for Human Rights (read Stalinism) in Latin America. A rather large group of supporters is manipulated with ease by a few cadre in the know, a situation initiated by an honest desire to help victims of U.S.-backed oppression, and maintained by the chronic refusal of such volunteers to acquaint themselves with reality, historical or current. Front groups of course always depend upon the unwillingness of their supporters to possess either rigor or autonomy, to see past the lie that one must choose between the grisly terror of military-corporate exploitation and planned suffocation under socialist democracy, to act as subjects rather than willingly directed objects.



Meanwhile the extremity of alienated life is causing more people at large to begin to question the validity of all aspects of everyday life and of technological civilization itself. The film *Koyunmisqatsi* expresses the critique of the latter and thereby also exposes the madness of the former. At the other pole of cultural offerings was *The Day After*, weak and banal, despite much heated publicity; no-one noticed the implicit contradiction contained by the fact that its main sponsor was Commodore Computers, simply because the drama was so superficial. That technology is ravaging the earth and its species and diminishing us as individuals in devastating ways will have to be confronted.

Today more than ever only an attack on all forms of domination is worth the effort; anything less can only alter details of an increasingly empty and mutilated society, if that.

A new kind of

OBEYED DEFIANCE



My life is wasted day after day at work, and like so many others I just go through the motions, unwillingly. Maybe that's why I can almost see the compulsion to consume as a real form of terrorism. But what else could make up for a life without freedom or meaning if not my purchases?

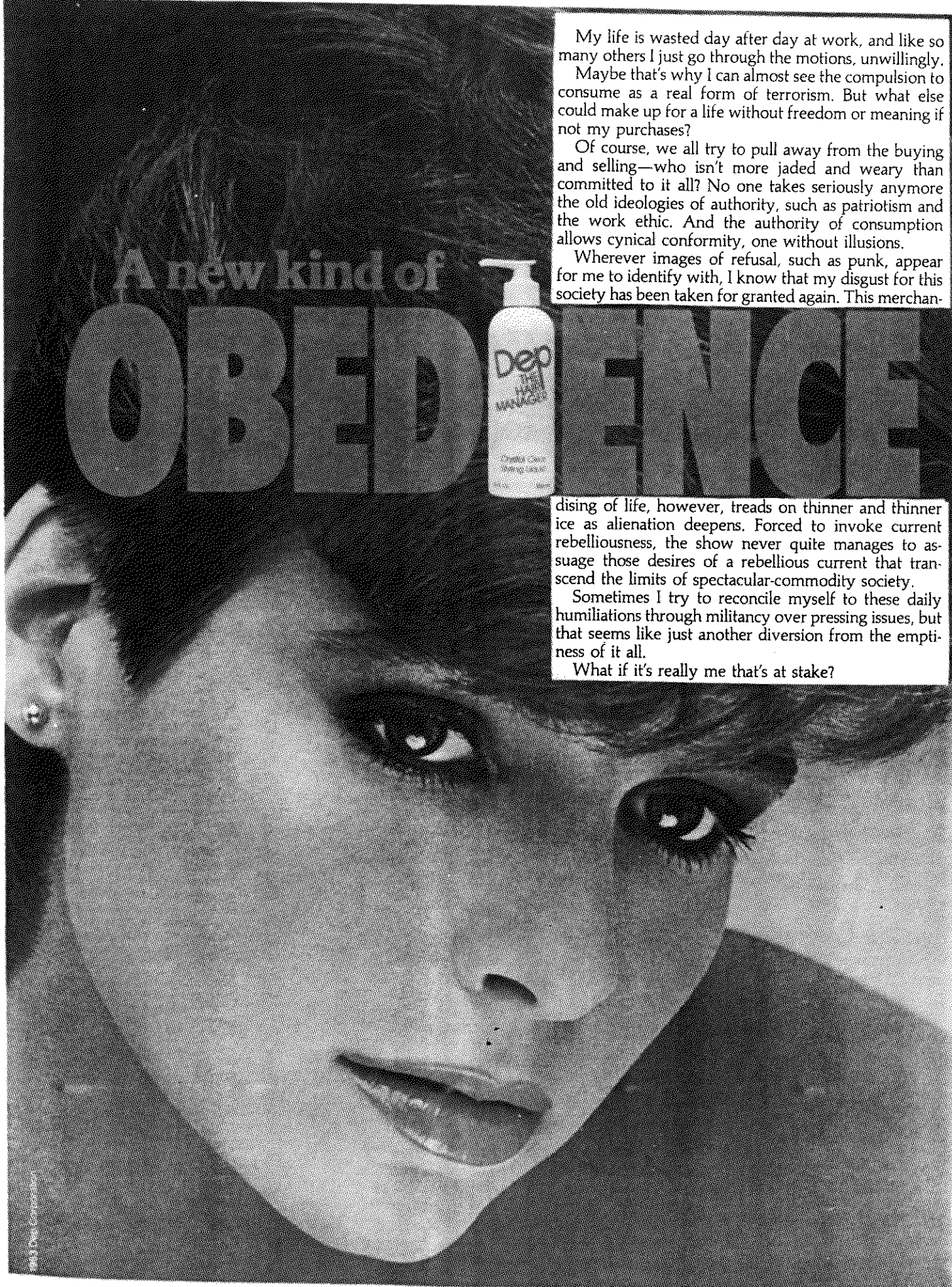
Of course, we all try to pull away from the buying and selling—who isn't more jaded and weary than committed to it all? No one takes seriously anymore the old ideologies of authority, such as patriotism and the work ethic. And the authority of consumption allows cynical conformity, one without illusions.

Wherever images of refusal, such as punk, appear for me to identify with, I know that my disgust for this society has been taken for granted again. This merchan-

dising of life, however, treads on thinner and thinner ice as alienation deepens. Forced to invoke current rebelliousness, the show never quite manages to assuage those desires of a rebellious current that transcend the limits of spectacular-commodity society.

Sometimes I try to reconcile myself to these daily humiliations through militancy over pressing issues, but that seems like just another diversion from the emptiness of it all.

What if it's really me that's at stake?





**"Do you really
need me to
be here
with
you?"**

*"Oh, darling, I
just don't seem
to be alive with-
out you around!"*

Rooted in the appearance of force, this civilization never stops dreaming of imposing authority through the force of appearances. As the real world is changed into a stream of images, these images become real forces. They appear everywhere, seducing our submission to paycheck / price-tag captivity.

Tamed by the discipline of family life, school, work, and fear of poverty, mutilated by the roles we assume and routines they require, we are pushed towards madness or acquiescence. Our fragmented selves—pulled apart by domination—are beguiled by images of rebellion, though these images only tantalize our desires for authentic life.

The spectacle of opposition—revolt as an object of contemplation or consumption—only trivializes a bitter, growing negation. The imperatives of technology require an accommodation more and more people refuse. What really terrifies all the specialists in participation, from parties, unions and sundry organizers to "radical" clerics and artists, is the refusal to be represented by anyone at all in the enjoyment of subversion.

After all, what pleasures can match insistence on life as a marvelous game of abolishing alienation?

TO CURE TECHNOPHOBIA YOU NEED ILLUSIONS THAT WORK.

A lot of people aren't fooled by the new technology. They know it means new levels of tedium wherever work is required for survival.

At AT&T, we're worried by their hostility.

That's why we're watching reactions to automation so closely. To find out what people will accept. And where they draw the line.

Our calculations can help them view their domestication as inevitable, almost nice.

You see, at AT&T we know even the most advanced technology can be dismantled by people who want to live for themselves and not us.

AT&T. We help keep domination up to date.



TO CURE TECHNOPHOBIA YOU NEED A GOOD PSYCHOLOGIST.

A lot of people have a real phobia about new technology. At AT&T, we have someone who can help. In fact, we have hundreds of them.

Psychologists who observe people to test their reactions to new levels of monotony and the artificial. To find out what they'll put up with.

And as we develop new products and work methods, we develop new ways of testing people's reactions to them.

You see, at AT&T we believe even the most advanced technology is of little use if people resist it.

AT&T. We're reaching out to overcome all your doubts.



AT&T





The unthinking and false side of "mellowness" in places like Eugene is the refusal to believe that anything but being nice is called for. Eagerness to enroll voters over various issues reveals the threadbare desire of activists to consume reform, as in their private lives they reform consumption (the constant search for "alternative" therapies, restaurants, products, entertainments, etc.).

Their preoccupation with "freezing nuclear weapons" and enthusiasm for "responsible social investing" of stocks indicate a profound wish for nothing more than a cleaned-up capitalism. They uphold as militant the most innocuous forms of civic protest (circulating petitions, voting for liberal candidates, writing letters) and civil disobedience (polite confrontations with officials in front of television cameras).

Well-off publicists of nice, comfortable cultural diversions might also do well to consider that being positive challenges exactly nothing, and that there are those of us, in an increasingly unhappy population, who see the need of the *negative*.

Fewer and fewer of us want to identify with this government—or perhaps be governed at all—as the growing disinclinations to vote, pay taxes, register for the draft or work attests. Such signs point to a fundamental unwillingness to be used as pawns of authority, and underscore the critical importance of the Left as the last, best hope of inducing the participation this society needs to perpetuate itself.

Middle-class radicalism finds inspiration largely in the visions of linear, historic "progress" derived from christians and socialists. But "the show is over. The audience gets up to leave their seats. Time to collect their coats and go home. They turn around . . . no more coats and no more homes," as someone has said. Time itself increasingly feels like the agent of our captivity, and history seems more nightmarish than ever.

Only an attack on capital precisely at the point of its greatest strength—wherever it provides jobs—can unleash the ultimate weapon of radical subjectivity: the refusal to see one's life reduced to working and consuming (even among "hip" businesses and collectives).

Authority, crumbling on all fronts, is unthreatened by "appeals to conscience," which only back up the illusion that it has any conscience that matters. Without this illusion, moral indignation seems beside the point.

Efforts at being fully human—generous, playful, spontaneous, venturesome, unpredictable—find little assistance on the Left. Never understanding the prospects for real transformation, it just keeps the old trademarks of religion up to date—discipline, obedience, praise for industry—but adds a superior cynicism.

Unwilling to glimpse beyond this artificial world and its unnecessary poverty, socialism in all its varieties gets harder to swallow all the time. We see it perpetuating the old world under a new ideology, but with wage labor, hierarchy and alienation quite intact. It works against revolt because it won't revolt against work.

It never fathoms the humiliation of those who have to submit without illusion to authority every day. Consequently, it doesn't recognize the manifold hostility to this submission as the active negation at work in society.

Only from this resistance can a vision of society without repression arise. Actual liberation should mean release from a condition where unending sacrifice is required to survive. Where the organization of suffering will have vanished with its empty compensations, where each person is his/her own master, would the notion of God have any meaning at all?

The fetish of commodities imprisons a material and spiritual abundance that could flower everywhere with the break-out of the *gift*, a life where no one would either starve to death or be bored to death.

Attention to the needs of the disabled and handicapped is completed by recognizing how seriously crippled each of us touched by civilization has become. Beyond the fascination with "fitness and health" as indisputably positive is the desire for a world the body can enjoy for itself. Partisans of this desire—dancers, dreamers, lovers, players—still need to find their negative counterparts—those for whom wrecking the system that wrecks the body will be a pitiless game. A revolutionary spark will be lighted then to detonate years of accumulated stiffness and tension.

All the generations of resistance to oppression and misery culminate in a world that fully, finally vindicates their struggles. This world is within reach everywhere alarm clocks are despised: a world without work, dancing on the ruins of the machines it refuses to serve any longer.



THIS CIVILIZATION REACTS WITH HORROR TO THE IDEA OF ABOLISHING TIME!

THAT'S BECAUSE IT RESTS ON WORK-A PRISON OF MEASURED TIME.



IF TIME ITSELF IS THE AGENT OF OUR CAPTIVITY...

... WE REALLY DO HAVE TO KILL TIME, DON'T WE?!



I'VE GOT A CLOCK TO SMASH!

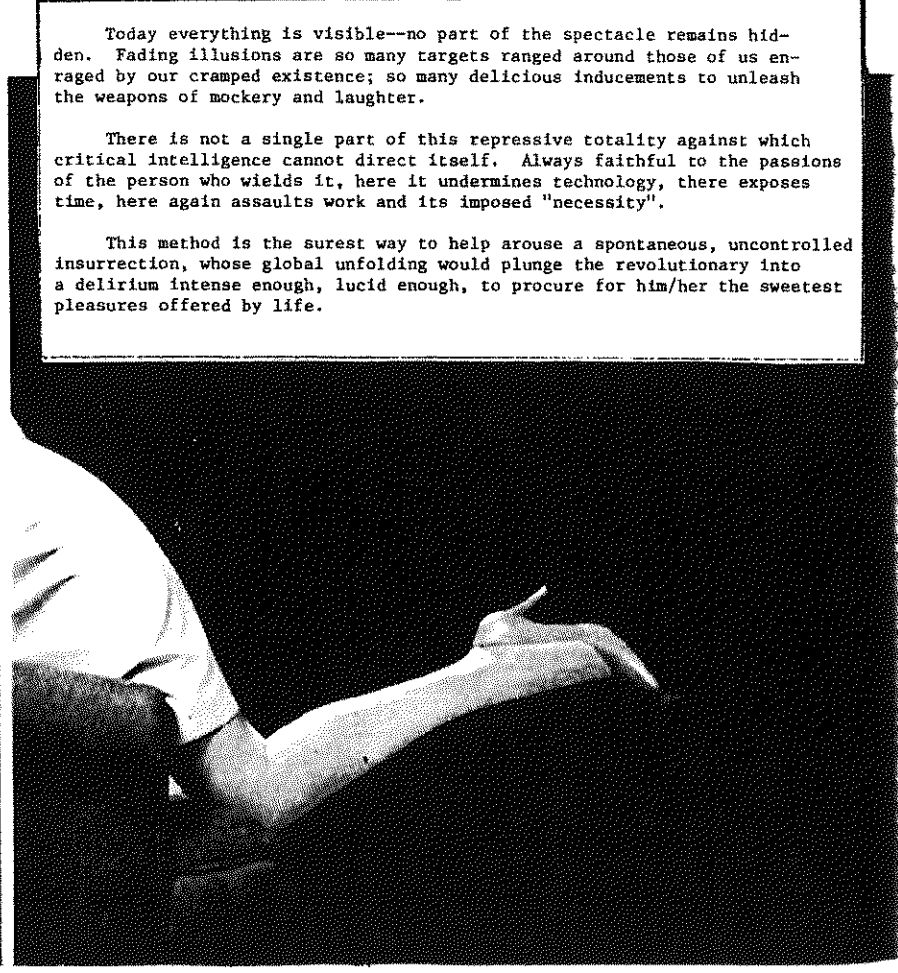
SLAM!

WHAT BETTER WAY TO BEGIN CREATING A NEW WORLD THAN BY DESTROYING TIME?

Today everything is visible--no part of the spectacle remains hidden. Fading illusions are so many targets ranged around those of us enraged by our cramped existence; so many delicious inducements to unleash the weapons of mockery and laughter.

There is not a single part of this repressive totality against which critical intelligence cannot direct itself. Always faithful to the passions of the person who wields it, here it undermines technology, there exposes time, here again assaults work and its imposed "necessity".

This method is the surest way to help arouse a spontaneous, uncontrolled insurrection, whose global unfolding would plunge the revolutionary into a delirium intense enough, lucid enough, to procure for him/her the sweetest pleasures offered by life.



If it's humiliating to be ruled, how much more degrading is it to choose our masters?

The concept "holiday mood" denounces the everyday--just as it denounces holidays and a world that divides the two from each other. That happiness is conceived as a mood that must be tailored to a span of separated time shows what it really is: administered "happiness."

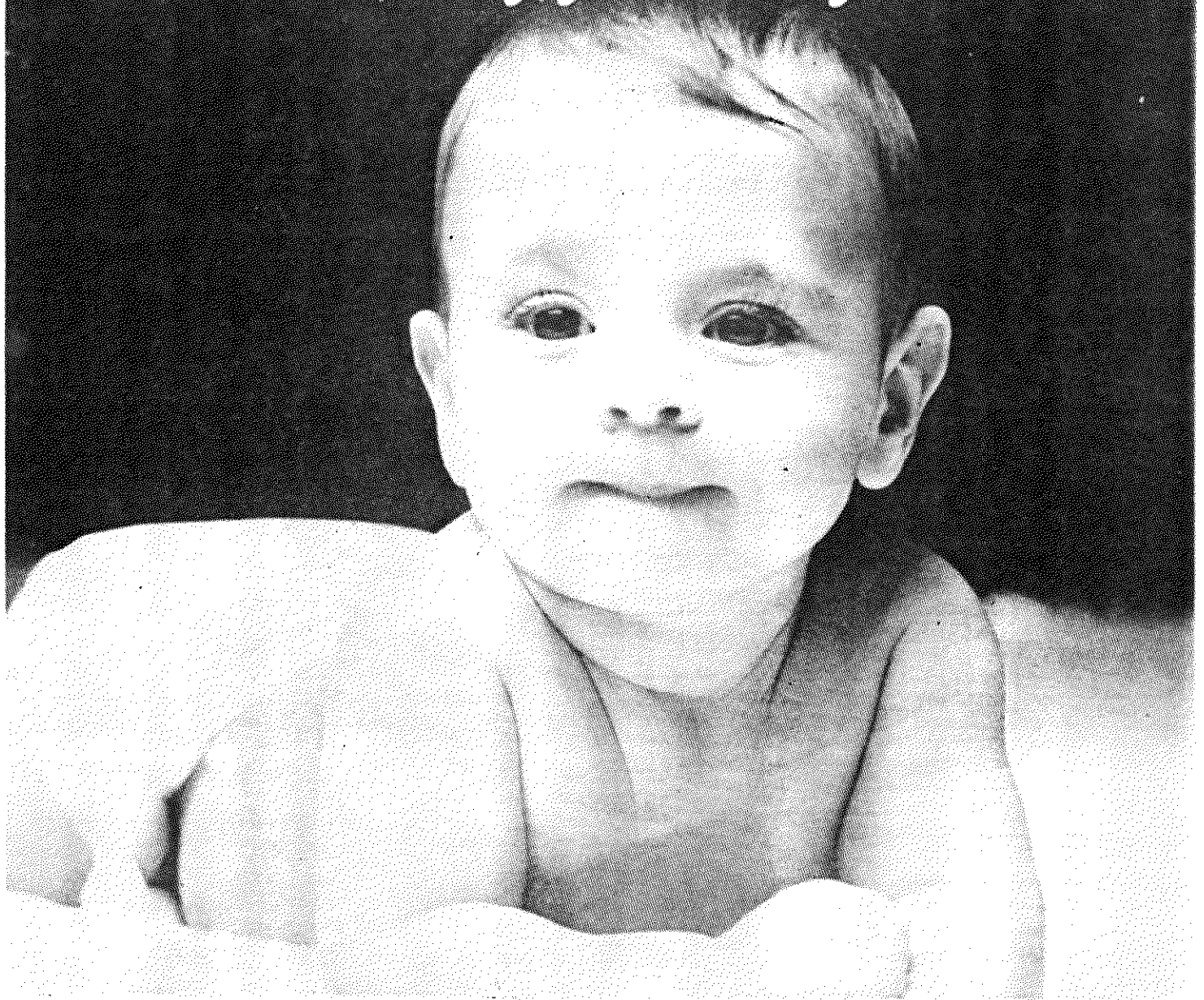
Christmas, pre-eminent among holidays because it is the commodity's fullest expression in the year, reflects a mounting hollowness. Not merely in the obvious disgusting features of consumerism and religion, equally present and feeding on each other, but in the deeper ache of separation; the tiny glimpse, however deformed, of authentic festival denied.

Freedom is not compatible with a life essentially constructed of working and paying, a life which thus sees itself summed up in Christmas. Without a radical break (which reforms only work against), the immanent logic of social development will truly result in a totally technicized life as its final stage. Only the commodity, in all manner of high-tech incarnations and dominating every nexus, would be left, every route to liberation suppressed--the high noon of Christmas buying!

But in the wonderful resiliency of us subjects of the price-tag, finding human pleasures despite an inhuman model for living, is our hope--to make of Christmas one more bizarre curio in the museums of a future and real life.



**We're all created equal.
After that, baby, you're on your own.**



Today everyone gets a chance to dominate somebody else. That's equality of opportunity.

But to move and shake the destiny of the world—that belongs to only a few of us.

To succeed, you better start hustling now.

We start you out in the family, so right away you learn isolation, and that to disobey brings pain.

You may feel terror at your powerlessness. Use it to determine that you'll be the one who wields power someday.

Chances are you'll lose a teen-age friend or

two to suicide—some kids just can't adapt to the bleakness around them (just as emotional disorders seem to be claiming more and more adults).

You'll probably realize that your acquisitions don't make up for the sacrifices necessary to get them. But when you accept that life has to be confined ultimately to consumer choices, you'll be fine.

Mindful of your own superiority, you'll go on minding your superiors—that's the attitude of professionals.

As you grow older, you fully appreciate

the absurdity of our power, and the contempt we feel for those who submit to it (a contempt only Sade has done full justice to).

Extraordinary cunning is required at the pinnacle of success. Using the specialists of reform and revolution to keep class struggles under control was easy once. But the deepening refusal to be represented by any kind of politician threatens as never before the reproduction of repression.

Quite simply, if you fail now, we're finished.

CAPITAL
We need you to succeed.



The barbarism of modern times is still enslavement to technology.



i work in what is considered a "progressive" medical center. i got a job there because i needed money, and naively i hoped it might be a "people oriented" job. as it turns out, it's more like a factory job on a body assembly/disassembly line. people are running machines that run the people who operate them and in this process patients become other machines needing to be "fixed."

obviously, i no longer think of it as a "healing place." the health business—like every other business—is alienating and depressing. it doesn't allow a human flow of nurturing and healing, to say the least.

a patient may have to deal with as many as 20 to 30 different people in one hospital stay, most of whom will remain strangers. assorted mechanical devices will be used on them by people whose attention is mostly commanded by their machines. if lucky, they'll see their doctor for maybe 5 minutes a day. no wonder people are "afraid" of hospitals! they go through a threatening (if not terrifying) experience in

isolation. it's a marvelous tribute to human vitality that people do recover at all in hospitals.

i don't blame the majority of people who work here. it's a singularly demanding situation if you're a caring person. on the one hand, you have people with real needs who you would like to comfort and help in any way you can. on the other hand, if you spend your time doing this—you'll get fired.

so you're always torn and rushed. you work on a tight schedule of productivity (a time and motion study of how much you're expected to get done in a shift has been grabbed out for you). testing has to be

done, medications given, beds changed, food served, charts written up, stats and orders documented, etc., etc. . . .

the longer i worked my ass off running from one end to the other of this huge medical center, the angrier i felt at being used up like a machine—and a slave to one in the bargain. i realized the patients and myself were only interchangeable cogs in a giant corporate machine.

left to ourselves, i have no doubt that medical workers could care for injuries and illnesses in a way that satisfied our nurturing instincts and curiosity toward the body, sharing responsibilities equally. this won't happen, however, with the health care hierarchy intact—it's stifling and absurd.

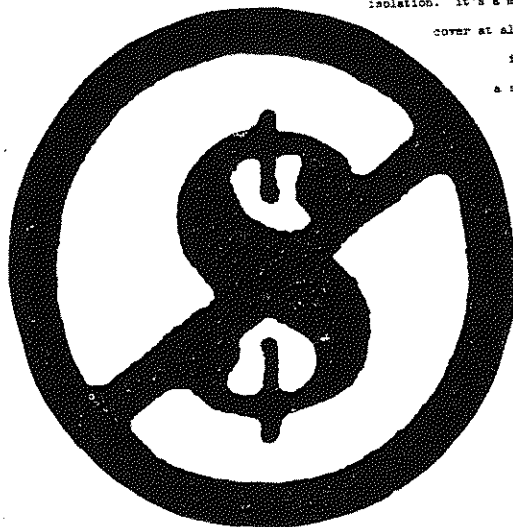
this hierarchy has developed right along with workplace hazards we endure in order to survive; with the systematic, pervasive poisoning of the Earth and atmosphere by industry (including the high-tech branch supposed to be "clean"); with the emotional ravages—and drug dependence—of everyday life in a drab, unfree society.

(and wouldn't blowing off this oppressive "reality" cure just about everyone's depression?)

corporate health care provides a grotesque picture of the real value of life in this system. i've heard people more upset about the bill they were running up than about whatever illness brought them to the hospital. i have no doubt that many an astronomical hospital bill has set off another round of sickness and death.

how many people put up with shitty jobs to get insurance so they won't have a heart attack over potential medical bills? doesn't this amount to terrorism?

maybe that's why it makes me feel better to tell anxious patients not to worry about paying their bill. i don't pay mine. who needs this shit?



THE POVERTY OF ANTI-AUTHORITARIANS

or,

The Last Ideology vs. The Last International

If theory is when you have ideas and ideology when ideas have you, a lot of people are being had by "anti-authoritarians." Anarchism can't be too dangerous when self-identified anarchists slink into the voting booth (as many did last year), and New Wave fashion plates on the local mall help cops bust a couple of \$500 jewel thieves. It seems even punks can be counted on to uphold property!

The real poverty of anti-authoritarians, though, is their unwillingness to set their own house in (dis)order.

For example, in 1982 the magazine Processed World (PW) appeared in San Francisco, ostensibly an anti-authoritarian voice by and for alienated clerical workers. Bob Black, aka The Last International, greeted this venture with some assistance, but recognized that it could become a front for a small group of long-time activists with their own priorities and a well-defined ideology (council communism).

As PW picked up several thousand subscribers and praise from periodicals such as Mother Jones and the Hearst-owned S.F. Examiner, Black's misgivings were fully realized. PW attempted to suppress public criticism of its ideology--with scandalous success. Black's account of his escalating dispute with the PW inner circle (The Baby and the Bathwater, available for \$5 from The Last International, 2000 Center St. #1314, Berkeley, CA 94704) illuminates this scandal.

Council communism may sound radical, but don't be alarmed. Caitlin Manning, in the Examiner interview (12/20/83) espouses a tepidly reformist vision where "meaningless work wouldn't be necessary, where the alienation in the workplace could be reduced by the proper use of technology," to be achieved, presumably, by "trying to make big business more human by not organizing it around profit, waste and destruction." What also bothers her is that many humanities students with useless college degrees are "employed way beneath their capacities" in corporate offices.

As Black points out, "The implication is that we can solve the problem by putting the sensitive collegians in management positions where they can work to their capacities efficiently planning the world economy through the latest in computer technology while instituting more human styles of personnel management."

This ideology has an obvious appeal to up-scale activists who want to reconcile half-baked idealism with a half-assed cynicism they assume goes along with being sophisticated. Years of resignation to academic drudgery should have some compensation, they assume, in the right to control others who lack the benefit of this extended toilet training. Why should they expose manipulation when they see it in their own organizations? Their leftist ideas are "too advanced" for a public they consider ignorant or conservative, so anyone who shares them, even vaguely, is entitled to the benefit of the doubt (which in practice amounts to silence).

As Black found out, those who can't keep a few discreet secrets can expect to be characterized as pathological liars or, alternatively, as neurotically "purist." How useful psychiatry can be when understood as defamation disguised as diagnosis!

This is all too reminiscent of Lenin maintaining central direction through deviousness where this works, ruthlessness where it doesn't. So it's not surprising that in another "anti-authoritarian" publication, No Middle Ground, Caitlin Manning glosses the Leninist junta in Nicaragua which bans strikes there and supported martial law in Poland.

Speaking of Nicaragua and Leninist tactics brings Eugene's own Council for Human Rights in Latin America (CHRLA) to mind. Those familiar with CHRLA will appreciate the similarity to the PW operation. At the center of both groups one finds a dominatrix with money (Caitlin Manning for the PW typesetting equipment; Nelly Link, socialite turned socialist, for the CHRLA cultural center), surrounded by a core group of loyal executives (also wealthy, in many cases), depending on a large group of volunteers doing the shit work and kept largely in the dark (not that many of them want out of it).

The public face of CHRLA is more decorous and less hip than PW's and its management more shrewd, perhaps because its Link to Leninism is direct via the U.S. Peace Council, a Communist Party front. CHRLA also flourishes because it largely confines its recruitment to students, churchgoers and YUMPIes, where guilt and gullibility tend to be concentrated.

On the other hand, the PW front is collapsing under the weight of its own contradictions (viz. a revolving door of defections) because it situated itself too close to the real potential for social transformation: workers who, taking their domination straight, on the job, are unwilling to have leftist organizers cram more of it down their throats at other times.

A world without masters or slaves, managers or managed, begins with a masterful disdain for recruiting adherents. This is the sense in which we become generals in the class war, not wanting subordinates and certainly not needing them, similar to the Zen discipline in which novices are continually thrown back on their own resources so as to develop them fully.

At large, meanwhile, the sanctity of capital has all but disappeared. Forbes magazine recently reported that workers are 80% more disposed to steal from employers now than ten years ago, to cite but one example of how people seek to reclaim lives lost to alienation and work.

A veritable international is everywhere negating authority in everyday life. Those "radicals" who aspire to tutor it are relics and worse. They deserve all the scorn we can pour on them.

Week That's

THE LEFT

MONDAY
*Bob & Carol
 Love Christmas*

TUESDAY
*Chips in
 Action for
 Spanish*



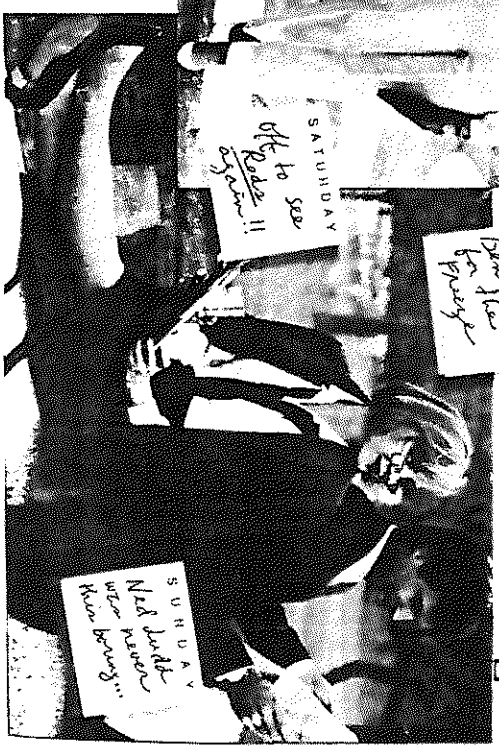
WEDNESDAY
*Professors
 Save the
 World*

THURSDAY
*No Business
 No Money
 No Power*



FRIDAY
*Off to see
 the Pope II
 again!!*

FRIDAY
*Good idea
 for
 Spanish*



SUNDAY
*Ned built
 with
 new beams*

ADVENTURES IN SUBVERSION

