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The Keep

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Gays protest movies; Snitch spills beans; Gen Tel screws up

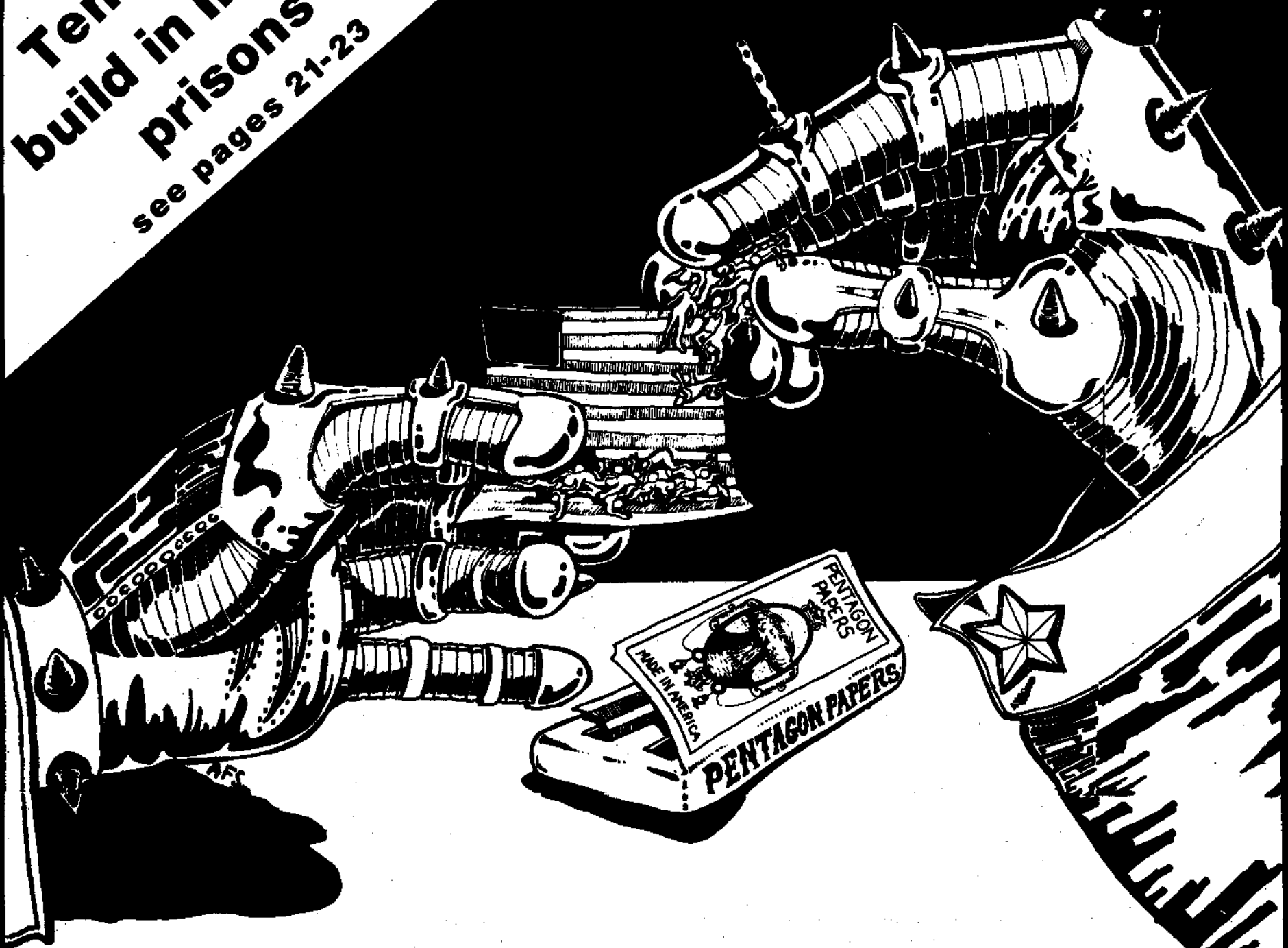
BLOOMINGTON—NORMAL

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POST AMERIKAN

Vol. 8 No. 9
March 1980

**Tensions
build in Illinois
prisons
see pages 21-23**



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ABOUT US

The Post-Amerikan is a worker-controlled collective that puts out this paper. If you'd like to help, give us a call and leave your name with our wonderful answering machine. Then we'll call you back and give you the rap about the Post. You start work at nothing per hour and stay there. Everyone is paid the same. Ego gratification and good karma are the fringe benefits.

Decisions are made collectively by staff members at our regular meetings. All workers have an equal voice. The Post has no editor or hierarchical structure, so quit calling up and asking who's in charge. Ain't nobody in charge.

Anybody who reads this paper can tell the type of stuff we print. All worthwhile material is welcome. We try to choose articles that are timely, relevant, informative, and not available in other local media. We will

not print anything racist, sexist, or ageist.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. We encourage you, the reader, to become more than a reader. We welcome all stories and tips for stories, which you can mail to our office. The deadline for next issue is March 27.

If you'd like to work on the Post and/or come to meetings, call us at 828-7232. You can also reach folks at 828-6885.

You can make bread hawking the Post--15¢ a copy, except for the first 50 copies on which you make only 10¢ a copy. Call us at 828-7232.

Mail, which we more than welcome, should be sent to: the Post-Amerikan PO Box 3452, Bloomington IL 61701. Be sure you tell us if you don't want your letter printed! Otherwise, it's likely to end up on our letters page.

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Bus Depot, 523 N. East
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Pantagraph Building (in front)
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Triple Treat, 1528 E. College
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Ram, 101 Broadway Mall
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Bowling and Billiards Center, ISU
W.W. Bakeshop, 602 Kingsley
Cage, ISU University Union
Midstate Truck Plaza, Route 51 north
Upper Cut, 318 Kingsley
Old Main Book Store, 207 S. Main

OUTTA TOWN

Galesburg: Under the Sun, 427 E. Main
Monmouth: Head's Up, 123 W. First
Springfield: King Harvest Food Co-op
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Urbana: Horizon Bkstre, 517 S. Goodwin

GOOD NUMBERS

Alcoholics Anonymous--828-5049
American Civil Liberties Union--452-3634
Clare House (Catholic Worker)--828-4035
Community for Social Action--452-4867
Countering Domestic Violence (PATH)--827-4005
Dept. of Children and Family Services--829-5326
Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare (Social Security Admin.)--829-9436
Dept. of Mental Health--828-4311
Gay Action/Awareness Union--828-6935
Gay National Educational Switchboard--800-227-0888
Gay People's Alliance (ISU) 452-5852
HELP (Transportation for handicapped and sr. citizens)--828-8301
Ill. Lawyer Referral Service--800-252-8916
Kaleidoscope--828-7346
Lighthouse--828-1371
McLean County Health Dept.--829-3363
McLean County Mental Health Center--827-5351
Men's Rap Group--828-6935
Mobile Meals (meals for shut-ins)--828-8301

National Health Care Services (abortion assistance in Peoria)--691-9073
National Runaway Switchboard--800-621-4000
in Illinois--800-972-6004 (all 800 #'s toll free)
Occupational Development Center--828-7324
PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help)--827-4005
Parents Anonymous--827-4005 (PATH)
Planned Parenthood--827-8025

Post-Amerikan--828-7232
Prairie State Legal Aid--827-5021
Project OZ--827-0377
Public Aid, McLean Cnty. Dept. of--827-4621
Rape Crisis Line--827-4005 (PATH)
SAW (Student Association for Women, ISU)--438-7619
Small Changes Alternative Bookstore--829-6223
Sunnyside Neighborhood Center--827-5428
Tele Care--828-8301
Unemployment Compensation/Employment Office--827-6237
United Farmworkers Support Group--452-5046
Women's Switchboard--800-927-5404

For a friend . . .

I would like to say a few things about a friend of mine named Dave Burdette. I first met Dave at a meeting of the local NOW Chapter in 1975. I worked with him in that group, in Community for Social Action, in actions for ERA and others against MEG. Dave was strongly committed to political, economic, and social change in our world.

Dave's strongest statements can be found in his writing. He wrote prolifically, articles in the Post-Amerikan and the Observer, letters to the editor in the Pantagraph almost monthly. Dave's father told me Dave

also wrote regularly to a Peoria newspaper. Very few people knew about it, but Dave wrote poetry too. His mother has quite a collection, of which she is very proud. Dave gave this community a lot through his political commitment and action and his friendship.

Most of us who met or knew Dave were aware that something was not all right. He was nervous and painfully shy. To some people he seemed strange and scary. He was very troubled and lonely. He was an easy target for teasing and tricks.

Dave Burdette killed himself on Friday Feb. 8, 1980. I was saddened many times by Dave's hurt and struggle to survive. I hurt now at this final

statement of his pain. I am also angry that whatever it was that Dave needed to survive was not available to him.

I knew Dave had other friends--he cared about people--but most of us had not met. We gathered Sunday, Feb. 17, 1980, at the Unitarian Church to share our grief and memories. I met a man who bowled with Dave. I met many people who gave him rides, the use of their phone, and a place to warm up when he rode his bicycle in the winter. People from his church remember his regular pushing for political action, his frustration at all the talk and analysis. Some spoke of Dave always finding and collecting things that might someday be useful to someone. His apartment was full of them, tools, glass jars, soap. Dave knew where there were wild berries and mint and all sorts of things right in the city. So many parts of him, and each of us knew only a little.

Dave gave me many things. I enjoyed talking with him, learning from his political knowledge and analysis, particularly about liberation struggles in third world countries. We shared a love for cats. Dave took stray cats to the animal shelter when he couldn't find homes for them. Sometimes I or someone else drove him; sometimes he rode his bike. Dave was a good cook. I enjoyed having dinner with him and getting recipes. Dave and I met because of shared political beliefs. We shared anger at sexism, racism and imperialism. We also shared anger at a mental health system that gives people who try to kill themselves with pills--more pills. I will miss Dave.

Susie Sewell

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Grownups' hangups end students' hangouts

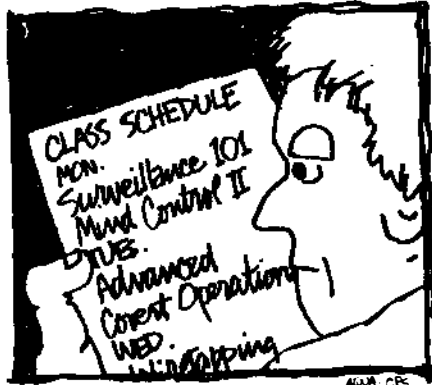
Hoots, jeers, and all-round indignation--this is how teenagers in District 87's schools should now respond whenever a teacher attempts to tell them about the basic rights and freedoms of American citizens.

School superintendent George Stimeling has come up with a new plan which will further enhance the prison-camp atmosphere of high schools and junior highs. In a misguided attempt to keep kids from smoking dope and drinking booze at school, Stimeling has outlined (and the board of education has approved) tougher policies aimed at catching and punishing the culprits.

Unfortunately, these policies put all the kids in jail between about 8:30 and 2:30 daily. They can't go to the parking lot without official permission. They can't go to the smoking ring for a cigarette unless they're prepared to flash a smoking permission slip signed by parents. They can't walk down the hall during a class period without a permission slip. They can't hang out in the john.

And to make sure they don't, the school board is paying \$10,000 for a uniformed cop to patrol the parking lot and three monitors to patrol the smoking areas and hallways at BHS.

To make sure they're heartily sorry if they do break the rules, Stimeling's plan calls for mandatory immediate suspension from school and a recommendation to the board for expulsion. Before, the suspension and expulsion was optional; school officials could decide case by case whether to kick offenders out of school.



The parking lot, the smoking area, the bathrooms, and the hallways. They all have something in common, something that Stimeling refers to as "unsupervised contact among students" (Pantagraph, 1/17). From a student's point of view, what they have in common is being the places that make going to school tolerable--the places where life goes on in the midst of deadly crap. Admittedly, that life doesn't look like much to a grown-up, but it's where friendships are made and lost, love affairs are begun and ended, important issues are discussed and argued and commiserated about, schemes and dreams develop.

What if the kids decided that teachers were ruining their bodies and harming their efficiency with nicotine and caffeine? Would the school board fund a student cop to monitor the teachers' lounge? Of course not. Grown-ups, it seems, have a right to unsupervised contact during the day.

The disrespect and mistrust that Stimeling and his crowd show for high school students is particularly absurd considering the fact that they hope most of the seniors will go to college next year, where they magically will be responsible enough to walk down halls whenever they

want, smoke cigarettes like crazy, hang out in the john for hours, and even sit in their parked cars for unlimited amounts of time.

Before school officials hand down their ridiculous restrictions to kids, they should clean up their own act. On Dec. 16, the Pantagraph reported that a 14-year-old BJHS student got busted at school when "a cellophane packet containing what appeared to be marijuana was found in the boy's wallet." I want to know who was looking through his wallet in the first place and why whoever it was thought they had a right to. On the 17th, the paper reported the expulsion of two BHS students, a senior and a junior, who "were caught in the senior boy's car in the BHS parking lot, and marijuana was found in the car." Who searched the car? Why? Seems to me like doping and drinking aren't the only illegal activities going on in those schools.

The justification for this over-supervision and overpunishment of students is supposedly the grisly spectre of Teenage Alcoholism and Drug Addiction. But I think we need some perspective on that spectre--a perspective that includes the grisly spectre of American success: an empty college diploma, a meaningless boring paper-pushing career at State Farm, a worrisome burden of debts on credit cards and condominiums and kids and Cadillacs, an ever-narrowing group of friends, an ever-widening gap between youthful dreams and adult reality, and a heart attack at 57.

It's enough to drive a kid to drink.

--Phoebe Caulfield

Police state proposed in Congress

100 national and local organizations oppose S. 1722, the Criminal Code Reform Act sponsored by Sens. Kennedy, Thurmond, Hatch, DeConcini, and Simpson. The organizations presented a letter of protest on February 4 as part of the growing effort to stop passage of the bill.

S. 1722 is not a reform of the laws, but a significant worsening, which could set back democratic rights and our system of criminal justice by decades. The protest letter sharply criticizes S. 1722, calling it "fundamentally flawed by its dangerous erosion of constitutional rights and its failure to adequately address the serious problems within our criminal justice system." S. 1722 is written in such a way that it places government functions and activities above the First Amendment guarantees of free speech and association.

The Senate Judiciary Committee approved S. 1722 on Dec. 4, 1979.

S. 1722 would make many repressive changes in the meaning and scope of federal criminal law. For example:

*It would give the government the right to appeal lenient sentences. This right could be used by prosecutors to prevent defendants from appealing their convictions.

*Parole and "good-time" release would be eliminated or cut back in the federal penal system, and a substantial risk exists that convicts would spend more time in prison than under current law.

*It would institute a form of pre-trial detention. This allows a judge to set a variety of restrictions upon a person's bail, including incarceration, based on a finding that the person is dangerous, even though there has been no determination of guilt or innocence.



*It contains several provisions which specifically endanger the right to dissent from and organize to change government policy on military matters and a draft.

* It would expand current law to punish conduct that occurs prior to the actual commission of a crime, under the Conspiracy, Solicitation, and Attempt laws.

*It would create new federal jurisdiction to charge or investigate persons engaged in anti-nuclear demonstrations with conspiracy or attempt to commit property damage on any "energy facility."

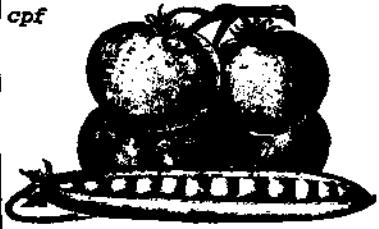
*It would increase opportunities for federal prosecutors and investigators to interfere with political activities which are now protected by the First Amendment, and to intervene in many cases now handled by local authorities.

The Illinois Bar Association went on record in opposition to S. 1722, calling it "a big step, and perhaps an irreversible one, toward a national criminal code enforced by a national police force."

The Senate vote on S. 1722 is expected in early March or mid-March. In the House, Rep. Drinan has introduced a somewhat different but similarly threatening omnibus bill, HR 6233.

MAJOR CONSTITUENT PRESSURE CAN STOP THESE BILLS! Write your senators and reps at the Senate Office Building or the House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20505.

--Alliance to End Repression



Gardening or the padded

Ice cream disease

When a patient reports a blackish looking stool, the doctor must inquire about the possibility of an ulcer or some other gastrointestinal lesion that might cause a loss of blood. They will also ask about the possibility of recent ingestion of iron, charcoal or any other substance that might cause the stool to turn black.

When Stephen M. Picca of the New York Medical College noted that he had passed a black stool, he was very puzzled. For one thing, he had no history of any health problems. For another, he had not consumed iron or any similar material. But what was even more puzzling was the color of the toilet water: bright blue.

"After considerable thought," he says in a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine, "I recalled eating some licorice-flavored Baskin-Robbins ice cream about 30 hours earlier. This ice cream is dark black and produces a bluish liquid as it melts, especially if diluted with water." His condition, he said, returned to normal after a day or two. He concluded that doctors should consider recent ingestion of licorice-flavored ice cream in the diagnosis of blue-black syndrome.

--Prevention

It's almost gardening time and I'm glad 'cause I've got a whole winter's worth of frustrations to get rid of by digging and sweating. It's a hard life being an intellectual.

It's also a hard life being a waitress or a teacher or an office clerk or just about anything else these days. So no matter what ails you, give gardening a try. It's lots cheaper than a shrink and much less likely to do you permanent damage.

If you're starting your first garden, you can begin by picking a spot. Almost all vegetables prefer lots of sun, so pick a spot that will get full sun almost all day if you want fat juicy tomatoes or luscious green beans.

If flowers or foliage plants are more to your taste, you may want to choose your favorites before you pick a garden spot. Marigolds, petunias, zinnias, portulacas, poppies, and most other annual flowers like full sun. But some flowers, like petunias, will tolerate light shade; and others, like begonias, thrive in partial shade. Coleus, which is grown for its colorful leaves rather than for its flowers, will do wonderfully well in almost full shade.

(A note about shade: full shade means no direct sunlight all day long; partial shade means some direct sun; by light shade I mean bright light but little direct sun.)

Next you decide how big your garden will be, and I recommend a modest start. A 10-foot by 15-foot vegetable garden, for instance, might not require more work than one first-time



gardener will be willing to give it. But a garden that size can give you a very satisfying supply of vegetables.

It's better to start small and expand next year than to be overwhelmed before you even get your seeds planted.

No, you say, I wouldn't give up that fast.

Well, I once lived in a long, narrow apartment with always-drawn shades and two dogs who never went out of doors. Back then, nature was something that got in the way when I needed more beer. I was deprived, but I swear that the first 50 square feet of long-established Illinois sod is going to come as a shock to anybody.

Digging the last two thirds of the garden may be discouraging and chopping up all that sod will seem impossible. Fortunately, I have some helpful suggestions.

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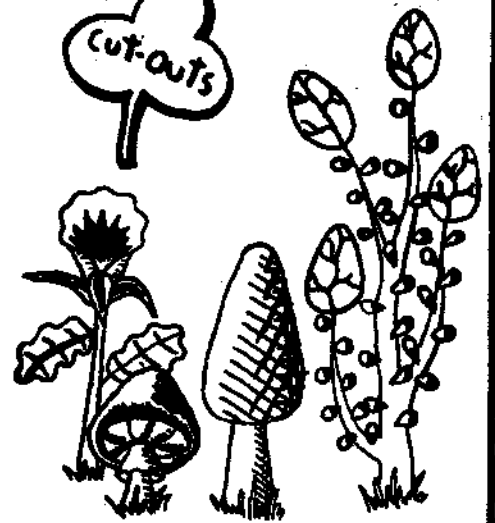
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couch: Time to get ready!

First, don't try to do all the work at once. You can start digging the first chance you get that the ground isn't frozen or too wet. If you turn over the sod early enough to make it die, it'll be easier to chop up.

Or you can transplant your sod somewhere else that you want some hardy grass. Or you can put it all in a pile and work it into a compost heap little by little. Or you can do like I did in my ignorance, and bury it deep in your garden. This last suggestion, however, is wasteful of good soil and organic material.

Finally, a really good rototiller, which you can rent for \$7 or \$8, will eventually subdue the meanest sod--if it's not too wet and if you're willing to stick it out. You may want to rent a rototiller anyway to break the clods up. Breaking a garden-full of clods down to pea size is a lot of work, and I usually don't have that many frustrations.

At some point, probably after you've done your early digging, you may want to take some soil samples (one from each end and the middle of your garden) to the county agent (USDA Service Center, 1324 E. Empire, Bloom-



ington) to have them tested. The ~~USDA people~~ will tell you what your soil needs for what you want to grow.

This probably isn't necessary if the grass you dug up looked reasonably healthy. But you will want to condition your soil somewhat.

The best thing to do for a 10 by 15 garden is to buy a couple of bales of sphagnum peat moss and spread it over your garden. This peat moss is relatively expensive, but your plants will love you for it, and if you start a compost heap you won't have to do it again.

The idea is to get plenty of organic material into the soil. The soil will work better, it will hold air and water better, and the process of organic breakdown will give your plants plenty of nutrients. The only catch is that you need to keep adding organic material to replace what breaks down and what your plants use. Composting grass clippings and radish leaves is the best answer. Watch for a composting article in a later Post-American.

The one drawback to peat moss is that it's acid, and most garden plants like our regular soil, which is only slightly acid. (Potatoes are an exception: they get scaly and do poorly in our cornfield soil.) So you need to put some agricultural lime on with your peat moss to sweeten the soil back up. And for good measure you may want to throw on a bag of composted cow manure.

Dig or rototill everything into the top 6 or 8 inches of your garden. Hoe and rake until smooth and you're ready to plant.

(A note on where to buy things: Cow manure and peat moss is usually cheapest when it's on sale at K-Mart. Buy the big bales of peat moss instead of the little sacks, which contain a lot of moisture. Fertilizer is also cheap

at K-Mart. You may need to buy your lime--a little sack--at Casey's, and definitely buy your seeds there. Casey's at Main Street near Normal has the best selection of seeds and good seeds are worth the price.)

You can use garden fertilizer instead of peat moss and lime and cow manure, but after a couple years your garden will probably be hard as a rock. Fertilizer also discourages useful animals like earthworms, and if you put too much on you may even damage yourself.

You'll want to have your garden ready to plant by the end of March or the first 2 weeks in April, so you'll have to be alert to take advantage of the few days when the soil is dry enough to work. Once your garden is established, you can get it ready in one afternoon with a rototiller.

You should draw up a plan of everything you want to plant and where it will be. I usually plant my vegetable rows a little closer together than the seed packages call for, and you can do this, too, if your soil is good. Save your plan for the next year because you can't plant cabbage crops (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi) in the same place two years in a row. Actually, it's wise to rotate all your vegetables to cut down on disease and soil exhaustion.

I also take into account that some plants like tomatoes and squash start out very small and grow quite large by mid-summer. So I plant things like spinach or lettuce near them and eat the spinach before the squash needs the space.

Here are the earliest dates to plant some common vegetables:

March 25--garlic cloves, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, onion seeds or sets, rhubarb, spinach, turnips.

April 10--beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, chard, kale, parsley, parsnips, peas, potatoes, radishes.

May 1--corn, green beans, rutabaga.

May 10--Cucumbers, eggplant, muskmelons, okra, peppers, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, watermelons.

Naturally, you can make your plantings a bit later than the earliest dates--2 to 4 weeks--and many vegetables can be replanted in mid-summer for a fall crop. Read your seed packets for advice. When you replant, be sure to work some compost or a little fertilizer into the soil where the previous crop grew.

After you've planted your garden,

you'll have to keep the weeds down because weeds use the space, the nutrients, and the light your vegetables need. Of course, you can hoe or pull the weeds, but mulching is best.

Mulch is something you use to cover the ground so light can't get to the weed seeds and so moisture stays in the soil. Some people use straw or peat moss or even plastic as mulch,



Workbook/cpf

but I like grass clippings because lots of people leave bags of them out for the garbage collectors. You can easily find enough to keep your garden virtually weed-free as well as enough more to compost.

When you put the clippings on your garden, don't cover the planted rows and don't put on more than one-half or one inch of clippings at a time. If you put on too many, they develop a nasty mold or pack down so air can't get through to the soil.

The thing about grass clippings is that they melt away. Part of it is water loss to the air, and part is loss of solids into the soil--which is good nutrition for your vegetables. But it also means you've got to spread new clippings now and again.

A final word about bugs: if your soil is good, your plants will almost certainly be healthy enough to stay ahead of bugs. Still, it's a good idea to keep your eyes open. Chewed up leaves are a sure sign of bugs. I pick worms and slugs off by hand and sometimes spray kohlrabi and broccoli with soapy water. (Use about 1 tablespoon of Ivory Soap flakes in one quart of water; don't use liquid or powder detergents.) Summer squash need regular spraying to keep squash bugs and stem borers under control. Whenever possible, remove diseased or insect-damaged plants to avoid infecting healthy plants.

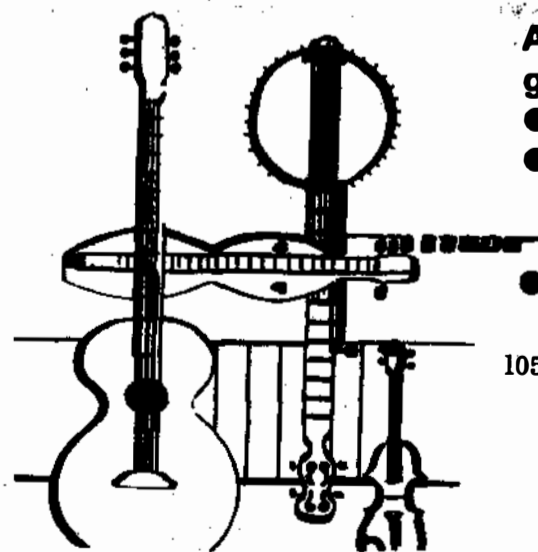
By the time you've eaten your first, garden-fresh salad, your anxiety level should be low and your satisfaction level high. If not, maybe you can barter vegetables to your shrink.

--D. LeSeure

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letters

Freedom's not just another word...

Post readers:

I truly wonder if the average citizen knows what it means to totally give up what freedom this society allows us.

He knows that if he goes to jail tonight that he'll miss his appointment with the doctor; but is he aware of the sights missed on the way to the office? The pregnant woman standing on the corner, waiting for the red light? The kids playing baseball in the playground? How about the conversation with the doctor's secretary, which would have had a devastating effect on the outlook he had, before he'd met her?

Can the average citizen even begin to imagine this one day missed, this one short period of his life given up, let alone the consequences of YEARS of this court-ruled abstinence? The thought of a convict who will never know the people he's missed, who would have given him knowledge, love, a smile? The sunrises and sunsets given up, that so many fools take for granted? The mental question, daily, of: Where would I be living now, if; How many crumb crushers would my wife and I have the pleasure of raising, if; How many bottles of wine, loaves of French bread, and romantic settings would I have experienced, if?

Is there a judge, sitting on the bench, anywhere, who knows what he is depriving me of, when he hands down a five-year sentence? Is there one who realizes that he has stolen a walk through a rainy day? Or taken away the holding of a child who needed to be held, by me, because of a hurt knee? Is there one out there? Where? Just one? Why isn't he here, sentencing me to work in a day-care nursery? Or how about really being cruel, and make me work for two years, for just room and board, in some hell-hole such as the Grand Canyon, or Yosemite National Park? Maybe since I'm so stupid and illiterate, how about my punishment being that, after work at the university as a janitor, I have to take courses in the humanities department?

Can you, a citizen, grasp at all what I'm trying to say? Can you see the irreversible damage being done to your fellow people, the unjust, inhuman situation you're placing me in, when you could do just the opposite, at far less the cost, by showing me how life CAN be enjoyed, through love and labor?

Why do you, as a member of your society, just sit back and watch, while I'm made into an animal, who will eventually be set free to attack? Why do you let yourself be ripped off, in your taxes, by supporting an institution, such as this prison, whose only goal is to keep ripping you off? Can't you see that the judicial system perpetrates crime, and not me? Can't you see that you're providing paychecks to the largest monopoly in the U.S.A.? And that by doing away with their form of "rehabilitation," which you admit is a farce, that the cops, lawyers, guards, etc., etc., would have to give up their pay, and find a job doing something constructive?

Have you never stopped to wonder why 83% of us come back to prison, once we have been incarcerated? Doesn't that, in itself, tell you there is something wrong, and it is NOT me?

--A county jail prisoner

Middle East at crucial point

Dear Post,

At this moment the Middle East conflict is at a crucial point. The bilateral talks between Israel and Egypt, assisted by the U.S., seem to have stalemated. A new approach may well be needed if the process toward peace is to be continued.

According to international law, Israeli occupation of the West Bank is illegal. Israel's legal status results from a 1948 United Nations resolution partitioning Palestine into two nations--one a homeland for Jews, one a homeland for Palestinian Arabs. Therefore, any expansion of Israel beyond the originally designated borders is illegal under modern international law. The Palestinian Arabs were never allowed to have an independent state as designed by the partition, because Egypt took over the Gaza strip, and Syria and Jordan took over the West Bank. International law would dictate Israel's return to its original boundaries, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

Israel also claims biblical authority for occupation of the West Bank. Yet modern Israel contains only two tribes of the twelve tribes of Israel--and only Judah had any claim on land, none of it anywhere near the West Bank. The other ten tribes are "lost" to history. There is no way that the biblical Israel can therefore be restored, and there is no way that Judah can lay claims to all of Palestine, by either actual sovereignty (they never occupied the West Bank), length of sovereignty (Palestine was occupied by Muslim empires longer than by Israel), or length of occupancy (non-Jews were there just as long).

The kind of autonomy that Israel wants the Palestinians to have seems to be pretty token indeed. I know of no autonomy anywhere that is this limited. The Palestinians cannot legislate or have their own courts. All they can do is administer Israeli laws and enforce them, but only among Palestinians, not among Jews or between Jews and Palestinians. In conflicts with Jews or Israel, their land can be confiscated with no pretext and they will be arrested by Israeli police, tried in Israeli courts, and be sentenced to serve in Israeli jails, where torture of Palestinians is reportedly rampant. They are constantly being crowded into smaller pieces of land to make way for new settlements and roads. Palestinian refugees will be given no right to



repatriation (return) OR compensation. Is this autonomy, or just the shadow of it?

The United States stymied a U.N. resolution calling for self-determination for the Palestinians. It was alone in doing this. Why? This resolution may be the only way to bring the Palestinians into the peace process and pave the road towards peace. If we veto it, we will be signaling to Israel and to the world that Israel can be as intransigent and stubborn as they see fit and we will still support them. We could use our leverage (aid, diplomatic support, etc.) to influence Israel to be more realistic, but we do not. This realism would also be in Israel's interest, because it holds the most hope for a real peace.

The PLO has been making significant concessions lately, but Israel has not. The Christian Science Monitor reported from Vienna that "analysts believe that Mr. Arafat indicated readiness to recognize the state of Israel in return for a Palestinian state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip area." On the other hand, Israel has changed its policy in the opposite direction. Their cabinet just voted to never negotiate with the PLO, even if they recognize Israel's right to exist.

--David Burdette

Keep on keepin' on

Dear Post-Amerikan,


How good it is to have a mag that tells it like it is. I have just read the issue about that bus fire which a friend of mine got some lung damage. All I can say is keep on keepin' on.

R.E. Danville, Ill.

P.S. Got anything on MEG in Danville, Vermillion County?

P.S.S. I'm glad I subscribed.

VITESSE



College & Linden
Normal Illinois

Advice to single mothers

Dear Post-Amerikan

I would like very much to speak out on the dilemma of being a single mother. Not a divorced mother, a single mother. I became a single mother in November of '77. I had lived with the child's father for about 3 years. When I got pregnant, he decided he didn't want me anymore. So, I was faced with having to bring the child up by myself.

I got a job as a cocktail waitress working 5 & 6 days a week. I couldn't support myself & my child on the money I made. I had too much pride to turn to my family, or to Public Aid. I'm now in Dwight Correctional Center because I turned to illegal ways to make money to support myself and my son. I'm only 22 years old, and here I am with 3½ years, and without the child that I tried so hard to support by myself.

I'm now labeled as a criminal. I just want to point out how hard it is to support a child by yourself. I see so many women who are here for basically the same thing. We never hurt anyone or anything, we just tried to survive.

Now I have a label on me that will be there for the rest of my life. And why? Because I tried to give the one person I love very much the things he needed. Please, if you are or get in the same predicament I was in, turn to someone or some agency for help. Swallow the pride that wants you to make it by yourself. I know so many mothers that sell dope or steal just to keep a roof over their children's heads, and food in their mouths. Think twice before you do it. It's not worth it!

I hope you print this for the sake of so many young ladies, like me.

Vanessa VanHorn
N07005
Box C
Dwight, IL 60420

Alert consumer wards off rip-off

Dear Post-Amerikan Staff:

I just recently have started reading the Post and I appreciate your efforts to serve the public, that is, to deliver the truth.

I was wondering if you print consumer watch articles; for instance, last Thursday I had car trouble as I reached ISU union parking lot. My car was overheating. After classes I stopped at the Standard station on the corner of Locust and Main, where an employee added antifreeze and water to my radiator. We both noticed what seemed to be a leak in the upper radiator hose; at that point, owner of the station Terry Heinz came over to assist and told me most definitely the water pump was bad.

I asked Mr. Heinz if it could be the hose and he said that wasn't the problem. He then estimated the cost to be \$62.00 to fix the water pump.

I stopped at Bloomington Machine and Auto Parts on the way home where the clerk was nice enough to put on a new radiator hose for me and showed me the hole in the old one; thus, the problem was solved for \$4.61.

It is unfortunate that so many people are so eager to rip off the next guy. I really feel the unethical business practices of people like Terry Heinz should be exposed and the kindness of the clerk at Bloomington Machine and Auto Parts should be commended.

Maybe the Post could do a monthly column on Rip-offs Around Town.

Thank you for your time.

--Dawn Dollnig

Bus fire victim responds

Dear Post,

I got a copy of the Post-Amerikan tonight in my mail; I read the in-depth article written by your press--I have to say--quite a cast of characters!

I especially like Michael Lane's explanation of the "cause" of the bus incident.

Your persistent efforts to get through to the Public Information Office and later to M. Lane have got to be admired greatly also.

At this time several things have happened. I went to the Prisoner's Review Board (Parole Board), and I have signed a contract with a law firm in Chicago to handle my law suit against the state of Illinois.

The P.R.B.--they talked real good to me, but frowned on my idea of suing the state. Hence, parole revoked, and a year to think about it. But, I'm still working on some plans to put that date closer.

That plan would be applying to gain a year-and-a-half of statutory good time credits that were revoked from the sentence before I made parole. In doing that, I could be very well released tomorrow--so to speak.

I have seen a doctor here about persistent headaches and tension in my neck. Now, they give me two big Darvons a day--doesn't do a whole lot of good, but--what to expect.

I hope you will continue to send the Post-Amerikan to my cell door.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
D. Sid Faulkner



PATH and ask for the RCC to get more information.

The board members and volunteers of the Rape Crisis Center would appreciate your spreading the word that it still exists. It was started on the guts and determination of a small group of women, and it will continue by the same means.

To contact the Rape Crisis Center, just call PATH at 827-4005 and ask for the RCC. They are there to talk and to listen whenever you need someone.

--Deborah



Rape Crisis Center ready to help

The Rape Crisis Center of McLean County, despite many rumors to the contrary, is still alive and well and ready to help victims of sexual assault.

The rumors of the RCC's demise are due to the breakdown of merger talks between the Rape Crisis Center and Countering Domestic Violence. In all probability, the merger between the two groups will not take place. What this means to the RCC is that it loses one part-time paid employee and most of its funding. So it is back to square one.

The RCC has only had a paid staff member for one year and has only had substantial grant money for two years. But the RCC has been in existence since January 1974 and has offered 24-hour hotline service since September 1974, so all the loss of staff and money means is that the volunteers will have to work a little harder. It does not mean that the service will suffer.

The Rape Crisis Center provides a telephone hotline and an outreach team of paraprofessionals who are on duty 24 hours a day, every day. They provide psychological, medical, and

legal help and referrals to the victims of sexual assault, their families and friends.

.....
...70% of the assault victims received at Boston City Hospital, for instance, are women who have been attacked in their homes, usually by a husband or lover.....

The center also offers a speaker's bureau to classes and clubs in McLean County. An honorarium is usually asked for, but they will not turn down any group because of lack of funds. They understand all too well about the lack of funds.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the Rape Crisis Center, a training session/workshop will be held March 22 and 23. The main purpose of the session is, of course, to train potential volunteers. But if you would just like to know more about rape, come anyway. Just call

The draft: evasions and

The Draft.

That ugly, frightening string-wart word is again rife in our vocabulary, sending shivers down the spines of young Americans.

A person could try and plan their life, think about maybe getting a job, staying in school, perhaps getting tight with a sweetie. And then--the Draft--and suddenly life and decisions are irrelevant, subject to the whims of Uncle Sam's foreign entanglements.

Others might answer that "it's your duty," but those are odd words for a country founded on belief in individual liberty.

As we talk about the brave patriots, Washington, the American Revolution, etc., we should remember that many of those early patriots were draft dodgers.

Draft dodgers? "The shot heard 'round the world" at Lexington and Concord could well have been fired by someone who was only in America to evade his majesty's conscription.



"...AND WE CALL THIS OUR 'GENIUS BOMB'—IT CAN DO EVERYTHING THE 'SMART BOMB' DOES AND THEN ISSUE ITS OWN DENIALS TO THE PRESS!"

As Canada was haven to Vietnam-era liberty lovers, so the good ol' U.S.A. was a haven for numerous Irish, Scottish, and British lads. In fact, we fought a war against Britain in 1812 in part because the British navy insisted on its right to conscript sailors, even those on American ships.

America the draft dodgers' haven didn't end with the Revolution. Numerous young Prussians and Bavarians came here to evade the Kaiser's army, not to mention Slavs escaping the Austro-Hungarian emperor, and Russians, especially Jews and religious minorities, skipping the Czar's oppression.

The draft came to America with good ol' Abe Lincoln, who instituted it by executive order in 1862. It took Congress a year to approve his action. The popular reaction to Abe's move was more immediate. In 1863 draft riots shook the nation: 1200 were killed in New York City and troops were sent to over 200 cities.

World War I introduced the lottery system and very strict repression of anyone who spoke out against the war. Many were imprisoned for draft resistance, and even saying that war was immoral could merit a prison term.

Barely, by one vote in Congress, the nation's first peacetime draft was instituted in 1940. Draftees were limited to one year's service and could not be sent abroad.

This draft was expanded in World War II and was followed by the 1948 draft law, which is still on the books. According to that law, the president can order registration but needs Congressional approval to begin military induction.

The unpopular Vietnam War required numerous draftees to feed the U.S. war machine.

Like 1863, this draft met massive resistance, not to mention the war that required it. Draft evasion was marked by protest marches, destruction of draft files, and in some cases violent acts against military structures.

It also marked a growing awareness of



possible draft evasions, objections, and resistance. Draft counseling centers sprang up around the nation in the sixties, where young people learned their options.

The new registration and potential draft might be very different. But based on past experience, here are a few possible options an individual might consider.

To register or not to register

The first question anyone has to ask themselves is whether or not they are going to register for the draft.

During the last draft, failure to register meant a potential 5 years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Before you are prosecuted for not registering, they have to find out that you didn't. In the past (but not necessarily in the future), the Selective Service System was under the Privacy Act, which meant they could not look at high school or other records to see who was of age.

Selective Service will use the computer facilities of Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration to identify the original pool of draft eligible youth. Those between 23-26, who registered previously, might also be required to re-register, since all past registration records have been destroyed.

Failing to register brings the risk of imprisonment and fines. If they

Why I oppose the draft

For the past several months, the world situation has been changing, becoming increasingly complex. The US response has so far been restrained, but it is not surprising that in his January State of the Union message, President Carter announced, "We will fight."

Behind the low profile, American officials have been whipping up an intense and terrifying nationalism to prepare the country for war.

The mainstream media are cooperating, with their huge headlines hysterically screaming, "America Held Hostage!" There are no headlines, even unsensational ones, when US intervention helps topple a foreign government unsympathetic to the US rich and powerful. US schemers helped force the bloody Shah on Iran's people, certainly an atrocity much greater than the taking of American hostages.

Along with nationalism comes racism. Iranians in the US are the targets of college demonstrations and unconstitutional deportation. Dark-skinned foreign students presumed to be Iranian are the victims of violence and harassment in restaurants and bars, on the streets and on campuses.

And now, with the Soviet action in Afghanistan, the Cold War has once again ignited, and with it the beginnings of red-baiting and American commie-phobia.

Again, the media cast America as the good guy in the white hat and Russia as the villain in the black suit, as if communist countries have a corner on the profitable market of invading and exploiting other nations.

It is incredible to me that Viet Nam had so little lasting effect on our national consciousness and self-image. How many of us have forgotten, or never really believed, that the US was the aggressor--the guy in the black suit--in that war just 10 years ago?

The media are not often interested in showing how US profiteers work over vulnerable countries. Instead, we hear about threats to "our" oil fields on foreign soil.

Carter has committed America--you and me--to preparing for a new war with the same arrogance that US presidents committed us to the Viet Nam war, without Congressional approval and

virtually without the knowledge of the American public.

All of our lives will change as US foreign involvement changes, whether we consent to these changes or not. Some of us will gain; most of us will lose.

Knowing this, we must choose to consent or resist. Being neutral is not an option, especially for anyone who is, or who cares about anyone who is, between 18 and 21. But the draft and a war will also affect how much money we have, what work we do, what social services we have, what diseases become epidemic, which drugs hit the streets, how much privacy we have, the social position of women and people of color, how much more fear and hostility we live with in our daily lives.

Although the US president can order registration on his own, especially in the case of national emergency, the issue has gone to the House and Senate for debate and passage first. Last year, when compulsory military service was tacked onto two Military Appropriations bills, it was soundly defeated. But with the shifting "mood of the nation," and despite the fact that at

options

don't find you, the draft won't touch you. Common experience in the past was that if someone didn't register, the following would probably happen:

Knock-knock.

(Young person, Joe Young, comes to door, Post-American in hand):
"Hello."

(Two men in grey suits and with a dark colored sedan parked out front, flash badges): "FBI. Are you Joe Young?"

"Yes."

"We have noticed that you have not registered for the Selective Service System."

(Joe acts stupid and coy): "The what?"

"The Selective Service System. The draft. You didn't register."

"Oh, they never called me and asked me to come there and do that."

"Do you realize that you are running the risk of a potential 5-year imprisonment and \$10,000 fine for the felony act of failure to register?"

"Oh, gosh golly, I didn't know that."

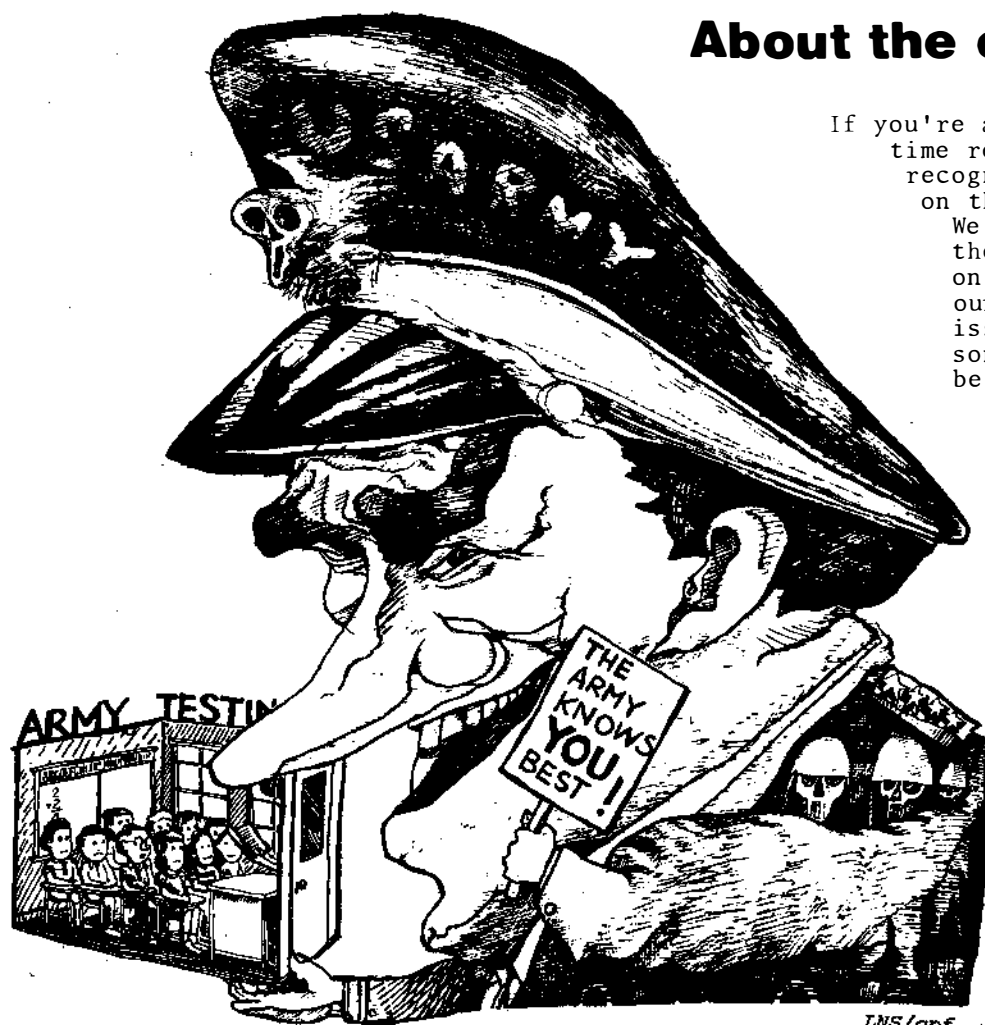
"You, Joe Young, have done a naughty no-no. Report to your draft board the first thing in the morning, or we will be forced to prosecute."

"Oh, thank you so much. Would you nice sirs like one of these funny brownies before you go?"

This is a common scenario. However, if you have been active in anti-draft demonstrations or vocal on the issue, it might be hard to play dumb. But don't ever let the FBI intimidate you into saying much of anything.

Even if this should happen, you should still question whether or not you are going to register. You then seriously run the risk of prison and a fine.

If millions of young people choose draft resistance, it can overload the criminal justice system and overcrowd the already too-crowded jails and prisons.



About the cover...

If you're a faithful long-time reader, you may recognize the drawing on the cover.

We used it during the Vietnam war, on the front of our October 1972 issue. We hope someday it will be obsolete.

Post-American
page 9
March 1980

These sentences look stiff, but they can vary too. In the South, the full fine was frequently levelled.

But in more liberal places, like New York, Massachusetts, or the West Coast, often the sentence was only six months, parole, or a sentence to do alternative service at a community facility.

Registering or not registering is an important choice to make. And if millions don't register, the government machinery will be clogged.

Selective Service is founded on the notion that everyone will voluntarily register. They do not have a competent system to deal with massive refusal to register.

Conscientious objector

A Conscientious Objector (C.O.) is someone who is opposed to war on moral, religious, or ethical grounds.

In the past, C.O.'s were generally granted to members of Peace Churches (Quakers, Mennonites, Brethren) but during World War II were opened to all religions. During Vietnam, after numerous difficult court cases, this was changed again to include C.O.'s on political, philosophical, or humanistic grounds.

Getting a C.O. is no easy process. If you are considering this, you should begin now. If registration begins, you should probably register, but be sure to write on the registration card, even if there is no place for it, that you are a conscientious objector.

In the past, there were three questions a C.O. had to answer:

1) Describe the beliefs which are the basis for your claim for classification as a Conscientious Objector, and

continued on next page

.. and you should too!

least one Senator has promised to block the bill, registration will almost certainly be reinstated.

The purpose of "peacetime registration" is to prepare for the draft. The purpose of the draft is to prepare for war. Following registration, there is a selection process, which traditionally zeroes in on blacks and the poor. Those selected receive a number, and when that number is called, they are drafted.

It is still undecided by those white men who decide these things whether women will be assigned to actual combat. If so, we women have increased horrors ahead of us. As women, we already live in a war zone, but the dangers of being so close to men in an intensified, violent situation are magnified. This is especially complicated by the macho militaristic egos of many men in the service who will be threatened by the presence of women in their ranks. The sometimes violent hazing of women cadets at West Point is a warning of things to come.

And how will women taken as prisoners of war be treated? All we have to do is consider the brutal treatment of women in Chile arrested for political

crimes to understand the awful implications.

The implications of international war in this decade are horrifyingly unbelievable. First, there is the threat of nuclear war, a threat that increases wildly as more nations get nuclear weapons. (The US is uncertain about how many countries have nuclear arms. Pakistan, a nation likely to become involved in a Middle Eastern war, now has untested nuclear bombs.)

Furthermore, the US now has the neutron bomb, designed to kill people without destroying land and buildings. It could be used against oil-rich areas to preserve those resources.

And it is unlikely that if one nuclear bomb were used, that only one would be used, that only one nation would be destroyed. In fact, is it likely that anyone would survive? And if so, what kind of life would be left?

Even if nuclear weapons are not used, war in these times will be dramatically different. The Middle East, the area most likely to become an international battleground, is already heavily armed with sophisticated weaponry. To talk about war in that area is to talk about global suicide.

It is a cliché of some US war protesters that, "when the communists land in California, that's when I'll fight." Ever since the Europeans did it to the Indians and then entrenched, it has been absurd to think that a hostile nation's forces could ever again invade and take possession of this huge country. Now, however, we face the definite possibility that if we go to war we will lose California, not to occupation but to annihilation. And Oregon, and Nevada, and Illinois.

The irony with this war, as with most wars, is that massive numbers of people will die for a system that never supported them in the first place. Women without the ERA and teenagers who can't legally drink alcohol get to die in a doomed attempt to increase the power of the men who deny them their rights. I say "doomed" because I don't believe any country can win a world war.

We cannot win this war, and we will not fight this war!

--Andrea Bauer

P.S. Thanx to Constance Perenyi of Big Mama Rag, from whose excellent article I plagiarized 90% of this one, Kurt Vonnegut, and Holly Near.

The draft: evasions and

continued from preceding page

whether those beliefs would permit you to serve in a noncombatant position in the armed forces.

2) Describe how you acquired these beliefs.

3) Describe how your beliefs affect the way you live, and the type of work you do or plan to do.

A C.O. should have 3-4 written pages of answers for each of these, plus letters from clergy, teachers, friends, civic leaders, etc., verifying that you do strongly hold these beliefs and practice them.

In your statement, list any churches or organizations you belong to that are anti-war. Do not write what you might do in a past or future war; that is irrelevant. A C.O. is someone opposed to all war right now.

Never use the words PERSONAL, MERELY, PURELY PERSONAL or ESSENTIALLY.

Once you have completed your statement, send a copy to NIBSCO (National Interreligious Service Board for C.O., 550 Washington Bldg., 15th and New York Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20005); they will file it, which will help with your claim and a counselor there will evaluate what you have written and reply to you.

Bear in mind that being a C.O. does not let you off scot-free. You are still required to do some kind of national service. There are two kinds of C.O.'s, noncombatants and civilian.

Noncombatants do serve in the armed



forces, but in non-combat roles, like being a medic. They are still a part of the military and subject to military rule.

A civilian C.O. is often required to perform alternative service in a hospital or community center, for low pay and usually for a set length of time (like 2 years).

A C.O. can be a time-consuming but worthwhile option. Be ready to stand up for what you believe in.

Moral disqualification (the Group W Bench)

You are morally unfit to serve in the U.S. armed forces if you have been convicted of a violent crime (an interesting contradiction in terms).

Also, if you are a known homosexual, you are morally unfit to kill. Card-carrying members of the Communist Party or the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW, one of the country's

oldest unions) are also considered morally unfit for the armed services.

Violent crime is not recommended as an option to prove that you are unfit to kill. However, if you are gay and proud this gives you another reason for being so, or for coming out of the closet. The IWW has memberships for any worker and now for students, too, so if you want a little red card write to the IWW, 752 W. Webster, Chicago, IL 60614.

Physical and mental disqualifications

This is a long and difficult list, but worth a little study. Again, like all the above recommendations, these may change with the new legislation, but here are just a few.

If you have a history of mental illness and treatment, you might be disqualified from service.

Numerous allergies can gain a deferment, including allergies to wool or pollen (this can vary according to the plant life where the Army is fighting). Being a diabetic can bring you a deferment.

Old football injuries, being too tall, too short, too fat, too thin, flat feet, missing limbs, etc., are all useful in evading the draft. However, for all of the above physical and mental and moral disqualifications, don't expect to walk into the draft physical and have the USA discover them. They'll do their best not to. If you think

XXX

XXX



XXX

XXX

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options

you are eligible for any of the above, begin collecting letters from psychiatrists, doctors, etc., now, so you have proof of your malady if you are called.

Emmigration and going underground

These last two are very serious options, and should perhaps be considered only if all others are exhausted.

Emmigration is difficult. "Going to Canada" might seem like an easy answer, but the Canadians are much stricter. Few immigrants are allowed to enter without either already owning land in Canada or having a job waiting.

Other countries might be considered, but remember, you are cutting yourself off from people you know and plunging into a different culture and nation, where you might not be welcomed with open arms.

Going underground is another draft option, but again, extremely difficult. It means cutting yourself off from everyone you know and love, leaving your home and going to a new place, getting a new i.d., and perhaps moving frequently. The statute of limitations does not run out, and there are still Vietnam draft evaders underground today, living in fear of discovery. Expect to be running for the rest of your life with this one.

Enlistment

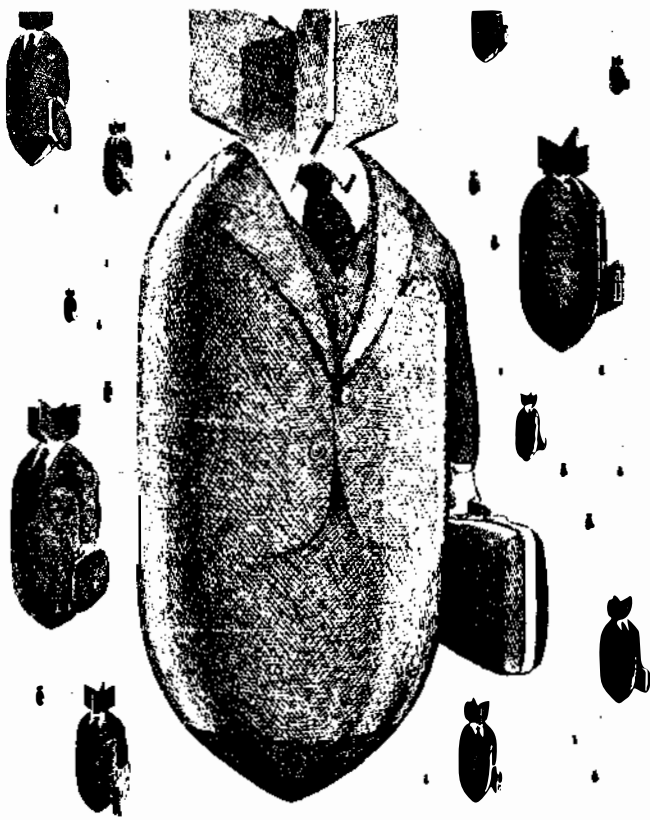
If you don't want to be drafted and all the above sounds terrible and unpatriotic to you, and you believe in America and Big Oil, feel free to go enlist at the nearest military recruiter.

That's your choice, and if your conscience tells you that serving in the Army is a proud and moral thing, please do it.

But don't expect the rest of us to eagerly follow in your footsteps. Perhaps our consciences tell us something else and perhaps we believe war is immoral. In that case, a draft, which allows us no choice, is an infringement on our freedom.

It ain't law yet

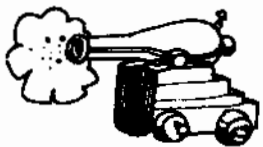
All this talk of registration and the draft is scary, but remember, it ain't law yet. Write Congress, Carter, send telegrams, protest, pass petitions encouraging these elected officials not to pass the funds necessary for registration.



This is an election year, and most politicians are overly sensitive to grass roots voices. So make yours heard. Write President Carter c/o the White House, Washington D.C. 20500; Senators Percy and Stevenson c/o U.S. Senate Office Building, Washington 20510; and Representative Madigan c/o U.S. House of Representatives, Washington 20515.

Public Opinion telegrams are only \$2, if less than 15 words. Call Western Union at 800-325-5100 and tell them you want to send a public opinion telegram and to whom. It will be delivered the next day and can be billed to your phone.

Feel free to call the Peace and Justice Coalition (452-5046) and ask for Mike. We'll be happy to try to answer any questions we can about draft options. There are also



petitions available to be passed around and other items of currently available information.

The best thing you can do with the draft is not to ignore it. Don't think it can't touch you, because it can, and it will affect your life in many ways.

Be prepared. If you are thinking of any of these options, begin working on them now. And an effective campaign against draft and registration legislation now can save a lot of heartbreak later on.

--MGM

ISU ROTC

As news media stir up militaristic sentiments, Carter moves to start up the draft again, and the oil companies prepare the country to go to war to defend their interests, Illinois State University is moving to do its small part.

The university is about to approve the beginnings of an ROTC program, to prepare officers for the military.

A committee of the university's academic senate voted to recommend approval of the new program, despite objections by the majority of speakers at two days of hearings.

Several speakers warned that an ROTC program would be a focal point for protests, possibly bombings, if another war spawned the inevitable anti-war movement of unpatriotic students unwilling to die for Exxon.

No right to life

Suit has been filed against the Three Mile Island nuclear plant's owners, operators, and manufacturers for the stillbirth of Perri Kick's daughter last August. Kick lived just over three miles from the plant and was four months pregnant when the radiation leak occurred. The suit charges the company with deliberately concealing information about the extent and seriousness of the accident.

- The Guardian-

On the inside

In a 1978 lawsuit, an Alabama inmate testified that after prison doctors set her broken leg in a cast, her leg itched excessively. When doctors reluctantly agreed to remove the cast, they found roaches inside eating her leg.

-Newsweek-



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Veteran MEG employee used drugs, sold dope to make cases

While working as a "special employee" of the MEG undercover drug squad, Rodney Meyer used controlled substances frequently, sold drugs, entrapped defendants, and received income both from MEG and his illegal drug dealing.

After five years of work as a professional informant, Rodney Meyer told the Post-Amerikan about his sleazy but successful drug enforcement tactics in a Dec. 20 interview.

In late 1979, Meyer capped off his career as a snitch by making allegations of unethical and sometimes illegal MEG tactics to investigators.

But Meyer did not offer investigators the most damning evidence he has against MEG: himself and his tactics.

Since the former snitch's grant of immunity from prosecution covers only actions Meyer took in the presence of MEG agents, Meyer has not told investigators the story which is printed here, which we have held until now as a condition of our interview.

Meyer's latest undercover work--several months of living in Galesburg under the name Phil Carter--ended in Nov., when two batches of suppressed indictments named dozens of the snitch's defendants.

"I could probably get 99% of the people in Galesburg out of jail, Meyer told the Post-Amerikan.

Meyer credits his success at getting

in with drug users to what he calls "partying with the people."

"I am the doper you always thought I was," Meyer told the Post-Amerikan. "I love my drugs."

Meyer's favorite drug is crystal methedrine, but he will settle for most anything. In Galesburg, he settled for MDA, which was plentiful.

"I probably spent \$300-\$400 a month on MDA in Galesburg," Meyer said. He said he bought from one person five times for MEG, got paid for it, but purchased MDA dozens of additional times just for his own consumption, although he did share it with the people he later busted.



The MEG informer also sold MDA.

Meyer said he sold MDA to Galesburg resident Richard Mitchell twice: a gram and then a quarter ounce.

Contacted by the Post-Amerikan, Mitchell confirmed Meyer's story. Mitchell says he has passed a lie detector test on his story that MEG employee Meyer was selling MDA.

Meyer said he even subsidized his quarter-ounce sale to Mitchell.

"I might have thrown in some extra bucks. I've done that a lot of times. I'll throw in ten, burn him the next day, make fifty, you know what I mean? It all works out," Meyer said.

I didn't know what he meant, so he explained:

"Say it costs \$210," Meyer said. "He says 'I'm not gonna pay no more than \$200.' Well I'll throw in the extra ten myself, let him go the difference. He will go 'well I know you're decent cause you sold this to me,' and I'll turn him the next day."

"You mean you'll buy from him..." I began to ask.

"With an agent there," Meyer interrupted, laughing.

"And then MEG will pay you \$50 which is your going rate for chemical buys?" I asked.

"Sleazy tactics, right?" Meyer laughed, and then laughed some more. "Like I tell ya, it's business."

* * * *

Meyer's selling dope while working for MEG is not new. A 1978 Post story reported that Meyer was caught selling speed in 1974 while he was working for MEG. The Post-Amerikan interviewed former Tazewell County prosecutor Brett Bode, who explained that he dropped the dope sale charge against Meyer after the young snitch and his wife both passed polygraphs on their claim that Meyer's supervising MEG agent, Bill Stephens, had given tacit permission for Meyer to continue selling drugs.

As Meyer recalled it in 1979, Stephens attitude toward the snitch's dealing was "as long as I don't see it. Stay cool with the people, keep up with them."

After throwing out the case against Meyer, Bode recalled chewing MEG out. "I made it clear that I wanted nothing more to do with Rodney Meyer or his cases," the former prosecutor told the Post-Amerikan.

Meyer didn't work for MEG again until 1977. We don't know why MEG re-hired an informer who was caught selling dope while working, unless MEG still tacitly approved of the illegal tactics.

Claiming to have experience as an

informer in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Houston under his belt when he returned in 1977, Meyer talks as though he had become "professional."

"I was pretty much on the up and up when I came back in '77," Meyer told the Post. "I knew the area, knew the ropes, and did a lot of good clean deals."

"I didn't really become an entrapper until I worked in Southern Illinois," Meyer said, referring to his stint for the Carbondale-based MEG from summer '78 through Feb. '79.

Meyer said he sold a full ounce of LSD to a man he later busted in Southern Illinois.

What made Meyer switch from being a legitimate straight-shooter snitch to a wheeler-dealer who entrapped defendants?

"Taking care of number one," Meyer replied. "As long as I was becoming one of the people, I was turning them left and right, and that was the only way we survived, wasn't it Teresa?" His wife nodded. "It's my bread and butter. If I don't make the deal, I don't eat. In other words, if I didn't go out and party with them, we'd have done been starving to death and died."

"Money is the name of the game," Meyer continued. "I'm a snitch. I started out for a few extra bucks and a few extra beers, now I'm a snitch as a business. It's my job. I was making \$1000 to \$1500 a month for a while in Galesburg."

"I'd like to leave a message for future snitches," the professional informer went on. "I'd like to tell 'em, be a snitch, but be a crooked one."

* * * *

After getting caught in 1974, Meyer says he kept his drug dealing secret from the MEG agents he worked with.

But he suspects that agents sometimes had to have known he was high.

Sometimes they did, judging from the few written reports Meyer has preserved from his 1977-78 MEG work--the period he claims to have been relatively straight.

Occasionally, Meyer's brief report of a drug transaction will include the note that he "simulated" ingesting some drug in the suspect's and agent's presence.

"I don't simulate nothing," Meyer told



Rodney Meyer

After an unprecedented five years employment as a professional informant for MEG, Rodney Meyer admits that he is a heavier drug user--and dealer--than many of the people he worked to set up.

Galesburg Free Voice publisher Mike Richardson. "If it says I simulated it, I did it."

* * * *

Although investigators would like to distinguish between Rodney Meyer's actions on his own, and Meyer's actions in concert with MEG agents, the distinction is meaningless.

Meyer worked for MEG longer than any agent, had more experience in undercover work, moved from town to town at MEG's expense, was "loaned" to another MEG unit, was trusted to make buys and testify in court. Meyer's actions are MEG's actions.

Jerry LaGrow re-hired Meyer in 1977, knowing that the snitch was a drug user who had already been caught selling dope while working for MEG. LaGrow must take responsibility for the fact that his employee of five years was selling dope again while supposedly enforcing the law against selling dope.

--Mark Silverstein

Informers, agents 'beyond reproach'

"These people have to be beyond reproach," Fulton County State's Attorney Tom Homer told the Canton Betterment Commission Feb. 4, referring to MEG agents and informers. "They are given stringent tests by lie detectors and if they do not pass, they are not used," the prosecutor continued, according to a Feb. 5 story in the Canton Daily Ledger.

Homer was speaking on the "drug" problem."

After stating that he had the "utmost respect" for MEG and its Director Jerry LaGrow, the naive prosecutor praised the narcs' "high ethics."

Homer told the Canton Betterment Commission that Fulton County "has a widespread problem with drugs."

Homer also stated that most MEG arrests in Fulton County were for marijuana, which he called the "most prevalent drug used in Fulton County."

MEG probe missed most serious charges

As the Post-Amerikan goes to press, MEG's "internal investigation" of charges made by ex-informer Rodney Meyer is close to an end. Peoria State's Attorney Mike Mihm will present his findings to the MEG Board of Directors Feb. 28.

Previous comments by Mihm indicate that he does not believe some of the ex-snitch's allegations, while other charges boil down to the informer's word against an agent's.

Because Rodney Meyer could not get immunity from prosecution

for actions he did outside the presence of MEG agents, investigators never heard the heaviest and most damning evidence against MEG: Meyer himself, and the fact that MEG hired him for five years.

An adjoining article details Meyer's drug taking and dope dealing, which he said made him a more effective and productive informer.

While Meyer was playing double agent, secretly giving information to the Post-

Amerikan, he turned over some solid information which we have been able to corroborate independently. He also made some exaggerated claims against MEG which he had trouble backing up with specific details.

When Meyer could be pinned down to specifics, most of the allegations he made to the Post-Amerikan, even if true, are relatively minor compared to the overwhelmingly outrageous--and true--fact that someone like Rodney Meyer was hired for five years to enforce the law and testify in court.

State's Attorney Mike Mihm says investigators finally distilled from Meyer's interviews a list of 13 allegations that were specific enough for the ex-snitch to take a polygraph, which he finally did. But Mihm wouldn't reveal the results, nor would he say what specific accusations against MEG Meyer made to investigators.

Some information from the Post-Amerikan's interviews with Meyer is printed here; more will wait until next issue.

Learn these faces

These MEG agents may have changed their appearance since these photos were taken, so be alert. From left to right, these secret police are: John Linden, Stephen Reeter, and Sam Walley. Reeter's and Walley's photos were taken in Dec.'79; Linden's in spring 1979.



Agent Linden



Agent Reeter



Agent Walley

MEG clamps down on drug-using employees...depending

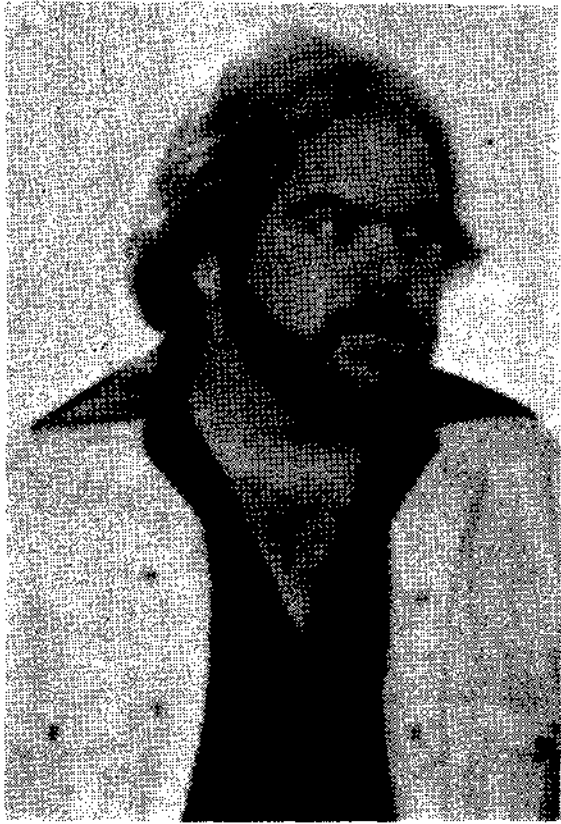
Have informants given up drugs? That is the question a grand juror in Fulton County asked of MEG Agent Terry Ziegenbein in June, 1978. Here is his reply, taken from the court file for case 78 cf 80:

"They are supposed to, and we keep a pretty tight rein on most of our informants, but we can't watch them 24 hours a day, you know. Why a person would want to continue to use

drugs and work for us, I really don't know why he would, because if we caught him, he would be in instant trouble, and we have got a lot of people with a lot of ears to the ground, and we hear a lot of things, and if we even suspect that one of our informants was still using or even dealing, we would put the clamps on him or her, depending on who it was."

MEG bought alcohol for minors, ex-informer says

MEG agent and snitch pass



According to Rodney Meyer, MEG Agent Mark Williams (above) lied to a Fulton County grand jury about his drinking while working.

"We are allowed in a 24-hour period three drinks. I don't always drink alcohol. If someone buys me a drink, then you are forced to do it, or if the bartender may be someone you might be interested in in a professional manner, you would drink. Normally, you would get a 7-Up or something."

--MEG agent Mark Williams, testifying under oath in case 78cf80 in June, 1978, before the Fulton County grand jury.

"We never drank only three drinks or less--never. We'd start at 5 or 6 at night and close the bars and then head to Peoria where they were open until 4."

--former MEG informer Rodney Meyer, speaking of his undercover work in Tazewell County with Agent Williams in the fall of 1977.

"Me and Mark Williams, we spent almost all that time working in Tazewell County drunk," Rodney Meyer told the Post-Amerikan.

Meyer was so loaded during one buy that he didn't even remember a drug purchase five hours later when Agent Williams told him to write the report. Since Meyer couldn't remember the purchase, Williams dictated the report, according to the former MEG informer.

"Me and Mark Williams had to be paying Jerry (LaGrow) back for OAF money we spent on drinking," Meyer told the Post-Amerikan. OAF stands for Official Advanced Funds, and represents carefully accounted-for cash allocated specifically for "Confidential Expenditures"--purchases of drugs or information.

He and Williams went through \$160 in OAF funds, Meyer said, during one wild evening of drinking and partying with two female informers from Canton that started in bars and ended at a party at one of the snitches' houses. In

Phone Jerry LaGrow: (309) 263-0762

MEG boss Jerry LaGrow would like feedback from Post-Amerikan readers. If you have any opinions about secret police, let LaGrow know by calling his unlisted number (above) at his home in Morton, 139 Oakwood St. LaGrow is usually home

and ready to listen around 3 or 4 AM. If you would prefer to talk to the head of the covert narcotics unit at his secret office, check out 600 Abingdon, Room 204 in Peoria, 673-3465.

looks like a sleepy, serene community.



look again.

If you listen to the city fathers, the Pantagraph, the civic boosters and the phony speechmakers, you would think we lived in a 1930's Hollywood set. But let's look behind the scenes. Each month since April 1972, the Post-Amerikan has been denting that serene facade, printing the embarrassing truths the city fathers would rather overlook. Take another look at Bloomington-Normal. Subscribe to the Post-Amerikan.

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the bottle on the job

an interview with the Post, ex-informer Martha Slater, who hosted the party, confirmed much of Meyer's account of that evening, including Agent Williams alleged sexual liaison with the other woman informer.

Besides consuming more alcohol than their own guidelines permit, MEG agents commonly commit the crime of illegal transportation of alcohol. On Feb. 1, 1979, Post reporters surprised two MEG agents and a snitch in the middle of their undercover work in Bloomington. Agent Michael White and informer Rick Thoennes were both carrying open beer in the MEG car. "Not many agents don't drink while they drive," Meyer said.

MEG agents could also be charged with contributing to the delinquency of a minor, for supplying alcohol to underage kids. Though he was only seventeen when he began working for MEG, Rodney Meyer says he had beers all the time with his supervisor, Agent Bill Stephens. Stephens bought the beers sometimes, and Jerry LaGrow even bought Meyer a few beers while the fledgling snitch was underage, according to Meyer.

Agent Stephens and Meyer did much of their undercover work at a bar called the Kolisseum in Creve Coeur, where Stephens condoned Meyer's using illegal manufactured phony identification. Jerry LaGrow, posing as a snitch working with Meyer, also was aware that Meyer possessed and used fake IDs, which were not issued by the Secretary of State's office.

During this period of time in fall, 1974, Meyer says he was heavily addicted to speed, was dealing heavily, and his supervising agent knew it. When Jerry LaGrow finally busted Meyer for selling 300 hits of speed, Meyer got his charges dropped by passing a polygraph test about

Stephens' giving "permission" to Meyer to sell speed. Stephens resigned from MEG after his 1976 conviction for child molesting.

In Galesburg in 1979, Meyer told the Post-Amerikan, he, his wife and MEG agent John Linden thought nothing of supplying alcohol to teenagers. Meyer listed four youngsters who he said John Linden bought beer for. "Then they took us to their dealers," Meyer said. "We sort of hosted an underage party. We bought the booze, and then got ----- and ----- busted. We showed them, 'hey, we're cool guys, we got y'all beer.'"

"A little kid would come to our door in the housing projects, and we'd give him beer," Meyer said. "I know we gave beer to 13-year-olds. There's no doubt about it. And John Linden was there too."

--M.S.



To gain the confidence of Galesburg teenagers, ex-informer Rodney Meyer says he and Agent John Linden (above) bought the underage kids alcohol.

Former prosecutor knocks investigations

Indictments based on investigations by MEG are "often ill-advised," Brett Bode, former Tazwell County prosecutor, told the Daily Pantagraph.

Bode's comments appeared January 23, in the third of a 4-part series on grand juries.

Since many Post readers who follow the MEG issue may have missed Bode's comments, we are reproducing them here:

"Bode said grand jury indictments based on Multi-County Drug Enforcement Group (MEG) investigations are often ill-advised."

"He said agents sometimes have not

taken enough care to be sure they have the correct name of a suspect. The fact drug investigations take several months, involve numerous suspects and make use of informants of varying degrees of reliability does nothing for accuracy.

"A prosecutor often does not learn until after the indictment that the information is faulty.

"The state's attorney can get a true bill (an indictment) with any information regardless of accuracy, Bode said."

Bode has seen MEG cases from both sides--as a prosecutor and as a defense lawyer.

Beware Mark Wardlow

A man identifying himself as Mark Wardlow contacted the Post-Amerikan in late January and said he had been asked to become an informer for the Multi-County Enforcement Group.

Wardlow said he'd been a professional informer in the past but gave it up after his latest employment for the Illinois Department of Law Enforcement's Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) ended in a batch of drug arrests in Springfield in August 1979.

Wardlow says he went ahead, met with MEG, signed up as a snitch, and found out who they wanted him to bust.

Wardlow claimed he wasn't going to actually do any work for the narcs, but wanted to string them along, take them for as much money as he could, providing information to the Post-Amerikan at the same time.

Wardlow claimed MEG offered \$500 if he could set up Post reporter Mark Silverstein. Wardlow claimed that MEG Director Jerry LaGrow and other agents suggested framing Silverstein. Wardlow said the narcs also named others they wanted him to introduce MEG agents to.

To prove he was in contact with MEG, Wardlow invited Post reporters over

on Feb. 1, when Wardlow said he was scheduled to telephone the MEG office. Post reporters met Wardlow at his girlfriend's apartment, 1612 Bryan, apt. B, in Normal, where Wardlow was living. Wardlow said he was keeping his activities secret from his girlfriend.



Post reporters did listen in as Wardlow dialed a Peoria number (673-2583) which we recognized as a MEG number--one that we had not published in the Post-Amerikan. Using what he called his "code name," Wardlow placed a collect call as "Tom Campbell." Post reporters listened as the MEG secretary, without hesitation, accepted the charges.

Jerry LaGrow, however, was not in the office at the time, she said. During the conversation, another phone rang in the MEG office. The secretary came back on the line, said the other caller was Jerry LaGrow calling in from his home, and that LaGrow would telephone "Tom Campbell" at his home.

Post reporters didn't stay around to wait for the call.

Although at first Wardlow seemed eager to bring information to the attention of Post reporters (and the whole relationship was his idea), he soon became evasive, missing appointments with Post people and dodging phone calls.

Wardlow still maintained that he was not going to do any undercover work for MEG.

However, the Post-Amerikan has received other evidence which indicates that Wardlow was working for MEG in early February. He may still be working for MEG.

Skinny, dark-eyed, with collar-length dark hair, Wardlow has a right forearm tattoo in the form of an ank (a cross with a loop at the top).

--Mark Silverstein

Atheists save city money

Post-Amerikan page 16



Bloomington city council discusses nativity scene.

A plastic Jesus recently created almost two months of comic uproar in Bloomington.

This little fellow, along with the rest of his plastic gang (Mary, Joseph, wise men, shepherds, two angels (one hovering, one heralding)), a couple of sheep, and so on) was the subject of at least a dozen Pantagraph articles, many letters-to-the-editor, a WJBC forum, three or four days of discussion on Problems and Solutions, theological speculations at the city council, and even a few Post-Amerikan articles.

The pious polyethylene pageant squatted in grotesque glory outside the ACI building, across from the cop shop in Bloomington. The city paid \$1,450 for this evangelical gem, hoping that no one would notice the decidedly Christian symbolism and object to the expense, saying that the city had spent money (and a gob of it, at that) for the glorification of the Christian religion.

But both the American Civil Liberties Union and the Post-Amerikan noticed, and began squawking about the separation of church and state.

The ACLU said that the city's pietistic purchase was clearly

unconstitutional. Eventually, the city's corporation attorney, David Stanczak, had to agree that legal precedents implied that plastic Christian symbols were, indeed, Christian, and were, therefore, religious, and should not be bought with public money. Stanczak said, "Unload the thing."

The city council decided to sell the scene, after heavy theological considerations which included councilperson Jesse Smart's complaint that "satanistic" forces in the community were urging the sale of the manger scene, and Eva Jones' contention that selling the spectacle smacked of banning prayer in the public schools. Jones, also a city councilperson, is quoted in the Pantagraph, saying, "They wanted prayer there. They took that out and replaced it with drugs."

Before Jones' suggestion, Bloomington dopers hadn't even considered urging the city to buy \$1500 worth of recreational drugs instead of

proselytizing plastic, but her suggestion was undoubtedly well-received in some circles.

Some of the city council members (including the mayor) and many of the letter-writers and Problems and Solutions callers really couldn't tell the ideological difference between the purchase of ugly plastic Santies, unsightly Spun-Glo candy canes, and a hideous reproduction of the Nativity. This teaches us something about these believers' understanding of Christianity. After all, I'm an atheist and can still tell the difference between a crucifix and a K-Tel Record Rack.

Finally, the Association of Commerce and Industry of McLean and the Bloomington-Normal Trades and Labor Assembly submitted the high bid for the spiritual spread. They'll continue to show off their sacred splurge every Christmas, same place. The city, besides reestablishing itself on the right side of the constitution, got back \$1,110 of the money they spent in the first place. Some of us are still disgruntled, though, because we have to look at the nasty thing every year, and it's ugly as (excuse the expression) sin.

--Phoebe Caulfield

Carter's spy project

When did you stop being a spy?

Jimmy Carter, his stand on human rights apparently forsaken for the "good of the country," has decided to make spies his new project. To this end and, hopefully (in his mind), to the end of spies, he wants to establish a secret court to hear secret testimony from secret police about the secret activities of secret agents. This secret court will decide whether or not our spies can tap the phones of, break into the homes and offices of, and open the mail of their spies. Whoever "they" are.

In all probability, "they" are the commies, those damn Ruskies. Better dead than red.

Okay, I'm willing to admit that there are probably Soviet agents in the USA, and everywhere else. There are also probably Amerikan agents in the USSR and everywhere else. I have read too many spy novels not to believe that.

But so what? I can't see that it makes any difference in my life. Who cares if a few trench-coated men sneak around watching each other with fountain pens and talk into Timex watches? I don't.

But I start caring when anybody in Amerika, on the word of some secret pig, can be spied on and stolen from. Of course they don't call it spying. They call it surveillance. It's a much more civil term. And they don't call it stealing, either.

They call it "black bagging." A much more palatable word than grand theft or armed robbery, don't you think?

Anyone suspected of being a spy is subject to this kind of treatment and harassment, according to Carter's plan. Anyone suspected of being a spy. Anyone suspected.

Now, if you're a good spy, no one will ever suspect you. That's the

whole point of being a spy. And if they suspect you, either you're not a very good spy and they would be doing your country a favor by exposing you so your country could get a better spy over here, or you're not a spy at all. And the last is what worries me.

I do not believe that Carter's plan is really aimed at inept Soviet agents (if such a thing exists, 'cause I don't believe in inept Soviet agents, either). I think the plan is a clumsy attempt to get those people who are a threat to the status quo. People, for instance, who, unlike Carter, are genuinely concerned about human rights. People who are anti-draft. People who are pro-union. People who are anti-nuke. Or anti-church, or anti-state. People who are pro-choice.

And pro-dope. And pro-revolution. People who either are or who hang out with people who are communists, socialists, feminists, gays, blacks, chicanos, orientals, aliens, immigrants, ex-cons, and the like. People like you. People like me.

It terrifies me to think that with the quiet nod of some judge's head the phones of any Amerikan citizen can be tapped, their homes and offices broken into and ransacked for evidence, their mail opened and read and scoured for the presence of a secret code.

Gone are the days when you can practice your dialogue from your Russian class with your friend, the Russian major, over the phone. Nobody talks Russian but Russians, and all Russians are spies.

Gone are the days of short wave radios, the kind on which you really can listen to the Moscow Symphony and talk to your grandmother in Poland. Nobody needs to be in contact with iron curtain countries unless they're Russians. And all Russians are spies.

Gone are the days of sending letters with the help of your Captain Midnight secret decoder ring. Nobody sends coded messages except Russians. And all Russians are spies.

Of course, if that were the only implication from Carter's plan, we could probably all find ways to practice our Russian lessons in person, pretend that Grandma died last year, and write our letters on post cards to prove we had nothing to hide. It would be a pain in the ass, but we could probably do it.

What we cannot do is be assured that we won't be treated as traitors just because someone has a grudge against us. "He opposes the draft--plant some heavy weaponry in his garage...She's a lesbian--find a communications system in her closet...They associate with undesirables--I bet there's a hot line phone to Moscow in their office."

Some of my friends say I'm paranoid. Maybe I am. But there is a grain of truth in every paranoia. And how paranoid is it--when we know that two-bit informers plant dope on people just so they can throw their foes in jail--to think that federal informers will not do at least as much for the same reason?

I am shocked and disgusted by Jimmy Carter's anti-spy, anti-people plan. Very few people seem to be concerned about this latest outrage. I hope it is only because they don't know about it. But I fear it is because they think it's fair treatment for spies, who are traitors, after all. They damage national security. And most importantly, they make those in power look silly.

When this plan is instituted, we will all have to live with the fear that at any moment, for the good of the nation, any one of us can have our phones tapped, our homes and offices broken into, and our mail opened. Better dead than read.

I do hope someone finds a way to stop all this foolishness soon. I don't want to spend the rest of my life trying to prove I'm not a spy. And I doubt that you do, either.

--Deborah Wiatt
(alias Agent NJ4-6K)

Malpractice suit can't repay losses

Putting your life in a doctor's hands is scary enough. And stories like Linda Bartlett's make it horrifying.

Bartlett is suing Doctors Larry Kneezel, Richard Trefzger, O.A. Zeller, and St. Joseph's Hospital in Bloomington for over \$15,000 each.

Kneezel referred Linda Bartlett to Richard Trefzger, a surgeon, for a hemorrhoidectomy in December 1978. On Dec. 8, Trefzger did the surgery, with Zeller administering a spinal anesthetic.

She awoke from the surgery with excruciating pain in her legs. Her right leg wouldn't straighten or hold weight--by the third day after surgery, it wouldn't move at all.

Mike Bartlett, Linda's husband, says that Trefzger was upset on his first visit to Linda's room after surgery. "Something went wrong," Trefzger said.

Linda lay in her room at St. Joseph's from Dec. 8 until Jan. 12, where she says they gave her a heating pad, heavy narcotic pain killers, and hassles about her bill.

Mike told the hospital, "I'll pay her bill when she walks out of here."

On Jan. 12, Linda was transferred on a stretcher, by ambulance, to St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago. Evidently her doctors decided that heating pad and pain killer therapy was not going to be effective. Besides, they had to take her off the addictive pain killers.

She stayed at St. Luke's until Feb. 6, 1979, where she received physical therapy, extensive testing to find out what was wrong, and a transcutaneous nerve stimulator, a machine that short-circuits nerve endings to relieve disabling pain.

She was released, to continue as an outpatient, on Feb. 6 with an inconclusive discharge summary, able to move her legs, but still in great pain.

Why did a routine hemorrhoidectomy have such disastrous results?

In September 1977, Linda was injured on the job at GE. Moving a table of heavy parts, she hurt her back. She went to six doctors and underwent over a year of treatment for the injury. She missed 13½ months of work. This is hardly an experience in her medical history that a doctor should overlook.

Bartlett says that Kneezel, Trefzger, and Zeller should have known that with her back problem (herniated nucleus pulposus, as it was finally diagnosed at St. Luke's), a spinal anesthetic was inadvisable.

The suit says that the doctors failed to give the proper tests to "determine the existence of any abnormality... which precluded the giving of a spinal anesthetic." It says they "failed to examine the history of the plaintiff (Bartlett) so as to disclose the unavailability of the issuance of a spinal anesthetic." Bartlett says that Kneezel and Trefzger knew about her back problem, but Zeller says he didn't.



The suit also charges the anesthesiologist with failure "to properly administer a spinal anesthetic." Linda was aware that there was a problem with her anesthetic while she was on the operating table. She remembers thinking that Zeller seemed upset as he first gave her the spinal, and then (the spinal not working) fell back on a general anesthetic, even though Linda never had the routine lung capacity tests that precede a general anesthetic.

Because of her injuries, Linda has had to take a job paying one half of what she earned at GE. Because of the pain she experiences daily, she must still wear the transcutaneous nerve

stimulator. She walks slowly and painfully.

Because of the financial burden, worsened by an on-the-job injury Mike suffered and rejections by workmen's compensation, the Bartletts have had to file bankruptcy this fall. "We struggled for a year before filing," Linda said.

"It's hard for us to believe this really happened to us," said Mike.

The welfare system has not come through very well for the Bartletts either. The only way they've gotten much help at all is by continually calling government officials: the governor, Ed Madigan, and even the U.S.D.A. in Washington D.C.

It took 45 days for the Bartletts to get food stamps. More quickly, the Economic Opportunity Commission gave them a flat \$300 for winter heat bills and \$100 for food. After three months, they got \$1050 in public aid: the welfare department wants the money back after the suit comes through. Social Security denied Linda benefits, even though St. Luke's orthosurgeon Mitchell Sheinkop analyzed her as 100% disabled.

Knowing that their story deserved public awareness, the Bartletts approached the Pantagraph. After what the Bartletts considered a two-day runaround, the newspaper turned down the story, saying that they don't cover malpractice suits until after the trial. But they do. Last month, the Pantagraph ran a story on a pending malpractice suit (see Post-American, VIII NO.8, page 17).

So the Bartletts, poor and in ill health, have spent the last year and more bouncing around like steel balls in a pinball machine made up of doctors, lawyers, and bureaucratic error and red tape. Mike summarizes what they've lost along the way: "The house we were buying, our credit at the stores, and, worst of all, a good part of our self-respect."

--Phoebe Caulfield

New Age Music Showcase



On Sunday Feb. 3 New Age Music, a local musical employment group, sponsored a 12 hour music showcase at Mabel's in Champaign. The showcase was primarily organized for club owners to get a chance to view the wide range of midwest musical talent available for them to hire. The event was open to the public for a buck and the basic assumption seemed to be that this was a good excuse for a party and the objective was to have fun.

I had a great time. Mabel's has got 2 levels, carpeted and decorated very tastefully. The waitresses are wonderful.

The music started at 1 pm with my all time favorite band Kool Ray and the Polaroidz who had just pulled in from a weekend gig in Indiana. Kool Ray was followed by Cicero Slim and the WWII Blues Band. I missed this performance but I've heard good things about this band.

At 4 o'clock we heard the Spence Brothers Band, a contemporary progressive jazz band from Muncie, Ind. They were very good, I thought, but then what do I know about jazz? Mabel's was getting pretty crowded by this time and the crowd was acting rather subdued, but not for long.

Food and Money, a dance band from Springfield, followed the Spence Brothers and shook up the whole place. From the moment they got on stage they commanded the attention of everyone in the place. The lead singer who calls himself Vox Humana, or the human voice, is a master of stage theatrics as well as an energetic rock 'n roll singer. Food and Money played one hard driving rock 'n roll tune after another, featuring several original songs as well as a couple of songs written for them by Cicero Slim and the WWII Blues Band and a song called "Pretty Vacant" by the Sex Pistols. The crowd was going crazy and people were finally dancing.

I would definitely call Food and Money a "new wave" band, but as Vox Humana says, "People are as afraid of new wave as they are of anything. No one wants to be converted." Perhaps Dennis DeBoubon of New Age Music puts it in clearer terms, "You call yourself new wave and people start spitting on you and putting out cigarettes on you." Vox says while he would rather Food and Money be known as a dance band, he understands the new wave label. "People are uncomfortable if they can't label something."

While Vox Humana was the only one I talked to in depth, he is not the leader of Food and Money and is not the only talented musician. The drummer, guitarist and bass player are also really good and very entertaining. These guys look really

insane. The guitar player Johnnie No used to live here in Bloomington-Normal. I first saw him at the Gallery years ago. He joined Food and Money because he didn't know how to sell computers.

Three R & B bands and a new wave band called the Rocking Clones followed Food and Money. Hurricane Ruth, featuring Ruth LaMasters, was the last band to play. I personally didn't make it to the end. I had so much fun that I had to go home and go to bed.

The showcase itself ran very smoothly and yet everyone was very relaxed. It's no easy task to get all of a band's equipment off stage and another band's equipment on stage and set up without losing a bunch of time. The whole show was only 15 minutes off schedule.

A lot of these bands featured at the showcase play here at the Lay 2 J Saloon. Food and Money has yet to be booked here, but if you'd like to hear them, you should call New Age Music at (309)827-5481 and tell 'em. I think Bloomington needs some new sounds. We all need music, for sure. Support your local clubs that feature live

music. You may complain about high prices, but musicians and bartenders have got to eat too. If you don't support the bars that feature live music, soon you may have no where to go and no music to listen to. Think about it. Aloha.

-Susan O'Neal-

Hollywood trashes gays

WARNING to gay people: These movies will assault and attempt to degrade your positive self-concept; they may also be hazardous to your physical health.

Gay men and lesbians have finally made it into major motion pictures. Newly released are two movies which center on gay characters: Windows, about a lesbian, and Cruising, about gay men.

But before you start cheering and saving your \$3.50 for a ticket, be advised that these films reflect the sick fantasies of the straight white men who produced them. The scripts wallow in violence and depict gay people as either villains or victims.

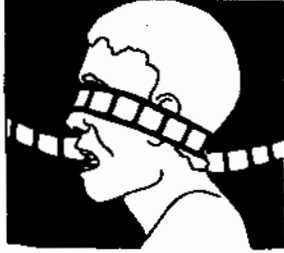
It's hard to say which film is more disgusting. Windows is based on the absurdly sick premise that a lesbian is so infatuated with her neighbor that she hires a man to rape the neighbor, presumably as a way to seduce her. The movie includes several murders, including one that has the gay woman killing her neighbor's cat and putting him in the freezer for the owner to find.

Cruising is one long series of gory killings. Its plot centers on the hunt for a "psychotic" gay killer--that is, someone who kills gay men after having sex with them; whether or not the killer himself is gay isn't clear at all.

So take your pick: a "psychotic" lesbian or a "psychotic" gay man. Some choice.

Both movies have big-name stars: Al Pacino plays the cop in Cruising, and Elizabeth Ashley is the lesbian who menaces Talia Shire in Windows. Windows opened in January and got uniformly bad reviews; apparently it's a rotten movie all the way around. It's scheduled for nationwide release sometime in March.

After a heavy ad campaign and secret preview screening, Cruising opened at 500 theaters around the country, including Champaign, Peoria, and Springfield. Reviews of this film have been slightly mixed, but almost everyone agrees that its violence is sickening.



The appearance of these exploitative films is even more enraging when you think about Hollywood's refusal to present positive images of gay people. Stereotypes, parodies, distortions abound. But a serious movie that focuses on gay characters has yet to be made by a major U.S. filmmaker.

Mother Jones recently reported that Rita Mae Brown cannot find a producer to film Rubyfruit Jungle. No one is interested in a movie about a strong, healthy, uppity lesbian. Nighthawks treats the gay bar scene in a

realistic, unsensational way. It's also a British flick that you've probably never heard of, though it did show in Boston and New York a year ago.

Since neither Windows nor Cruising has opened yet in Bloomington-Normal, several groups of concerned people have taken action to inform local theater managers of objections to these movies. ISU's Gay People's Alliance has written letters to the Kerasotes distributor and to area newspapers; arrangements are also being made to use local talk shows and other media sources to warn the public about these vicious films.

The women at Small Changes bookstore have telephoned local movie houses and are also gathering names of people interested in leafletting and picketing, should the movies come to town.

If you're interested in joining these protests, here's what you can do:

--Call the managers of local theaters and tell them not to show these films. Warn them that if they do, there will be demonstrations. Call several times. In Bloomington, contact the manager of the Irvin Theater at 829-3279.

--Get on the list to pass out leaflets and picket. Call Small Changes at 829-6223 and leave your name and number.

--Tell others and urge them to "Stop Cruising" and "Smash Windows."

--Luma and Ferdurdurke

Nationwide protests greet anti-gay movies

The movies Cruising and Windows have become rallying points for the gay community. Numerous protests against these homophobic films, both released by United Artists (UA) corporation, have taken place all over the country, from Boston to San Bernardino, from Chicago to Houston and many cities in between.

On Jan. 18, 300 protestors gathered in the pouring rain at New York's Baronet theater to demonstrate against the opening of the anti-lesbian Windows. Sixty more protested at the RKO Cinerama. They carried signs which read "Windows Reflects Heterosexual Bigotry" and "Lesbians Don't Rape Women--Men Do."

Two picketings against this same movie were held in Chicago in January. Fifty to 100 persons showed up for these rallies in front of the McClurg Court Theatre.

Since that time the movie Cruising has opened, and the protests, boycotts, and other actions have increased dramatically.

Here are some of the highlights in the ongoing struggle of lesbians and gay men to end our victimization by Hollywood:

--In Los Angeles, representatives from 30 gay and lesbian groups picketed at two theaters. They also petitioned the Motion Picture Association to change the "R" rating of Cruising to "X."

--The Boston city council voted unanimously Feb. 13 to approve a resolution critical of the violence in Cruising and urging "city residents to reject any attempts to instigate violence which may occur as a result of this film."

--50 demonstrators picketed the Transamerica Pyramid, one of San Francisco's largest buildings; United

Artists is a subsidiary of Transamerica. Protest organizers accused the corporation of widespread anti-gay bigotry, pointing out that two of its subsidiaries contributed \$2000 to John Briggs and his anti-gay Proposition 6 campaign in 1978.

--A Committee to Stop the Movie Cruising (CSMC) was formed in Chicago. A picket line and leafletting were set up on Feb. 15. CSMC organized its protest around these slogans: "End Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men" and "Fight for Gay Liberation."

--Coalitions have been formed in many large cities, with support for the gay cause coming from feminist, anti-nuke, socialist, and progressive church groups.

--The General Cinema Corp. cancelled its agreement with UA and refused to show Cruising in any of its theaters. Many other theater operators around the country moved the film from downtown locations to theaters in suburban shopping malls to discourage demonstrations. Political demonstrations are not allowed on private property like malls.

--A coalition of lesbians and gay men in Houston secured a pledge from the American Multi Cinema chain to cancel the film at its Greenway Theatre.

--75 people from various groups picketed the Feb. 4 screening of Cruising in New York City. (This was the only public media screening in the country; screenings for local theater owners and promoters were held in secret.) Some people who emerged from the screening applauded the demonstrators and shouted words of support.

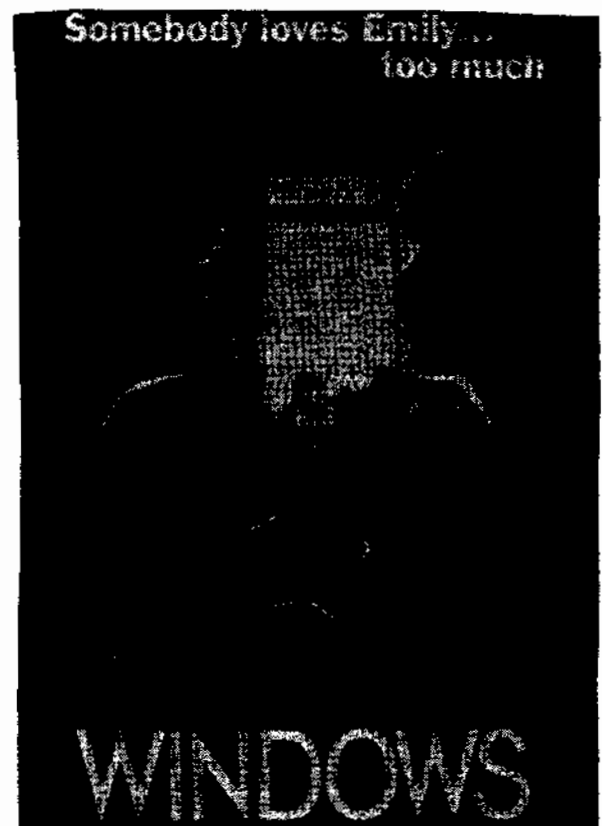
--The National Gay Task Force is sending organizing packets to local groups, and the Metropolitan Community Church of New York has used its extensive mailing list to alert gay

people across the country about the film.

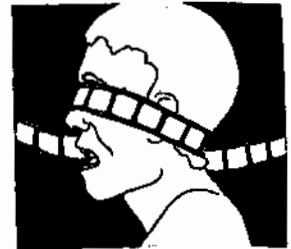
Whatever the results of these demonstrations, it's clear that gay people are no longer willing to be exploited by American filmmakers. The scope and variety of these recent protests show a strong, imaginative, determined community of gay men and lesbians standing up to the oppressors. It's a fine sight to see.

--Ferdurdurke

Sources: Gay Community News, Feb. 16, 1980; Chicago Gaylife, Feb. 15, 1980.



Cruising : A brutal, dangerous film



Cruising opens with the sighting of a severed arm floating in the Hudson River. This image is followed by more gory shots of limbs and torsos being picked over by a medical examiner.

Then, two men meet at an S&M bar called the Wolf's Den and they go to a hotel room; one of them gets tied up on a bed and is stabbed four times in the back.

These opening sequences set the limits for the movie--violence, violence, and more violence.

Cruising never gets beyond its preoccupation with blood and gore. As the plot develops, a detective (Al Pacino) poses as gay to infiltrate the leather bar scene, but the suspense of the hunt for the killer never overtakes the movie's obsession with the horrible details of the killings.

The real sorrow--the very real danger--of showing all this brutality is that it's constantly and exclusively linked to gay men and gay bars. The message is clear: gay cruising leads to murder.

William Friedkin, producer of *The French Connection* and *The Exorcist*, has plundered the gay scene for as much sensational, horrifying material as he could dig up. And that's all.

He offers no insights, no explanations, no analysis of the film's brutal scene.

This combination of heavy violence and zero understanding makes the film a vicious misrepresentation of gay sexuality. It shows violence and murder to be the usual outcome of cruising and gay-male sex. There is no gay sex in the movie that isn't

an excuse for murder, and no major gay characters who aren't either killed or killers.

The movie may well encourage physical assaults, even killings, of gay men.

Here are some of the particulars that lead me to such dire conclusions about *Cruising's* impact:

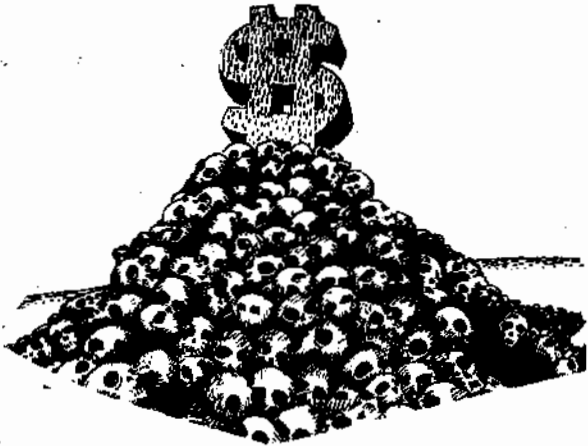
--The murders--three of them--are presented in bloody detail, all against a pulsating soundtrack of hard-driving disco music--the kind you might expect to hear in a gay bar.

--The killer is a Columbia student who, his roommate explains to police, "never got over his father's death." A box of letters, addressed to the dead father and begging for acceptance, is found in the killer's room. The cheap psychological implications of these points is uncomfortably close to the "distant father" nonsense which is routinely used to "explain" the origin of male homosexuality.

--Pacino's attitude is never clear. Several shots show him staring soulfully into the camera. Apparently he's saddened by what he finds in the gay bars. He may also be attracted and/or repelled--the movie suggests both. But none of the critics I've read can figure out how to interpret the straight character's encounter with the gay subculture.

--The film's only "respectable" gay character--the one who isn't into S&M (but his boyfriend is)--tells Pacino: "I'm scared to death of cruising," which is, after all, the movie's title.

--This same character, Ted



Bailey, has a stormy, contentious relationship with the domineering Greg. It's the stereotypical gay love affair--bitchy and unstable.

--Very little gay sex is actually shown, only gay stabbing. But there's plenty of hetero sex, always accompanied by a string quartet and set in the pleasant surroundings of Pacino's girlfriend's apartment.



This scene from *Cruising* illustrates how the movie exploits brutality and panders to anti-gay fears at the same time by depicting encounters between gay males as violent and menacing.

--The bar scenes are condescending and staged: a noisy, smoky room of alternately uniformed and seminude men; a group caressing and mouthing a nightstick, a man writhing in pain, a lot of menacing stares. Early in the film a bar patron (a victim) tells his companion (the killer), "I have ego problems and need to be worshipped and adored."

--Bailey is found murdered in his bathroom at the end of the picture. Who did it? Did Pacino "catch" the psychological disturbance from the Gay Killer he stalked? (Does just being near these awful gay men drive one to murder them?) Or did the domineering lover do it? (Are all gay men potential killers?)

The movie leaves this decision and a lot of others to the viewer's individual prejudices. Homophobes ought to have a field day.

To a public that is largely ignorant of gay life, *Cruising* is bound to feed fears and reinforce bigotry. Fortunately, it's not a good film and may well bomb at the box office. Let's hope so.

But *Cruising* continues the systematic misrepresentation of gays that Hollywood has always undertaken. Until this pattern of inciting fear and stonewalling the truth about homosexuality is broken, gay people will suffer oppression--we will be attacked and beaten and killed.

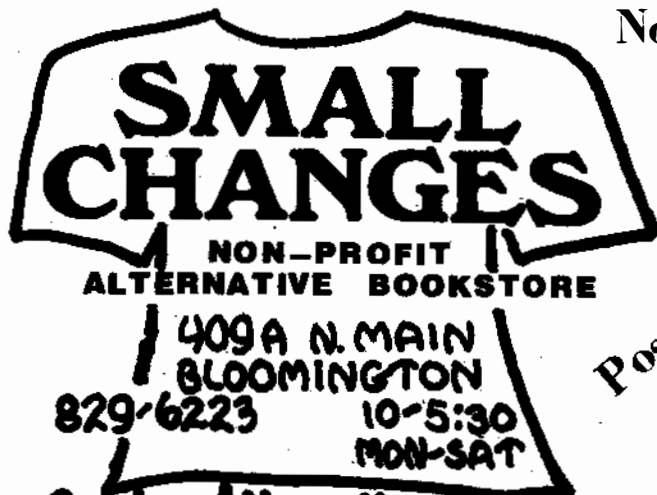
--Ferdurke

Sources: *Gay Community News*, Feb. 23, 1980; *Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 16, 1980.

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These t-shirts are all produced by non-profit social change groups, come in lots of colors, and cost \$4-6.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Illinois gay rights hearing set

A hearing on the four gay rights bills pending in the Illinois House of Representatives will be held Thursday March 6 in Chicago. Members of the Human Resources Committee will hear testimony on the need to amend present civil rights laws to include gay people.

The four bills under consideration would make it illegal to discriminate on the basis of sexual and affectional preference in the areas of general employment (bill #621), state university and college employment (#620), housing (#622), and public accommodations (#623).

Hearings on these same gay rights bills were held last year, but the committee's tie vote prevented them from being taken before the entire House. At that point, the bills were put in interim study, where they remain. The March 6 hearing begins the process to get the bills out of committee once more.

The hearing is being held at Wellington Church, 615 Wellington, in the heart of Chicago's gay district. The Illinois Gay Rights Task Force (IGRTF) sees this location as ideal, offering an opportunity for gay people to turn out in force and draw lots of media coverage.

The IGRTF is urging lesbians and gay men and their supporters throughout Illinois to attend the hearing. People from downstate will be able to be recognized or sign attendance cards, if they wish. In these ways the legislators will be shown that interest in gay rights is statewide. IGRTF hopes to get a crowd of 2000 at the hearing.

Since the four sponsors of the bills are all from Chicago, downstate support is vital, according to IGRTF. Similar gay-rights legislation reached the Illinois House in 1978, but only 38 representatives voted in favor of it (86 votes are needed for passage).

The chance for the bills to pass in the House probably isn't better this year, but IGRTF points out that the struggle for civil rights is always a long one. Getting the bills on the floor of the House will allow gay-rights supporters to take their case to a much larger audience and will provide opportunities to gather more support for future passage.

"We have to change attitudes and educate to build support," says IGRTF.

If the committee vote is unfavorable, the pending bills will be thrown out and the whole procedure for introducing the legislation will have to start all over.

Several people from Bloomington-Normal will probably be going to the hearing on March 6. If you want information about possible rides and housing arrangements (which will be available through IGRTF), call R. Jay at 828-6348. The hearing will last approximately two hours (7:30 to 9:30 pm).

--Ferdurke

Metaphysics will be explained

The Bloomington School of Metaphysics is sponsoring an educational lecture at the Normal Library March 11 at 7:30 p.m. The lecturer will explain all aspects of metaphysics. The program is free and open to the public.

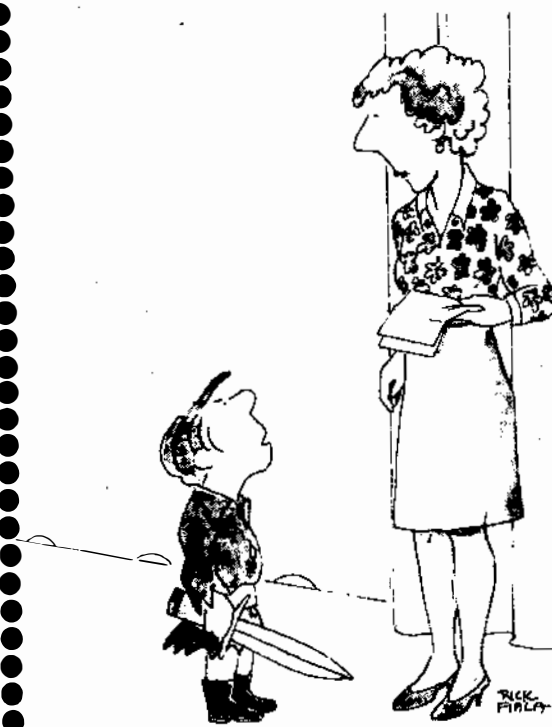
Gay theater comes to B-N

Two evenings of gay theater have been planned by ISU's Gay People's Alliance.

The Feb. 27 meeting will feature a scene from "The Killing of Sister George" and a readers' theater performance of "T-Shirts" by Robert Patrick. On March 26, the play "A Late Snow," which focuses on the lives and loves of four lesbians, will be presented in readers' theater style.

All of these productions are being directed and staged by staff and students of the university's theater department, with participation by members of GPA. The readings will begin at 8 p.m. in room 112 of Fairchild Hall.

These exciting performances may just be the beginning of an even more exciting event: the formation of a gay theater collective in central Illinois. Theater people, both gay and non-gay, have expressed interest in starting a group to perform gay-oriented drama throughout the Bloomington-Champaign Peoria area.



"Why can't we write in a gay character?"

Businesswomen unite

Peoria women have just chartered an association of women business owners. The Peoria group's objectives are to encourage ownership of businesses by women, to encourage and support women who own and operate businesses, to provide a voice for women who own and operate businesses, to foster economic stability of businesses owned by women, and to prepare women for business ownership.

The chapter provides practical information by experts in fields such as marketing, administration, operations, public relations, finance, and laws. It also provides an opportunity for women to make contacts with women business owners in the community, thereby exposing them to new business opportunities. For more information contact the chapter at 8811 N. Pioneer Rd., Peoria IL 61615, 309/692-5511. Reservations are needed for meetings.



Rape crisis center training

The Rape Crisis Center will have a volunteer training session workshop March 22 and 23. The session is free and open to anyone.

Myths about rape, the sex offender, avoidance of and resistance to attack; medical and legal aspects of rape; and the politics of rape will be among the topics discussed.

For more information, call PATH at 827-4005 and ask for the Rape Crisis Center.

Jerry Brown benefit

Students for Jerry Brown will hold a benefit Wednesday, Feb. 27, 1980, at 8 pm at the Campus Religious Center Coffeehouse, 210 W. Mulberry, Normal, featuring the Bluegrass Crackerjacks, Two Hits and a Miss, and Marita Brake. Enjoy coffee and doughnuts, too, all for a 75¢ donation.

Candidates to debate

The Central Illinois chapter of the ACLU will sponsor a debate between Ron Dozier and Charles Reynard, candidates for McLean County state's attorney, on Saturday, March 1, at 7:30 at the Unitarian Church, 1613 E. Emerson in Bloomington. A panel will present questions, and the debaters will answer questions from the floor as well. The public is invited; coffee and tea are provided. The primary is March 18.

Classy Fried Ads

Gay male student needs housing for Fall-Spring 80-81. Interested in finding 1-3 roommates and a house to share. Call Craig, c/o Gay People's Alliance, 452-5852

Two women wanted to share house on Bloomington's west side. Private bedrooms. \$150 per month covers rent, utilities, phone, and cable TV. Phone 829-9839. Cats welcome.

VIETNAM--five years of liberation! Read "Our Great Spring Victory" by PLA Chief of Staff, General Dung. Send \$5.95 (includes postage) to RECON, P.O. Box 14602, Philadelphia, PA 19134.

Judge condemns prison health care

The Illinois Department of Corrections (DOC) has failed to provide adequate medical care to prisoners, federal District Judge James Foreman ruled Feb. 19 in a far-reaching resolution of a six-year-old class action suit filed by prisoners at Menard penitentiary.

The judge blamed "inadequate or improper treatment" for the deaths of five prisoners between 1974 and 1977, according to an Associated Press story.

"The court finds a well-defined pattern of substandard medical care to inmates in Menard over a 3½ year period up to and including the time of the trial," Judge Foreman's 46-page decision said, according to the AP.

Described as a "virtual judicial takeover of health care in the Illinois prison system," Foreman's order gives a court-appointed doctor "unlimited access" to all facilities under the control of the Department of Corrections, in order to monitor the state's compliance.

For years, prisoners in the Illinois maximum-security prisons have protested, written grievances, filed lawsuits and sent letters--some printed in this newspaper--to gain improved medical care.

Testimony in the case was heard in 1977.

Menard Assistant Warden James Chrans told the AP that the conditions described in the judge's ruling no longer exist at Menard.

The suit centered on the deaths of five prisoners at Menard: Willie Graham, Kenneth Daugherty, Kurt Robinson, Chester Graves, and a man named Hansen.

Chester Graves died at Menard, Judge Foreman said, because the night shift medical technician in the prison hospital "was clearly unable to make a simple diagnosis of the classic symptoms (of pulmonary embolism) on the night of admission and a person of appropriate skill would have sent this man to a full-service hospital." (A licensed doctor apparently was not on duty during the night hours.)

Kurt Robinson died, Judge Foreman said, partly because an unlicensed medical technician at Menard gave the prisoner the wrong drug.

Kenneth Daugherty's death might have been prevented, the judge said, "if qualified personnel had been available to interpret an EKG and physical symptoms that clearly suggested the ultimate cause of death."

The judge said a defibrillator at Menard was designed for pediatric use and was inadequate for the 240-pound Hansen, whose life might have been saved if Menard had a properly sized defibrillator.

Treatment for Willie Graham's chronic asthma was "devised and carried out, for the most part, by unlicensed, untrained and unsupervised medical technicians and inmates," Judge Foreman's order said. For Graham's asthma attack on June 15, 1975, the prisoner was given a drug when only a mechanical ventilator would have saved him, the judge said. The prisoner was transferred to the segregation unit, and he died within hours.

Judge Foreman based his decision on testimony by doctors.

--M.S.

More Pontiac trials scheduled

With their first conviction under their belt, the special prosecution team is ready to move full speed ahead with their plan to make 31 black and Latin men take the rap for the Pontiac Rebellion.

The next trial is scheduled to begin Feb. 25 in Peoria. The defendant in this case is Robert Tosado, charged with burglary. Following this trial John Lee and Lamont Richards will be tried for two counts of aggravated battery, one count of mob action and three counts of armed violence. This trial will begin on March 10 here in McLean County.

Supposedly Lee and Richards, both black men, assaulted a white female with milk crates. Because the guard is a white woman, there is definitely the possibility for the prosecution to stir up some racist reaction in the jury to the myth that "all black men want to do is rape white women."

From what I know of the case, most of the evidence is hearsay. Inmates say they heard John Lee say he hit

the guard with a milk crate. The guard has never pretended to be able to identify her attackers. Maybe, "all those black folks look alike."

In Chicago the pretrial motions for the 17 black men charged with the murder of the three guards are progressing at a slow pace, which is advantageous to the defense. The State has been delinquent in providing information to the defense in all of these Pontiac cases.

Public support for the Pontiac 31 can make a difference in the outcome of

these trials. The fourteen men being tried for the non-capital charges are all being tried downstate, away from family and friends. That is why community support here in McLean County is very important. If you would like to learn more about the case, write letters of support, show the slideshow about the rebellion or keep up on the trials in general, call Small Changes Bookstore at 829-6223. You can also get "Free The Pontiac Brothers" T-shirts for \$6 at Small Changes. Proceeds go to the Pontiac Prisoners Support Coalition.

--Susan O'Neal

Pontiac trials

Perez, Santiago Verdict Given

After deliberating for nearly eight hours, a McLean County jury found Luis Perez and Manuel Santiago not guilty of aggravated battery but guilty of battery (a misdemeanor) and mob action. This trial was the first of several trials on charges stemming from an IDLE (Illinois Department of Law Enforcement) investigation of the Pontiac Rebellion in July 1978. (See past several issues of the Post for more information.)

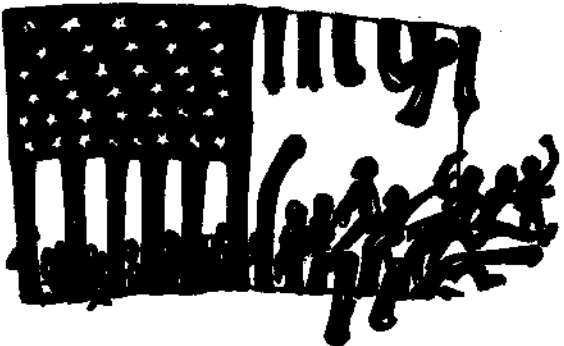
Although the defense was pessimistic from the start about getting a fair trial in McLean County, defense lawyer Buddy Clark said afterwards that he was pleased with the jury and that he didn't think he could have found an equally fair jury in Cook County, the place that the defense had requested

the trial be moved to.

Pontiac Prisoners Support Coalition reports that when the jury first went out, after hearing all of the evidence, they voted 11-1 for acquittal on all charges. Evidently, that one person convinced the others to go along with him. I find that amazing. I say "him" because I'm sure it had to have been a man.

Perez and Santiago are scheduled for sentencing on March 3 at 10 am at the Law and Justice Center in Bloomington. They would like to thank everyone for their support.

--Susan O'Neal-



In bus fire rescue efforts:

Guards "did one hell of a job," DOC pretends

Prison guards and firemen trying to rescue prisoners trapped in a smoke-filled transport bus Nov. 29 "did one hell of a job," a Department of Corrections (DOC) report claimed, while the Department's Assistant Director Michael Lane defended using the handcuffs and chains which made a safe and speedy evacuation impossible.

Of the 35 prisoners trapped on the burning bus, one died and many were very seriously injured, some spending months in the hospital.

Nineteen of the prisoners wrote to the Post-Amerikan, which published a five-page story on the fire last issue. Four weeks later, the Daily Pantagraph printed a major story on the fire, which included results of investigations and DOC officials' denials of negligence.

Prisoners writing to the Post-Amerikan blamed their injuries on guards' negligence and incompetence, plus the DOC's standard security procedures for transporting prisoners.

A long chain on each side of the bus connected eight or nine pairs of prisoners who were handcuffed to each other. Although many prisoners reported that the chains were also fastened in some way to the bus itself, the DOC denies this. Even after prisoners managed to yank the chain free from its mooring, panicking prisoners became entangled trying to escape the smoke-filled bus.

Prisoners wrote that a guard--identified in the Pantagraph as John Tipton--panicked, left the bus, and tried to shut the prisoners inside. Two prisoners who managed to get to the door reported that Tipton actually pushed them back onto the bus, saying he didn't have the authority to release them. Denying this, Tipton told the Pantagraph that prisoners pushed him off the bus.

Although DOC spokesperson A.M. Monahan told the Pantagraph that guards and firemen did "one hell

of a job," prisoners reported that guards stood around "dumbfounded," not knowing what to do, and delayed an agonizingly long time before trying to break bus windows to let oxygen into the passenger compartment.

The Pantagraph confirmed earlier prisoners' reports that firemen and paramedics took 30 minutes to arrive. After using axes to open the roof's emergency exit (which had been bolted shut as a security measure), firemen sprayed all the unconscious prisoners with water hoses. The soaking in the cold November air aggravated medical complications, giving at least one prisoner pneumonia.

The soaking, guard John Tipton told the Pantagraph, "was a mixup. They thought they were spraying oxygen, not water."

According to the Feb. 14 Pantagraph story, Assistant Director of Corrections Michael Lane still sticks to his story that "about half the prisoners were taken off the bus in an orderly manner."

To anyone reading prisoners' accounts of that "orderly" retreat, Lane's description is a macabre joke.

The only thing "orderly" about the evacuation of the first batch of prisoners is that most--but not all--were still conscious as they tripped, fell, tangled and untangled, crawled, yanked, jerked, twisted, trampled or were dragged--screaming, coughing, vomiting, choking and blind from the smoke--to the doorway, where officers eventually cut or unlocked their handcuffs.

Two prisoners have already sued the Department of Corrections; lots more suits are expected.

McLean County resident Daniel Hines was one of the most seriously injured prisoners. Still hospitalized three months after the fire, Hines says his doctor concluded his lung damage is permanent, preventing lifting or any strenuous activity.

--Mark Silverstein



Life-endangering chains not always used for transport

Last issue's Post-Amerikan blamed the Department of Corrections' standard security procedures for transporting prisoners--chains and handcuffs--for preventing the swift and safe evacuation of a transport bus which caught fire at Vandalia Correctional Center Nov. 29.

DOC officials maintain that the barred windows, handcuffs and chains are necessary to protect the public and prevent escapes. But these supposedly essential security provisions are not used when prisoners are bussed from Cook County Jail to the DOC reception center at Joliet, according to Jeannette Musengo, director of the Illinois Prisons and Jails Project.

One prisoner died and many more were very seriously injured in the Nov. 29 tragedy.

Prisoners writing to the Post-Amerikan said long chains on each side of the DOC bus connected eight or nine pairs of prisoners, who were handcuffed to each other. In addition, prisoners reported, the chains were somehow fastened to the bus itself.

Even after they yanked the chain free from its mooring, prisoners became hopelessly entangled as panic and thick toxic smoke filled the bus.

An Associated Press story shortly after the accident said DOC officials would review their policies for transporting prisoners. But a Feb. 14 Pantagraph story quotes DOC officials defending the chains' use to prevent prisoners from escaping.

Sixty per cent of the state's prisoners are sentenced from Cook County. Each week a busload of prisoners--handcuffed in pairs, but not further encumbered by chains--drives from Chicago to the DOC reception center at Joliet, Jeanette Musengo told the Post-Amerikan. The DOC's paranoid concern for security--carried out to the point where it endangers the lives of prisoners--is apparently not shared by the Cook County sheriff, who is in charge of transporting prisoners from Chicago to Joliet.

If the Nov. 29 bus fire had occurred between Chicago and Joliet, prisoners could have evacuated the bus quickly and safely.

--M.S.



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Exxon's boss to present wonders of corporate exploitation

Howard Kauffman, the president of Exxon, seems to think McLean County residents will honor his presence at the McLean Co. Association of Commerce and Industry banquet, which is being held in Illinois State University's Ballroom March 11.

The audacity of this profit-oriented individual amazes me! Does he really think we want to hear his rap on energy and international economics?

I wonder if he'll discuss the excessive profits his multinational corporation has reaped from U.S. citizens, as well as those in other countries?

I wonder if he'll tell us how, within the last quarter, Exxon, which is not only the largest oil company, but also the largest corporation, increased their profits by 60%.

I wonder if he'll admit that the reason Exxon will not allow gasahol to be purchased on a charge account is that its

profits would not be as excessive for gasahol as they are for gasoline?

Something tells me Mister Kauffman won't discuss any of the above. After all, if he did, the public would realize Exxon's true role in the field of energy and international economics, which is to increase its profits at any expense to the public.

It's more likely that Mister Kauffman will claim that because of Exxon's great technological developments, we are still able to purchase gasoline and oil. Although gasoline is more than a dollar a gallon, he may claim that's the price we must pay for affluence.

I would never venture to guess that in his discussion, Mister Kauffman will neglect to mention the affluence Exxon's corporate managers and stockholders have gained through its excessive profits.

Does he expect McLean County residents to "honor" his presence because of his expertise in ripping off those of us who must depend on his corporation's oil resources?

I think we should attend his presentation and voice our disgust at Exxon's exploitative tactics.

Although there is a fee of \$12 per person for the banquet, the return on telling Kauffman how we really feel could be much greater.

If you don't wish to attend the banquet, there's nothing to stop you from congregating outside the ballroom to show him that you don't support Exxon's profiting from your pocketbook.

--M. M.

Bogus charges appearing on phone bills

A Gen Tel service representative admitted today that I was not responsible for the one dozen 50-cent calls on my bill listed as "LOCAL CHARGE." Mrs. Carney of the business office said that there was some sort of problem with the computer. I got to deduct \$6.38 from my bill.

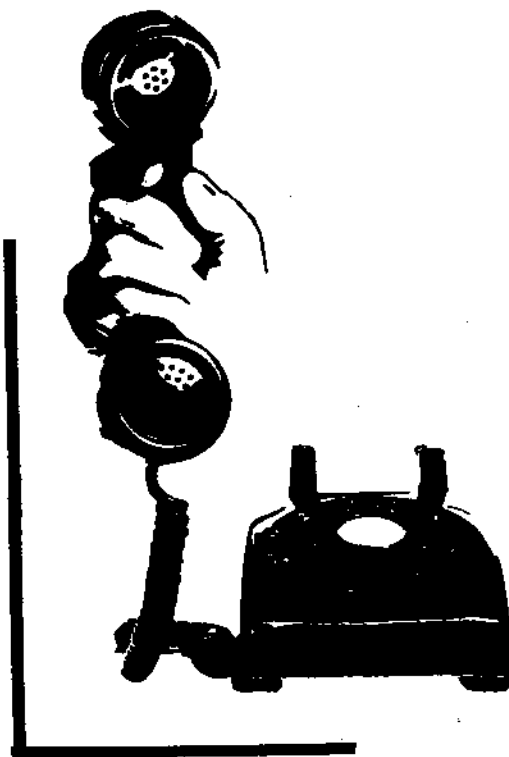
"Believe me, you're not the only one this has happened to," Mrs. Carney told me. I remembered that I had fought two similar charges on my bill last month.

Although it is listed like a toll call, the local charge bills people who use the operator to make a connection on a local call.

I knew I hadn't used the operator unless something was malfunctioning, and I'm not supposed to get billed for that. And I know I hadn't used the operator more than once, if at all.

When I asked Mrs. Carney if I'd have saved the \$6.38 if I hadn't called Gen Tel, she said no.

Even though Mrs. Carney admits the problem of bogus charges for "local charge" is widespread, she didn't know of any Gen Tel plan to search the records and notify people who'd been illegitimately billed.



Since a lot of folks are too busy, especially during Gen Tel business hours, to bother to fight a few bogus charges, the phone company could make a lot of money from its computer mistake.

Mrs. Carney said I should talk to Ellis Corso, operations director, if I wanted to insist that the phone company search their records and notify customers of phony charges.

Corso said he didn't even know about the problem but assured me that if it were widespread, then surely the company would be searching its records.

When I asked about notifying customers of bogus charges, Corso said the company had to take into account the cost of notification. He said the company relied on customers to call about bogus charges.

"Of course if the problem is widespread. . .," Corso qualified.

The problem is widespread, I pointed out--the service rep had told me so.

I told Corso the company could make a lot of money adding bogus charges that many people would pay without question because it was too much trouble to bother calling up.

"A company that did that wouldn't be in business long," Corso said.

Yeah, right. The customers would patronize the other phone company in town.

--M. S.