

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1981 \$2.00 (Can) \$2.00 (U.S.)

VANCOUVER LESBIANS AGAINST THE RIGHT
CORRIDART
AND THE JUDGE

FUSE

BUSINESS AND CULTURE

a shot in the arm
or a shot
in the
head?

Imperial Oil
net profits
(1980):
\$601 million

CHARLOTTETOWN (CP) — The arts should be subject to the same risks and rewards of the marketplace as business. William Young, a senior vice-president of Imperial Oil Ltd., said in a speech here.

\$175,000
per annum

He said some individuals and organisations have come to regard government subsidies as a divine right.

self-subsidy!

\$9,000
per annum

"I think that artists have to take their chances in the marketplace the same way that businessmen have to take their chances in the marketplace," he said.

exclusive control

"Some of them deserve to go broke for the same reason that companies go broke — they produce inferior products and services."

To what?

Tax
write-off

Young said Imperial Oil will spend about \$1 million this year in support of the arts.

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by EXXON (U.S.)
1980 net profits
\$5.6 Billion

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FUSE

INFORMATION/DIFFUSION

ARTEXTE

August/September 1981
Volume V, Number 6&7



The 'Last Supper'?

Ric Amis

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Ric Amis

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Pointed shoes

When I get enough money from my art I am going to buy a pair of pointed shoes. My whole self dizzies when I try to read stuff like Laura K's 'Aesthetic Careerism'. (FUSE, March/April, 1981). Actually I am not as hot a shot as Laura had me to be. While I was attending NSCAD I did meet some heavies, but the point is I never even heard of Michael Asher. But when people said he did this piece at the Clock Tower in NYC I looked him up and was surprised to find out he was Robert Irwin's half brother. The main point of this letter is — I was not quoting an Asher work with the work Fresh Air. It is true that in some of my earlier work I have quoted other Artworks by other Artists.

J.M. Goss
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Protest this arrest

I have received some very serious mail from a mail art friend in California, U.S.A., Geoffrey Cook. He passed on to me information concerning a fellow mail artist in El Salvador. The information has been confirmed by Amnesty International and his case has been taken up by Amnesty International (AI).

On January 9, 1981, Salvadorian army soldiers from the 'Brigado de Cuartel San Carlos' raided the offices of the Publications Department of the Ministry of Education in the city of Mejicanos in San Salvador. They arrested the Director of Publications and General Manager, Jesus Romero Galdamez, and seven of his staff. There is serious concern for the safety of these people as it is believed that they are being tortured and may already be dead. Jesus is a mail artist/correspondence artist who has participated in many exhibitions and projects throughout the world from Italy to Australia. These people never engaged in, or promoted, violence — yet they are the victims of violence.

During 1980, approximately 8,000 Salvadorians have died by violence, most of them executed by government security forces, and these are civilians, not combatants in the El Salvador Civil War. Their crimes have been their associations or alleged associations with peasant, labour or religious organizations; or with political parties that do not support the military junta. This same junta was responsible for the rape/mutilation/murder of three nuns and a lay missionary in December, 1980.

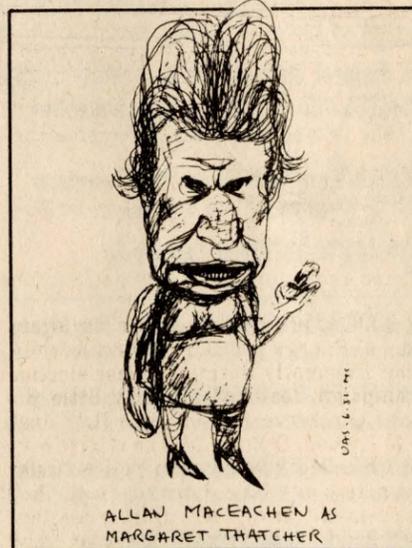
Jesus and his staff are being held incommunicado, without legal counsel, without a criminal charge against them

and without a trial. Concerned artists and humanitarians should send letters of protest to their Federal M.P. and ask that he make enquiries through the External Affairs Department as to the whereabouts of Jesus and his staff, and protest their arrest. It is only through world wide public pressure that the junta can be forced, through embarrassment, to release these artists. Appeals from publishers, journalists and teachers are particularly helpful.

This letter could be the most important letter you ever write, it could save a life.

M. Duquette
Toronto, Ont.

The Missing: Jesus Romero Galdamez, Romeo Moreira, Otto Jaime Portillo, Encarnacion, Ricardo Alfonso Martinez, Carlos Mauricio Hernandez, Alfredo Campos, Ana Ester Valdez.



Einstein's Children

Tony Whitfield's thoughtful review of Einstein's Children (FUSE, March/April, 1981) was totally sympathetic to our intentions. It was gratifying to be so well understood. Please extend to him our belated but sincere thanks.

Judy Graf Klein
New York, N.Y.

Television delivery

Tom Sherman's article (FUSE March/April 1981) contains a lot of information which should be assessed in terms of its communication potential. It should also be clarified.

Tom says that "video technology should not be wastefully programmed and displayed as a utility rendered

beautifully useless". He incorrectly assumes that art has something to do with beauty. He also assumes that because television and artists' video share "video technology", the two are the same. Not so. Television is the delivery system. Video is program content. Television delivers the often wasteful stuff we know as tv programs. It can also successfully deliver video. 21 inches of video do *not* become 21 inches of television, however. Poetry on a page is not the same as the page of a magazine. Let's keep the terms clear.

Tom assumes that video artists and television artists — let's call them television producers — do the same thing. They do not. Television producers package known ideas for mass audiences. Video artists rearrange our thoughts and redefine how we experience them. Sometimes the redefinition looks like painting and sometimes it looks like traditional television programming. Let's be clear about the distinction, however. Television producers cannot challenge how we experience information. Video artists must. It is retrograde to evaluate video "relative to successful (tv) industry applications".

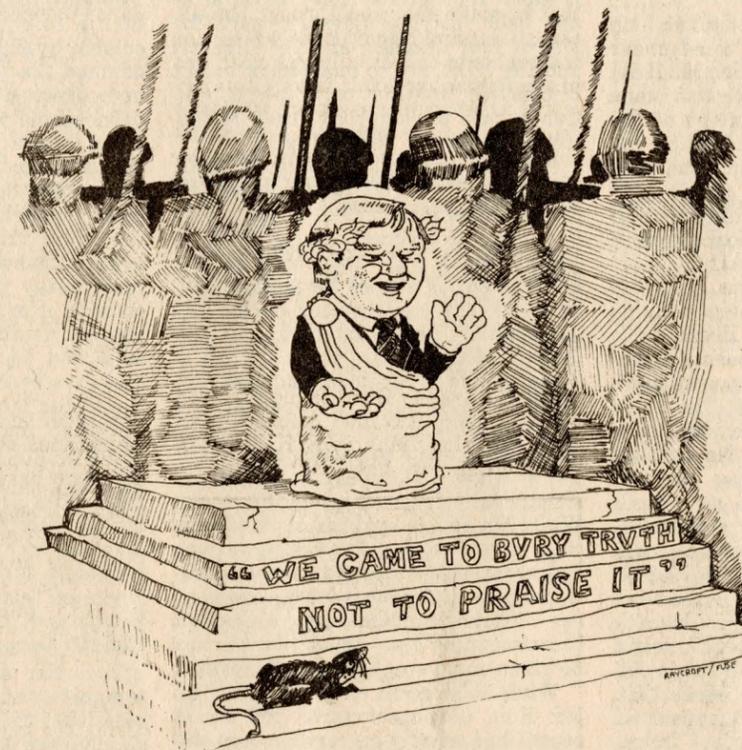
Tom goes further. He says that video artists should avail themselves of what he calls a "communications aesthetic". Using the medium properly appears to mean using the spoken word in combination with orthodox camera work. This is neither logical nor useful advice.

Tom appears to hate the borrowed and boring fine art aesthetic but wants video artists to adopt an equally borrowed and boring television program aesthetic. This is no improvement on the updated "arcane cultural ritual" which we agree tries to pass as good video. Artists may not have had their hands on the medium first, but so what. They are still free to use the medium in their own ways — and some are doing so.

Where does this leave artists' video? I hope not where it is now, left to small in-the-know audiences. Tom is right when he says that artists' video can and should be widely circulated through art galleries, libraries, closed circuit systems, and on television. I personally see the television connection as the most exciting, but only if artists' video offers more than the same old stuff. The important collaboration between video artists and television producers could improve both video art and television programming. This can happen, however, only if video artists and television producers clearly understand their own unique relationship, and responsibility, to the medium.

Jane Wright
Oakville, Ont.

The Decline and Faults of Ontario's Empire



Two things are important in viewing the current wrangles that the cultural community is having with the Ontario Censor Board and the recent announcement by Gordon Walker, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Relations, of proposed changes to the Censor Board and the Theatres Act. First consider that 1983 will be the 40th anniversary of Conservative government in the province of Ontario. As this year's election saw a Conservative majority returned to power, this milestone will no doubt be reached, and when it happens, it will probably be a record for longevity among democratically elected governments.

Second, consider how this 40 year record has been achieved. One way to look at this long run is to say that the people of Ontario *want* to be governed by the Conservatives. It makes them feel safe. But another view is that the people of the province pay, through their taxes, for their own indoctrination via government advertising which tells them in many ways, some overt and some hidden, that it is looking after their interests.

The Ontario government is currently the sixth largest advertiser in Canada, spending more than \$17 million last

year. One prominent ad from the Ministry of Energy which, not coincidentally, ran frequently during the last election campaign, featured a catchy little jingle: "Preserve it. Conserve it. 'Cause life is good, Ontario." So as the citizens were being reminded to pull on their sweaters and turn down the heat, they also might have been getting another message — don't rock the boat. And most of the citizens can, of course, remember when Ontario was the rich and powerful province of Canada. It's very recent history. Many hope for at least a partial return to this former status. They took this hope to the polling station and this year, as in past election years, the Big Blue Machine cleaned up.

So where does morality (and its concomitant censorship) come into the provincial picture? It was and still is a matter of political expediency. Governments gain support when seen to be upholding the morals of their constituents. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, many cities, states and provinces introduced the first pieces of legislation which set out procedures for prior censorship. These laws were directed at the new medium of motion pictures, which, at the time, were considered by some to be not only

the embodiment but the *source* of immorality. The Ontario Board of Censors rode in on this wave in 1911. And it's been with us ever since, with modifications and 'modernizations', all undertaken after auguring public attitudes for change as to what is acceptable.

The Ides of March

The present Conservative government, of course, reads the tea-leaves by poll, again at the citizen's expense. In 1979, the provincial government spent \$434,312 for various public opinion polls, including the infamous one on censorship. Using this poll (A Survey of Public Opinion, 1979), which indicated that 69 per cent of the province favoured censorship of film, the government tried to weather the controversy around the Censor Board's actions on The Tin Drum, Pretty Baby, and Luna. The irony here is that not only are Ontario residents underwriting a subliminal ad campaign encouraging them to maintain the status quo, they are subsidizing their own 'democracy by market research'.

At this point, we all know that this particular public opinion poll was not

Brent Raycroft

very general in its "public." It was revealed that the majority of the 1,020 respondents were infrequent or non-movie goers. No doubt, the government's intention was to slant the slim figures in order to support the already existing institution of censorship in the province.

There is also no doubt that this poll would probably not have come under such scrutiny had not the then-Minister, Frank Drea, drawn attention to it while trying to shore up the actions of the Censor Board and take the heat off the government. And Walker, the new Centurion, is following in Drea's footsteps, again quoting this dubious survey when making his announcement of 'changes' to the Theatres Act.

The 'changes' Walker has proposed are nothing more than a new hemline sent down the runway to distract the Toronto press which has been actively engaged in what is every politician's nightmare — a media war. The press has been pursuing the Censor Board since early spring when the cultural community began providing concrete examples of the liberal newsman's favourite axe to grind — censorship. Articles, news stories, interviews, editorials and columns have kept the activities of the Censor Board in the news which, of course, is exactly what the provincial government doesn't want. Because, as has often been pointed out, censorship is one of those issues that, like prison reform, doesn't appear on any politician's current agenda — unless there's a crisis. How successful the Conservative government in Ontario has been in deflecting criticism of the Censor Board's activities over the last 15 years is, at least in part, a grim tribute to an effective party machine.

The relative freedom from crisis or criticism enjoyed during the first 50 years of the Censor Board in Ontario was as much a result of the total secrecy in which it operated as it was evidence of general public support. The public in fact had little idea of what was being done. Having been told by the religious and moral leaders of the time that censorship of motion pictures was necessary, they agreed in principle, despite their substantial consumer support for the movie industry at the box office.

Playing Caesar's part

But the last 15 years have been slightly different. Although some of the opposition to censorship in general and the Censor Board in particular is undoubtedly a result of a shift in social values, another factor is at work. And that is exposure. As the media, consumer groups, citizens' groups and others who oppose the government's policies conduct zealous investigations into public institutions (and private business), poli-

cies and actions which formerly were hidden are revealed in greater and greater detail. Often the result is public outcry, sometimes with the support of the media. When this happens, the Conservatives either 'hang tough' or appear to make concessions, whichever is more appropriate. They have, after all, been playing Caesar's part for almost four decades, and the Liberals and the NDP, not so much inept as out of practice, find that organized opposition is hard to mount. But they do continue to throw in the odd spear.

A recent example: on July 30, 1981, Liberal MPP Patrick Reid accused the Conservative government of using public money to finance opinion polls on energy which were then used by the government as a basis for making policy on energy conservation during the last election. Reid pointed at a very effective election-year strategy. As a demographic breakdown was also provided by these surveys on energy, the government was able to direct specific policy statements to particular areas of the province and appear to be responsive to many different groups of people. While Mr. Reid's analysis of this particular use of polls by the Conservatives was accurate, he stopped short of questioning the entire basis for government use of public opinion surveys, instead recommending that opposition parties be given equal access to survey results.

While this recent example raised by Mr. Reid of Conservative poll abuse seems bad enough, a further convolution is possible. Consider the slanted opinion poll on censorship as an example. When determining a position on 'moral' issues, it is more convenient for government if the policy comes first and then the poll. In this way, questions can be carefully constructed to help the government avoid future discussion of any issues which might be 'touchy'. Then when the poll results are released to back up a government position, as in the 1979 poll indicating apparent support for censorship, the government's acts are doubly re-inforced. Not only are they 'just doing what we're told', but the fixed poll can also be used to discourage any opposition. Who wants to argue with "69 per cent of the people of Ontario" anyway? This would be a particularly effective tactic to use in areas such as gay rights, ethnic and minority rights or abortion, all areas where public pressure reaches the government from both sides.

Despite the widespread knowledge that this poll on censorship was not accurate, it would be difficult to say that the Conservative's use of the poll has been a complete failure. They have, after all, never campaigned on a platform of sensitivity. They just do what's necessary. And at crisis points, what's necessary is to buy time until things cool off in the media.

Divide and conquer

If the Minister hoped to get some good press out of the proposed 'changes' to the process of censoring he put forward in June, he was less than successful. Two editorials (both the Globe and the Star in Toronto) plus a full-page opinion column by Jay Scott in the Globe, condemned the proposal as crass political maneuvering. But critics aside, the proposal did offer space for Walker and Head Censor, Mary Brown, to take the offensive in print again, explaining rather than defending themselves. And given enough opportunities like that, the whole thing could blow over once again. Meanwhile, within the bureaucracy-heavy Censor Board, work goes on with prior censorship continuing unabated. As for the skirmishes with the arts and cultural community, court cases are proceeding where the Censor Board has initiated the action (against Canadian Images), but compromise is being sought by the Board itself where the cases have been filed against its actions (The Funnel). And Mary Brown herself continues to exploit everyone involved with her own propositions and proposals, letters and phone calls, and when all else fails, luncheon dates. Divide and there won't be any opposition left to conquer is the strategy.

For the cultural community, the temptation now is to take the romantic view that their work has been/will be singled out by the Censor Board because it is particularly 'dangerous' or threatening, because it is experimental or 'new' or important. This must be resisted. We have simply gotten in the way of an already existing piece of legislation. The Theatres Act and its offspring, the Censor Board, will stay in place until such time as the government in power decides it is politically expedient to change it. This fall, Gordon Walker will be introducing the Theatres Act into the Legislature for amendments including the establishment of an appeal process. The possibility for any other substantial change to the Act depends on how much pressure is placed on the Minister and how much persuasive information is supplied to the opposition parties.

As important as the issue of censorship is, something more vital and ultimately more dangerous has surfaced through the fracas — the manipulation of public opinion polls. The Conservative government has used both tax-sponsored polls and advertising for their own political ends. These must be removed from their direct control. Until this happens, the Conservative government will remain what it has recently been revealed to be — its own principal lobbying force, manipulating where it cannot silence any who are opposed to its policies. □

Business As Usual?



Clive Robertson

The Art Gallery of Ontario has been consistently criticised by contemporary artists, historians and the AGO's service personnel for management policies that would be more appropriate if the AGO was a private retreat for wealthy yachtsmen. In January of this year John Marshall (Globe & Mail) assembled an impressive list of 'charges' that demonstrate the exclusive and protected nature of Toronto's well-endowed club:

- Fear of any democratic representation, including open board meetings.
- The sale of 14 different classes of tax deductible titles "to arouse sentiments of noblesse oblige (within the affluent sector)."
- Extensive conflicts of interest for trustee-collectors.
- Extensive conflicts for trustees also involved in printing and advertising, car rental and large chain retail companies.
- Corporate and business control of the AGO was anticipated and provided for in the construction of the organisation's constitution.

As the Board of Trustees appears to be pushing the AGO further and further into the private sector, will their \$5 million a year in public funding soon not be necessary?

To entice additional sponsorship from corporations, new projects have been initiated that seduced large audiences, the invitation being re-enforced by newspaper "art history" supplements, radio and TV saturation of the latest security ploys and playthings that will deter the less affluent from stealing the 'treasures from the past.' Status and corporate goodwill has come from the sponsoring of such exhibits as "Van Gogh and the Birth of Cloisonism" (The Weston Group) and "Jock Macdonald: The Inner Landscape" (Teleglobe Canada)

In the AGO's brief to the Applebaum-Hébert Commission, the 'club' stressed the importance of community ser-

vice: "The Art Gallery serves the province in a number of ways, primarily through the various programmes and services of its Extension and Education branches."

But on May 27th, 1981, the AGO showed just how important these programs were. Responding quickly to Reuben Baetz' (Ontario Minister of Culture and Recreation) announcement the previous day of a 7.9 per cent increase in the Gallery's funding instead of the expected 25 per cent increase, the Art Gallery of Ontario immediately announced layoffs and cuts in programming, and the Education and Extension Services were among the first to be 'trimmed'.

AGO Director, William Withrow, stated in a press release announcing the Gallery's cuts that "(Quite) obviously we are in a period of retrenchment." Translated in concrete terms, this "period of retrenchment" eliminates programs devoted to contemporary and alternative art and community access. School tours, for example, have been cut back 25 per cent, effectively shutting the Gallery's door on 10,000 school children; studio art classes for school children face comparable cutbacks; the Gallery's reference library will be open only to those non-staff users who hold academic affiliations and on an appointment-only basis.

Private sector mentality

The control exercised over the AGO by the corporate presence on its Board of Trustees is beginning to fully reveal itself. To avoid the 'embarrassment' of going into deficit (and possible government intervention which this might provoke), Withrow's press release says, "The Gallery has never had a deficit in its 81 year history", feigning ignorance of the fact that most public institutions operate with deficits.

Added to this 'private-sector' mentality is the recent history of labour relations at the AGO which shows another characteristic of private business in operation, as Gallery management has systematically eliminated the bargaining power of Local 535 of the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union (OPSEU).

During two organising drives which brought AGO management directly in conflict with the provincial labour laws, Gallery management set a pattern of harassment and intimidation against its own employees. During the successful OPSEU campaign conducted in 1979, the AGO management was found guilty of five separate charges of unfair labour practices which implicated department and branch heads throughout the institution.

Yet even after Local 535's ratification in December 1979, the harassment of some union activists continued and discrimination against union employees

was fairly common. It came as no surprise then that the latest layoffs announced May 27th, affected 13 bargaining unit positions with Local 535.

Inco at the AGO

With these new layoffs, which brings about a total elimination of 38 public service jobs within twelve months, Local 535 has been reduced to nearly half of its original numbers. In contrast, the number of management positions — largely overseen by a Chief of Administration whose previous employment was with INCO as a labour-management relations specialist — has suffered no significant decrease or attrition. Neither, it should be noted, has the powerful Volunteer Committee, with its network of corporate connections and personal ties to the Board of Trustees.

Film programmer, Margaret Cooper was among those laid-off on May 27th. She offered that, "Cuts in these areas are consistent with the Gallery's management attitudes towards public programs. They can best be described as ambivalent, even schizophrenic. On the one hand, public programs in media and performance arts have been essential, on the other, peripheral. In other words, public programs are needed to attract the public — and frequently, the only public to be found in the Gallery on a Thursday night — was at a film or performance program. At the same time, the official view for years has been one which felt that to attract the public, the programs need only exist — without, as it were, any distinguishing characteristics that might capture the public imagination. Apparently Gallery management now believes it is no longer necessary to attract the people who were served by those programs. The May 27th moves by the Gallery management effectively closed the doors to this public."

Gillian Robinson

In Us We Trust

In response to the mounting dissatisfaction with the ways in which the Metro Toronto Police Complaint Bureau handles allegations of police harassment or brutality, (see FUSE May/June 1981) a coalition called C.I.R.P.A. (Citizens' Independent Review of Police Actions) has been organized to act as an alternative to the official grievance process.

C.I.R.P.A.'s main aims will be to investigate allegations of police misconduct and to help people pursue those allegations through the most responsive channels, i.e., complaining directly to the Police Commission at one of its public meetings or initiating an action in Small Claims Court. C.I.R.P.A. also in-

Film Censorship worldwide

Index on Censorship 4/81 is a special issue on film censorship. It will focus on:

- South Africa** — the local situation and the work of its exiled film-makers;
- Egypt** — a profile of *Youssef Chahine*;
- Senegal** — extract from *Sembene Ousmane's* banned film 'Ceddo';
- Argentina** — an account of extreme censorship;
- Bolivia** — the dangers facing film-makers;
- UK** — censorship past and present;
- USSR** — Anatoly Kuznetsov's battle with the authorities + list of 50 suppressed films;
- France** — political censorship today;
- USA** — the power of the distributors and producers;
- India** — erratic censorship;
- Pakistan** — an interview with *Jamil Dehlavi*;
- China** — the cinema since 1949

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tends to: publish statistics on the number and nature of complaints against police; press for reforms that would ensure fair treatment to both sides; conduct research into the organization and conduct of Metro Toronto police force; give such information to sympathetic groups and individuals; and to initiate, intervene in, and sponsor litigation where it is necessary.

According to David White, one of the nine aldermen who have endorsed C.I.R.P.A., the organization is committed to "improving police-community relations; not undermining them."

But Philip Givens, chairman of the Metro Toronto Board of Police Commissioners, does not seem to want to hear of any such improvement. In a predictable outburst of hostility towards affirmative action groups, Givens was quoted in the *Globe & Mail* of July 14 as saying that C.I.R.P.A. was "encouraging a system of espionage and sabotage on law enforcement officers who are sworn to uphold the law." He went on to criticize the coalition by claiming, "They're always groups upon groups, and when you look into them you find they can hold their meetings in a telephone booth."

Alderman White responded to Givens' demeaning slur by pointing out that it was "indicative of the ways in which Givens and the Police Commission are completely isolated from the rest of the community." He added that the Commission members are afraid of any group that might upset the status quo of the present system for investigating complaints. And since C.I.R.P.A. is advising complainants to avoid approaching the Police Complaint Bureau (in order to save them from being charged with public mischief if their complaint is deemed to be "unsubstantiated"), C.I.R.P.A. is sure to lock horns with the Police Commission over the issue of citizens using "improper" channels of judicial recourse.

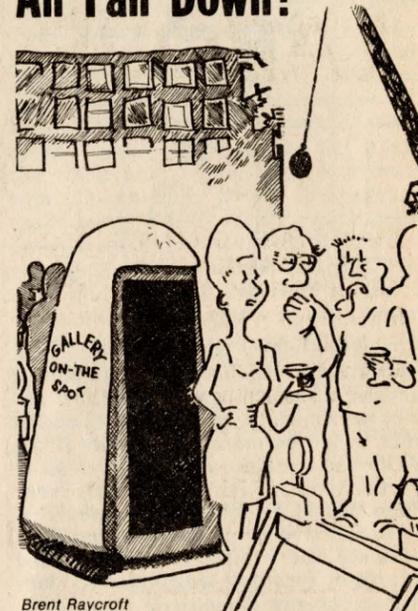
James Dunn

(Ed. note) One week after C.I.R.P.A. announced its formation, Ontario Solicitor-General Roy McMurtry announced that the province would go ahead with its plans to establish its version of a civilian review board to investigate complaints against Metro Police. Earlier, McMurtry had postponed the organization of such a board after his legislation had failed to gain final approval from the Ontario Legislature before it recessed for the summer. His latest move means that the complaints commissioner (who will head the board) will have no legislation to substantiate his authority until the government holds its public hearings in the fall. Even after such legislation is passed, however, the board will still not become involved with citizens' complaints until 30 days after they are filed, allowing police 30 days to conduct their own investigation.

Clive Robertson

According to Mark Wainberg, a C.I.R.P.A. representative for the Law Union of Ontario, this is only one of many problems with the new structures set up by McMurtry. "We are still advising people not to use the review board," he said, "because it is definitely stacked in favour of the police."

All Fall Down?



Brent Raycroft

You might think that the loss of the fine Clocktower building (680 King Street West, Toronto) — and with it the old site of the artist-run Partisan gallery and some twenty artists' studios — would be a cause for concern, especially within the artists' community. But there are always those who can find the means and the meaning to celebrate city destruction, especially if it's not your place that's being demolished. A Space, whose last community service was re-decorating an elderly woman's "dingy apartment" with brand new Daniel Buren striped wallpaper, moves on with its Terminal Building Project. John Bentley Mays, Toronto's whooper-about-art critic of the *Globe and Mail*, wrote of the celebration: "Implanted within the real factory about to fall before cultural force is this marvellous fictional anecdote about a chic bar knocked down by an earthquake." One can only assume that the significant force that is felling the building is not "cultural" but the hand of the developer's market. Of course you must remember the context. In play-go-seek Toronto, progress is forced to march *enfant terrible* or was it *avant regardeless*? And what looks and smells like a home to some is only a "fictional anecdote" for others. Apparently though we can enjoy the heat and humidity of Los Angeles, without its earthquakes we are less than fulfilled.

Clive Robertson

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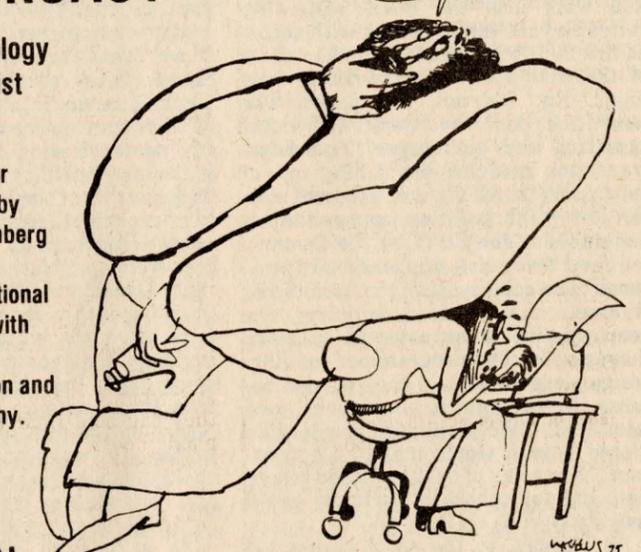
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BUSINESS AND CULTURE

When government backs off, there's always talk of help from the 'private sector'. Well, don't hold your breath.

You walk into the hotel hospitality suites and see tables loaded with xeroxed briefs. It's hot and it looks like parts of the nation have just written their finals. But it's not just paper. The committee rooms are littered with videocassettes and audiotapes. Transistor-translator modules are falling out of shirt pockets. All signs of a federal matter. Every intervention has been taped and dubbed. The CRTC or the Committee (and there are duplications) "pressured" the cablesystems, in each of the eighteen cities visited, to carry the hearings live in an attempt to make them public. The programmer for Rogers Cablesystems said they agreed because they thought it would make good television. "We assumed people like Pierre Berton would make an appearance." For some of us it was good television and for others it certainly could provide re-runs on PAY-TV.

As Reagan, to the south, hacks his way through everything, including the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts) and the NEH (National Endowment for Humanities), here we are in the process of collectively giving just one extra pint of blood with the hope that this time we will secure a final transfusion.

The Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee (Applebaum-Hébert Commission) was on the last leg of its three month cross-country check-up and the final few days in Toronto were anything but dull. The business sector came out of the woodwork. Normally in the cultural arena, big business likes to endearingly identify itself as the domestic pet. Before the hearings closed, such masks were removed and, instead, we were treated to a portrait that could only be titled "Pigs at the Trough" (1981) (artist unknown).

The Committee

What was originally to have been a joint-parliamentary committee (see Applebaum interview) ended up as a group of government appointed cultural representatives with a few governmental department 'infiltrators'. Of the twenty Committee members, six are artists, four are cultural managers, three are businessmen, there is one artist/administrator, one architect, one publisher, one educator, one economist, one sitting member of the CRTC, one assistant Under Secretary of State and one Deputy Minister of Communications. There are sixteen men and only

four women. There are no natives, no visible minorities, no one from the North West Territories and no one from labour. Most of the members of the Committee are intelligent true liberals. With few exceptions they were not visibly demonstrating the cynicism, arrogance and hostility that we have come to expect from the leaders of the Liberal government. Apart from its unrepresentational make-up the Committee suffers from an isolation that is shared by most Canadians. While women remain invisible within our culture (see insert), it is often the culture itself which is invisible. Indigenous films, video, magazines and music are segregated away from their audience — not through any desire on the part of their authors but because the marketplace enforces strict choices on what is available. The grunts and articulations that inform us of our cultural existence may, at odd times, have a function within the political currency but in the real world of corporate culture such manifestations are worthless.

The government has shown much interest in industrialising what there is and many enthusiastic entrepreneurs are pressing for the entrée to be served immediately on the finest of satellite dishes.

While it is true that the Committee sought our dirty laundry, they also were easily side-tracked, wanting to know what we wish to wear in the year 2000. So many federal studies fall apart by not comprehending that it is not a change of clothes that concerns us but whether or not we will have any clothes to wear. By repeatedly requesting growth projections — is it 'this' or is it 'that' — they fail to understand that sufficient mechanisms are not in place that would guarantee our short-term survival which leaves little room for hypothesising long-term goals.

There have been other criticisms of the make-up of the Committee including words from the former Minister of Communications, David MacDonald. MacDonald, who put the Committee in motion, has said, referring to the inclusion of Pierre Juneau and Leo Dorais: "I appointed Juneau to an advisory committee; now he's on the agency for public hearings. They've (the Liberal government) mixed an independent inquiry with an in-house advisory group

... If the Committee is perceived as a departmental committee, other departments will ignore it. As it stands the Committee is hobbled by its own structure. Juneau and Dorais have no links to Parliament or the general public; their primary links are to the Department (of Communications)."¹ Other non-independent members include co-chairman Jacques Hébert who is a long-time friend of Pierre Trudeau's and Albert Breton, an economist who has been characterised as being in alliance with Hébert. The Committee is undoubtedly divided; only time will tell which side can sink or swim.

At the ringside

The public hearings are merely part of a continuing struggle for the survival of a Canadian culture (or more correctly a set of distinct Canadian cultures). The federal government has shown much interest in industrialising what there is and many enthusiastic entrepreneurs are pressing for the entrée to be served immediately on the finest of satellite dishes. The non-isolationist policies of the government are in themselves dangerous for the maintenance of an indigenous culture; industrialising what we have, in essence, means letting the business sector run with what will become a homogenous ball.

Federal agencies like the NFB, the CBC and the Canada Council have been noticeably nervous as the public hearings proceeded hoping that they would not be betrayed by their customers. Yet it was, perhaps, not so much the concern of a frontal attack, but the knowledge that the federal government itself was waiting in the shadows, with every intention of breaking the arm of the arm's-length cultural agencies. As Adele Freedman reported (*Globe and Mail*, February 10th), the Crown Corporations Bill has been tabled twice in the House of Commons and put on hold until the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee has tabled its report. The bill proposes that the CBC and the Canada Council conform to the same budgetary system as other government departments and in addition provides for a policy of ministerial directives that could transform the activities and direction of the cultural agencies. As a result of the hearings we might expect that the Canada Council will be spared, CBC TV will be reeling, and the NFB will have to barricade it-

(continued on page 199)

Applebaum interview

The following is an interview between FUSE co-editor Clive Robertson and the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee chairman, Louis Applebaum. Mr. Applebaum was a founding member of the Canadian League of Composers (1951), has worked as a composer for the NFB and as a music consultant for the CBC. From 1971-80 he was the Executive Director of the Ontario Arts Council. The interview took place following the last day of the hearings in Toronto, Friday, July 10th.

FUSE: Who chose the make-up of the committee, and what is the personal responsibility of each committee member above and beyond attending the hearings?

L.A.: Originally we were set up not to do the job we are now doing. We were set up roughly as a committee of fifteen in order to act as an advisory committee to the then-Secretary of State, David MacDonald for the previous Conservative government. He had in mind a public inquiry of this kind being conducted by a joint parliamentary committee. This idea had a lot of advantages because it would have brought at least a certain group of parliamentarians into direct contact with the problems of this field which they don't now have. MacDonald realised that because they would need a lot of background and assistance in planning an inquiry, that he would have to undertake, as Secretary of State, the providing of a lot of direction, advice, etc. Instead of leaving it entirely to staff that he might hire to do that job he thought that to better reflect what the country might need he should set up an advisory committee to himself to help advise him both with the input to the parliamentary committee and the output from that committee — they would eventually come back with recommendations and he wanted to be able to assess those recommendations in terms of the arts community's needs, the public's needs, the arts supporters' needs, the non-art world in the cultural sphere and so on. MacDonald appointed, through the government process, an advisory committee to himself of fifteen people. Their job was to define the parameters of the investigation, to provide the necessary background materials and whatever advice the Minister might need in that context.

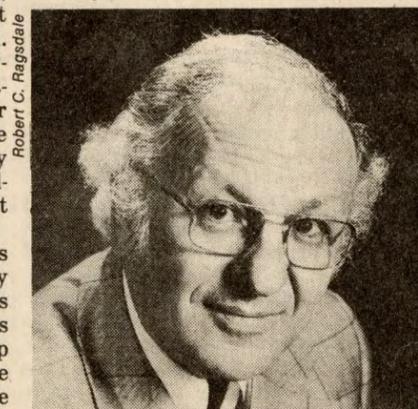
As you know that government was rather short-lived and a new Secretary of State came into the equation. Francis Fox from the Liberal government was faced with the questions: do we drop the public inquiry into culture and the arts? Do we maintain it? Do we do it the same way or do we change it? The new government made a number of funda-

mental decisions — the first being that they would continue an inquiry into the arts. Yes, they would continue this advisory committee's presence in the process. What they would not do is use a parliamentary committee device to conduct the inquiry and instead asked the committee to undertake the job. So we were created in one context but since August of last year we had to transform ourselves from an advisory committee to an operating review committee. A lot of work we had been involved in was obviously very relevant but we undertook a whole new game. We have been, if you like, laundered by the Liberal government — there have been no fundamental changes in the original group except that two people have left. One was Bernard Ostry, who was an ex-officio Deputy Minister of Communications at the time — he left for a new job in Paris. The other was the director of the Playwrights Co-op who left because she wanted to write a book and couldn't devote the time. The new minister, Francis Fox, appointed five additional members to the committee. So my long answer to your questions is that the committee members were appointed by two Ministers.

FUSE: Am I correct in believing that there is a back-up research team who is writing the report.

L.A.: No. We're not going to put our names on something that isn't our creation. It is true that we have to have a back-up team to provide us with research, insights, expertise and flow of information and we've been at this for over a year.

FUSE: I have two impressions of the committee after watching you in both Vancouver and Toronto. The first is that you are all successful in your fields and that most of you have had access to broadcasting, publishing, filmmaking. What do you think of when you see artists across the country who have had no access in these areas? Do you think they are trying something that many of the committee members have not tried or do you think that these new artists



Louis Applebaum

are in some ways responsible for not being able to get distribution access? L.A.: Are we successful in our fields? I don't know. Am I here as a composer? FUSE: I would say yes you are. Let me define what I mean by "success" in distribution terms. Many of the filmmakers, video producers, artists and writers have appeared before the committee and said we cannot get our work into the CBC, the NFB or into larger audiences or markets. A number of the committee members including yourself have worked in these larger institutions...

L.A.: What is our reaction? Our reaction is that the system should be changed in order to allow those people to have access. It doesn't mean that everyone will get in, nor that everyone will be a success, but clearly one of the most vivid impressions that has been achieved by us, as a result of the public hearings, is that the need for creative individuals in this country to be given the opportunity to fulfill their potential is perhaps our most pressing requirement. If you are implying that we have a certain establishment approach as to what should be written or created or what is acceptable...

FUSE: No, I am trying to get a larger picture of what no-access implies for the committee.

L.A.: What I've seen, because I've been around for some time now, has been an absolutely extraordinary growth of activity. That activity has taken, thankfully, shapes that no-one could have anticipated. There has certainly been a continuation of what we could call established arts activities, conventional orchestral activity, conventional dance and even theatre activity. But there's also been an incredible emergence of non-establishment artistic activity and I don't think there's been a murmur from anybody, but let me say the opposite — there hasn't been a member (of the review committee) who hasn't felt the absolute necessity of making sure that flow of new ideas and approaches isn't maintained.

FUSE: As we can see from all of these briefs, artists certainly do not make up the main thrust of those who claim in one way or another to be offering essential services in the name of Canadian culture. How does the committee deal with us? I have heard members of the committee on several occasions refer to interveners as "pressure groups"?

L.A.: If I understand your question, you are saying what is the place of the artist in the scheme of things? One of the biggest worries we had was that society, as we operate, has not found a place especially for the creative artist — he seems to be operating outside the pale. What do we do about it? When we talk of pressure groups — the appearance of

(continued overleaf)

FUSE, Impulse and other magazines — that's a pressure group. You are representing a point of view and you are impressing that point of view on somebody because you think it can help achieve whatever objectives you may have. I don't think beyond that, anything was meant by the term "pressure group".

FUSE: I would have thought that was the actual process of intervention.

L.A.: Sure. So we have nothing pejorative in using that term. The important question is the status of the people we are talking about in the scheme of things. If you have been used by the machinery, if the process has involved your opinion, then you are just as much part of that influential group. What I am talking about is that we as a society have absolutely no way to reward people for creation. There has been a lot of talk about the Copyright Act — it works for the people who deal with mass audiences but it doesn't work for the poet or the composer of serious music or the painter or photographer of material that appeals to smaller audiences.

FUSE: Your colleague, Mr. Hébert said two days ago that based upon what the Committee has heard across the country, very few cultural producers feel satisfied with the CBC. I think he had asked the rhetorical question, "Can they do anything right?" Even if the federal government chooses to ignore what you as a committee have to say about the CBC, do you think that the CBC will finally take notice of what has been said? Is this one of the auxiliary functions of these hearings?

L.A.: I think yes in the context of what I eventually learned has been said by the CBC. In other words there has been an internal pressure (within the CBC) to achieve the same kinds of goals. So given both the external and internal pressure, something has to give. Clearly CBC television is not doing a job that satisfies the country; it doesn't satisfy the politician, the public, the critics or the creators.

FUSE: There has been, as I am sure you are aware of, a healthy amount of skepticism about the end result of these hearings, and how important your recommendations will be to the federal Cabinet or Minister of Communications. So many people are asking for so much, and some of the demands are for structural changes. Can you say at this time how much you have been guaranteed by the Minister?

L.A.: We haven't been guaranteed anything. What we have been promised or what we have heard the Minister say is that the Government, sometime next year, will issue a document that says here's what we're going to do about it. The guarantee you have — you being the public — is that you are going to

have in your hands our document, with our recommendations to the government. And shortly thereafter you will have a government document that says here's what we are going to do and so you will be in a position to interrelate the two and act accordingly. That's a lot of guarantee built into it. Beyond that I can't give you any guarantee about anything.

FUSE: Will the recommendations you make be taken seriously?

L.A.: Yes. Will they be filed away? No they will not, and that's the big difference. That for me is the most significant aspect of this whole process. The Massey Commission (1949-51) was as independent as you could want to make it. It filed its report and the government said, thank you very much. The government could have done absolutely nothing and for a long time it did just that. But eventually it began to introduce some of the Massey Commission's recommendations. It took seven years. We have heard a lot about how the Massey Commission created the Canada Council and the National Library. Eventually it happened, but they could just as easily not have happened because through their process the Massey Commission filed their report and it was finished. In our case we have something special here. We are going to file a report and the government has said that in return they will present their statement on what they're going to do about it. And that's a biggie.

FUSE: On page nineteen of your guide "Speaking of Our Culture" there is a question that seemed to me contradictory. It asked, "Should the federal government consolidate its support to fewer projects, primarily those initiated by its agencies?" I always assumed that the federal agencies, particularly those whose main responsibility is funding, were supposed to respond to the initiatives of the cultural constituency at large. Isn't this question a contradiction of mandate?

L.A.: We were dealing with a set of dichotomies. On almost every question there are two extreme sides. The questions that we put forward in that guide did not reflect a preconceived answer. We are saying to the public on whatever question you want: here is one side of the argument, here is the other side. What we are trying to do is stimulate the public to take a position. What has been very encouraging is the degree to which we succeeded. We created responses that to a remarkable degree are very relevant. Those responses talk in terms of self-service which is to be expected. In fact those self-service kinds of responses are in a way more valuable than general answers. This guide was a background. I don't think you can accuse us of contradictory views because we didn't really have any

fixed views.

FUSE: Two very well argued and reasoned briefs came from the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and the United Steelworkers. Both represented large numbers of people, both complained of continued social bias against, in one case, women and in the other, organized workers. Both stated their dissatisfaction with the mechanisms of the dominant culture. How and in what manner can or will the committee deal with such direct social and political cultural issues?

L.A.: I really don't know how to answer that question except to say that in the case of women we have had a very intensive set of representations to us both during the hearings and in writing. It's an area that we just have to take a set position on. At the moment we have very substantial input from the women's side of the equation and we are going to react. In what way I can't tell you because we haven't begun to consider the answers to the questions that we've asked ourselves. The other aspect is that there is an implication in your question that there's a certain description of arts and culture that is applicable here but not applicable there. I think it's true that we have a much wider vision of what culture is. Therefore the kind of culture that might appeal to the members of the Steelworkers is just as relevant to us as the kind of culture that I received when I attended the Royal Ballet last night. We are not locked into and, I hope, not weighted in one direction at the expense of the other. I don't see how we can avoid looking at the interests of the United Steelworkers. Whether the government needs to do something more about it is another question but we certainly have to accept those interests at least as dramatically as we can accept the interests of any other group.

FUSE: There is no mention in your guide of multiculturalism and little mention of minorities...

L.A.: There certainly is mention of multiculturalism because it's an important issue.

FUSE: I don't think the word "multiculturalism" appears once in the guide. (*re-affirmed, ed.*) In the Black Canadian community and for other visible minorities, multiculturalism has often been described as "the cultural carrot that was offered by the federal government as a substitute for the sharing of economic and political opportunities"...

L.A.: That may be true... FUSE: Furthermore multiculturalism has been seen as the chief obstacle to a breakthrough in the mass media for the views and culture of indigenous Canadian minorities. Wouldn't this whole issue have deserved a greater place in these hearings?

L.A.: It has, I don't know what the

self behind its history because the testimony regarding its present has been like a prolonged cloud of volcanic ash. However it should never be forgotten that the present Liberal government is capable of any amount of destruction. If culture is seen to be the passenger in our society, no doubt, as the Transport Minister has just demonstrated, any number of branch lines could be closed.

National identity: A disposable?

The gang beatings that Canada and its culture have received have been well studied and well-documented. The sometimes radical notion of a nation, as opposed to a parking lot, is periodically brought forward during different episodes of the same Liberal government as they wax and wane as defenders of the (nationalist/multicultural/regionalist) faith.

In 1971, the Gray Report (on the causes and consequences of Canada's dependence on direct foreign investment) was filed by Federal Cabinet Minister, Herb Gray. The report suggests that "the multi-national corporation is by nature a vehicle for the national aspirations of the parent company." The report also noted that the lack of a strong national identity and distinctive culture creates a vacuum making Canadians more receptive to foreign influences. "On this fertile ground foreign investment has a relatively easy task in shaping and influencing the Canadian environment. Looked at from the point of view of the U.S. investor, the openness and lack of cultural distinctiveness reduce the risk and cost of foreign investment since there is less need to adapt the product locally. Thus, foreign investment at one and the same time plays on cultural similarities and reduces the capacity for the distinctive development of a national identity."² This statement is typical of the Liberal government's multi-functional rhetoric. By suggestion it equates the importance of both economic and cultural independence and yet there are doubts as to which, if any, has preference. It is known that Canadian controls over cor-

porate monopolies (domestic or foreign) are less stringent (than both the U.S. and the U.K.) and that what controls do exist are less enforceable.³

Seven years after the Gray Report, Canada's 100 largest enterprises own 48.6 per cent of all corporate assets. If we look backwards, in 1870 the Hudson Bay Co. (U.K.) owned 38 per cent of the entire country.⁴ What is relevant to the cultural support question is does it make any difference to our indigenous culture if corporations are Canadian or American? The answer of course is no.⁵ The largest direct corporate sponsor of culture in Canada is Imperial Oil, the second highest profit-earning company in Canada. Its 1980 net profits were \$601 million and its cultural donations \$902,000.⁶ Imperial Oil is an example of how tricky it can be to define a "Canadian" company. While Imperial Oil for example wishes to appear to be the responsible immigrant, it is nonetheless 70 per cent owned by Exxon of New York (the second most profitable corporation in the U.S. with 1980 net profits of \$5.6 billion).⁷

After all, if 'Canadian' is not an option, maybe 'made-in-Canada' is, for their purposes, a respectable second best.

There is needless to say an unquantifiable difference between an indigenous culture (with its own specific audience) and mass culture which theoretically has global markets of considerable economic and hegemonic proportions. What we get as mass culture is American which, as S.M. Crean wrote, leaves Canadian culture "consigned to an underground where it cannot possibly function as a culture in the true sense of the word." Crean also said, "Canada is one of the few countries in the world whose abject cultural defenselessness can be presented to its citizens as a magnificent achievement in international co-operation. To guard our border ... would be taken as an act of bad faith."⁸

The reason that some of this analysis seems dated is because, for all of its public defence of the Canadian economy

and it has had enormous cultural implications.

FUSE: A writer suggested to the Committee that writers be tax-exempt...

L.A.: The Irish model...

FUSE: Artists have called for a living wage and even Arthur Gelber (Ontario Arts Council, Chairman) requests an end to the economic humiliation of artists by banks, merchants and insurance institutions. What basic recommendations by the committee along these lines do you think will stick?

L.A.: I don't know. Whether the Irish model is relevant — how applicable, how saleable it is — I haven't the slight-

and Canadian culture, the government has instigated little in the last ten years that would truly protect our national identity. Even the nationalisation programmes through Crown Corporations are a bastardised form of state-ownership. The government chooses instead to enter the private sector where it now controls 4 per cent of the top 500 companies, an additional 41.2 per cent being owned by Canadian companies and the remaining 54.8 per cent being in the hands of foreign ownership.⁹

Both the government and Canadian corporations are not interested in indigenous culture. If Canadian companies can improve the economy by turning out some imitation mass cultural products, both will pat each other on the back. The bleakest forecast that could be made is that the Committee's work is a cover for some government/business sector strategy. After all, if 'Canadian' is not an option maybe 'made-in-Canada' is, for their purposes, a respectable second best.

Day of the Locusts

Appearing before the Committee in its last week of hearings were representatives from two groups that presented the 'business view' of culture. The Association of Canadian Advertisers, Inc., in its own eyes, pays for the production of our commercial TV, radio and newsstand magazines, foreign or domestic. Periodical Distributors of Canada in no uncertain terms outlined its own economic strength stating in their brief that PDC members annually distribute \$250 million worth of paperbacks and magazines and in turn pay "taxes worth several millions of dollars annually". PDC member companies are Canadian-owned but their delivery, their threats and their values are right out of California's "Proposition 13" (Howard Jarvis) book. Both groups spoke often and repeatedly of a "freedom of choice" for the cultural consumer in the marketplace, omitting to say that they themselves control a major portion of the market and they alone can prevent an indigenous Canadian culture from reaching the marketplace. 90 per cent of PDC's

est idea at this time. We are going to be looking at all kinds of alternatives to try and move the artist, especially the creative artist up the social ladder. I think you know what I mean, in terms of general acceptance. The artist may be accepted more and more in terms of status. He may be more respected than say a plumber. But the artist certainly does not receive economic acknowledgement to the degree that a plumber does. We have a way of measuring service of a certain kind and being able to purchase it. We haven't been able to find a measure for the service of a poet or composer and that's our problem. □

products are of American origin. Seeing both groups of Canadian residents fighting for the maintenance of the highly profitable dominant American cultural industry no longer signified a threat but an empirical victory. Some members of the Committee were visibly upset.

John Foss, Association of Canadian Advertisers, Inc., president stated in his opening remarks that "as the global village is getting smaller and smaller (sic), isolation, we feel, is a sign of fear." Foss went on to quote John Kennedy: "We are not afraid to entrust the people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people." Despite the emptiness of these words, especially considering what military action the U.S. would later take to destroy "foreign ideas and alien philosophies", Foss shows little concern for either social context or meaning. His suggestions to the Committee included such gems as "go to the people and build up what is there ... instead of homogenising through

Advertising answers

Albert Breton: In your opening comments you mentioned that in marketing ordinary products, it often happens that the marketing is not successful. Are you suggesting that if it was not possible to successfully advertise the arts or any part of the arts they should be dropped altogether?

Foss: I don't think it should be dropped altogether based on that criteria. If you have no response to what you're offering I'm suggesting that you are banging your head against a brick wall.

Breton: No-one is a very small number. What kind of audience in your mind still allows the existence of an institution like the Canada Council that subsidises museums, painters, theatres, performing arts?

Foss: No argument. The Canada Council kind of incentive, good. As long as they don't use a form of power to prevent others from offering choices, offering alternatives that then we as public can respond to...

Breton: The advertising industry is a big consumer of artists, art products, art forms. Do you feel that the advertising industry has any responsibility in terms of the arts — it takes out of the pot, should it put something back?

Foss: I gave you a list of our companies that are patrons of the arts. Advertising is a pragmatic business.

Breton: So it's your view that the ad-

vertising industry has no responsibility vis-a-vis the arts except buying the services of artists?

Foss: It has the responsibility of providing artists with work, it puts them within reach of a loaf of bread, a jug of wine, the wherewithal. In many cases if performers didn't have the opportunity for commercial work (smiles) they would be classically starving as historically performers and talent have.

Breton: Do you think that a recommendation by our Committee that the federal government impose a tax on advertisers' expenditures for the purpose of supporting the arts would be something your group could support or not?

Foss: It would be a set-back to the dark ages on a scale and magnitude that would make no economic sense, no understanding of what advertising is in our system. We are currently fighting the taxation measures that have been employed on Broadcast tax in Quebec for the purpose of supporting advertising with another point of view. Advertising is a catalyst. It's a motor for all tax purposes. The government gets it back at the sales tax level. To try and insert indirect taxation makes no more sense than taxing the performer in the play.

Breton: Wouldn't such subsidies help create a larger resource pool for your purposes, help you to produce more effective, more convincing advertising?

Foss: We have our own stimulation methods that are much more effective. □

edict." What the people have, as Mr. Foss knows, is an imperialist homogeneous mass culture. What Canadians see at the movies, in the bookstores, on TV, is American. To "build up from what is there" can only mean more of the same, or more of the same produced by Canadians. Foss like all businessmen sees culture strictly in terms of the product: "Business provides the materialistic underpinnings for cultural pursuits (sic) but we feel that we can offer a concept that you may look at. The concept is to go to the people to determine the level of acceptance of these different activities that constitute the aggregate: culture. You could find that in that sense, culture is a product as much as a loaf of bread, a glass of wine."

Later on in his presentation, we hear that Foss objects to "enforced" Canadian content in prime time TV supposedly because of the lack of opportunity to place worthwhile advertising in those "unpopular" slots. Likewise the Association of Canadian Advertisers has been against CBC TV becoming commercial-free because the CBC has been the only choice available in certain regions, for advertisers to reach a mass

audience. Not only does the advertising sector have to be taken into account but its interests, above all, must be given preference. Though some corporations may have felt misrepresented by Foss's 'self-determination', no doubt Mr. Foss was in his own Kennedy-fashion (Kennédien?) conveying, according to business, the truth.

"People across this country are hungry for an identity of their own. What I find offensive in your comments is that I'm not entitled to that because of advertising."

Committee member Rudy Wiebe, an author from Edmonton, questioned Mr. Foss: "In looking at your brief it does not seem guaranteed to win our approval, which is what advertising, I think, should do. One sentence in your brief I found particularly objectionable and I quote: 'There is an elitist culture for the balletomanes, the Ibsenites, the admirers of modern art and the like but that is not Canadian culture as here discussed.' I would suggest you use actors a great deal in the production of your products. By speaking of these people as not part of Canadian culture, as something we should forget about, are you not cutting off your own nose?" Foss answered that maybe the statement was too absolute but that it did support the Association's view that consumers must decide for themselves. Max Tapper, Director of Development of the Royal Ballet of Winnipeg and one of the Committee members, opened his questioning of Mr. Foss by making a statement to the effect that as the world gets smaller and smaller, relative to the expansion of communications technologies, Canada will diminish in size until as a discernible reality it will disappear. "What we have heard for forty days of hearings is that the problem, I suggest to you sir, is that people across this country are hungry for an identity of their own. What I find offensive in your comments is that I am not entitled to that because of advertising." Mr. Tapper, aside from being an administrator, is a member of ACTRA and proved to be very capable of doing his own Kennedy impressions. Nevertheless, whether constructed or not, his emotional outbursts provided a welcome relief. Tapper asked Foss if he really believed that "people make up their own minds, independent of advertising" and Foss, as expected, rejected any suggestion that advertising directly affects choice. What was not mentioned was that pre-production market testing (through the use of consumer surveys) enables post-production marketing to re-inforce what has already been researched, so making Foss's answer technically correct. Foss did imply that all cultural products should follow the same marketing route. Apart from

the obvious economic difficulties in pre-testing indigenous culture, more importantly the very notion of giving the "people" exactly what they have been conditioned to want removes the "cultural" component from the "product".

Determination of need

The specific value of all forms of culture from folk to pop to high culture is that it carries certain specific kinds of needs through its own expression. Total massification of all forms of culture by corporate interests would not only place in their control the ownership and means of production and distribution, but more importantly the *determination* of need. Corporate culture as espoused by Mr. Foss and others does not just create a more efficient profit-making system. Our culture functions by articulating the social conflicts of both the individual and the group. The total massification of culture would be an attempt to end the historical cultural dialectic between the dominant class and its opposition. The disappearance of an indigenous culture into its corporate forms essentially means the removal of 'democracy', 'freedom of speech', or 'free choice'. When corporate culture is disguised as mass entertainment, it seems harmless, even beneficial. This is part of the reason why "indigenous culture", 'Canadian culture' and 'mass culture' were so easily and erroneously interchanged throughout the Committee's hearings. Our cultural *needs* are not defined by us nor by government but increasingly by business monopolies. Such monopolies, as their words support, understand the importance of self-determination on the primary level of self-survival. In their eyes, their needs survive and ours don't. Like all fascists, an understanding of the social environment is anathema to their way of thinking.

Was John Foss stepping out of line? The views of the Canadian Advertisers Association were not necessarily duplicated by some of its members in their separate briefs. Let's return to Imperial Oil. Sitting on the Committee was none other than one of its Vice-Presidents, Robert E. Landry. Imperial Oil's own brief to the Committee was more like what we would expect from a corporation with large windfall profits trying to keep its patronly nose clean. Their reasons for directly donating \$1 million for the arts were explained in the following manner: "Our prosperity in Canada results not only from the hard work and investment but also from the very existence of the society that permits us to do business (emphasis mine). That permission and our success imply an obligation to put something back ... we acknowledge, then, that our motives in contributing to cultural organisations are mixed, and range from the self-serving to the altru-

istic." More honesty, carefully honed. In their brief (dated March 9, 1981) there was no mention of the marketplace being "the true measure of artistic quality". However since July 10th when Mr. Foss gave his presentation, Imperial Oil has changed its mind. On July 28th in Charlottetown, William Young, a senior vice-president of Imperial Oil was quoted by the Globe and Mail as saying that "the arts should be subject to the same risks and rewards of the marketplace", adding, "Some of them (artists) deserve to go broke for the same reason that companies go broke — they produce inferior products and services." I hope Mr. Landry has not been leaking future Committee recommendations to his corporate colleagues. So much for big business and the arts. Perhaps now Canadian arts organisations who are planning future sponsorship from the business sector will begin to pull the cotton out of their ears.

"Watch your lip!"

Nestled comfortably or at least not incongruously in the pages of the Cultural Review Committee's Guide is a section titled: Cultural Economics: Some Aspects of Supply and Demand. The guide states that: "...the practice of favouring producers (sic) has, on the whole, tended to ignore consumer tastes." Deliberate or not this was the bait. One of three recommendations of the Periodical Distributors of Canada's brief was that "the Committee give priority to establishing mechanisms for subsidisation of the consumer of Canadian products, rather than the supplier." The "favouring of producers" refers of course to government subsidies not just of art but the whole spectrum of cultural activities that are not supported by the marketplace or those

As the PDC sat before the Committee, again there was no doubt that Canadian culture proper was an annoying housefly that, following its short life, now deserved swatting.

who control it. In fact it is the wholesalers of the commercial sector who have been favoured, while the producers and consumers have been similarly treated as adolescents on a tight allowance. As the PDC sat before the Committee, again there was no doubt that Canadian culture proper was an annoying house fly that, following its short life, now deserved swatting.

Ray Argyle, Public Affairs Director of PDC, underlined the association's power in his opening remarks by telling the Committee that PDC had already received assurances from the Minister responsible that PDC's distribution monopoly would not be touched by federal government regulations. "We have been assured by Francis Fox, Minister of Communications, that such action

would be beyond the constitutional powers of the federal government, trade being a provincial matter. We hope that the Committee in any discussion of this subject will vigorously reject the concept of government controls of the nation's newsstands ... If retailers are forced to carry a large number of specialised Canadian publications, for which there may be a limited sale, who will take the responsibility for the retailer's loss of income? The net result of such a policy, we predict, would be to discourage retailers from handling any magazines of any description to the ultimate disadvantage of all Canadian publishing."

The membership of Periodical Distributors (PDC) consists of regional wholesalers across Canada. The Committee was aware that 98 per cent of all magazines sold on Canadian newsstands are foreign publications and 65 per cent of all subscriptions to magazines in Canada are for foreign publications. If every newsstand in the country closed tomorrow the effect on most Canadian magazines would be minimal. Furthermore as regional wholesalers in the past have put the strong-arm on the retailers or dealers with exclusive supply contracts,¹⁰ concern for the retailer by the wholesaler is nothing more or less than a sham. But PDC in its own inverse way is concerned about Canadian materials; they choose to show this 'concern' by throwing spears at stuffed animals. "On some occasions, we regret to observe, Canadian-made work is poorly written, poorly edited and unattractively packaged. When that happens, no amount of subsidy will entice the reader into purchasing the product. We have often heard about the distribution sector singled out as a scapegoat for the failure of quality that lies at the heart of some Canadian publishing problems."

The panel representing PDC did not appear before the Committee just to play a quick game of Snakes and Ladders. They came with a plan that could not only re-line their pockets but no doubt pay for their membership to have the option of wearing gold lamé suits. Argyle said: "(The) emphasis of government subsidy should be shifted from the supplier to the consumer. The \$5 monthly cultural voucher we have proposed is to be aimed at families. I emphasise *families* because in the long-term work of nation building it's the next generation we want to work (on)." (The suggested voucher is redeemable for books, magazines, films, or arts performances)¹¹ "We suggest that it (the voucher) be distributed with Family Allowance cheques as it would ensure that the expenditure of cultural funds would be controlled by those who are providing them — the members of the public. This may be a radical concept, but one that we believe is worth exploring. The impact on Canadian arts would be truly monumental at no net increase in cost, as funding would be achieved by

transferring priorities within the existing \$1 billion federal cultural budget. Even if only half of the vouchers were redeemed the result would be \$100 million of purchasing power being applied where it counts: at the box office, at the bookstore or at the newsstand cash register." Later Mr. Argyle, in answer to a Committee member's question about the percentage of foreign magazines on Canadian newsstands, offered that the two largest selling magazines were TV Guide and ("the wholly Canadian") Reader's Digest. In other words, money would get withdrawn from the production of indigenous Canadian books, films, video, art, theatre, dance and music so that it could subsidise the purchase and profits of TV Guide. Note that the "purchasing power" goes directly back into the "newsstand cash register" and thereon back into the pockets of the PDC.

Now follows the connecting lines between the PDC, the Association of Canadian Advertisers, Imperial Oil and anyone else licensed to carry a gun. Argyle continued, "Under our proposal the benefits of the subsidy would be directly enjoyed by the consumer and flow through to all participants — publisher,

editor, author, as the case may be, directly proportional to the true worth of each contribution as measured by the only true measure of artistic quality: demand by the consuming public. No longer would funds be expended on subsidising artistic effort of doubtful quality, or even questionable value. Rather

It would be too easy to write these people off as 'outlaws' or the lunatic fringe of the business world ... what is more revealing is the overall militancy of the business community towards culture.

funds would be distributed in a manner that would be truly accountable to the Canadian taxpayer. A system that, for the first time, would be eminently fair, totally justifiable, efficient and calculated to have the strongest possible impact on the cultural industries. A programme of the nature we propose would stimulate demand, encourage innovation, and make an enduring contribution to raising the level of artistic effort and raise the level of artistic appreciation in the Canadian population."

It would be too easy to write these

people off as 'outlaws' or the lunatic fringe of the business world. As they in essence control the magazine and paperback market in Canada it is not surprising that they would wish to see an industrialised market controlled by the marketplace. What is more revealing is the overall militancy of the business community towards culture. The Association of Canadian Advertisers, for example, spends \$3.5 billion a year on "cultural services" (advertising), three times more than federal government spends on all cultural agencies including the CBC and parts of Parks Canada. As a group, the ACA must be one of the most powerful cultural lobbies in the country, and seemingly all that's between their ambitions and the government is the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee.

Is there a corner of a 'foreign' field that is forever Canada?

Part of the problem of these hearings was that, like stage auditions, you could not be sure in advance what the competition would be singing. There were

some interesting matches organised in advance by the Committee. Independent filmmakers and video producers would be back-to-back with the NFB or the CBC. In publishing, the draw for the Periodical Distributors of Canada was the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association (CPPA). The CPPA was not the only national association that was ill-prepared for attacks from the business sector, yet the CPPA was fully aware of PDC's belligerent views including their claims that Canadian products are "poorly written, poorly edited ... etc."

The CPPA represents 175 Canadian magazines including many small literary magazines and a wide range of special interest cultural magazines. Among the membership there are also a handful of larger consumer magazines (Toronto Life, Atlantic Insight, Saturday Night) who definitely would be compromised by overly criticising the PDC. Such members rely heavily upon the PDC group to distribute their products regionally or nationally. In their written brief the CPPA states: "If the market won't support us, why should the government? In the pure economic, free-market sense, there is no reason to

support periodicals. In defense of a country, its culture and its tradition, the laws of free-market society may not apply." Appearing before the Committee were, Anne Welch (Toronto Life), William Belliveau (Atlantic Insight) and CPPA Executive Director, Sherrill Cheda, who had the opportunity to defend that position on behalf of the country's indigenous magazines.

Ten, or even five, years ago such a statement might have won some applause from the government, but today if you want to say "the free market won't support us" you have to point the finger (and hard) to warrant any attention. The CPPA had few good answers and took their 'privileged' position too much for granted.

William Belliveau read from a statement that included the figures of newsstand and subscription domination by foreign magazines, adding, "as a result there has been little room for Canadian publications." He also referred to Bill C-58, which was designed to discourage foreign magazine intervention in Canada, but admitted that "in fact all it did was to Canadianise Reader's Digest and make TIME more profitable." The effect of Bill C-58 was said to be largely a

"psychological advantage" and then Belliveau proceeded to map out the economic disadvantages that Canadian magazines continue to suffer. In answer to whether or not government funding to the CPPA had aided distribution, Sherrill Cheda could only bravely answer, "Yes, but it's a drop in the bucket." Committee member Albert Breton asked how could the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee justify recommending more funds "if the problem seems to be on the buyer's side." Belliveau answered by saying, "one of the considerations we put forward ... was a stimulant to cause more people to buy more Canadian magazines." Mr. Breton, who throughout the hearings would ask variations of the question 'How would you feel if we suggested that the government slit your throat' then asked what effects the removal of postal subsidies would have. Getting this answer right was no problem.

However the CPPA often seemed to be avoiding many of the issues raised by the Committee. Typical of this was the matter regarding quotas and import controls. Committee member Max Tapper was not alone in wondering why

Affirmative action: women's presentations to the Committee

It must have been embarrassing for the Committee. There they sat, a living embodiment in their numbers (16 men, 4 women) of the exact disparity that all the women's organizations across the country kept pointing out with what must have been, for the Committee, blunt tenacity. The central theme of all the groups was quite simple: women in Canadian culture are often unrecognized and always under-represented.

But the working strategy was more complicated. The women's groups presenting briefs sensed, quite correctly, that 1981 is not the time to naively trot out the few examples of prominent women in the arts in order to produce a collective presence for ourselves and follow that up with an Oliver Twistian 'please sir' and hope for the best, assuming that it can't get any worse. Instead, many of the briefs, notably those by the Status of Women (both the B.C. group and the National Action Committee) and Womanspirit ("Art Research and Resource Centre", London, Ontario) used the opportunity of their presentations to address issues politically and to project the creation, re-location and re-evaluation of culture in Canada.

What was advocated was a form of affirmative action for women in culture, in terms of job opportunities, grant op-

portunities, wage parity and advancement potential. But the necessity for this kind of advancement was not seen in isolation from the necessity for the creation of the culture itself in women's own terms. The NAC brief stated, "In 1980 women want and expect as a minimum, structural equality with men" but went on to call for "self-determination ... the opportunity to develop a language and a style and our own agenda for cultural development."

The primary difficulty that some Committee members had with the presentations of women's groups was obvious. It was these groups' insistence on the democratic advancement of the position of all women within the culture. For example, in setting out the three guidelines recommended by NAC, the reduction of barriers for women, self-determination and equalization, Thelma McCormack explained the last one, saying: "...we want an arts policy



Thelma McCormack

that will benefit all women. Nothing could be further from the spirit of the movement than for some new group of elite women to develop at the expense of other women, both in Canada and in other countries." This concept, of course, cuts deep into the entire notion of cultural development which has often depended, especially in its public face, on the elevation of just such an elite. It must have been chilling to some members of the Committee to learn that women didn't want keys to 'the club' — they wanted to nationalize it.

The NAC brief, in particular, is remarkable for its confrontational stance. After presenting a statistical comparison of art students (68 per cent of whom are female) with faculties in art schools (less than 20 per cent of whom are female), the statement is made: "Women, then, are encouraged to attend art schools, to pay tuitions which support the employment of male teachers who are often the same persons who sit on all-male juries awarding fellowships to other male artists who, in turn, view these same women as housewives and whores." The authors of the NAC brief no doubt knew the horror this statement would be greeted with amongst the liberal Committee members, as they must have known the similar effect of another statement: "The under-representation of women in Canada's cultural life, and the uneven distribution of women within the arts constitutes a hidden, but nonetheless insidious, form of censorship."

But NAC knew this stance was necessary in order to draw the discussion

into its proper framework. Having worked within the women's movement, they could project the fate of what seem to be irrefutable statistics: either they are accepted with "grave concern" and promptly relegated to someone's *mañana* file or they are disputed in such picky detail as to obscure the overall conclusions they support. The latter was evident when NAC representatives Lynn MacDonald, Thelma McCormack and Diana Mason made their presentation to the Committee in Toronto. Here Mme. Lavoie-Frachon, obviously balking at the word "censorship", questioned the basis of the claim of under-representation. Lynn MacDonald replied, "(What are the figures based on?) Statistics Canada publishes those figures." It was a reply which demanded no rebuttal but Mme. Lavoie-Frachon persisted anyway, saying, "You know, I have a hard time believing that."

Most likely, Mme. Lavoie-Frachon was not actually disputing Stats Canada's figures. Instead, she and other Committee members found themselves in the position of questioning statistics being presented by women's groups, solely on the basis of their own personal experience. In several instances, a Committee member would dispute the overall presentation because he or she "knew" a woman at the head of an arts organization. (Madame Shiu, recently-resigned head of the National Gallery was invoked several times, once even being turned into a couplet by Guy Robert, "Madame Shiu, who is certainly not a he", during the

Womanspirit presentation.)

Another contentious issue in the women's presentations was the idea of fostering and giving "special status" to a culture created by women that would be, at least in part for women. Businessman Robert Landry, who is vice-president and manager of Imperial Oil's External Affairs Department and whose participatory claim to culture is being vice-president of the Edmonton Symphony, was most uncomfortable with this idea. "In reading your brief, I came away a bit disturbed...I sensed when I was reading it, through the references to women's broadcasting systems, women communicating with each other through dance, film, music... (he hesitates) cultural policy shaped by men for men, I guess the corollary for that is cultural policy for women shaped by women. But the suggestion which I was reading (in the recommendations) was to set up a parallel society, a society for women. Broadcasting systems where women are talking to women. (He chuckles at the novelty of this idea.) That's an interesting concept, but I'm not sure I can identify that any more than I can identify a society of men for men. Are you recommending that we should be considering cultural policy to create a parallel society or are you suggesting that we should be looking at a 'person' society where women can play a larger role. Now there's a difference between these two concepts and I don't mind telling you I was disturbed by what I read as being an apparent need felt by your group — and I don't know how representative it is of women gen-

erally... (He hesitates here.) it's a concept (that) sure as heck just about knocked me off my chair as I was reading it."

In her reply, Lynn McDonald took the CBC to task for not responding to the requests of women's organizations for more programming that was of particular interest to women, but also rebuked Landry, saying: "You use the term 'persons'. You must realize that it was only 50 years ago that women were recognized as persons in Canada. You can use that term very freely. That's your privilege. We're very recently defined as 'persons'. This idea that culture is for everybody, that the CBC is providing programmes for everybody, and (that) we want to do something separate — that's a position you can only take from your point of view. We don't see it that way." McDonald's reply was fitting to a man who, like many others, has never questioned his own bias but must 'call for the smelling salts' when another group declares theirs.

The Applebaum-Hébert Commission received very clear directives from the women's groups who made their presentations asserting that no amount of photographic retouching will be capable of 'drawing' women into cultural policy as it exists at the present time. Quoting the introduction to the NAC brief: "the present situation of women in the arts in Canada is a replica of women generally in Canadian society, a condition of inequality that is no longer acceptable to women..."

Lisa Steele

the CPPA would not light up and show a little flame.

Tapper: In their brief (PDC) the distributors "reject any notion that Canadian publishers, either of paperback books or periodicals, encounter any undue difficulties in reaching the marketplace." Sherrill Cheda: The reason is that as distributors their customers are largely highly financially successful American magazines. We represent Canadian magazines solely.

Tapper: I fully appreciate the difference. But you are the producers and PDC are the distributors. We have had many back-to-back presentations between producers and distributors and it seems to be a problem that Canadian work, produced by Canadians, is not being distributed. Somehow, for whatever reasons, economic, possibly quality in some instances, the work is not distributed. I don't have access. The PDC rejects any quotas. Are you suggesting that controls be implemented? If so how strong should they be? How much should the government intervene in the marketplace in terms of delivering Canadian products to me? The products are as wide-ranging as films, magazines, whatever. Is your association recommending hard, strong controls?

Belliveau: First of all we're not recommending controls or quotas. That's not to say there shouldn't be stimulants to enhance visibility or sales or distribution.

It's difficult to understand why the CPPA executive is stubborn on quotas. In his opening remarks Mr. Belliveau stated that "numerical restrictions would create a dangerous censorship-by-omission precedent." Forget the PDC for a moment; doesn't the CPPA understand the panoramic irony that the flood effect of corporate culture (mainly from the U.S.) not only creates censorship-by-omission, for Canadian magazines in this case, but also threatens the whole indigenous culture period? Surely they have read Canadian Forum, Canadian Dimension and This Magazine, all members of CPPA who have been ringing the fire alarm, some for decades. Given the reading patterns established by the likes of the PDC, the only question relevant to quotas is: are they too late?

Max Tapper: PDC also has a recommendation, very fascinating, about a stimulant. They say that included in the family allowance cheques could be a monthly \$5 cultural voucher, exchangeable for a book or periodical. What do you think of their principle?

Belliveau: The aspect of putting the voucher in the family allowance cheque suggests that, if you have a family, it will be available to everyone. If you recall this morning you heard an intervener describe the demographics of magazine readers, so it's not everyone that reads magazines. The PDC suggestion would create a great waste factor, most people wouldn't use it or want to. I don't think the exercise is in terms of whether people will buy magazines period, but whether or not they will switch their selection from foreign to Canadian. The only way that will occur is when Canadian magazines can compete in terms of content or quality and that is the dilemma, because that's an economic problem.

Tapper: You sound like Mr. Herendorf or Mr. Johnson of the CBC saying the only way we can compete is by producing more 'Dallas's'. I don't quite understand...

Belliveau: That's not what I said.

Tapper: But you're measuring by their standards.

Belliveau: You have to compete for the sale. If competing for the sale means Canadian content, it nevertheless has to be something that people are willing to buy.

And so the myths continue — it's not the control of the marketplace but the 'quality of the product'. Another myth re-inforced by the CPPA before the Committee was that if stimulants are received by the commercial Canadian

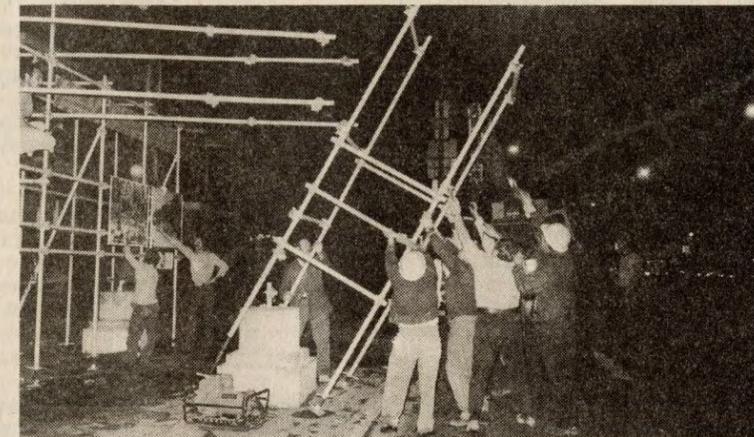
magazines it will broaden the total base, "which helps all sectors of the industry by providing new opportunities for writers". The majority of CPPA magazines including the literary, cultural and political opinion titles are not assisted in any way, shape, or form by the growth of the industry per se. You only have to glance at the National Magazine Awards to see who the industry values. Both content and critical analysis will keep many writers out of any commercial explosion. Canada certainly has enough mass consumer or aspiring mass consumer magazines of whatever origin. Few, if any, will help us survive as a definable country. The third most prevalent myth supported by many associations of cultural organisations is a need to improve management skills. Canada is buried underneath a glut of cultural managers all suggesting that our salvation lies in their propagation. We want to fly a plane not run an airline.

The CPPA was not the only Canadian association of producers present at the hearings that is sponsored by the government to tickle and trained not to scratch. And we still hear future plans from all cultural associations for more federal monies to pay for more statistical studies. Much of this now is trying to put off for tomorrow what surely can only be done today. The federal government in many areas of cultural activity does not need any more statistics to graphically illustrate the problem. In the case of magazines there are two figures that say it all: 98 per cent on the newsstands and 65 per cent of subscriptions. Let's not beat about the burning bush. There is a monopoly and the miracle is that we still don't ask for quotas or controls.

As for the survival of our indigenous culture, the question is no longer: Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?, but who wants to see it dead, and who doesn't mind watching it happen? □

1. Adele Freedman, "Culture Shock," Globe and Mail, February 7th, 1981.
2. S.M. Crean. Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture? General Publishing, 1976.
3. Diane Francis, "Swallowed Alive," Canadian Business, Vol. 54, No. 7, July 1981.
4. *ibid.*
5. I am referring here to Canadian companies, particularly in publishing, that have no responsibilities towards publishing Canadian materials.
6. "Canada's Top 500 Companies," Canadian Business, July 1981.
7. Forbes, "Top 500 Companies" (U.S.) March 11, 1981.
8. S.M. Crean. Who's Afraid of Canadian Culture?
9. Canadian Business, July 1981.
10. Refers to findings of the Ontario Royal Commission on Publishing (1971) which found that a regional wholesaler, Metro News, applied "psychological" pressure on 'their' dealers to obtain, or obtain the effect, of exclusive supply contracts.

THE CORRIDART "FIASCO" Artists lose their right to criticise institutions under a smokescreen of judicial aesthetics



Claire Beauprand/Champagne

On May 20, 1981, Quebec Superior Court Justice Ignace Deslauriers rejected a \$355,000 damage suit filed by 12 artists against the city of Montreal, adding his 70-page judgement to the five-year-old battle over Corridart. The chronology:

- July 7, 1976 The unveiling of Corridart, an outdoor art exhibition sponsored by the Ministère des affaires culturelles du Québec, the Minister of External Affairs, (Canada) and COJO.¹
- July 13, 1976 Three days before the Games open, City of Montreal work crews, on the order of Mayor Jean Drapeau, tear down Corridart in the middle of the night.
- August 25, 1976 Corridart artists demand re-installation of the exhibition.
- September 1, 1976 Artists' demand is rejected; works are retrieved from City Pound — most damaged, some lost.
- October, 1980 City of Montreal offers inadequate compensation. Twelve artists bring individual cases to court.
- November, 1980 Trial begins. Artists' cases based on the illegality of the City's actions and damages to the works.
- May 20, 1981 Artists' claims rejected, leaving them with \$10,000 court costs. Judge Deslauriers discusses merits of the artworks in his written judgement on the case. (Although the artists brought individual cases to court, the judgement was collective.)
- June 10, 1981 Artists lodge an appeal.

"Repression is an historical phenomenon." (Hebert Marcuse)

Quebec, or if you prefer La Belle Province, has always leaned toward repression, first from the heights of the pulpit² occupied by her rulers and more recently by a so-called democratic structure: her municipalities. So the socio-democratic current, protected by an "indépendantiste" government in power but whose power is not to grant independence, results in an underground swell engendered by a populist sentiment which manifests itself specifically in constantly rekindled post-war nationalism which glows even today. At the very moment when Duplessis was ordering his police to storm the Asbestos strikers, the co-signers of Refus Global³ found themselves compelled to choose exile. The government was establishing its power on the foundation of public acquiescence. The municipalities of today establish their jurisdiction from a similar sentiment.

The visual arts milieu in Quebec, virtually synonymous with the government art system since an art-market which exists only in embryonic stage is replaced by a meager state grant regime⁴, finally reacted en masse and physically to the October Crisis in Québec 75 (the event which portrayed Québec culture and anti-culture). The War Measures Act declared by the Trudeau regime had retroactively permitted the legitimization of anglo-saxon and anti-sovereignty ideology by arresting our latin side "so sexy as they say." The cultural workers (travailleurs culturels), because their identity and their projections had been subjugated to coercive rules, would only undertake the reconstruction of their repressed Ego five years later or one year prior to Corridart.

Translation by Martha Townsend and chronology prepared by Linda Covit.

In visual art, since the beginning of the Quiet Revolution and the foundation of the Musée d'art contemporain in 1965, the story of symposia which take place within municipal frameworks, is charged with heavy repression as though monumental sculptures represented a potential Trojan Horse. Unfortunately, again and again the sculptures of such symposia have been torn down, demolished, and thrown into the near-

1. COJO (Comite organisateur des jeux Olympiques) was the paragovernmental organization responsible for the Olympic installations of which Corridart was part. Corridart was administered under the Art et culture section.
2. In French the word pulpit, "chaire", is a pun on the word flesh "chair"; in this case, the sense is one of embodiment or incarnation.
3. Refus Global (Global Refusal) was the controversial document of liberation written by Québécois painter Paul-Émile Borduas. Published on August 9, 1948, in an edition of 400 mimeographed copies, it put forward the idea of self-determination and conscious rejection of the oppression endured by the people of Québec, and posed liberty as a personal and political possibility, if people refused to be ruled by the past, by history, and instead took direct action to combat their own oppression. Essentially an anarchic vision, the document was responsible for Borduas losing his teaching position at Ecole du Meuble in Montreal and his subsequent exile, first to New York and later to Paris, where he died in 1960.
4. Regime or "régime" in French also means diet.

APPROACHING VIDEO

Some
implications
of video and
narrative.

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across Canada,
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est river or municipal dump.⁵

The state censors and so do "the people"

Following this train of thought, governments have prohibited exportation of our national literature on the pretext that it was not "clean." For example, when a Quebec company was invited to perform *Les Belles-Sœurs* by Michel Tremblay in Paris in 1972, the then-Minister of Cultural Affairs, Madame Claire Kirkland-Casgrain, refused to subsidize the project on the grounds that "joul" was a bastardized language. Here is another gesture tainted by the sentiment of being colonialized. Aligned with this phenomenon, but this time taking place on home ground, the incident around the play *Les Fées ont Soif* by Denise Boucher presents itself as another gasp of this old public sentiment. In the play, the Quebec "mother" and the weight of religion were criticized. In 1978, a coalition of extreme right Roman Catholic groups, claiming that the play's dialogue constituted "blasphemous libel," applied pressure (picket lines, court cases, etc.) to prevent access to the work.⁶ In spite of heavy subsidization of the play, the state let public opinion be the judge of the affair. In this case, our "enlightened" rulers understood that if they leave well enough alone, "the people" themselves will take on the responsibility of bringing the dissidents back to order.

These dissidents, the reader will by now have guessed, are cultural workers or intellectuals. Here we are fairly swimming in full contradiction because the triumph of nationalism depends on their work and thought! The judgement of the Corridart event shows similarities with this roughly sketched picture: Judge Ignace Deslauriers sanctifies the rupture which exists between a social body (the cultural workers) whose sole power exists in its voice and a quiet majority which according to him would be quelled by the former. By dividing the artists into two groups, the bad guys and the good guys, or those responsible for the Corridart "fiasco" and those not responsible, he judges the members acting in Quebec society according to whether they defy or accept the contradiction. From this one sees that the function of art should correspond to one of diversion "propagating the joys of the harmonious union of human beings", as the judge underscores in his judgement, and not to one of the reflective values.

Judge Deslauriers concluded on Corridart in the following manner, a

manner which tells us that his judgement was more aesthetic than judicial: "It is inconceivable that there might even have been a question of showing such an exhibit". Let us linger then on the manner of Judge Deslauriers concerning the foundations of his juridical attitude since it seems that art is also essentially juridical:

- **Security:** The judge attempts to prove that the scaffoldings were unsafe, arguing that "the people" could climb them and that one should have at least provided ground suitably landscaped for this purpose as have their sister-structures, "jungle gyms". The argument is based on the belief that humane persons who see representations which throw political life into question, say in a photograph (a photograph of policeman charging on the crowds during the parade honoring the St-Jean-Baptiste, Quebec's national holiday, for example) would react in the same way.

- **Melvin Charney,** the planner of the exhibition, poses the opposite point of view. The scaffoldings used are the same as those sanctioned by the City of Montreal security standards. In erecting these structures, one allows citizens free circulation "as though to, symbolically, expand the space granted pedestrians and contract the encroachment of automobile traffic." This attitude springs from more open principles, for example: the less one chokes the population, the less it is likely to resort to violence, and the less the authorities will repress manifestations.

- **The permits:** The judge questions the good faith of the artists vis-à-vis permits which they hadn't obtained. A contract was signed between COJO and the artists individually. The city of Montreal had the right to oversee the installation of the works, which it did in the case of Jean Noël's banners among others (changing their route and direction). Moreover, several artists sub-contracted municipal workers who installed their works. The judge affirms that Mayor Drapeau was astonished, that M. Sauvageau from the "Office d'embellissement de la ville de Montréal" was astonished, and that the municipal workers were ... astonished.

- **The witnesses:** The judge casts moral doubt towards those responsible at COJO, the minister of Cultural Affairs whom he discredits, the Ministry of External Affairs and its representatives, those who juried the exhibition and the specialists they heard in the proceedings; all of whom being in agreement with Corridart. This moral doubt is absent when the judge, in

order to support his indictment of the exhibition, cites several witnesses who have close relations with the defendant (city employees, directly or indirectly, ex-contractors, etc.). Oddly enough, all of these witnesses position themselves against Corridart, as do the Anglo-phone journalists and their readership.

- **The 'vested' interests:** The judge wants to persuade us that the Corridart artists insulted institutions, thus by implication insulting Justice which is an institution. He calls for the endorsement of his colleagues on the basis that "no court would be in agreement (with the exhibition)." He opens the way to his colleagues of the Supreme Court of Canada by explaining how these works blaspheme against Canada and the Monarchy.

- **The indictment:** "The cities chosen as hosts wish to give to the whole universe ... the most favorable impression of themselves and the country in which they are situated". This sentence appears almost as a foreword to the commencement of the judgement. Thus, the whole judgement revolves around this point and the conclusion returns to this sentence. According to the judge, these exhibits are an "added attraction", which orients a strict definition of the nature of art.

The judge points out that the scaffoldings conceal buildings, even a Rodin, a park, a museum! Consequently, he begins from the principle that one should not mask the buildings which house institutions, as art already has its place and should serve only aesthetic ends.

A certain point of view persists at the heart of the judgement, it can be summarized in such homilies as "the scaffoldings are far from beautiful", "the scaffoldings expose nothing", "the profusion." In other words if one perceives the structure of a construction, it is not beautiful, nor is it art; if a work shows a profusion of colours, or of explanations it cannot be a work of art. Thus, when the hand on one of the scaffoldings points to a Hydro-Quebec pylon, the judge retorts "functional installations are not very aesthetic", "their presence is not desirable" "needless to say."

The judge constantly comes back to the sentiment that the Corridart event was based on the idea of "ruins and destruction", an idea reinforced by what he calls the "manifesto" (Charney's original concept) which "traces in its own manner a chronological history" of Montreal. (ed. note: Charney's history examines past and present edifices which reveal the class structure of the

city as well as the ravages of recent development which have "...tended to reduce the street (Sherbrooke) to a vehicular thoroughfare with few vestiges of its past.") But, according to the judge, the photographic comparison of opulence face to face with poverty is "unfair and inaccurate." No doubt, the unannounced 6:00 a.m. demolition of the historic Van Horne house should, then, correspond to the idea of progress, and to oppose such an action constitutes "folly and anti-progress."

Washing our own dirty laundry

The position of Judge Ignace Deslauriers could be summarized by the formula: "the event propagated the notion of demolition and that is what happened". This Manichaeism reveals a wisdom of the world in which appearance should dominate the essential, especially in the case of an exhibition in which one should present one's best face to the world! To come back to the criteria which qualify one as an expert, the judge approves the social rupture⁸ which exists at the heart of Quebec soc-

ety: that which the liberal professions have a vested interest in promoting, meaning that the masses should subordinate themselves to the life-style of the professionals so that the true critical voice of the cultural workers would become as mute as the masses themselves.

The fundamental reasoning is stated in syllogisms of the "shocked all thinking persons" type, which means if you were not shocked, you are not thinking well. In this way this discourse hopes to strike the sensitive chord in the "québécois" public sentiment. This way of interpreting the human actions which surround us is paramount to the kind of social intervention to which we became accustomed through the October crisis.

When the governments of communist countries make use of similar syllogisms, it engenders interferences such as the one in Izmaylowo park in Moscow, September 29, 1974, when an unruly exhibition was razed. In the summer of 1975, one year later, the Moscow regime permitted independent painters to hold an exhibition. Are our societies more democratic? The judgement of Judge Ignace Deslauriers confirms the

contrary by its repressive nature in denying to artists the right to criticize the nature of art. □

Postscript: While editing this article, I learned that the City of Quebec caused its functionaries to withdraw the work of Andrée Pagé from the outdoor exhibition Confrontation 81. This exhibition has been held under the auspices of the "Conseil de la sculpture du Québec" since 1965. Pagé's work was subsequently returned to the exhibition, on the pretext that "a second Corridart" should be avoided. This gesture allows us to hope that the present judgement will not establish a precedent within jurisprudence, as well as offering the possibility of a successful appeal of the decision by the artists. J.T.

The artists involved in this court case must raise \$10,000 by September 1, 1981. Contributions may be sent to:

Fond Corridart
C.P. 66
Magog, Quebec, J1X 3W7

NANCY JOHNSON

FEMINIST FILM AND VIDEO Women at this international conference met to discuss the form and content of feminist expression

For one week in Amsterdam at the end of May, about 250 women from 33 countries met for the First International Feminist Conference on Film and Video. When I arrived I went to my billet, a squat house of four girls who called themselves 'maison, pretty girls'. On the kitchen window there was writing in Dutch, which read, "please get me out of jail, signed madame x." It was in reference to a recent squatting battle where police erected barricades around the building. The squatters had won this one, when the police backed down without forcibly evicting them. One woman pointed to a line with bells on it, strung across the canal from one squat to another. "It's an alarm system," she said, "in case of 'military action'." It's going to be an interesting week, I thought.

James Tiptree Jr., a pen name for Alice Sheldon, wrote a science fiction story called *The Women Men Don't See*, about two women and two men abandoned in a wilderness swamp. They are contacted by extra-terrestrials and the women, rather than waiting to return to earthly civilization, find it more plau-

sible to go with the neutered aliens into an interstellar world. One of the women, as she steps into the departing vehicle, says "... we survive by ones and twos in the chinks of your world machine ... (Living in a patriarchal society) is like hating the weather."

Information exchange on a massive scale

It is vital for women to meet in situations like the International Film and Video Conference and further develop the international camaraderie, support and feedback of a global event. This conference generated a massive exchange of information. Each day there were continuous workshops on the politics of collective filmmaking, the use of film for social and political intervention, third world feminist film, lesbian aesthetics and film theory, technical skill sharing, video, documentary filmmaking, mainstream cinema, experimental filmmaking, distribution and the development of the international feminist film network. Each night there were film and video screenings,

mostly of work done by the conference participants.

Many of the workshops and screenings were held at the same time, creating in effect, many conferences within the conference. It is impossible to comment on the nature of all the discussions. But to give some indication of the huge tangible output, by the end of the week, the third world women had written a joint paper, two newsletters were started (an International Feminist Film and Video Newsletter and a separate International Feminist Video Newsletter), and the structure created to compile a massive resource book containing virtually all relevant information on feminist film and video in each country (see insert next page).

The opening sequence in a Dutch film, *Donna*, by Yvonne Scholten, is a courtyard interview with five, old and motherly, northern Italian women. Several years before the women had been broadcasting their own radio programs from a small basement station. The broadcasts presented stories of local women. Often they were the personal articulations of various transitional

5. See *Bozarts*, a film by Jacques Giraldeau (NFB 1969) on the subject of such symposia which took place from 1964-69.
6. This coalition was successful in getting a temporary injunction applied against the sale of the play in book form and also to prevent its performance. However, in January, 1979, a Québec Superior Court judge lifted the injunction and on June 6, 1979, the play re-opened.
7. Much of the work contained within the exhibition implied criticism of the city of Montreal's development policies, especially a series of photographs mounted on the scaffolding which showed the houses (now demolished) that had once lined Sherbrooke Street. On top of this scaffolding were large two-dimensional hands, pointing to the replacement structures — high-rise buildings, pylons, etc.
8. "Coupure" can also imply "sous la coupe de" or "under the thumb of".

FEMINIST FILM AND VIDEO

forces at work in the village. ("I left my husband because he thought he was god.") In 1979, a bomb was thrown into the station, destroying it. As the women tried to escape they were machine-gunned and critically injured.

Although the radio broadcasts were rather ordinary acts of self-expression, they elicited a violent and crippling response. The basic human rights of the women were denied because their behaviour threatened the social balance in the community.

Despite often violent attempts at suppression, these and many other women continue to engage in political struggles. The acts of suppression demonstrate the necessity to use global networks, like the film and video network, to defend and shape international feminism.

A predominant occupation of the workshops was the elucidation of the political situations present in the various nations and regions and the implications these held for the activities of feminists. For some, as in Turkey or Algeria, the survival of a feminist expression in any form is what is at stake. For others the continual task is to make the issues of feminism clear and effective.

In doing so, many questions come up about what it means to do feminist work. Obviously, work dealing specifically with female issues (like contraception, abortion, lesbianism, female sexuality, etc.) can demonstrate feminist politics, but what specific attitudes does a feminist bring to work geared towards other issues of social and political intervention? What is the specifically feminist perspective on struggles for nationalistic independence, on strikes, self-management and other forms of economic reorganization, on racism, environmental protection, education? What distinctions can be made between a leftist struggle and a feminist one?

Women in Algeria

The Algerian delegates demonstrated some of these distinctions very clearly. In Algeria during the National War of Liberation between 1954 and 1962, women were instrumentally involved in the creation of the new socialist, Islamic state. Their involvement was particularly important in that these were Arab women who traditionally have been barred from any public association with men. However, after the revolution, in an effort to organize the socialist agrarian reform and build new industry, the traditional function of women reappeared. They were forced back into the home, to become the private organizers of the family, losing accessibility to public participation and to most forms of paid labour.

In the new state, filmmaking is completely controlled by a national office of



Using film/video networks to defend and shape international feminism.

filmmaking and TV. Private and corporate films do not exist, and the director does not own a copy of the film. All projects must be approved by the national office and pass their censorship requirements.

Since the socialist Islamic state of Algeria will not admit to the existence of prostitution, it follows that there are no film projects permitted on prostitution. Another example is the female textile worker who must endure particularly bad working conditions in lightless, airless underground factories. The vast majority of the textile workers are widows and other 'abandoned' women. As outcasts in an Islamic society, their working conditions are sanctioned by the state, and any discussion or film projects about their situation are prohibited. Thus for many feminist filmmakers, a primary problem is one of outright censorship of subject matter, as is often the case in Algeria.

Continuously, the films and videos shown at the conference revealed the diversity of ways in which feminist struggles are being undertaken. For most of its 90 minutes, Donna, the Yvonne Scholten film, gave an historical outline of the feminist movement in Italy during the twentieth century. It emphasized how repeatedly the priorities of feminists were absorbed into the partisan movement or the concerns of both world wars.

A Turkish woman, Sema Poyraz, screened *Golge*, her film about traditional role models among Turkish families living in West Germany. This rather tame film, whose threat must be that it dares to talk about the family structure at all, has forced Poyraz into exile. If she returns to Turkey, she will be forced to stand trial for anti-Turkish propaganda and is liable for sentencing of up to 15 years. Turkish authorities are threatening to seize her possessions and withdraw her nationality.

Filming the 'clients' — a threat of exposure

An Italian film, *AAA Offresi*, by M. Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, Roni Daopoulo, Paola de Martiri, Loredana Rotondo, and Annabella Miscuglio has caused a huge scandal following its re-

lease. This film, made for TV, contains scenes of actual clients visiting prostitutes. There are no scenes of sexual acts and the film was edited so that the faces of the clients could not be identified. In choosing to shoot real situations, the filmmakers pointed out the double standard of illegal prostitution. The film threatens the clients with a vulnerability usually reserved for the prostitutes. Criminal charges have been laid and the film has been seized by police. Both left and right organizations in Italy have condemned the film as "dishonest" and an "invasion of privacy". The film intended to illustrate how protected the clients are by placing them in a situation where exposure is threatened. In fact, the *threat itself* has proved to be enough of a reason for the film's legal suppression.

A Canadian film, *A Wives Tale*, by Joyce Rock, Sophie Bissonnette and Martin Duckworth (see *FUSE*, March/April 1981) shows through a traditional left struggle — a strike — the sociological and political emergence of the wives who are tied to the situation. During a strike in 1979 at a nickel company, the wives' support group begins to recognize that their position in the family is quite different from the wage-earner, and that the union will not necessarily protect their interests as mothers and wives. By voicing their independence publicly they give themselves a clearer perception of their relation to the labour of their husbands.

In the third world workshops, there was much discussion of the entire question of western women making films in third world countries. Western women often have technology and funding that is otherwise unavailable. In their joint paper the third world women stated that they welcomed "the foreign women filmmakers who have political solidarity with our aims and objectives." This implies that foreign women film directors do their homework, and that they be aware of the situation they are filming in its complete socio-political context. It is an awareness that will only materialize through months of dialogue. In addition, it was felt, the foreign filmmakers had an obligation to exchange resources and skills with local feminist filmmakers.

A Dutch-financed and directed film about Cuban cigar factory workers' attitudes towards their job conducted all of its interviews while the Cubans were in the factory. Any possibility for an honest presentation of what the worker thought was lost. Although theirs was a well-intentioned film that tried to be informative about the nature of the socialist revolution in Cuba, the filmmakers failed to recognize this simple political actuality of the workers' situation and in doing so, treated them like ethnographic novelties.

Any film or video situation, whether cross-cultural or not, demands that the director be aware of her approach to her subjects. *Es Primera Vez*, by the Collective Cine Mujer, is a Mexican documentary about prostitutes. The film included long scenes of a young mother who is a prostitute washing her children in a bucket in a courtyard, doing her makeup and washing the dishes. The mother narrates the film by commenting simply on the events of her life. She is shown as direct and practical in her approach to prostitution. The film is not voyeuristic and it does not characterize the prostitute as an outcast. It simply elaborates on her daily routine.

The Collective Cine Mujer shows the film to prostitutes to warn them about health and legal dangers and to act as an impetus for the women to organize themselves. That the film was made to further the prostitutes' own ends is obvious in its entire formation. Part of its effectiveness stems from the conveyance of a trusted rapport between filmmaker and prostitute.

Do some forms signify feminism?

Many of the workshops discussed the nature of the film and video media, the various ways in which the transformation of information occurs through the use of it, and interrelation of content and form. It seems essential when making decisions about the use of the media, to know very clearly what kind of statement one is interested in making with a film or video.

Partly due to theorists like Mary Daly and Adrienne Rich, some feminists feel that the use of certain forms in themselves will allow for the creation of new feminist language. In film and video, as in literature, any use of form that is more abstract, less linear or the use of cyclical, layering or spinning de-

FEMINIST FILM AND VIDEO

VICES is sometimes considered to be in opposition to mechanistic (i.e. patriarchal) thinking. But I think to connect structure with ideology is a very limited concept.

Firstly, the association of more abstract, less linear forms with feminism is an attempt to unnecessarily tie the expression of women to their organic nature. Secondly, structure can set up a predisposition towards making a certain statement, but only rarely does it signify the statement itself. Michelle Citron's *Daughter Rite* is no more or less feminist because of her use of a flickering, sequence-reversal device in the home movie portion of her film. Citron could make a very similar statement in a number of other ways. On the other hand, Maya Deren's use of structure in *Meshes in the Afternoon* is so bound up with her statement that it is hard to separate one from the other. The point is that there is little value in signifying certain forms in themselves as demonstrations of feminism.

Lesbian feminists, because of the scarcity of lesbian role models and the lack of lesbian visibility, often find their priorities lie in addressing this absence. Films, such as Barbara Hammer's, that work so unabashedly from a first-

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FEMINIST FILM AND VIDEO

person-singular perspective, are attempts to fill in a lot of uncharted territory.

Depicting lesbian sexuality

As well, it is important that lesbian-made media specifically portray lesbian sex. It is important for lesbians to see their own experience reflected in a public media, and it is important for all women to see portrayals of female sexuality that attempt to be neither pornographic nor misogynist. However, films such as Hammer's *Dyketactics*, a 25-minute piece showing nothing but close-ups of two women engaged in sex, created some negative reactions among the women at the conference. Criticisms, of course, can be made of any portrayals of sex including a lesbian one, but I think some women equate every explicit portrayal with misogyny, narcissism, exploitation or voyeurism. Sexuality, even in its barest physical nature, is so central to our lives that it deserves to be discussed and emphasized at least as much as any other feminist issue.

The treatment of sexuality creates tension between lesbians and straight women. Often the tension is really a matter of different women having very different priorities. It is only one of the internal tensions that feminism must include if it is to remain broad-based enough to address all women's realities.

However important, lesbian filmmaking does not depend specifically on the depiction of sexuality between women. Sometimes, as in Chantal Ackerman's films, when the characters move through the ordinary (non-sexual) action of the film, often it is a lesbian moving.

On the importance of interiors

Julia Lesage, a critic and editor of *Jump Cut*, a film publication from San Francisco, gave a workshop on what she calls the cinematic depiction of domestic space. Domestic space, or the interiors in which the characters live, is not as generally recognised to be a manipulated environment as are other, more alien locations. Partly this is due to the fact that, like the ideal family, the domestic residence is often seen as ahistorical and non-participatory in the market place. In fact, Lesage says, the use of domestic space reveals a whole range of ideological assumptions about the occupant's life. By looking at the spatial divisions and set designs, the function of the space is revealed, and all the individual contents can be analyzed. With this information the viewer often is aware of the structure for emotional behaviour and the occupant's class relation to the rest of society. When these sociological details are absorbed, it pre-

sents a way in which to analyze the real political messages in the film. In effect, what Lesage is suggesting is that clues as to the actual role of women, or the character's actual class status are contained within the environment, rather than within the story-line.

If there was a major failing of the conference, it was that delegates did not organize themselves to bring along enough of the really excellent films and videos from sources other than their own work or that of their own organizations. The conference was well organized, and incredibly non-divisive, despite the wide variety and interests of the women present. A lot of the credit must go to Cinemien, the feminist film distribution centre in Amsterdam, who put together an international organizing committee a year in advance. The committee was broad-based enough to presuppose and accommodate many of the divergent needs as they arose.

Canadian representatives

Finally something should be said about the representation of Canadian women at the conference. There were 22 Canadian women — 19 of whom received sponsorship. Six of the twelve Québec women received federal sponsorship. The other Québec women were sponsored by the Québec government.

The Québécois showed themselves to be organized and aware of each others' activities. In general, they were a reflection of their geographical and political cohesion and this province's willingness to fund participation in international events.

The rest of the English Canadians were in a terribly different situation. It was painfully clear that there are too few centres for feminist activity, especially in relation to film or video. Those that do exist are barely financed and strung out in a linear fashion across 4,500 miles of country. But several specific points should be made. Why, when five prospective names were submitted to the Secretary of State was only one delegate chosen to represent all of central Canada between Vancouver and Montréal? Why did Studio D, the National Film Board's women's bureau, and the body that made grant requests to the Secretary of State, not feel the responsibility to give central Canadian women a fairer representation? Why was information about the conference so slow in circulating around and out of Toronto when arts, film and video organizations were first contacted by Cinemien in October, 1980? If this information died at an early stage because there is no specifically feminist film or video organization in Toronto, then this alone speaks for the need for one. □

Nancy Johnson is an artist living in Toronto.

Addresses and information

- Letters protesting the seizure of AAA Offresi made by M. Grazia Belmonti, Anna Carini, Roni Daopoulo, Paola de Martiri, Loredana Rotondo, and Annabella Miscuglio should be sent to: Ministero de Grazia e Giustizia, Via Arenula, 00186, Roma, Italia.

- Letters protesting the exile and legal position of Sema Poyraz, over the film *Golge*, should be sent to the Turkish Ministry of Justice.

- Two newsletters came out of the conference:

International Feminist Film and Video Newsletter, c/o Abigail Norman, Women Make Movies, 257 West 19th Street, New York, NY, 10011. (212) 929 6477.

International Feminist Video Newsletter, c/o Christine Wilks, Women in Sync, 18 Addison Grove, Chiswick, London W4, England.

Both newsletters are interested in information on new feminist films and/or video tapes, announcements by distribution groups and news on political struggles around specific campaigns.

- In addition, networks are set up to compile a resource book containing the following information: a complete list of all feminist films and video tapes in each country including running time, format (16mm/35mm/video) maker, distribution; an outline of the funding, distribution and exhibition situation; an outline of the legal situation regarding copyright, censorship and customs regulations; details of laboratory costs, details of video systems most commonly used, technical skills and resources; a listing of feminist organizations.

Canadian contacts for the resource book are: Albanie Morin, (French contact — video) Group d'Intervention Video, 1308 Gifford, Montreal, Que., H2J 1R5; Diane Beaudry, (English contact — film) Studio D, CP 6100 Succursale, Montreal, Que., H3C 3H5; Michelle Nickel, (English contact — video) Women in Focus, 204-456 Broadway West, Vancouver, B.C., V5Y 1R3.

Postscript: It should be added that a Toronto-based film and video group has begun to meet and more information can be obtained by contacting Meg Thornton at Trinity Square Video, 299 Queen St West, Toronto, 593-1332.

FIGHTING THE RIGHT

Lesbians propose a fight on all fronts to counter the growth of right-wing activities

The burning cross, symbol of the Ku Klux Klan, was seen in front of a branch of the Klan in Vancouver. Forty members of the fascist Ku Klux Klan gathered in front of the branch of the Klan. On the same day, May 31, in Toronto, a group of women and backgrounds march up through the work...

The Fifth bi-National Lesbian Conference (english and french-speaking Canada), held in Vancouver, May 16-18, set three priorities for future action: childcare, the formation of a national lesbian organization and the fight against the right. The latter was the subject of a workshop conducted on two consecutive days of the conference by Sara Diamond, Helen Mintz and Frances Wasserlein. The workshop was timely because it defined how the right's coalescing power will effect all women's choices by revealing the particular issues of lesbian oppression. But the workshop was more than a list of grievances. Diamond, Mintz and Wasserlein are all active within the feminist and lesbian community as well as within organized labour and other community-based groups. Seeing the rise of the right as a well-organized, well-publicized and well-financed movement, they recognize that opposition to this rise must begin with an understanding that, as Wasserlein says, "political climates do not just fall out of the sky, they are made. They are made not only by forceful actions taken by groups — any groups — but by the permissions granted for those actions when they are not opposed by the greater numbers in the community... It is imperative for all people, lesbians, gay men, heterosexual women and men, all those who support a pro-choice position on life to refuse our permission for these acts. That is why I think it is important for lesbians to organize, to reach out to lesbians in isolation, whether in cities or in the rural areas. It is important for those of us who have the freedom to speak out to begin to make the necessary connections between the actions of small groups of extremists, the larger organized 'liberal' right-wing groups, and the state. It is important for all of us to begin to understand our society better, how it works, and who and what holds it together."

FUSE co-editor Lisa Steele talked to Sara Diamond and Helen Mintz on June 18, 1981 in Vancouver.

FUSE: How did the idea of your workshop on lesbians fighting the right come about?

Helen Mintz: After the B.C. Federation of Women conference last year, a group of us began meeting to talk strategies and what would be useful within the women's movement in terms of pulling together more effective fight-backs on the attacks against working women and also to counter the growth of the right. We had moved from fairly theoretical kinds of discussion around what the women's movement should be and began talking much more concretely about the kind of organising that needed to be done.

The workshop at the lesbian conference came out of six months of those meetings. Three of us, Sara, Frances and myself, felt that it was really important for there to be discussion at the lesbian conference about the rise of

right-wing forces and the ways in which they are attacking women and lesbians. At the conference I think people's militancy really coalesced around the whole offensive against the right. In fact none of us had been part of the organising committee of the conference and yet the workshop was held once and there was so much interest in it that it was held again the next day. In the discussion groups after the presentation, women talked about the ways that their own lives were effected by the rise of the right and by repression against us as lesbians in our own personal situations. I found that really moving. The thing that was clearest to me in the group that I was in was the extent to which people were protecting themselves.

Sara Diamond: In the group I was in there was discussion of general exploitative work situations. There was a real

split between lesbians who had been working within institutions in the women's community and lesbians who were working for wages out in the straight world. What came out from the wage earners was this incredible pressure to go back into the closet. Several women talked about losing their jobs when they came out recently, and a really changed climate around gay and lesbian issues so that it was really difficult to talk to co-workers about it. So there was a lot of fear expressed, but also a lot of anger. It wasn't that women were just feeling victimised, it was that they were feeling angry that they had struggled so hard to re-claim their sexuality and then were under attack to that extent. It was militant, there was a really strong sense that okay we are going to move out of this conference, organize and create a public profile for lesbians. And we are not just going to

Sara Diamond belongs to the Association of College and University Employees (local 2), is a member of Bread and Roses and is actively involved in the Vancouver-based lesbian organization against the right. She is also an independent producer of videotapes currently working on a tape about the CUPW strike as well as compiling a history of women in B.C. labour through a series of interviews. Helen Mintz has been a teacher in the public school system in Vancouver for 8 years, is a member of the B.C. Teachers' Federation, Bread and Roses and the B.C. Organization to Fight Racism. Frances Wasserlein has worked at a Vancouver shelter for battered women for several years and has been active in feminist organizing including the International Women's Day Committee.

do it in response to the right, but we are going to try and lay out what we think should be our rights, what positive demands we want to make of the state and move it further than just saying that we have a right to exist.

FUSE: What's the organisation called and what are its plans? Do you have a name?

H.M.: No we don't, but one of the things that a number of women have said is that they don't want it to be called Lesbians Against the Right. They don't want to be constantly in the position of being on the defensive and responding. **S.D.:** Different ideas came up. One of them was the need to respond to the media, to create a national media-watch to look at the kind of coverage that the press is giving to the growth of the right which is essentially positive because it's non-critical.

FUSE: I understand there's an archive of this material on the media being collected now?

H.M.: Frances is collecting the material together that the group in Vancouver is compiling. They're going into back issues of the main press and also the right-wing press and the press of resistance to get an overview of, first of all, right-wing activities and then the way the media deals with those activities, so we can respond to the media and figure out how we are going to present ourselves to counter that kind of mass image.

FUSE: Would you like national coordination on that?

S.D.: Yes it would really help. The way we are structuring it now is to assign different magazines and newspapers to women within the group and they'll take responsibility for xeroxing and clipping. We'll organise it very practically and we will also feed some of it through Lesbian/Lesbienne in condensed versions. In Canada there are many different communities doing anti-right work — there are immigrant groups, racial minorities, anti-fascist groups, teachers, lesbians and feminists, and a lot of us are duplicating research and duplicating the kind of overview we are trying to develop of the right's activities and how to fight back. Eventually what we need to aim towards in the next year is some kind of bi-national conference around this stuff to create a really effective organising network so that people are not only working within their own communities. We are trying to do that with the lesbian movement through this Day of Action (planned for March, 1982). We also want to use it as a way of educating our allies. But I don't think it is enough for just the lesbian community to do it. I think it has to be a coordination of all the different forces. And that kind of thing could get itself into the trade union movement, could reach working people if it had that kind of broad based

organising — which is ultimately where you have to go.

FUSE: Historically there has been greater difficulty for lesbians to gain political leverage or political profile. Why do you think that's the case?

S.D.: I think that it has to do with the ways that lesbian oppression is hidden because as women, lesbians are often in dependent economic relationships with men. A certain number of lesbians — maybe even the majority — end up in family relationships and stay there despite being lesbians. That is one reason. And secondly, the state has focused its attack on male homosexuality because it is more public, it publicly challenges sexual norms. Also gay men, as men, have been able to be more visible because there has been money to create a commercial ghetto which is public space. Lesbians have not had the same kind of public profile as gay men so they haven't come under the same kind of attacks. The kinds of attacks that we

For more information about, or contributions to, the media-watch on right-wing activities, contact: Frances Wasserlein c/o Vancouver Status of Women, 400A West 5th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

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have experienced are around the right to bear children, to keep our kids and now increasingly, the right to alternative fertilisation (artificial insemination); the right to be women who have children and relate to women in ways that challenge the traditional family structure. That's where the attacks have been focused; but it's still hidden because it is within the family. Other attacks on lesbians have been less direct; they're taking place in job areas where it's primarily women working, like teaching. So when the right organises to prohibit gays from teaching and working with children, it's also going to effect a large part of the lesbian population who won't be able to be child-care workers, teachers and so on.

Also pressure is applied to the lesbian community through attacks on women's organisations such as the Vancouver Status of Women which was denied funding a year and a half ago because of its support of lesbian issues. VSW also supported women's right to choose abortion. So again that attack was not made explicitly on lesbians but in a secondary way. I guess I am trying to say that it has been hard for the lesbian

movement to pull together around a series of clear attacks on lesbians per se in the same way as the gay male movement has. At the same time lesbians have been really active in struggles around women's issues because they understood that their oppression is linked to the general position of women in the family.

The place where we are a threat is in defining an autonomous place for women to have personal, economic, political and sexual lives outside of that dominant structure. As the right begins to organise more and more it's become really clear that the attacks on lesbians are becoming more explicit.

H.M.: The rights that women have gained are under attack now and this is being spearheaded by an attack against lesbians. The Family Protection Act in the U.S. is a really clear model for us to look at. It's an attempt to protect the nuclear family that would involve massive cutbacks in services for battered women, juveniles, as well as a real right-wing offensive in the schools. The offence against gay men and lesbians would deny federal funding to any agencies which would put forward gay or lesbian lifestyles as acceptable. It is important to look at that because it hits liberals at their weakest point. The liberals who run all those agencies that could be cut back are going to be forced to choose between their support of gay and lesbian rights and their access to funding. And that is really dangerous. If the Family Protection Act is passed it will set up the structure for a massive victimisation and scapegoating of gays and lesbians because it will pull the liberal support out.

FUSE: That's a mirror of the provincial election in Ontario. During the election the gay community could get no public support from the opposition parties for inclusion of sexual orientation within the Human Rights Code in Ontario. The NDP and the Liberals backed right out and both had certainly indicated their support before the bath raids which scared them off.

H.M.: I think that what we have done as lesbians, rather than organising around lesbian issues, is to organise within women's groups around women's issues, and not to take up specifically lesbian questions. It hasn't happened until now partly because within the women's movement there are a lot of women who feel that being a lesbian is a personal choice and not a political issue. Women's groups don't want to take that up. I've been told that there has been a tendency amongst certain women and among the women's movement to resist taking up specifically lesbian issues because of the fear of the kind of reaction that will come. There is tremendous homophobia within this society which comes into the women's movement. I think a really important anal-

ogy can be drawn with certain progressive groups' resistance to taking up questions of red baiting and the victimisation of communists because people don't want to be identified with communists. I think that's really dangerous because what the right can do with that point is pick off people who are most vulnerable and often the most militant, both lesbians and communists. That trend is being reversed through lesbians organising around our own specific issues which I think is really important.

S.D.: Also I think that this thing of choice is really important in part because of the history of the women's movement and in some ways it emerged when alternate lifestyles were seen as a very major component of strategies for women, becoming a lesbian was seen as a political choice, as a strategy to fight our oppression as women. In fact for the majority of lesbians out there it is not that kind of choice, it's something that comes out of women, on a gut level, not wanting to be dominated by men, it comes out of very powerful, complex relationships with women that some women experience as they are growing up. It comes out of the family, out of the fact that it is possible to learn to love people of both sexes or just one sex. I think it's really important for the women's move-

ment to start understanding that. If it's only seen as women "choosing to become lesbians" then it's also seen sometimes as women choosing to be oppressed as lesbians. We are lesbians, the political choice is in deciding to come out, not stay terrified in the closet. It's in deciding to fight for the right to be who we are.

FUSE: If lesbianism isn't a consumer product that people simply pick up, is it a political choice based on the social world?

H.M.: Initially for women it is not a political choice. It's not because you read a manifesto and say, "gee I'm going to be a lesbian because that is the politically right-on thing to do." But having made that choice for whatever reasons it's made — I think it is usually a personal choice based on reinforcements of social needs — once the decision is made then at that point it becomes a political question.

S.D.: It becomes a political question because you are forced to act politically to defend yourself in this society.

H.M.: Right, because one of the things that we talked about in the presentation in the workshop was that when the state comes down on lesbians, we're not left with the option of saying, "Well excuse me, this isn't a political question for me, it's a personal one, so go bother the woman next door who is a political

lesbian. I'm just in it for my own self." **FUSE:** Then lesbians don't have the option to take the stance of it being a personal choice.

S.D.: I don't think the majority of lesbians see it as something that they have chosen. They see it as something they are. For those of us who function within the women's community, there is a whole buffer zone of protection, where, for many women it was maybe more of a choice or appeared to be. It's important to remember that's part of the nature of the oppression always. But there are thousands and thousands of lesbians out there who are incredibly isolated and they have started to come out and have relationships with other women because that's where their sexuality lies, where their emotions are.

Another priority that emerged from the conference of anti-right organising was to reach those women who are not yet organised within either the feminist movement, the lesbian movement or any communities, and to help them find ways of being active as lesbians. Some of the things that we tried to point out in that workshop were ways that people have been successful in organising. **FUSE:** You talked about the Briggs amendment in California. What was proposed there?

S.D.: Briggs proposed that gay and lesbian teachers not be allowed to teach in

Family Protection Act would power the 'nuclear' unit

It is not surprising that one of Jimmy Carter's only discernible legacies as President of the United States is a piece of legislation known as the "Family Protection Act". For despite Carter's so-called human rights advocacy, it is only his fear for the survival of the nuclear family that has been reclaimed by the Reagan administration in its attempts to systematically abolish all non-conformist modes of behaviour.

The "Family Protection Act" will soon come before Congress in an updated form and, like the recent budget cuts for community and cultural programmes, it will seriously threaten the rights of women, gays, lesbians and minorities to self-determination.

Citing the view that "a stable and healthy American family is at the foundation of a strong American society," and that "the (U.S.) government has frequently fostered policies which undermine the viability of the Amer-

ican family, through its policies of taxation and spending," the Act sets out to "strengthen the American family and promote the virtues of family life through education, tax assistance, and related measures."

The "Family Protection Act" attempts to accomplish these ends by withholding federal funds from any organization or institution that (direct quote, emphasis added):

- 1) prohibits voluntary prayer on the premises of any public building;
- 2) produces or promotes courses of instruction or curriculum seeking to inculcate values or modes of behaviour which contradict the demonstrated beliefs and values of the community;
- 3) purchases or prepares any educational materials if such materials would tend to denigrate, diminish or deny the role differences between the sexes as it has been historically understood in the United States;
- 4) operates a child abuse program unless such program has been specifically authorized and established by the legislature of that State;
- 5) fails to notify the parents or guardians of an unmarried minor prior to providing any contraceptive device or abortion service (including counseling) to said minor;
- 6) provides legal assistance with respect to any proceeding or litigation

relating to abortion, school desegregation, military service, divorce, or gay rights; or

7) presents homosexuality, male or female, as an acceptable alternative lifestyle.

The "Family Protection Act" also provides for: parental review of textbooks; tax exemption and judicial exemptions for private schools; tax breaks for women who do not work outside the home; disqualification of college students from the food stamp program; federal abdication of responsibility on behalf of battered women; and a general increase in the power of individual states to decide which organizations should be funded by the federal government.

In essence, the Act sets out to align the power of the family with the power of the State and thereby allow the U.S. government to legally opt out of any prior commitments it has made to human and civil rights. The likely ramification of such a policy is that alternative communities and organizations would assume the manifest status of individuals. And like individuals, when their beliefs are not necessarily seen to be in the best interests of the Majority — "Moral" or otherwise — their services become expendable.

James Dunn

the schools. Access to children is very sensitive. It also proposed the repeal of protective ordinances around gay rights that had already been enacted. So it was attempting to wipe out the work of the gay and lesbian movement of the last ten years. It was defeated by a majority. That was 1978.

FUSE: How was it defeated?

S.D: What they did around the Briggs Amendment is really different from, for example, how they responded in Dade County, in Florida, and some of the other places where the gay movement was electorally defeated. In the places where the people lost, they lost because they ran basic human rights campaigns where they said, "we deserve civil rights like any other minority group." The problem was that it did not take on the slanders of the right which were saying that gays were sick and criminal, and why should people who are mentally ill and criminal be given the same rights as other minority or majority groups within the society. In order to fight Briggs effectively, people in California took on the claims of the right about our sexuality directly. They answered with a lot of factual detail and discussion about how most child molesters are heterosexual men and most of it occurs within the family, about why people choose to be gays and lesbians and how their sexual repression within this society effects all people. They explained why the right wants to re-structure the family and who would be victimised by that re-structuring to show the working class families and rural families how if the right was successful they in fact would be victimised also — as much as gays and lesbians would be — in terms of their right to have sexual options. They discussed the kinds of choices that people have been making around their sexuality since the '60s and the development of birth control and so on, and also made a very conscious effort to link up the attacks on the gay and lesbian communities with the attacks on minority communities and workers' rights. They organised a conference of trade unionists against the Briggs Amendment that was really successful. They talked about the right to work legislation and they talked about the ways that the right was organising against that by fighting against sexual orientation clauses in the unions. They were very clear in terms of identifying their allies and reaching out to them. They did really effective mass publicity around why people should defeat Briggs. They went and spoke in places where gays and lesbians had never been seen before. They talked to church communities, set up debates on television and in community situations with right-wing people. They studied ways to draw these people out and make them present their actual programme which was the actual liqui-

ation of gays, lesbians and other minority groups.

FUSE: What is the next step?

S.D: Part of what we have been trying to do is to analyse who the right actually is and how their organisations interlock with other institutions within capitalist and patriarchal society. It's important to fight the kind of political space that organisations like the Klan, Right to Life, the Moral Majority, Renaissance create for the state to bring in more repressive legislation — for example cutting back on the availability of abortions. Their function now is both to isolate the groups that they want to attack and to create a social and political space for broader attacks against workers, women and racial minorities as a whole. You see this in Toronto where the far right has played a role in creating an ideological climate where the cops have been the instrument of repression in a very organised way. It's a very self-conscious political role in Toronto. We can see this happening here in B.C., where the Right to Life has organised here for years to get on the hospital boards which are democratically elected. The meetings to elect the hospital board for Vancouver General Hospital got so large, they had to rent the Pacific National Exhibition stadium to hold them. It was just incredible the number of people who had come out from either side. The Social Credit government stepped in and took over the hospital board, taking it out of the hands of the community. Now, at least temporarily, they have protected the board which supports the right to choose abortion, but they also took away community control of the hospital. And the Socred government is quite extreme in its ideology and doesn't support the right to abortion... so who knows. The problem is that people got very tired of having to mobilise against the Right to Life every time there was a hospital board election.

H.M: The right has really been effective at reaching out and doing massive grassroots work, and progressive forces have really learned from the right about the need to do that.

POLITICS

Two weeks after this interview was conducted, the B.C. Legislature passed the Civil Rights Protection Act, which will allow members of minority groups to sue any person or group of persons who promotes hatred or racism. The Act provides for a maximum fine of \$2,000, six months in prison, or both for an individual or a maximum of \$10,000 fine for a corporation or society. The basis of this Act is that the current Human Rights Code in B.C. is totally inadequate to deal with the problem posed by the Klan, a position very strongly put forward by the B.C.O.F.R.

FUSE: Advertising and direct mail campaigns would be part of that.

S.D: And union organising — it's important not just to get into the union structures, but to get to the rank and file. Here in Vancouver they are the targetted group for the Klan and also the Right to Life. The Klan is active within the trade union movement even though their ideology opposes unions and wants corporatist union structures at best, but at this point they are not pushing that stuff. What they are doing instead, for example, is working in the Boilermakers union. There was a guy, a Klan member, who was distributing Klan literature and the union took the issue to the membership and they banned him from the Boilermakers union after a debate on the shop/union floor which I think is a really progressive move. Management tried to take over by firing him and saying that from now on unionists can't put up political information on bulletin boards and so on. But I think the thing that was really important was that the union actually took action and said, "we don't want fascists within our union." Certainly within one of the largest unions in B.C., the International Woodworkers of America, where there is a really mixed racial population and a lot of east indians, the level of racism in that union is really bad. It's an area where work just has to be done because the Klan has said explicitly that they want to organise there.

FUSE: Can you tell me about the B.C.O.F.R.?

H.M: B.C.O.F.R. is the B.C. Organisation to Fight Racism. It has done a massive publicity campaign in order to force the government to ban the Klan. Even though it seems at this point quite unrealistic that it'll happen, a lot of public education was done around that petitioning campaign.

FUSE: When was it started?

S.D: Around the beginning of this year. H.M: Also the organisation investigates incidents of racial violence. There is a committee that in the last four months has had between 40 and 50 complaints of racial violence. They have ranged from minor harassment and egg throwing, to fire bombing and incidents of assaults. What the B.C.O.F.R. has done is to try and go out and intervene in those situations to both provide immediate support for victims of racial assault and also to try and develop methods for fighting back. It's obvious now that people can't rely on the police to resist racial assault. So what the B.C.O.F.R. is doing is setting up neighbourhood groups. There are two that are functioning at this point: one in Surrey and one in Abbotsford, both of which have large east indian populations. Neighbourhood groups are starting to be put together in Burnaby, New Westminster and Vancouver. Each of

these groups is comprised of between thirty and forty people; they tend to mobilise around areas where there have been assaults or incidents of racial violence. The objectives of the group are to look after each other, exchange phone numbers, have some method whereby they are in contact with each other; put pressure on the police to increase protection against violence. They have started to distribute leaflets in the areas where these incidents have taken place, to attempt to make people aware of what's happening and what's being done to fight back. The groups attempt to unite anti-racist and progressive forces. The B.C.O.F.R. had a press conference with Rape Relief to con-

demn the violence against that group and show their support.

FUSE: Do you see the possibility of collective action between women active in the B.C.O.F.R. and the organisation of lesbians against the Right?

H.M: Yes, there are women within the B.C.O.F.R. who are open lesbians and women who support the rights of lesbians. I think this is really positive since the membership is 80 per cent east indian and I don't believe the whole question of lesbianism has been publicly raised within that community. The women I know who are involved in the B.C.O.F.R. are really concerned about waging an anti-racist struggle. Some of us are going to work within the

women's committee of the organisation. We will try to draw the links between the attacks against racial minorities and the attacks against lesbians. But we've never presented these connections to people who are not in the women's movement. We've never tried to win support for our rights as lesbians in immigrant communities and I think we have a lot to learn about how to go about it. Homophobia tends to be rampant in many cultures in this country and we may have to deal with it there. But we're encouraged by the progress of groups in Toronto, by the ways in which immigrant groups there have supported the rights of gay men and lesbians. □

KENNETH COUTTS-SMITH

CROW DOG

Spiritual revival and corporative repression: Wounded Knee, 1890 and 1973

From the beginning, the white settlers have wanted what the Aboriginal peoples had. The buffalo and the land itself were the first to go, but lately the 'menu' has changed. Now, "energy and resources" are the plat du jour. Oil, natural gas, uranium, molybdenum, coal — the federal mouth waters. But corporate powers are served first in this developers' banquet, as North American heads of state continue to act as toastmasters. What's at stake in the current round of negotiations for land claims is the survival and integrity of the Aboriginal culture and life. FUSE presents a history of treaty negotiations in Canada by Heather Ross, researcher for Grand Council Treaty 9, as well as a comparative analysis of the events of 1890 and 1973 which occurred at Wounded Knee in South Dakota by cultural historian, Kenneth Coutts-Smith.

There would seem to be little doubt that the American Indian movement of resurgence developed in the context of the widespread climate of refusal of the 1960s. The recognition that official authority and repression is inextricably related to corporate interests underwrote not only the thrust to establish land claims, but also laid down a new understanding of the nature of official power. At the same time, the broad concerns that rejected consumerism in favour of a revival of spiritual life led to a renaissance, or at least a reconstruction, of aboriginal ceremonial life.

From today's perspective of a congealing and coalescing right, the heady days of the Viet Nam refusal seem almost to have been swept into a historical vacuum. Certainly, the widespread rejection of consumerism, the urge to replace alienated positivist social forms with ones conditioned by greater psychological and spiritual relevance, collapsed under its own class-contradictions. The counter-culture was

a bourgeois phenomenon that remained trapped in the logic of bourgeois social culture; and the passionate aspirations of 1960s were transformed within a decade into either solitary and individual subjectivity or the cynicism of North American punk that, underwritten by a new and expanded consumerism, has adapted the rhetoric of rebellion into the domain of fashion.

The class system of North America, however, like that of other countries with internal colonial structures, is not homogenous. Both the urban sub-proletariat — those permanently unemployed — and the aboriginal social forms of the reserves remain largely impervious to the dynamic of that class system. The very brutality and indifference that conditions authority's understanding of a sub-proletariat allows for a space into which authentic spiritualised social aspirations can take hold. Just as Rastafarianism has emerged as a significant aspect of a mutating urban black identity, so has a revival of the

Ghost Dance emerged in Indian reserve life. Neither are merely religious consolations. Both are intense spiritual movements that propose the consolidation of identity and social meaning into an almost totally-destroyed cultural life; together with the political authority and power to wrest control of that cultural life.

Charismatic power

This integral relationship between the spiritual and the political domains is nowhere more intensely shown than in the movie *Crow Dog*, a documentary exploration of the significance of the Sioux Medicine Man, Leonard Crow Dog, who, perhaps more than anyone else, is responsible for a revitalisation of Indian religious life. From the very beginning of this film the remarkable personality and charisma of this man dominate the screen. In the opening sequences of prayer and ceremonial, in which he is both addressing his grand-

father, and by extension, ancestral tribal history, and revealing his own personal spiritual development, it is almost as if he is channelling the ritual process through the camera itself. Indeed, the makers of this movie, Mike Cuesta and David Baxter, credit themselves merely as "producers", and Cuesta is on record as stating that, though he had first assumed the role of director, he quickly realised that "there was no necessity for one, and that if anyone held that position it was Leonard Crow Dog."¹



Wovoka, the Paiute Messiah

Leonard Crow Dog's grandfather was an important medicine man, at the end of the so-called "Indian Wars", the tragic peak of Sioux plains culture, when the social structures of aboriginal culture were finally shattered and destroyed by murderous military power at Wounded Knee in 1890. The repressive reserve life subsequently imposed, and defined by constantly broken treaties, rapidly eroded the ceremonial base of the Sioux nation. Since 1870, the United States government has controlled and administered the Indian people through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, originally a part of the War Department, and now an agency of the Department of the Interior. In the early days, "Indian Agents", legally possessing absolute and dictatorial powers, were sent to manage the new reserves. Later, in 1934, the Wheeler-Howard Indian Representation Act was passed through Congress, in which a bureaucracy was established and Tribal Councils, based on a white-American notion of "democratic" government, were appointed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The roots of the tensions that were to explode in Wounded Knee forty years later in 1973 were securely laid at that point.

Ever since the systematic military destruction of Sioux life, just as in any other colonialist dominance of an aboriginal culture, ceremonial life was banned. From the very beginning, Christianity was brought in by government to provide its traditional missionary influence. The extraordinary degree to which this programme was engaged may be seen at the Pine Ridge reserve of South Dakota, the reserve which encompasses the Wounded Knee site, where, at present, there are 137 different churches — more than one for every hundred residents. It was in this mental climate of culture and spiritual debasement, bureaucratic welfarism, and the culturally-genocidal pressures to "assimilate" and disappear off-reserve into the urban sub-proletariat, that Leonard Crow Dog was, during the 1960s, to revive the traditions of the Ghost Dance. He reinforced first, a whole Sioux generation, and then other tribes, with a new found pride and dignity that was to quickly meld with the political currents of refusal that were in the air at that time.

The Ghost Dance

The Ghost Dance was an ecstatic millennial religion that swept Indian culture during the early 1890s and which developed its own specific form among the Sioux nation. Originating with the Paiute tribe of Nevada, it first surfaced under the prophetic leadership of an individual called Tavaibo in 1870, but began to achieve notice and to spread when the second prophet, a messianic personality known as Wovoka, assumed the leadership almost twenty years later. However, the Ghost Dance was far from being characteristic of traditional aboriginal religious life, despite its revival in the present with claims to such, but was, itself, a clear form of transitional culture. History is replete with various millennial and ecstatic "religions" that have coalesced around cultures experiencing colonialist stress or other forms of repressive domination; in Canada, amongst the Métis people, the religious teachings of Louis Riel is one example.

In its original Paiute form, the Ghost Dance was a clear blend between certain aboriginal traditions and others developed from the ecstatic spiritual rhetoric of Mormon Christianity. Though the Sioux were to develop a militant version of Indian identity and resistance, the teachings of Wovoka were essentially assimilationist in nature, in that the ceremonial dance pro-

mised the resurgence of all the Indian nations through an imminent millennial revival of the dead, who would inherit a world still shared with the white man; meanwhile, the preaching focused on essentially Christian ethical values of charity and love, with a strong injunction against fighting or any aggressive emotions.²

The new religion quickly spread to the surrounding tribes. However, when the Dance first arrived in the North among the Sioux people, in 1888-89, it found a nation both more demoralized and more militant. Delegations were immediately sent by the Sioux to visit Wovoka in Nevada; and, on their return, the main aspect of the cult that was emphasised was that the Messiah had indeed come to help the Indians but not the whites.

By 1890, the Ghost Dance was fully inaugurated at Pine Ridge reserve in the southern part of South Dakota, and Crow Dog — Leonard Crow Dog's grandfather — together with several other medicine men, the leadership of this new religion, quickly adopted the existing medicine to the new and changing conditions. And they were changing, with rapidity, for the Sioux people.

The millennial promise

Indeed, the new and imported cult melded indistinguishably into the generalised repressive experience that the Sioux were undergoing, and the peaceful message of Christian acceptance was redefined to a warlike one of militant resistance. The millennial promise was transformed to the prairie conditions: the buffalo would return once more in all their wealth of vast herds, all the Indians that were dead would be revived, and the living were to be immune from the white man's bullets as long as the individual wore the Ghost Shirt, a specific cult object unique to the Sioux, but derived, nevertheless, from the distant Mormon tunics.

The transformation of the dance into this form was completed by 1890, at the very moment at which the social pressures came to a head on the plains. In the early 1870s, the Sioux had been granted the whole of North Dakota as their reserve in perpetuity; but, as with the sorry history of government, settler, entrepreneur and aboriginal relations, the treaties that had guaranteed this as Indian land were to be quickly broken. The first major incursion into Sioux territory was that of the buffalo-

hunter, and by 1890 the herds were almost completely extinct. The next incursion was due to the discovery, in 1876, of gold in the Dakota Black Hills, the traditional sacred mountains of Sioux belief. As miners, drifters and gamblers arrived, rather than defend the treaty rights, the government simply rewrote the treaty — and the Indian people were summarily shorn of one third of the existing reserve. This move was backed up with military force, and the "Custer Wars" of the mid-1870s resulted.

With the buffalo disappearing, the government agents attempted to encourage the Sioux to turn to agricultural pursuits, but the alkali-dense soil was quite unsuitable for crops. Nevertheless, white settlers, encouraged by entrepreneurial land agents, clamoured for homesteads; and in 1882 the Sioux were called upon to surrender more territory, with a risible offer of 8 cents an acre. This government demand was resisted for a while by the Sioux leadership, but by 1889, they were finally forced into giving up *one complete half* of their assigned land. The once vast reserve was now split into three comparatively small reservations, which to this day remain separated in north and south by a sixty-mile wide corridor of white settlements, roads and towns.

All that time, the discontents and demoralizations were coming to a head. There had been failures of the already meagre crops, diseases and hunger; and, at that point, Congress saw fit to pass a bill radically cutting the earlier treaty obligations to supply meat and dry-food rations — the beef issue was reduced by more than one half over a three-year period.

In spite of this, the majority of the 25,000-strong Sioux nation were far from aggressive, and many of them not only accepted the imposed authoritarian structures, but actively supported both government and Christian missions. The political life of the Sioux nation could, by 1890, be said to have been divided between the so-called "progressive" (that is to say, white-oriented) party and the militant one, by now completely informed by the millennial dreams and aspirations of the Ghost Dance; and this was firmly under the leadership of three medicine-men: the great chief of a whole generation, Sitting Bull, and the younger men, Short Bull and the original Crow Dog.

Short Bull's address

The Ghost Dance, with its built-in messages, naturally aroused the hostility and fears of the Indian Agents, who attempted to use the tribal police to put down the movement. Failing this, they began to report threats of an uprising to the bureau of Indian Affairs and made demands for military interven-



On the Sioux reserve at Wounded Knee during the 1973 siege.

tion. Finally, in October 1890, after a series of Ghost Dances throughout the summer, Short Bull made an address at a large gathering on the Pine Ridge Reservation. He said that, since the whites were interfering so much in the religious life of the Sioux people, he would advance the date of the coming of the Messiah, perhaps as early as the next month. He urged the whole nation to gather into one place, and stated that they should dance, even if surrounded by troops, since the white bullets would be harmless and the white race would soon be annihilated.

The War Department responded. Early in November, President Benjamin Harrison directed the Secretary of War to assume military responsibility in order to prevent an outbreak; and, by the 19th of November, troops began to arrive at Pine Ridge under the command of General Nelson A. Miles. Within a few days, there were some 3,000 troops posted throughout the Sioux territory. With the first appearance of the military, Short Bull led a group of 3,000 Indians, which included only 700 warriors amongst them, out of Pine Ridge and Rosebud to the badlands in the north.

By now, under the pressure of the military, the Dance had been discontinued at all reservations, with the exception of Sitting Bull's camp in the Cheyenne River Reserve. It was here, in October, that Sitting Bull had broken the peace-pipe which he had kept in his house since his surrender to treaty in 1881. Now Sitting Bull said he wanted to fight and he wanted to die. It was evident to the military that it would be necessary for them to negate his influence, and, after various projects of persuasion, a detachment of some 43 police supported by a one-hundred-strong military contingent was finally sent to arrest him on December 15th. Despite the fact that the arrest was accomplished, a melee erupted and in the ensuing gunfire Sitting Bull was killed, together with eight other Indians and six police-

men. After his death, his body was mutilated by a policeman who repeatedly bludgeoned the face until the features were unrecognisable.

Wounded Knee — 1890

Following this, the army was determined to move the Indians from the badlands back to their reserves, and, with a combination of persuasion and physical force, they succeeded, with minor skirmishes and firefights, in getting the majority to return. Among the groups was a party of 106 warriors, accompanying over 200 women, children and old men, under the leadership of Big Foot, an acknowledged senior chief of the Sioux nation. This party came into Pine Ridge and camped on the banks of Wounded Knee Creek. It had been the intention of General Miles to remove Big Foot and his senior followers altogether from the Sioux country until the mood of the Sioux nation was contained and the political resistance had died down.

On the morning of December 29th, 1890, preparations were made to disarm Big Foot's band preparatory to taking them to the railroad. The Indians were camped in obedience to instructions in an open plain surrounded by soldiers, and under the protection of a white flag guaranteeing peace and safety. At eight o'clock in the morning, the warriors were ordered to come out of their tents and surrender their arms, which they began to do with great reluctance. As a result, some of the troops were ordered to close in to make a search of the tipis.

At this point, an incident occurred which precipitated the massacre; it was, however, doubtless exacerbated by the medicine-man, Yellow Bird, who was walking around, not being understood by the troops, blowing an eagle-bone whistle, urging resistance and promising immunity to the white man's bullets. One Indian responded, jumping up and shooting a trooper point blank.

1. Quoted Pamela Childs in Crow Dog, Millimeter, May 1979.

2. Much of the information concerning the Ghost Dance has come from various sources. The most useful document is James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890*, The University of Chicago Press, 1965. This was originally published as Part 2 of the Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Society of the Smithsonian Institution, 1892-93, by the Government Printing Office in 1896. James Mooney was one of the few nineteenth-century ethnologists working before the later establishment of academic anthropology under the authority of Franz Boas, and he demonstrated, for the mental climate of the period, a remarkable sympathy and understanding of the social and cultural life of the Indian people. I am also indebted to this volume, particularly to the appendices of government and military reports, for an understanding of the Wounded Knee events of 1890.

The military reaction was immediate and spontaneous, and obviously out of control of the officer's orders. In a few moments a massive volley of fire killed 200 men, women and children immediately (and wounded a further 100 who were to later die) out of a total estimated number of 370 individuals. The worst slaughter was caused by the Hotchkiss light artillery that pumped 2 lb. explosive shells at the rate of 50-a-minute into the large disarmed crowd and mowed down the fleeing women and children.

It seems clear that this brutal reaction was the result more of military incompetence and indiscipline than of a planned repressive and genocidal programme. The War Department had been reluctant to be engaged in the first place, and clearly it was the policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the civilian government that had allowed the situation to develop to this stage.

Wounded Knee — 1973

Although the 1890 massacre, which provided the haunting myth to the subsequent events of Wounded Knee 80 years later,³ may well have been one that was involuntary and not part of a defined programme of repressive domination, this certainly cannot be said for the situation that culminated in the 71-day siege of 1973. The massive intervention by Justice Department marshals, the F.B.I., armoured personnel carriers and military aircraft, demonstrated, at the outset, a clear determination to ruthlessly crush any opposition to the fundamental policies of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Not only the military over-kill, but the use of a Special Operations Group, a sort of independent S.W.A.T. team, one defined by the Director of U.S. Marshals, Wayne Colburn as "...a completely self-sustaining unit able to handle most situations without dependance on other organisations...a strike-force, one deployed at the request of the President or the U.S. Attorney General," emphasised the government level of decisions that were engaged.

Two streams of events developed through 1972 and early 1973 led to the Wounded Knee confrontation. One was resultant from incidents typical to the crude and brutal racism of small-town rural settler communities, and the other was local to the reserve itself. In February of 1972, an Indian called Raymond Yellow Thunder was beaten by two white men in Gordon, Nebraska, just south of the reserve. He was taken to an American Legion dance, beaten again, stripped and forced to dance naked, beaten further, and finally killed. Despite the fact that the body was found in the trunk of one of the men's cars, no charges were laid. Relatives of

the victim, pressing the police and the B.I.A. authorities, could get no satisfaction until they solicited the aid of members of the militant American Indian Movement, who had been holding a conference at that time in Omaha.

Only after Russell Means, and other A.I.M. leadership engaged in pressuring the authorities, were charges laid, charges which were made as lenient as possible — second-degree manslaughter and release without bail. Some months later, Leslie Bad Heart Bull was killed by a gas-station attendant, Donald Schmidt, in Buffalo Gap, South Dakota. Once more the aggressor was simply charged with second-degree manslaughter and, this time, extremely low bail. But on this occasion, A.I.M. announced that unless a full charge of murder was initiated, they would march and demonstrate in Custer City, North Dakota, where the case was to be held. As a result of the obduracy of the local Justice Department, a large demonstration gathered, and a fight broke out inside the courthouse where the A.I.M. leaders were trying to negotiate with the city officials. This sparked a riot among the crowd in the streets that climaxed in the burning of several buildings including the courthouse itself.

At the same time, the second stream of events was unfolding on the Pine Ridge reserve, where a particularly reactionary individual, one Richard Wilson, had managed to get himself elected Tribal Chairman. Wilson quickly instituted a reign of terror and corruption, in partnership, it seems, with the local Bureau of Indian Affairs Superintendent, Stanley Lyman. The population of the reserve found itself polarised between the assimilationist "progressives" and the traditionalists who were attempting, under the spiritual leadership of Leonard Crow Dog, to revive the dignity and integrity of Indian cultural life. Finally, after several failed attempts to impeach Wilson — attempts

defeated by the use of armed goon-squads — the traditionalists approached A.I.M. to help them dislodge the repressive and corrupt administration.

The arrival of A.I.M.

The American Indian Movement had, by this date, become an organisation of some considerable weight. Founded in Minneapolis in the mid-1960s, and originally devoted to the protection of displaced and de-cultured urban Indians vulnerable to police brutality, it was now beginning to exert a national pressure on the government administration structures. They had made their first contacts with the Sioux reservations by 1969, and, discerning the religious leadership of Leonard Crow Dog, they had adopted the spirituality of the Ghost Dance to fill the de-cultured vacuum of the urban ghettos. Richard Wilson's response to the arrival of A.I.M. leadership at Pine Ridge was conditioned by his association with two white members of the John Birch society, Eugene and William Roots, and he immediately appealed to the B.I.A. for police and military assistance in order to foil a "communist" plot dedicated to subverting his constituted authority.

It may seem completely incredible that the Justice Department, the F.B.I. and the U.S. Attorney General would accept such a simplistic argument; but it seems completely probable that a decision was then made to smash A.I.M. much in the same way that the Black Panther movement had been previously destroyed by a programme of military assault, plain assassination and concocted arrest charges. Within a day a contingent of 75 U.S. Marshals, supported by an F.B.I. team, arrived on the reserve ostensibly to "train" the local tribal police and Wilson's informal goon-squad militia. A few days later, with the gathering of more A.I.M. people at the historic site of Wounded Knee, a further 250 heavily-armed Mar-

shals supported by armoured personnel carriers and other massive military hardware set up a siege perimeter and roadblocks around the small village. Thus an illegal military force was created by the Justice Department; in effect, the army had been sent in to threaten, and finally to shoot at and kill, civilians — but, in not actually using the troops from the local barracks, or the National Guard, an illusion of a mere "police" action could be maintained for the public.

The siege of Wounded Knee, however, spread to a much wider notice and concern than the authorities had anticipated. With 71 days of exchanged gunfire, frequent woundings, but miraculously only one death, with hopeless negotiations defined by official bad-faith, the siege finally ended with a manipulated political defeat for the Sioux nation, but not finally, a cultural one. The whole Wounded Knee experience of 1973, charged with both the reality and the myth of the past, was to consolidate and to reinforce the growing Indian resistance to both the official and the unofficial authoritarian structures.

Bargaining in bad faith

In the face of the essential demand that the Sioux nation have restored to them the independence guaranteed by the Treaty of 1868, advisors to Assistant Attorney General Harlington Wood came up with an incredible Catch 22 in which Citation 25 of the U.S. Code 71, entitled "Future Treaties with Indian Tribes", was quoted. This, it seems, states that "...no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognised as an independent nation, tribe or power by treaty. But no obligation of any treaty lawfully made with any such Indian nation or tribe prior to March 3rd, 1871 shall be hereby invalidated or impaired." Harlington Wood's reading of U.S. Code 71 is that Congress would have to repeal this Bill before any further discussion on the subject would be possible, since, though clearly the Treaty of 1868 was signed prior to the Bill of 1871, and it appears to guarantee the inviolability of the earlier treaty, nevertheless the 1871 Bill, in fact, abrogated that treaty simply because that was Wood's interpretation.

In May, following the only death, the shooting of an Indian, Buddy Lamont, by a government sniper, a further round of negotiations was held in which Dennis Banks of A.I.M. and Leonard Crow Dog, together with other Oglala Sioux leadership, met with the Director of U.S. Marshals, Wayne Colburn, and the Assistant Attorney Generals Rich-

ard Hellstern and Kent Frizzell. The government position now was that no proper discussions could be held until a disarmament had taken place. The killing of Buddy Lamont had, to some degree, altered the climate of the talks. The defenders were badly feeling the strain of the siege — inadequate food and contaminated water — since the government perimeter had, for some time, managed to cut off the greater part of the incoming supplies. The government posture was (and quite absurd considering the enormous military force at its disposal) that they could no longer hold off a threatened massive intervention by white civilian vigilantes who had, it was claimed, recently been gathering in large numbers.

It is not surprising that Frizzell was finally able to persuade the Sioux leadership to disarm and submit to government authority on the understanding that meetings would be held at the White House itself to discuss the future of the Sioux nation and the possibility of reactivating the Treaty of 1868. The military operation was rolled back, an operation that had cost seven million dollars, and in which, according to the government's own estimate, the incredible number of half a million military rounds were fired against a few thousand store-bought twenty-twos and game-hunting shells. When the defenders were trucked off and "processed," many, to their surprise, were arrested (Finally, over a period of years, 428 individuals were to be charged with offenses related to the Wounded Knee incident.) The rules had now changed. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was once more in control, and it exerted its old policies unchanged, but now with the additional physical support of the F.B.I. and the military contingent of the Justice Department.

The first White House negotiations appear to have been a fiasco, with no serious discussion of the treaty taking place, and a blank refusal to consider any official intervention into Wilson's corrupt administration on the reserve, since it was claimed that the appropriate "democratic" procedures to dislodge him, if wished, were in place. The second White House negotiation was an impertinence; the White House cancelled the arranged meeting, and merely sent a letter, re-quoting their reading of U.S. law regarding the government's non-recognition of any form of aboriginal political independence.

Not surprisingly, Richard Wilson consolidated his power, and his reign of terror escalated. Between 1973 and 1976, there were 49 killings on Pine Ridge reserve; but, as a result of protection and corruption, only 16 of those cases resulted in convictions. In their intention to break the movement altogether,

the B.I.A. and the F.B.I. harassed the A.I.M. leadership, and two years later they had a chance to act decisively in this matter.

Uranium 'discovered'

On June 6th, 1975, Richard Wilson signed away to multi-national interests, one eighth of the area of the reserve — a location which turned out to be densely rich in uranium ore. It is very difficult to believe that the Attorney General's office wasn't aware of this fact when ordering the massive military action at Wounded Knee two years earlier.

Anticipating resistance, the authorities, once more, sent in over one hundred heavily-armed troops; and again, the situation erupted so that houses and villages were under fire all day. It seems almost certain that a B.I.A. policeman killed the unarmed Indian Joe Stuntz, though no charges were laid — no such certainty surrounded the deaths of two F.B.I. men also killed that day. The A.I.M. leader Leonard Pelletier, most certainly innocent, was charged with their murder through manufactured evidence and his subsequent manipulated extradition from Canada; he is now serving two consecutive life sentences in the high security prison at Mason, Illinois. Russell Means and Richard Marshall were charged with another murder, that of a man called Montileaux who, before his death, unequivocally cleared them both. Nevertheless, Marshall was sentenced to life, though Means was acquitted. Dennis Banks went on trial for his alleged leadership of the riot in Custer City. And, when the manipulation of legality was insufficient, simple assassination and unbelievably corrupt cover-up seemed to be the order. Anna Mae Aquash, another A.I.M. militant, was found dead in a snowdrift at Pine Ridge. The coroner's court declared, quite blatantly, that she had died of exposure, undoubtedly drunk, until another doctor discovered, on exhumation, that she had been professionally executed with a bullet in the back of the neck.

Leonard Crow Dog was also, as one would expect, arrested, jailed and intimidated. In the movie, we see him anticipating a long jail sentence, though what he did actually receive was much shorter than the efforts of the authorities to incarcerate him indefinitely. At one point, during the height of the siege, two postal inspectors were arrested by the Wounded Knee defenders, and there is clear evidence that Crow Dog did no more than observe the arrest and deliver the prisoners a lecture on Indian rights — yet he was sentenced to no less than eleven years in a federal prison for assault. While in cus-



Sioux Medicine Man, Leonard Crow Dog

3. I am indebted to the magazine Akwesasne Notes (Mohawk Nation, Roosevelttown, New York), and especially to their volume Voices From Wounded Knee 1973, Roosevelttown 1974, for information concerning the events during and subsequent to the confrontation of 1973.

tody he was to undergo further charges, including one brought by F.B.I. *agent-provocateurs* who had appeared uninvited on the reserve as peyote-seeking hippies. Although, after some two-years of appeals, he was released on probation, his period in jail was one in which he suffered the most brutal and illegal harassment, being incarcerated for a long time in a cell in which he could not stand up, and being terrorised by the prison medical authorities with an entirely fictitious brain tumour.

"There is no question", says William Kunstler, the defense attorney who makes a brief appearance in the movie, *Crow Dog*, "that Leonard has become the focal point, more so, I think than any other leadership ... you push the Indians off the land because of human greed, and then you fight every attempt, even though you may not think it will succeed, every attempt to resuscitate themselves and come back in some form and make demands that we all know are totally justified ... therefore, you have to destroy them if you can. And I think a lot of people are really worried about justified Indian claims to land, to resources and so on. So I guess they're most afraid when the claims are morally right."

And it is here that the movie demonstrates what might be called a posthumous logic. For, though there is no men-

tion of the collision between corporative capitalism and aboriginal social culture, this is essentially what has dictated the dynamic of the Wounded Knee confrontation. The earlier *competitive* colonialism of settler and frontier anarchism charted the worthless treaties and the B.I.A. legislation. The present *corporative* colonialism of multinational speculation no longer feels it necessary to operate behind the smoke-screen of legality. The same straightforward military oppression that is used in total undisguised immediacy in the Third World can also be applied to the localised and internal third worlds of our own industrial society. In the present climate of consensus, official authority hardly anticipates much public opposition to the program of industrialisation at any price of the American north-central heartland.⁴

Observe the existing situation and the future industrial plans for the region which will create a branch-plant economy for this area. A massive uranium-extraction programme is now being initiated at Pine Ridge, with the planned dumping of nuclear waste on Indian land far from any white urban complex. Ninety-six million tons of taconite coal are to be strip mined from the Dakota Black Hills. The water table below the Rosebud and Pine Ridge reserves is considered expendable, and it is planned to be depleted over a 30-year period;

the already arid land is expected to become a desert. Equally, over that 30-year period, it is expected that 600,000 white workers and support-staff will move in, and out again, to the Dakotas and parts of Wyoming and Montana to service this resource extraction.

This is not a projection — it is a distinct plan; and it is, of course, one not unique only to this area of aboriginal land. The Navajo and the Hopi people of the Southwest are undergoing a similar experience with the discovery of uranium on their reserve lands. One simple, significant, fully-authenticated fact colours the present corporate understanding of the corporate/realty of Indian indigenous life and that is *no less than sixty percent of all United States energy resources are locked underneath reserve land*. Against the massive implications of this fact is ranged the fragile, brave and human hopes of the aboriginal cultural revival, the faith and value-system represented by Leonard Crow Dog and other politico-spiritual leaders who are appealing to both tradition and to myth in an escalating attempt to gain some control of the Indian future. □

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HEATHER ROSS

THE ABORIGINAL NATIONS

Canada's settler government sees development as the gun that forces negotiations over land claims

The conflict between the settler government of Canada and the Aboriginal Nations is fundamentally between differing visions of the future: homeland versus frontier, development versus exploitation, integrity versus superprofits. While the struggle is over dreams, it is being waged on very earthy grounds — who determines what use will be made of the land. This clash of visions is as old as the settling of the New World. It will continue until the settler governments either commit the final act of genocide or reach accommodation with the Aboriginal Nations.

By the mid-1700s this conflict was verging on open warfare. Rapacious colonists were expanding into Indian Territories, destroying Aboriginal Imperial alliances and undermining the

authority of the motherland. King George III, perhaps to appease his Aboriginal allies, or to counter the demands of the restless thirteen colonies, issued the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763. This document recognized that Aboriginal Nations were indeed nations with the rights, prerogatives and territorial ownership of nations within the international community. The immediate result was the alliance of the Aboriginal Nations with Imperial Britain in both the American War of Independence and the War of 1812-14.

The long-term implication of the Proclamation, still valid today, lay in the requirement that Aboriginal lands could be appropriated only through negotiations and agreement between the Aboriginal Nation and the Imperial

Crown. When Rupertsland was transferred to the fledgling settler government of Sir John A. Macdonald, Britain insisted that the land be ceded by the Aboriginal Nations following the procedure established in the Royal Proclamation. Thus began the first and longest phase of treaty negotiations by Canada.

The Numbered Treaties

By the late 1800s Aboriginal Nations were no longer useful allies in imperial proxy wars but obstacles to the great dream of Canada and the accumulation of wealth. Worse yet, with the Riel Rebellions, they had challenged the hegemony of the Ottawa establishment. Negotiations and settlements were made grudgingly, in bad faith, and with

maximum misunderstanding, setting a pattern still true today. These treaties — the numbered treaties — are astonishing for their parsimony. Each features an annuity of \$4 or \$5 per year (no cost of living allowance) and reserves of at best one square mile per family. In return Canada's negotiators gained a nation. This is, of course, the official version of the treaties, often written years before the signing and seldom changed through negotiations. The oral version, held by the Aboriginal Nations, bares little resemblance.

This phase of nation-building and treaty making drew to a dreary and amoral close in 1930. By 1969, the settler government had so abandoned its commitment to Aboriginal Nations that Prime Minister Trudeau could argue that aboriginal rights were the might-have-beens of history and could propose a policy of stripping all vestiges of special status from the Aboriginal Nations. Indigenous people were, according to this policy, just another immigrant group in the Canadian melting pot. That they arrived 10,000 to 100,000 years before the next wave of immigration was just an irrelevant quirk of time and history. This simple-minded and venal policy was met with a surge of organization building and declarations of aboriginal sovereignty. Not for the

first time Aboriginal Nations appealed to the national and international community for recognition and protection of their nationhood. In 1923, Deskaheh, an Iroquois leader, went to the League of Nations in Geneva to ask for representation. Canada refused him readmittance to his land. He died in exile. In 1950 Jules Sioui, a Huron leader, appealed to the United Nations. He was readmitted to Canada only to be tried and convicted of sedition.

The second round

In the early '70s, Canada began the second round of negotiations for the ceding of aboriginal lands, forced on by the twin stimuli of legal necessity and potential economic gain. The discovery of oil and gas in Prudhoe Bay turned government eyes toward Canada's Arctic. Exploration in the Beaufort Sea, the Mackenzie delta and High Arctic, funded by generous state subsidies, took off. Having disposed of aboriginal rights to the trash bin of history, the fact that this was unceded aboriginal territory was irrelevant. In 1973 the settler government was abruptly pulled from its delusions. The Nishga Tribal Council took the federal government to court demanding Canadian recognition of its aboriginal rights to its homeland, the

Nass Valley in British Columbia. While the Supreme Court's split decision was ambiguous, it did support the Nishga claim that Aboriginal Nations had rights recognized in settler law. Revising history yet again, the Liberal government instituted a comprehensive land claims policy. If nothing else, this policy demonstrates that language belongs to the powerful. Canada, through the power of assertion, is forcing Aboriginal Nations to be petitioners to their own land. The land claims policy has three stated elements:

- Aboriginal Nations must prove their historical occupancy of the land;
- Aboriginal Nations must surrender their aboriginal rights and title;
- Aboriginal Nations whose land lies within provincially claimed boundaries must negotiate with both the federal and provincial governments.

This policy has several unwritten ground rules as well, the major ones being that the settlements will cover only land and money; the government will not negotiate a political settlement; land already alienated in any way will be abstracted from negotiations; and Canada will choose the Nations with whom she is willing to negotiate.

This phase of empire building saw one agreement signed, the Baie James Agreement with the Cree, and the In-

Maclean's sees corporate 'caring' in the North

cial government(s) with the human-interest component provided by details of the hardships of Chief Billy Diamond's life, post-James Bay settlement. The actions of the government are, of course, presented as irresponsible and reprehensible, which they are. The mood of the Aboriginal leaders is presented as analytical but angry, which it is. So what's the problem?

The June 1st, 1981, issue of Maclean's headlined a cover story on native land claims as "Rumbles From the North", accompanied by a photograph of Cree chief Billy Diamond and his 12-gauge pump-action shotgun. Inside, Diamond is quoted, "I now know the government is not your trustee. The government is your opponent." A provocative combination, this photograph and this text.

The position of Maclean's seems remarkably clear. In his editorial, "Enough of the forked tongue, it's time for fair treatment", Peter C. Newman says, "Canada's one million native people remain refugees in their own land...Now...the Indians and Inuit are demanding their aboriginal rights, not as retroactive charity but as fair reward for allowing us to share their land and its resources."

The story itself is an informationally accurate account of current and past land claims made by Aboriginal people against the federal and provin-

development with glee." The conclusion to be drawn from this article-plus-insert fits the mood of the conservative '80s like a threepiece suit: Aboriginal people are mad and frustrated enough to start taking violent action against the callous disregard of the government if their demands aren't met (Watch out, Maclean's warns), but private/corporate interests really care (Whew, Maclean's breathes a sigh of relief).

The only peculiarity, of course, is that this 'caring' is accomplished through the investment of government money by a private corporation. This corporation, Dome Petroleum, with operating revenues in excess of \$945 million and assets of over \$3 billion in 1980, (according to the Financial Post 500) might be seen to be capable of making its own investment in northern social and educational development, if it sees the need. But this is not a suggested possibility in the Maclean's view of Northern Development.

The Maclean's critique of federal government policy toward native people misses both the intention, which is ownership, and the motivation, which is greed, of such a policy. The absolute necessity of technical training schools in the north is without question. But the ability of Dome Petroleum to provide this, with 'no strings attached', isn't.

Lisa Steele

uit, and one agreement-in-principle reached with the Committee for Original People's Entitlement (COPE) representing the Inuvialuit of the Western Arctic. It came to an abrupt halt with the National Energy Board decision to reject the application for a pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley. Having agreed in 1973 to negotiate with the Aboriginal Nations of the Mackenzie Valley — the Dene and the Northwest Territories Metis Association — the federal government pushed ahead, laying the groundwork for a transportation corridor in the Valley. The Dene Nation, finding the promises of future settlement thin beside the preparations for pipeline construction, applied for a caution on the valley. They argued that the treaties they had signed were for peace and friendship between nations, not for the surrender of land and that the construction of the pipeline would prejudice the settlement of their "claim". Having heard both oral and documentary evidence, including proof that the X's on some documents had been forged, Judge Morrow agreed and placed the caution. The Liberal government was determined to build its pipeline but, being in a minority position, was hampered in the full exercise of its customary power. Thus Justice Thomas Berger was asked to convene an inquiry into the future of the Mackenzie Valley. So began his historic voyage of discovery. The competing visions of the future were presented to Justice Berger and the Canadian people. The Aboriginal Nations of the Valley eloquently spoke of their faith in and commitment to their own way of life, of their dreams of a future as long and unbroken as their past, of themselves as an integral part of the Valley whose present, past and future were one with the mighty river. The government-industry-small business complex could not offer a competing vision. To exploit resources for superprofits is not to dream but to crave. In general, Canadians agreed with Berger that justice to Aboriginal Nations far outweighed the dubious economic benefits of northern resource extraction. Berger recommended a ten year halt to projects in the Mackenzie Valley while land "claims" were settled and implemented. The Liberal government however, never adopted Berger's recommendations.

With the one-two punch of the NEB ruling and Berger's recommendations, the federal government halted negotiations and put the financial squeeze on the Aboriginal Nations who had had the temerity to challenge Canadian hegemony. Exploration activities in the north slowed. While Aboriginal and popular oppositions may have played a part in this slowdown, the major factors were purely economic. Exploration had resulted in barely marketable finds of



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natural gas and limited pools of oil. Natural gas was being discovered at an astonishing rate in southern locations. The gas market was glutted. There was no pressure to bring northern energy reserves to southern markets.

The third phase

Following a hiatus of a few years, negotiations have begun to gain momentum, spurred on by the visions of northern energy supplies and superprofits. The number of schemes for northern projects is ambitious. The following list of plans give a glimpse of Diefenbaker's northern dream as it nears reality:

- oil and gas development in the Beaufort Sea
- transshipment of Beaufort Sea gas via LNG (liquified natural gas) tanker westward to Japan
- transshipment of Beaufort Sea oil eastward through the Northwest Passage to the east coast via ice-breaker tanker
- construction of the Norman Wells Pipeline from Norman Wells, NWT to Zama, Alberta, approved by the National Energy Board
- expansion of the Norman Wells oil field to supply a maximum of 1 per cent of the Canadian oil requirement.
- increased oil and gas exploration permits, particularly in the Mackenzie Valley and the high Arctic
- development of the Drake Point gas field off Melville Island
- transshipment of the Drake Point gas by two icebreaker LNG tankers traversing Lancaster Sound and the Northwest Passage
- 1,000 ships per year through the Northwest Passage by the year 2000 (The passage has yet to be traversed in winter.)
- uranium mining, already underway in the Baker Lake area

- Nanisivik mine on Strathcona Sound
 - Polaris mine on Little Cornwallis Island
 - Polar Gas Pipeline to carry gas from the high Arctic and possibly the Beaufort Sea to central markets.
- This is only a partial list of projects, underway or announced, emanating in floods of paper from the upper reaches of southern office towers.

The federal government seems to be re-entering negotiations with precisely the same strategies and goals of one hundred years ago. As Kit Spence, aid to the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, John Munro, has stated, development is the gun that forces negotiations. The federal government is not only holding the gun but also, by being one of the principle industrialists through their creatures PetroCan, Pan Arctic and the Canadian Development Corp., pulling the trigger. The Dene and Inuit Tapirisat of Canada have repeatedly asked that development be halted during negotiations as a sign of good faith bargaining on Canada's part. The requests have been consistently refused while Canada, through Bill C48 (the Canada Oil and Gas Act which guarantees the federal government's control of northern energy resource development) has acted to consolidate her pre-eminence in the colonized territories. Canada's current model settlement is, in effect, a modernized version of the numbered treaties. Land and money settlements are likely to be inflated, moderately; the medicine chest has become medicare; and economic development is no longer simply a case of transforming Aboriginal Nations into peasants — it's transforming them into workers and petty bourgeois. But now, in the aftermath of the Nishga court case, the settler government is demanding the extinguishment of aboriginal rights as well as title.

Unfortunately for Canada's hegemonic aims, the flaws of the second round of negotiations are now becoming visible. The agreement-in-principle reached with COPE has never been confirmed. During the Conservative interregnum, the government decided the agreement was too rich and generous and should be re-negotiated down. The revived Liberal government is carrying on the Conservative policy.

Jurisdictional battle

Even more alarming is the progress made toward implementing the first of the modern treaties — the Baie James Agreement. The federal and provincial governments are locked in a jurisdictional battle, each arguing the other is responsible for paying the costs. As in all wars, the first victims are the innocent. Several children have died from the gastroenteritis raging through Cree communities. The epidemic stems from dirty water, as water and sewer systems remain uncompleted because of government's refusal to release the necessary funds. Meanwhile a new hospital stands vacant, neither government being willing to pay the operating costs. The settler governments seem to be arguing that the settlement monies paid to the Cree and Inuit should be used to provide basic services, services provided to settlers through the tax system. When the agreement was negotiated the monetary compensation was clearly designated as an economic development fund to be used to create an economy to replace that lost through the environmental destruction by the hydro project. The Grand Council of the

Crees estimates that it has been forced to use most of its settlement cash to provide minimal services and to negotiate implementation of the agreement. The balance has been reached. The governments have now saved, through their refusal to provide services, approximately the equivalent of the compensation paid and in no more than five years. Ironically, Aboriginal Nations who signed the numbered treaties were addressing similar problems of implementation 100 years ago.

Aboriginal nations are approaching this latest round of negotiations with a far greater sophistication and understanding of the Canadian state than ever before. It is clear that land and cash compensation is an insufficient base for their future as distinct Aboriginal Nations within the Canadian confederation. A political settlement is essential to safeguard their identity and culture.

The Dene Nation and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, with the support of the Government of the Northwest Territories, propose that the NWT be divided into two political entities: Denendah, homeland of the Dene Nation and Nunavut, homeland of the Inuit. Understanding that the art of government in a complex political system requires skills and knowledge, they are proposing that over a fifteen year preparatory period, the territories of Denendah and Nunavut develop full provincial status. The new provinces would hold the typical provincial powers including control over resources and environmental protection. Since Denendah and Nunavut would be not only provinces but also aboriginal homelands

they would have some special powers such as the right to maintain direct contacts with other Aboriginal Nations, not usual in the present Canadian division of powers. The Dene and the ITC will also negotiate, within the framework of provincial status, specific land and monetary compensation.

As negotiations begin at their state-ly, even lethargic pace, the positions have been clearly drawn, the conflict inevitable. The Aboriginal Nations are negotiating the terms of union for their entrance into the Canadian confederation. The senior settler government is negotiating the extinguishment of aboriginal nationhood for the least possible price in land and money. The Aboriginal Nations have advanced a proposal well within the framework of the Canadian state. The senior settler government, through Bill C-48 and its participation in oil and gas development, has proposed the continued colonial status of the north.

The negotiations offer perhaps the last chance for Canada to welcome Aboriginal Nations into the state. At present, Canada seems to be choosing the hegemonic path of immediate theoretical gain at the expense of the cultural genocide of the Aboriginal Nations. Canada argues that this path represents the National Interest and the greatest good for the greatest number. What nature of country is Canada that its future requires the extinction of Aboriginal Nations? □

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JEFF HOUSE

POST-FRANCO SPAIN

The militant optimism of the '70s has been undermined by the prudent compromises of the '80s

Less than ten years ago, the fascist dictatorships of Europe's southern tier — Portugal, Spain, and Greece — faced the pent-up power of popular resistance to their regimes with mounting apprehension. The fury of the students of Athens Polytechnic and the dockworkers of the Greek capital, the currents of leftist thought among Portuguese workers and soldiers, and the broadly popular, highly illegal trade unions and national autonomy movements of Franco's Spain all promised a new progressive development in these societies.

In 1981, each of these societies is

ruled by centre-right governments who have eased the overt repression somewhat, but have done little to change the daily lives of the people of those societies, where lack of work, substandard living conditions, and alienation remain the rule.

When I visited Spain in the summer of 1976, shortly after Franco's death, at the time of the first Parliamentary elections since the victory of the Popular Front of 1936, the country was alive with political debate, alternative futures, and hope. A torrent of books was published, burrowing into every corner

of the past, and reclaiming from the ashes of repression such revolutionary figures as Durruti, Largo Caballero, and Nin. The left press was represented by *Triunfo*, arguably the most competent socialist magazine produced in Europe, and the newspaper *El Pais*, comparable to Italy's *La Repubblica* in content and professionalism. Most of all, there was a sense of mobilization, from the hundreds of youths who painted the walls of Barcelona with the circled "A" of Spanish anarchism to the lawyers of Atocha and Espanoleta in Madrid, who formed the inner circle of

experts who gave the trade unions their initial formation.

Five years later, Spain trembles on the verge of political change once again; but it is the right, and not the left who will be the beneficiaries. The failed military coup of February 23-24 came extremely close to installing a Spanish Pinochet in power in the person of General Milans Del Bosch, holder of the Iron Cross awarded to him by Hitler for his anti-Communist fervour during World War II on the eastern front.

The left compromises

In a very concrete sense, the coup of February 23-24 was a great success. No doubt the plotters, Colonel Tejero, Milans, and General Armada, remain under a not very constraining kind of arrest. Yet the shadow of the second coup, the "big coup" which February 23-24 pre-empted, looms large in Spanish politics. As Jose Recalde put it in the magazine *La Calle*: "It is the political parties which present this great threat of blackmail as the reason for a politics of compromise (with the army rightists). Can these parties be said to be working for democracy? The answer is complex, ambiguous; they are fighting to preserve it, but at the same time, capitulating."

From the moment of the coup, the parties of the left followed a path of compromise. In contrast to 1936, when Franco's coup attempt led to a mass, revolutionary uprising, Spain was silent during the long night of the generals. I asked Miguel Lopez, a Provincial member of Parliament in Catalonia, why no general strike had been called, why no mass demonstration had been mounted by the left. "We Communists," he said, "were taken aback when our entire Party leadership was arrested in Parliament, and there was much confusion among us. More importantly, we did not want to provoke the rest of the military to come into the streets. We wanted to keep them out of it, and we did." Felipe Gonzalez, leader of the Socialist Workers Party, affiliate of the Second International, told an Italian newspaper: "It's true, the unions and the left didn't mobilize the masses, as a great part of Europe expected...in distinction to Italy, for example, Spain is dominated by a huge fear with deep roots, beginning in the crushing experience of the civil war. The forces of the left cannot ignore this reality, and consequently chose a more prudent compartment."

Even after the danger was over, the left was unable to bring forward new answers or analyses. Both Gonzalez and his Communist counterpart, Santiago Carrillo offered to join a coalition gov-

ernment of national defence. No programmatic demands were made, other than "defence of democracy," and the Thatcherite government they were attempting to join spurned the offer.

Nonetheless, the parties of the left did nothing to stop the government's response to the coup attempt, conveniently labelled "The Law to Defend Democracy". This law took great strides towards meeting several of the military's demands, such as executive power to close the newspapers deemed to offend democracy, a state of siege applied to the Basque region, etc. The repressive content of the new law was masked by the creation of a new offence, "Attempt upon the Constitution." But, as lawyers Xavier Roig and Guillermo Alvarez told me, all of the plotters, and all those who knew about the plan but did not inform the authorities, are already liable for long jail terms. "It's not a new law we need,



On the Night of the Generals

but the will to enforce the old one that we need here", Roig told me.

The army agenda

In fact, the government's response to the coup bore substantial resemblance to an army agenda which "highly placed military spokesmen" handed to sympathetic journalists after the coup attempt. Popular magazines carried banner headlines reading "What to do to avoid a second coup" with copies of the agenda inside. Angel Sanchez, editor of the well-informed Barcelona paper *El Correo Catalan* found nothing odd in the government's appropriation of the military agenda. "What do you think the king did during the night when Parliament was in the hands of the rebels, and Valencia region had tanks controlling every foot?" He argued that the King had bargained for military support for the Constitution, signing his name to a written contract in which the army agenda was the *quid pro quo*. "I believe there is a five year time period in the agreement," he said. "One of the main demands of the military is the renewal of the bilateral treaty with the U.S. in July.* There are forces in Spain's government which would prefer multilateral relations with the E.E.C.

to a special relationship with the U.S. — if the military wins their demand, it will be evidence for the theory of the secret agreement. Reinstitution of the death penalty for attacks on the army is another future demand."

If Sanchez is correct, democracy in Spain consists of the unelected (and Franco appointed) King bargaining with the unelected (and Franco appointed) staff of generals concerning the changes to occur in Spain in the next half decade. Yet because the King did face down the overtly fascist coup leaders, the twenty leftist mayors of Spain's largest cities loudly called for the Nobel Prize for Juan Carlos.

A failure to be realistic grips the most experienced cadres of the left. Ramon Marrugat, a Socialist organizer with dozens of arrests over twenty years, told me, for example, that soldiers who had once refused to back a coup d'état would now be forced to defend democracy within the barracks, or risk being inconsistent. He also placed great hopes on the fact that many of the officers appointed by Franco would be facing compulsory retirement soon. "The younger officers are a different breed," he said. The argument that a new army could be created without breaking the old one was generally very popular; I heard it from members of Parliament as well as union militants. Yet a politician such as Felipe Gonzalez can acknowledge that the effective power of Spanish fascism has never been broken; it persists under the surface reforms, ready to reassert itself if "democracy" should become inconvenient.

Although the official left seemed to me to offer nothing to the people of Spain, other than support for a democracy in which decisions are taken by shadowy forces beneath the surface of society, the militancy of the average Spanish man or woman remained encouraging. Typical, and yet extraordinary, was a group I met in Liria, a part of the III military region once controlled by Milans del Bosch. Mostly young men and women in their mid-twenties, unemployed (sucking brother's arm, as the slang phrase goes), and the children of a poor rural peasantry living on tiny, waterless plots called *secanos*, they had come to the regional centre of Liria to find fame and fortune. Five years later, they combined union activity, when employed, with far reaching, radical discussion of the problems facing Spain, the relations between racism and sexual repression, the function of money in capitalism and socialism, and the like. These people, the descendants of the stratum which produced Spain's revolutionary anarchism, can have no political home in to-

day's Spain. Far to the left of the official parties, they identify deeply with the haunting song by troubador Luis Llach "Companys, no es això" (Comrades, this isn't it) The it, of course, is real democracy, people's democracy. As Diego Marin, one of the young people in a radical discussion group, put it to me: "The only reason we have a Parliament in Spain is to disarm the left." And his comrade, Marisa Carpio added: "We want real equality, not talk. We want work that has meaning, and a sexual life not tied to bourgeois forms. We want a democracy where the people decide together, not a tv show of old men. Whether the fascists try to stop us or not, we will win."

In the larger sense, the failure of the official left does not begin with its policy

of compromise vis-a-vis an impending coup. It goes back to the left's support of a Constitution guaranteeing private property, and naming the army as guarantor of this Constitutional right. It goes back to the Moncloa pact, when the left parties allied themselves with the Conservatives to achieve democracy first, and put socialism on the back burner. Because, in a country like Spain, "democracy" has little concrete content for the population, and parties which do not pose far reaching solutions at first risk being discredited when "democracy" does not deliver. It may even go back to the time of the civil war, when the Popular Front government decided to force the revolution back into acceptable, bourgeois lines, so as not to risk the hostility of the "democratic" powers — England,

France and the United States. The second, socialist stage, to occur after democracy became established, disappeared when the allies failed to support a democratic government which they knew was planning a new, revolutionary stage later on.

When fascism was ended through compromise in Spain, the left accepted a bourgeois republic; what they failed to realize was that the centrist forces with whom they allied would also fail to support a second stage; in fact, would prefer the return of unbridled fascism. That is the reality faced by the Spanish left. □

Jeff House, who recently returned from travelling in Spain, is a member of the Law Union of Ontario.

JAMIE SWIFT and ART MOSES

THE MOZAMBIQUE CAPER

Journalists were ready, willing and anxious to believe Barbara Amiel's horror stories of "darkest Africa"

The headline over an April, 1981, advertisement which appeared in the *New York Times* read, "We — a group of intellectuals and religious leaders — applaud American policy in El Salvador." The gist of the ad was that the Reds are knocking at the door and that, should "Soviet imperialism" triumph in El Salvador, thousands of refugees would most certainly be "driven into the sea."

The message included a claim that the government of Napoleon Duarte, whose links to the activities of right-wing death squads and the massacres of innocent peasants are widely acknowledged, represents a force for progressive change. An outfit called The Committee for the Free World sponsored the ad. Among the signatories were that dynamic duo of reactionary opinion in the Canadian media — Peter Worthington and Barbara Amiel.

Worthington is the anti-communist editor of the *Toronto Sun*. Amiel writes for *Maclean's*. She seems to have manufactured an image as a conservative ideologue in order to grease the path to a successful career. So it is not surprising that these two would share the Reagan/Haig view of the world.

Three months prior to the ad's appearance in the *New York Times* Amiel was cooling her heels in a Mozambique jail, having been detained by the government of that country for entering without a visa. The reaction of

Canada's Toronto-based media establishment to Amiel's adventure in Southern Africa deserves some scrutiny, if only to shed some light on how our views of the Third World are shaped and how the so-called swing to the right has its popular ideological underpinnings provided by people like Amiel and Worthington.

The scenario

Events in the past winter seemed to unfold this way: In its issue dated December 29, 1980, *Maclean's* magazine carried a column by "senior writer" Barbara Amiel attacking several Canadian organizations for their support of African liberation movements. Particularly singled out was Oxfam-Canada, a charity dependent on public donations. Oxfam was roasted for its assistance to the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, SWAPO of Namibia and FRELIMO of Mozambique. (According to Amiel, "The intimidation and murder of innocent men, women and children by these groups number in the thousands.") She concluded by urging Canadians to stop donating money to Oxfam and not to retreat from the challenge of totalitarianism.

On Saturday, January 10, 1981, the *Toronto Star* carried a banner-red headline on its front page, — "8 days of horror in an African jail". The *Star* reported that Amiel and two travelling

companions had been arrested "as spies" by Mozambique border guards, forced to sleep in the rain and then jailed. Amiel apparently deemed it necessary to eat her *Maclean's* press card and notes during breaks in interrogation in order to avoid detection as a journalist. In an "exclusive interview" conducted while Amiel recuperated from a bout of malaria in a luxurious South African hotel, she said she had gone without food for eight days in a military hospital. Meanwhile her companions — Toronto tour operator Sam Blyth and American university lecturer Jim Basker — remained in Mashava, a "political prison".

The next day the *Sunday Star* repeated the story, this time with a picture of the trio in Johannesburg. Amiel attacked the Mozambiquan government for ignoring the plight of its people. The *Star* also carried a statement from an official at External Affairs in Ottawa who said, "To have entered the country without showing the passports to immigration, and not having a visa was sheer stupidity."

Not to be outdone, the *Sunday Sun* (circulation 400,000) carried some more sensational news in its lead paragraph. "As Toronto writer Barbara Amiel and two friends languished for 8 days in a Mozambique jail, the man who might have freed them — the country's tourism minister — was just two cells away...victim of a political purge!" The story

* In 1953, when Franco was isolated in Europe as the last of the fascist powers, the United States signed a bi-lateral treaty with Spain which provided the U.S. with military bases on Spanish soil, plus low fly-over rights in exchange for economic aid to Spain. The treaty expired this summer and is currently being re-negotiated. A decision is expected sometime in July.

went on to quote Amiel, "I just wanted to look at elephants and giraffes. I wasn't going to write a goddamn thing."

Amiel's own Maclean's came out the next day with its issue dated January 19. In it Amiel told her story again, this time in greater detail. Titled "A flagrant violation of rights", the story not only featured the information about the jailed minister (the man "introduced himself one day" to Blyth) but we also learned that Amiel's cellmate was a 45-year old woman "whose crime was her suggestion of an alternate political party to FRELIMO".

Amiel said she was so afraid of being identified as a journalist that "I began eating my notes and anything that might identify me as a journalist, including the guest list I had taken from Maputo's Palona hotel (sic. It is the Polana Hotel.) and my plastic-coated Maclean's I.D. card".

Calling Mozambique "a country in which the western concept of due process of law is unknown", Amiel described "appalling" prison conditions and said she was treated for malaria by Bulgarian doctors since the country's doctors had fled in 1975 "at the time of the FRELIMO takeover." These Bulgarians apparently treated Amiel by throwing buckets of water onto her. Amiel seemed to think that the Mozambicans thought of her as a "gringo", a Latin American term for Americans unknown in Portuguese-speaking Mozambique.

On Friday, January 16, the Toronto Sun carried an interview with Blyth in which he said that his interrogators had been most interested in a Cuban engineer the trio had met and talked to. Blyth asserted that the Mozambicans were interested in any information they had received about the Cuban presence in the country.

Hook, line and plastic press card

The Star, the Sun and Maclean's were more than willing to carry Amiel's claims without investigation and without any understanding of the context in which the events took place. Value judgements, allegations and innuendoes were all included in the stories which appeared.

But unfortunately for Ms. Amiel other elements in the media didn't swallow her story as easily as she had apparently swallowed her press card.

Two days after the Star first ran its banner headline, Toronto's Globe & Mail reviewed the facts known to date and quoted an External Affairs spokesman: "They were charged with clandestine entry as indeed we might charge people walking around in Canada without their passports stamped." The Globe, seeking an alternative viewpoint, interviewed

John Saul, described as "professor of Eastern and Southern African studies at York University who has studied Mozambique". Saul pointed to the tense situation on the South Africa/Mozambique border and claimed that this made it extremely unlikely that Amiel and friends would have been "waved through" without visas.

But it wasn't until five days after the original story appeared that anybody in Canada got the Mozambiquan version of the events. In an interview with Barbara Frum on the CBC's *As It Happens*, a government spokesman gave a far different account.

He said Amiel and company had actually bribed their way past border guards and then after two days in



Brent Raycroft

Maputo tried to skip out on their hotel bill and leave the country at another border crossing, this time at the frontier with Swaziland. He said that at first the authorities suspected the trio of espionage but then realized they were a harmless group of bunglers. British and American diplomats had helped with their release and one foreign diplomat in Maputo termed the actions of the trio as "stupid and illegal".

As for the Minister of Tourism, the Mozambique spokesman said that the official in question had in fact attended a diplomatic function along with the President of the country, Samora Machel, at the time of Amiel's ordeal and had been on the job throughout the period in question. The Minister's office denied statements by Amiel and Blyth that they had attempted to contact the ministry while they were in Mozambique. As *It Happens* reported that Amiel was unavailable for comment.

Revising her story

It remained for Joe Coté, host of the CBC's local morning show in Toronto, to confront Amiel directly on Monday, January 19. And Amiel was forced to

back away from several of the assertions she had made.

First went her most colourful story: Amiel said it wasn't her plastic press card she swallowed after all. "It was probably a misunderstanding. What I said — and you must understand I was being interviewed in Johannesburg the day after I returned — I said I had my Maclean's identification cards and those I couldn't destroy I ate. Those, of course, were the little plastic cards with my name and my position with Maclean's on them. I'd have to be a walking miracle to eat a plastic identification card."

Then came the "Minister of Tourism". Coté confronted her with the facts and Amiel responded: "The Minister of Tourism (sic) that one of our group met had been inside for eleven months. He had been purged. He was the Minister of Tourism for a certain number of provinces as well as the manager of one of the major hotels in Mozambique and had been purged eleven months earlier."

This was the man the Sunday Sun described as the very fellow "who might have freed them."

Finally, when Coté questioned the credibility of those which one might encounter in jail, Amiel adopted a very exasperated tone and invoked images of the Gulag: "It is to my mind one of the tragedies of this century that in so many societies the most decent and civilized people are the people inside the political prisons and concentration camps." Nothing here on whether or not her fellow inmates were in fact political prisoners or people accused of more mundane offences.

Two days after Amiel was interviewed by Coté, a gossip column in the Sun had it that Amiel was preparing to sue Metro Morning for her treatment on the air. And on Thursday, January 22, Sun editor Peter Worthington characterized the scrutiny Amiel's allegations had been subjected to as the work of "the glib-libs whom Amiel tends to dissect so effectively and who can't forgive her for being good-looking, talented and right."

Amiel fired the final shot in the media skirmish in Maclean's on February 16. She admitted her actions had been "foolish", "mindless" and "negligent". Yet she took the opportunity to again flay the Canadian government for not coming to her rescue and the CBC and the Globe & Mail for failing to cover the story exclusively from her perspective. This article triggered a three-week dispute that reached into the top echelons of the CBC and Maclean's. At issue was Amiel's claim that *As It Happens* had failed to seek her comment the day it ran the interview from Mozambique. But when Colin McLeod (CBC's Director of Current Affairs) wrote a letter to the editor of Maclean's pointing

out that *As It Happens* had in fact attempted to contact her with no success, Maclean's delayed publication for three weeks.

Nevertheless, Amiel saved her most strident attack for Mozambique. She said that though she considered the action "immoral and tasteless" she stayed at the international class Palona (sic) Hotel "where Cuban and Russian 'advisers' stuffed themselves with fresh fruit, milk and liquor, while outside the hotel women and children sat on the pavement hoping for bread."*

Racist overtones

The entire thing may seem totally ludicrous. But the fact that part of Canada's media establishment fell for the Amiel caper speaks loudly for the way we are fed our news every day; especially news about the Third World.

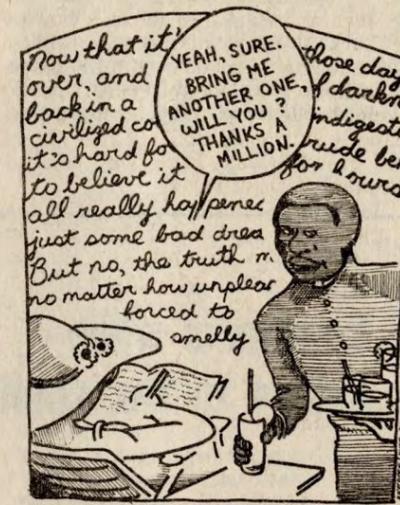
The coverage of Amiel's experiences was tinged with racist innuendo. While she spoke of "primitive conditions", Worthington referred to "darkest Africa" and the Sun's Ian Harvey described Amiel as recovering from "malaria and other African (sic) diseases."

The material is bereft of any analysis, concentrating on the superficial images which many Canadians have come to associate with the Third World. In her initial, pre-ordeal offerings Amiel spoke of African children, "their bloated bellies stretched tight over legs too thin to carry even these wasted bodies." Then there was Julius Nyerere, caught up in "the great experiment with socialism", a man who "mauled" the International Monetary Fund into giving loans to Tanzania. After two days in Mozambique, Amiel was able to conclude that "the people were beautiful but they lived in conditions of near-starvation." While Maclean's said that Amiel and her companions were "luxuriating in the African sun on the bleached beaches of the Indian Ocean", this apparently provided sufficient opportunity for Amiel to comment that "we saw babies with swollen bellies and there was no sign that the regime was trying to do anything about it".

Then there are the easy putdowns of Mozambique, a country whose "oceans team with fish scooped up by the East German and Russian factory boats in exchange for the weapons and loans with which the ruling FRELIMO party maintains its oppression...a fertile lush country brought to the verge of chaos and starvation by the Marxist economy."

The image is one of African people and their country as passive victims,

* Less than a month after Amiel's visit to Mozambique, on January 30, South Africa dispatched a group of helicopter-borne troops to Maputo where they staged a raid on an office of the exiled African National Congress, South Africa's oldest black resistance group. The soldiers killed eleven ANC people, seized documents and announced that the raid was a lesson to any country harbouring "terrorists". The ANC is supported by Oxfam-Canada. Perhaps South Africans hadn't missed Amiel's admonition, "We should retreat no longer".



Brent Raycroft

prey to the dictatorial whims of nasty Russians, Cubans and other diabolical predators. Nowhere does one get the sense of a people participating in the making of their own history. Such bald characterizations fly in the face of the facts of the war that the Mozambiquan people waged against the Portuguese colonial regime for fifteen years — a struggle by the people, and for a better future. Centuries of colonialism, years of guerilla warfare and today's radical social experiment apparently signify nothing to some of Canada's leading opinion-makers.

Echoes of the official line

Rather, the reports rely heavily on allegations about political prisoners, violations of rights and "western-style" due process. In fact, the critiques offered about the course of Mozambique's development are startlingly reminiscent of the official line emanating from South Africa, the unquestioned bastion of civilized rule in Africa from which Amiel and friends began and ended their foray.

One wonders what the whole affair was really all about. For example, one wonders to whom Amiel was referring when she told Joe Coté that "It was the consensus of the South African officials who dealt with this that they would decide at the Mozambique border whether or not to issue us visas, whether or not to let us in".

It seems strange that, having filed her attack on Canadian aid to Mozambique with Maclean's, Amiel would set off for southern Africa simply to look at wild game in South Africa's Kruger National Park. Then within two days

Amiel and company are in Mozambique without visas, not having intended to go there in the first place. Two days later they are arrested without the necessary entry visas and Amiel is in possession of the guest list of the Polana Hotel. Why? How did she get it? Why use would such material be to a holidaying game-watcher who had no intention of "writing a goddamn thing"?

And what about Peter Worthington, friend of South Africa? He calls Mozambique a "butcher regime" and asserts that "no country in Africa has less freedom and fewer rights" (emphasis in original). Here's a man well-known for his connections with western intelligence services, a long-time conduit for leaks from the RCMP Security Service, a body which surely maintains the usual liaison with its South African counterpart BOSS (the Bureau of State Security).

Both Worthington and Amiel make the same allegations about Mozambique and cite the U.S.-based Freedom House, a right-wing human rights group which has taken upon itself to arbitrarily rank the nations of the world according to their degrees of freedom. Both attack other journalists who dare to question what really happened — "media think-alikes" whose "moral attitudes" are brought into question.

There is obviously a battle of ideas being fought through the media between those who are locked in step with official notions of good and evil and those who prefer to keep their distance from the correct line. Among the former we have individuals like Worthington and Amiel and organizations like the Committee for the Free World which sponsored the ad endorsing the Duarte government in El Salvador.

The Committee is a U.S.-based group claiming to be independent of government. But it has been identified as heir-apparent to the Congress for Cultural Freedom, a CIA-supported body active in the Fifties during the last era of right-wing hegemony in the U.S. The Congress marshalled intellectuals to support the conservative dogma of the day and the Committee for the Free World is currently attempting to do the same thing. Two foundations that bankrolled the Committee have been exposed by the Nation as being affiliated with the CIA: the Smith Richardson uses CIA officials to review its grants and trains CIA personnel through an affiliate; the Scaife Family Charitable Trust has as one of its trustees the owner of a CIA-funded news service, according to the Washington Post.

It seems rather ironic that such sworn foes of Big Government as Bar-

bara Amiel, who claims that the Human Rights Commission concern over her use of the word "Hun" in a story is evidence of the state trying to control her mind, would be willingly associated with the Free World Committee. After

all, the Committee does have links to one of the biggest, shadiest government organizations anywhere. But perhaps intellectual leadership in the fight against the "enemies of freedom" in El Salvador and Mozambique is more im-

portant than any form of consistency of thought. □

Art Moses is a freelance writer living in Sudbury. Jamie Swift is a writer living in Toronto.

DAVID MOLE

WEALTH AND POVERTY

The poor should run on treadmills while the rich should ride escalators to tax shelters

Wealth and Poverty
George Gilder
Basic Books Inc., New York.
1981, 306 pp.

The "new right" has finally produced its political economist. George Gilder, speechwriter, polemicist and general hack and flack for the conservative cause, now reborn as "Program Director of the International Centre for Economic Policy Studies", has provided the American rich with "bold and brilliant" bedside reading for the 1980s.

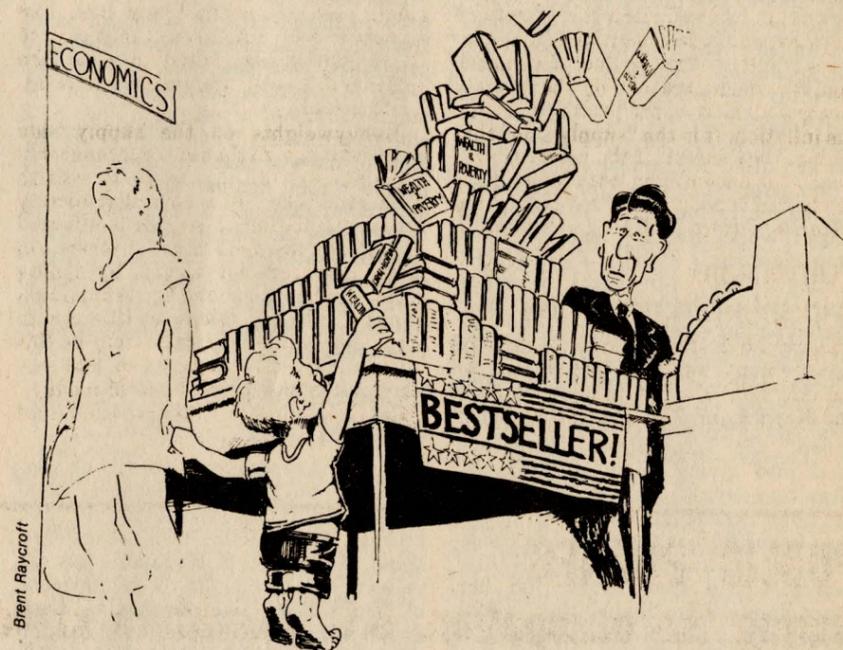
Wealth and Poverty has already earned its author some admirers. People magazine hears that President Reagan has a copy and his chief advisors are avid Gilderites. A writer so keen to flatter the prejudices of his readers deserves no less.

Sad to say the political economy of the "new right" is not very new. Wealth and Poverty is finally a lengthy and overwritten repetition of the oldest themes of conservative economics.

Here is Gilder's recipe for the poor: "The only dependable route from poverty is always work, family and faith. The first principle is that in order to move up, the poor must not only work, they must work harder than the classes above them...after work the second principle is the maintenance of monogamous marriage and family." Finally he tells us "faith in the mutual benefits of trade" and "faith in the providence of God" are essential to a successful capitalism.

The pyramid of wealth

For the rich there is the high calling of entrepreneurship. "The risk bearing role of the rich cannot be performed so well by anyone else. The benefits of capitalism still depend on the capitalist. The other groups on the pyramid of wealth should occasionally turn from the spectacles of consumption long enough to see the adventure on the frontiers of the economy above them —



an adventure not without its note of nobility, since its protagonist families will almost all eventually fail and fall in the redeeming struggle of the free economy."

So for the poor, hard work, domestic responsibility and religion, and, for the rich, the noble vocation of getting richer.

A social policy that will spur the poor on to harder work and a stable family life is not hard to devise. Edwin Chadwick, architect of the "English New Poor Law" in the 1830s clarified the basic principle: public support should always be so niggardly that anyone would rather work at any job for any wage rather than try to live on it. Gilder seems to expect that the implementation of this principle will also drive poor women and children back in-

to dependency on male wage earners, obliging men to work even harder. Thus two birds are to be killed with the one stone.

Likewise the rich are spurred to greater efforts — but by giving them more, not less. Deregulation, lower taxes and less competition from the state for workers and finance are called for. Gilder is very optimistic about these policies, that they will "release great pent-up energy" and so on.

The ideas peddled in Wealth and Poverty thrived in America until the 1930s. Veblen's urbane contempt for the folk tales of capitalism diminished their persuasive power; so did Schumpeter's gloom as corporate organization and risk-taking began to bury enterprise. But it was the slump of the 1930s that finally crushed faith in free enter-

prise.

It became clear in the twentieth century that capitalist economies show a tendency to systematic movements in the total production of goods and in the level of employment. These movements have nothing to do with how hard people work, or how much risk they take, or whether they get married and start going to church. The economy is a social and interdependent mechanism and individual efforts may work out or they may not. Crudely put, unless demand for products in the aggregate is sufficient to absorb the supply of products, hard work and enterprise come to nothing.

"Demand management" and "demand side economics" were the crude response to this crude perception of the problem. What George Gilder and his friends now claim is that in the event "demand management" has proved pernicious. It has validated the growth of state expenditures, high taxation, generous welfare, the decline of competition, the degeneration of the private sector and, at last, has produced a ruinous inflation. It is the "supply side" that counts, they assert. If the production of wealth is encouraged the demand for goods and labour, notwithstanding the historical record, will look after itself.

Vulnerable capitalist institutions

Oddly enough this criticism of demand management was first articulated on the left. Paul Mattick in his book Marx and Keynes and M. Kalecki, the Polish

Marxist, pointed out how vulnerable capitalist institutions are in a period of long term high aggregate demand and full employment. The threat of unemployment is the source of the capitalist's control over wages and the work process; the threat of bankruptcy is the great check on low productivity and low profits. Full employment undermines the power of capital and its dynamic capability.

Karl Marx is, of course, the great theorist of the "supply side". Indeed, conservative "supply side" theorists owe most of their notions to Joseph Schumpeter who got much of his from Marx. Such are the vicissitudes of the academic cocktail party.

If conservatives are going to sup with the devil in this way they need longer spoons than George Gilder can manage. The re-establishment of the christian family and lower taxes on small business profits may look like relevant and effective remedies to Gilder but he has failed to grasp the relation of wealth and poverty in capitalist society.

Heavyweights on the supply side realized long ago that entrepreneurship is a less expeditious route to wealth than ownership. In a capitalist society the accumulation of wealth is effected by the employment of great masses of wage labourers for wages, by selling what they produce and by skimming a profit off the top. There is little creativity and no nobility called for in this process. What is required is that one start out with a great lump of money.

It is absurd, says Gilder, to think that

the poor are poor because the rich are rich, that wealth is the cause of poverty. Quite right. But he does not see that poverty is the cause of wealth. Wealth is no more than the measure of a private power to command the work of others. The cheaper they work the more work the money will buy and the quicker wealth grows.

The problems of American capitalism are bound up with this system of wealth and poverty, the atavistic fantasies of the "new right" and the "supply side" are of no long run consequence for their resolution.

The real importance of Gilder's book is that it is an indication of the reach and power of the right in American politics. His clear statement that the dependence of women within the christian family is a requirement for the health of the capitalist economy is a new departure for a ruling class ideologist, however familiar the idea has become among the left. His insistence that social security must be cut back, his claims on behalf of petty capitalists against those of corporate power and state agencies, his assertion of the moral purpose of capitalism and its religious mission are all alarming. Cant it may be, pap for dull minds, unbearable to read; but the appearance of this book and its generally warm reception by the American press and the enthusiasm for it shown by the Puppet King and his circle are bad signs, very bad signs. □

David Mole is an economist currently teaching at the University of Manitoba.

GILLIAN ROBINSON

PUBLIC 'PHONES

During the occupation, B.C. operators stayed on-line and, without management, service was better.

Amelia Productions: Billie Carroll, Sara Diamond, Sarah Davidson, Ellen Frank, Gay Hawley and Nym Hughes, was recently formed to produce video tapes on women, labour, unions and other issues. They have just completed two tapes — one on the health hazards of VDTs (Video Display Terminals) and the other on the maternity benefits being demanded by CUPW (Canadian Union of Postal Workers).

When the operators of the B.C. Telephone Company (B.C. Tel) went on strike and occupied the company's offices province-wide on February 5th, 1981, they barred the doors to management and remained in the building,

waiting for a court's decision on an injunction served by the company. Amelia Productions approached the union, the Telecommunications Workers Union for permission to document the events. Amelia spent three days with the strikers, interviewing those involved in the occupation to find out not only the current situation at B.C. Tel but the background of the women operators' grievances.

The material they recorded was quickly edited to make a nine minute news tape, Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU Tel) which was immediately broadcast on Cable 10, Vancouver (whose facilities and equipment were used in the production). Later a longer

twenty minute tape, This Line is Not in Service, was also produced by Amelia Productions, which is a more in-depth look at the women operators.

In most cases media coverage of occupations, strikes, demonstrations and other labour related issues becomes a slick rendition of the 'event' with a coloured sense of the 'real' situation. But what Amelia Productions have managed to produce, both in TWU Tel and This Line is Not in Service, is an unusually sympathetic account of this occupation. They allow the B.C. Telephone operators to speak for themselves. Unlike the usual news story, which provides the numbing and 'necessary' voice-over commentary for any

event in order to give the audience a 'view', in TWU Tel and This Line is Not in Service the camera does not become the alienated accessory to the commentary — it is there to document.

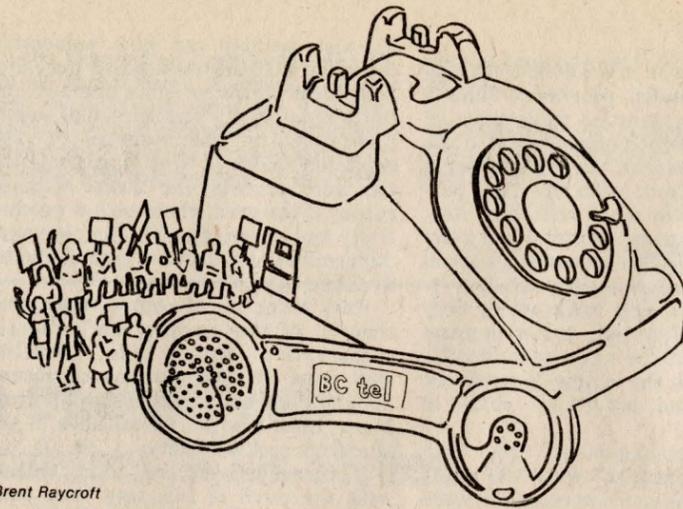
The events that led up to the province-wide occupations are full of B.C. Tel's corporate ill will towards their employees and the Telecommunications Workers Union. B.C. Tel applied for a rate increase from the CRTC (Canadian Radio-Television Commission), an increase which would have added 54 million to the company's revenue. The CRTC granted them the rate increase but included a clause stating that all of B.C. Tel's services *must* be improved after eight months. The union says in TWU Tel that the \$54 million increase will only go into construction and repairs and none of it will be allotted to improving public services. The union had been attempting to negotiate a new contract with B.C. Tel for a year and a half prior to the occupation, a contract that would have provided equal pay for the women employees and improved working conditions for the operators. B.C. Tel in this same year and a half period had rejected all three mediators' reports, one of which the union had unanimously accepted.

"Beastly Tel" buttons earn suspensions

Somehow B.C. Tel neglected to consider the 'public' clause and the day after the CRTC's granting of the rate increases, the company laid off 30 workers from the Nanaimo office. The Nanaimo workers refused to vacate and occupied the offices to protect the remaining workers and to protest B.C. Tel's refusal to sign a contract. The 'action' spread to the other offices in B.C. TWU Tel and This Line is Not in Service were produced in the central office in Vancouver where, as in the other offices, workers had been suspended and harassed for wearing union buttons and t-shirts critical of the company — "Beastly Tel."

However, what is unusual in this occupation is that the telephone operators across the province and in the central Vancouver office continued to provide all the vital services for the public such as emergency calls and long distance. They wanted to work because, as one operator says, "we've been trying to do the best job we can and it's a service we're providing for the public and I'm also part of that public." Their grievances against the company involved not only their own working conditions and wages, but also the company's anti-public service attitude.

Almost all the telephone operators in B.C. are women (out of 1,700 operators, only 60 of these are men). The other men work on installations, repairs and electronics, for approximately double the operators' income. (The daily rate



Brent Raycroft

for jobs other than operators in February, 1981, was \$70-\$80 a day.) As previously mentioned, one of the most important areas the union wanted to change was the inequality of pay when the work was of equal value.

In TWU Tel and This Line is Not in Service, we watch some of the 'highly skilled' men help out with the operators because of the overload of work. They sit at the machines learning how to take incoming calls and when questioned about the work say that it's, "tedious, boring, tiring" but they admit they wouldn't like to do it "for more than a few hours." They refuse to comment on the inequality in wages for work that is so exhausting.

Exploitation of women in the work force is all too common, but what is interesting about TWU Tel and the women in it is that they have decided, with the backing of a union, to take a "hard line" to change the corporate exploitativeness by occupying the offices and proving that the work can be done as well without the presence of management — "with fewer headaches" — and in the process gaining almost "a 100 per cent support from the public."

B.C. Tel's all too obvious approach to corporate gain was to erode most of the public services that could not be charged to the public: emergency calls, directory assistance, allowing operators to take the time to be courteous, and any other fringe services. Operators are informed by management to average their time with the public to 30 seconds per call and "(even) that is high". The result is a frustrated public and embarrassed operators who are forced to place priority on long distance calls which provide instant revenue for B.C. Telephone.

The dictum management provides for the telephone operators is 'speed, accuracy and courtesy' and what angers the operators most is management's blatant insistence that speed comes first and last; the other two services are disposable in the old maxim of speed equals profits.

To ensure the operators keep up this frenzied pace, management monitors their calls at certain times without the operator's knowledge and a file (ACV) is kept up to date yearly on the speed and attitude towards the public of each operator. One of the women says, "You just come in one minute late and it all goes into the book." Another operator angrily waves the 'secret' file in front of the camera asking why they have to continue this surveillance when she *must* have proved herself capable after fifteen years service.

Constant surveillance

With a race for profits on, there are few breaks allowed from a job that is obviously demanding and mentally oppressive. The thorough surveillance methods of management allow them to check into every movement made by the operators ... "you are not even allowed to comb your hair on an incidental (any unscheduled time when an operator comes "off-line") because management comes into the washroom and tells you that's not allowed." Another monitored operator says, "The first time they monitored me I was (being) too friendly. The second time I was (being) too business like. You just can't win." And you can't win when the rules of the game are there solely to ensure continuing profits for an amorphous group of shareholders' demands for increased profit margins. (B.C. Tel is owned and operated by General Telephone and Electronics, an American company centered in New Jersey.)

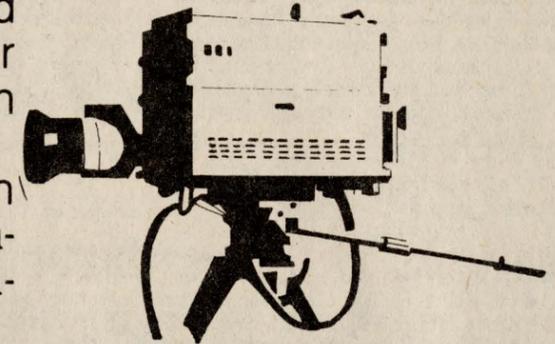
Operators who take call after call after call (on the line) produce the necessary goods and they become, as one woman says, "machines". By becoming a human extension of the computer they have successfully been reduced to "incidentals". "If you tried to stop and blow your nose, a supervisor (would) come over and ask you to make yourself available (for incoming calls)."

On February 9th, 1981, the Telecommunication Workers in B.C. were

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served an injunction by the courts to vacate the premises and to allow management re-entry. The operators and the union were disappointed but certain they had achieved what they set out to do — proved themselves capable of working without the profit obsessions of B.C. Tel and shown the public that the service they should be provided with is possible if they resist the anti-public policies of B.C. Tel. A province-wide picket against B.C. Tel was held on February 10th, 1981 and

the B.C. Federation of Labour held a rally.

What is important about TWU Tel and This Line is Not in Service is how it documents women on the job talking and working — as they realise their working conditions can improve when they are in control of their workplace and their services. The occupation has proven for the operators "(that) we can stay on this job, and manage it ... it shows that we can run the job and management doesn't really have to be here.

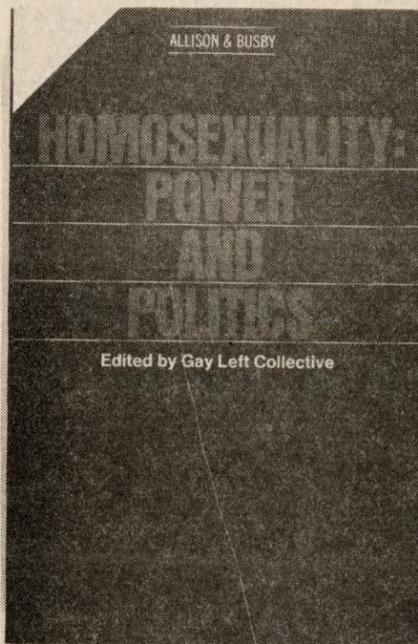
This is our job — management just oversees us. Since management has been out people's attitudes have been really a 100 per cent better — they have been coming in on their days off and they have worked ten days in a row. You just can't express the feelings in here — the electricity." □

Gillian Robinson is assistant editor of **FUSE** and on the editorial collective of **Fireweed**.

GEORGE SMITH

GAY LEFT POLITICS

Two looks at the ties that bind sexual relations to social relations



Homosexuality: Power and Politics
Gay Left Collective
Allison & Busby (London), 223 pp.,
index, 1980, \$9.95

Pink Triangles: Radical Perspectives on Gay Liberation
Pam Mitchell (ed.)
Alyson Publications Inc. (Boston), 1980,
\$6.25

Available at Glad Day Books, Toronto.

Both of these books are collections of essays on gay politics. *Homosexuality: Power and Politics*, however, is by far the stronger book. Its sense of politics is more coherent and more radical. It's intellectually better. The articles in *Pink Triangles*, by comparison tend to be superficial and ideological, even though nearly a third were originally

published in *Gay Left*, the journal of the London collective which put together *Homosexuality: Power and Politics*. The difference, it appears, can be attributed to the editing and perhaps to a much better sense of recent developments on the part of the Gay Left Collective. Both books are intent on displaying the kinds of advances that have been made in sexual politics on the left during the past decade. But, again, only *Homosexuality: Power and Politics* really succeeds, and it does so through a critique of gay and feminist ideology. An interesting comparison is Pam Mitchell's essay in *Pink Triangles*, "Lesbians and Gay Men Hetero Sexualities, Common Cause" and "Bringing it all Back Home: Lesbian Feminist Morality" by Susan Cartledge in *Homosexuality: Power and Politics*.

Pam Mitchell's article is an attempt to analyse the basis of political unity between gay men and lesbians. Pointing out, quite correctly, that there is a radical difference between the everyday lives of lesbians and gay men, she goes on to suggest, in a burst of gay/lesbian chauvinism, that the common cause between these homo sexualities is opposition to heterosexuality, the crux of which is male ideology. She describes male ideology as "belief in hierarchy, competition, contempt for weakness, the inferiority of women, the acceptability of violence, all built into the social system and powerfully symbolized in attitudes towards sex." This account, perhaps, arises naturally out of her own experiences, but there are problems here. First, there is no understanding of how these phenomena are produced in the material conditions of people's lives. As a result, the "causes" of these experiences come to be located in individual men as such because this is how they appear. Thus men become

the enemy, with gay men seen as not quite as culpable as their straight collaborators. For marxists, this kind of account of the phenomenal world, the world of mere appearance, is not adequate. Unless feminists are prepared to believe that men as a result of their genetic makeup are committed to hierarchy, competition, and violence, they must show how these characteristics are socially produced in men. When this is done, what we will see, I think, is that Pam Mitchell's description of "male ideology" is really a description of class. Class relations, in other words, are produced and reproduced in our society through a series of practices involving the production of hierarchy, competition and violence. They do not reside in men, as such.

Taking personal responsibility

A second problem is that feminists have taught us to start from our own experiences as a means of constructing a critique of ideology. Yet Pam Mitchell here is prepared to put forward an account of the everyday life of men without consulting the experiences of men at all. In the process, all men come to be labelled as violent and competitive. One result of this kind of construction of men's lives (in this instance gay men) is that they are unable to see themselves in these accounts. For example, Mitchell, in developing her account of "male ideology", goes on to say that "Gay men rape each other, sometimes even kill each other. (Lesbians — or any woman for that matter — are not noted for sex killings.)" But such a description does not accord with the everyday sexual experiences of gay men where sexual relations are in almost every instance consensual. Male

rape is something committed in prisons and by street gangs against both gay and straight men (especially if they are small and "pretty") by heterosexual men. Another, and in a sense opposite, result of this ideological process is that men can come to believe these accounts — especially if they are inclined to be "politically correct" — and thus come to see themselves, personally, as responsible for women's oppression. What follows from this is the belief that the eradication of the oppression of women is essentially a matter of personal politics. The moral dilemma which this kind of analysis creates either politically enervates a man or leads to a form of womanism, which like workerism and third-worldism arises as an individual moral commitment to right a moral wrong with all the moralism and other-worldliness that this entails.

Pam Mitchell not only provides an ideological construction of gay men's lives, she does the same for women, and in particular, for lesbians. Speaking on behalf of women, she writes, "We are fighting for the ascendancy of values — which have been traditionally associated with women, and for a new synthesis of female and male knowledge." Men are competitive and violent; women are gentle and empathetic. What stereotypes! If this is what is meant by "female and male knowledge", it will not do because it is not knowledge, but ideology. The political unity of men and women on issues of sexual politics can only be developed out of a proper understanding of sexual life. This can never be a matter of slogans and stereotypes, but rather must be based on an explication of the material conditions of people's sexual lives, both "those which they find already existing and those produced by their own activities." When this is done, the basis of unity will not be opposition to heterosexuality, as Mitchell suggests, but a commitment to a restructuring of the social relations which determine our sexual lives. This transformation of a social form is not a matter of personal politics, but of class politics.

Sue Cartledge's article in *Homosexuality: Power and Politics*, "Bringing It All Back Home," is an examination of lesbian/feminist morality. Feminists often rightly insist that the personal is political, but this often leads to the ideological construction of the political as personal. While domestic life, in other words, ought not to be excluded from the concerns of politics, the solution to political problems cannot be taken up simply as a matter of personal life; as a matter of how we live as individuals. The main ideological construction here is to work up political problems as moral issues; and like all moral issues to see the world through the intentions and veniality of individuals. This mistakenly transforms a political

CORRESPONDENCES

PART I August 5 - September 7, 1981

PART II September 14 - October 4, 1981

A special project originated by the Walter Phillips Gallery to examine "new image" art in Canada. Guest curator: Bruce Ferguson of Montreal. Canadian artists working in painting, photography, sculpture and installation art represented in this exhibition include: Tony Brown, Montreal; George Legrady, London, Ont.; John McEwen, Toronto; Christopher Pratt, St. Mary's Bay, Nfld.; Tim Zuck, Halifax.

SUMMER MASTER CLASS EXHIBITION

August 14 - September 7, 1981

Peter Whyte Gallery, Banff

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ISSUES IN CLAY: WESTERN CANADIAN SCULPTURE

October 8 - November 1, 1981

Originated by Latitude 53 and Susan Fridman in Edmonton, the exhibition includes ceramic sculpture by artists from Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, including Sally Barbier, Luc Beauparlant, Lorne Beug, John Chalke, Victor Cicansky, Annemarie Schmid Esler, Joe Fafard, Gathie Falk, Franklin Heisler, Salley Michener, James Thornbury, Mary Shannon Will and Charles Wissinger.

VOCATION/VACATION

November 5 - December 13, 1981

Originated and curated by Brian MacNevin. A series of three installation exhibitions and an original manuscript that considers the following: The Banff Centre School of Fine Arts (Walter Phillips Gallery) established for the continuing education of visual artists, which is within the larger organization of the federal government's National Park created for the recreation and enjoyment of the Canadian people and our guests. The manuscript, which is one part of the Vocation/Vacation exhibition, will be written by Toronto artists Tom Sherman and Jan Pottie. The installations will be created by Michael Asher of Los Angeles, Garry Kennedy of Halifax and another artist.

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struggle into a moral relation, making its resolution the responsibility of individuals simply as individuals.

A moral project

As Cartledge points out, this is an especially difficult problem for the women's movement which, as she describes it, is "an intensely moral project." Thus all too often the failure to eradicate sexism and to transform domestic life is seen by those involved as a personal failure. What Cartledge is pointing to, but what she does not make explicit, is that the lives of individuals are embedded in various sets of social relations over which they, as individuals, have little if any control. Their lives are determinate. For individuals, in the name of morality, to struggle against these organizational forms is simply to invite frustration and failure. The problem with feminist personal politics is that it goes forward in just such a social vacuum. This then creates in their personal lives a whole series of contradictions between individual feminists and the social life around them. Cartledge identifies these as the problems of feminist morality.

She begins what she calls her whistle-stop tour of these problems with a flashback first to an article called "Fuck the Family" from *Lesbians Come Together*, published in 1972, and then to a workshop paper which dumps on romantic love in order to "smash monogamy." She goes on to examine whether "feelings" — of love, romance, dependence, attraction, jealousy — are 'natural.' Then comes the problem of whether serial monogamy, parallel monogamy, or any other form of monogamy is morally right. Next is the issue of "the Meaningful Relationship" which raises thorny moral issues regarding casual sex, objectification, and so forth. The tour goes on. What she describes are the problems of individuals, as individuals, attempting to transform a social relation. Reviewing her own experiences and those of other women over the past ten years, she points out that these changes cannot happen overnight. What she argues for, consequently, is common sense in the face of feminist morality. Otherwise, she writes, "Instead of developing a more solid, if more gradual approach based on the actual practical conditions of women's lives, we could retire wounded to the apparent safety of couples, homes, babies and individual solutions." What is necessary to add here, however, is that the liberation of women requires the transformation of a social relation. First and foremost this is not a question of reforming the particular behaviour of particular individuals, but of transforming the organizational form of our lives. This is where the emphasis has to be placed. Because of the magnitude of this task, it cannot be the work

simply of individuals working individually within their own families, for example. It can only be the work of a class.

Two other articles in *Homosexuality: Power and Politics* are really worth mentioning: Jeffery Weeks' "Capitalism and the Organization of Sex" and Simon Watney's "The Ideology of GLF". Like Susan Cartledge's work,

both these articles begin to illuminate the ideological practices of feminists and gay activists. Both should be read by anyone seriously interested in gay politics. At this point in history, when women, lesbians and gay men are under attack from the radical right, a much better understanding of the ideological practices that have created the present politics of sexuality is necessary in

order to forge a politically effective basis of unity. Without this basis of unity, conservative governments, police forces, and organizations like the Anti-Homosexual League, Positive Parents, the KKK and Renaissance International will have their way. □

George Smith is currently a student of sociology at OISE and a chairperson of the RTPC.

ALISON BEALE

EASING OUT SEXISM

Taking a pluralist stance to media sexism — it can be waited out as well as fought.

Women and the Mass Media: Sourcebook for Research and Action
Matilda Butler and William Paisley
Human Sciences Press, 1980

"Sexism emerged in American media to serve vested interests, and sexism will remain in American media until the power of the opposition exceeds the power of the vested interests." (page 308)

This book concludes with three types of action to which American women have recourse in addressing the problem of sexism in the media. In addition to legal, economic and social strategies (the latter including, for example, lobbying by both public groups and media professionals), a crucial fourth is added by the authors. With *research*, they say, pressure groups can "make the data do the work of pressing for action."

The moving target represented by the "vested interests" behind the media is not revealed, but a well-catalogued arsenal of data and research methodology is provided for those heading into the fray. The book includes an historical introduction to the American battle for female suffrage, and a short history of the U.S. media, which includes a perspective on the media research traditions in American sociology. Theories of language and of image cognition/identification are noted before the text proceeds to the three major sections on content, institutional and audience-oriented studies of sexism in the media. Television, radio, newspapers, magazines, films and books — ranked according to average audience hours per day — are thoroughly documented in terms of their content, ownership, audiences, hiring histories and policies, and their important points of vulnerability to change.

The many studies which are quoted are assessed rather than merely used;

recent developments in research are foregrounded and these tend to illustrate a qualitative and quantitative improvement since 1970 in the data supporting the feminist case for reform. These studies also provide the sort of mildly startling quotations and statistics which should capture the attention and zeal of the book's intended users — undergraduate communications students and women's media lobby groups.

Consciousness scale

Women and the Mass Media does not dwell on the differences between private-corporate, "public" and "alternative" media systems, in terms of their long-term goals or accountability. All of them hire women unfairly, and even *MS* magazine publishes sexist advertising. In the same pragmatic fashion, women in ads, soap operas and cinema can all be assessed and compared using the "Consciousness Scale", which measures from I for a Playboy centrefold to V for the "individual" woman who transcends the limitations of gender stereotypes. This approach is pluralist — it seeks to attack sexist media practices from every relevant angle. It is also gradualist — the authors reason that the media are not responsible for sexism, but since they do reinforce it they may as well be used to diminish it. Media sexism, the book concludes, can — like anti-suffragism — be waited out as well as fought.

Despite the fact that the book is intended for an American audience, it is too narrow in its survey of useful communications research, to serve that audience very well; though this is a very wide "narrow" indeed. The authors draw intelligent and useful comparisons between the research and battles in the U.S. over racism and violence in the media and the current anti-

sexist campaigns. They have included an important chapter on the influence of the media in gender-identity formation in children, a study which is responsive to the criticisms levelled at "effects" studies over the years. But there is no mention, for example, of the writings which theorize the link between sexist female imagery in the media and commodity fetishism, and no real mention or distinction of *group* as opposed to individual responses or resistance to the media's output.

Even more seriously, and less understandably, the class, ethnic, racial and geographic differences among U.S. women, their differing capacities as consumers, and the respective economic roles of men and women in modern society (let alone the theories of patriarchal capitalism) are not significantly present. Following the dominant functionalist tradition, the American media are seen as institutions which *ought* to be able to give the individual woman everything she wants. This faith is perhaps the reason why the book does not investigate the alternative feminist media. (They are, however, included in the list of resources).

The American media have shown themselves to be elastic — they can absorb but can also transform and reject feminist ideas. For this reason one could fairly expect an action-oriented book like this one to realistically face the conflict of interest, on this shifting ideological ground, between the consummate Consciousness V woman (the individual) and the group (women) of whom she is one. □

Alison Beale is currently involved in the graduate programme in communications at McGill University in Montreal.

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