

# SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE



EVOLUTION OR  
REVOLUTION:  
LESSONS FROM  
CHILE

WOMEN  
HOSPITAL  
WORKERS

CHINA:  
SCIENCE WALKS  
ON TWO LEGS

ENGINEERS  
AND UNIONS

COMPUTER  
WORKERS AS  
PROFESSIONALS

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## EDITORIAL PRACTICE

Each issue of *Science for the People* is prepared by a collective assembled from volunteers by the magazine coordinating committee. A collective carries out all editorial, production, and distribution functions for one issue. The following is a distillation of the actual practice of past collectives. Due dates: Articles received by the first week of an odd-numbered month can generally be considered for the magazine to be issued on the 15th of the next month. Form: One of the ways you can help is to submit double-spaced typewritten manuscripts with ample margins. If you can send six copies, that helps even more. One of the few founding principles of SESPA is that articles must be signed (a pseudonym is acceptable). Criteria for acceptance: *SESPA Newsletter*, predecessor to *Science for the People*, was pledged to print everything submitted. It is no longer feasible to continue this policy, although the practice thus far has been to print all articles descriptive of SESPA/Science for the People activities. Considerably more discrimination is applied to analytical articles. These are expected to reflect the general political outlook of *Science for the People*. All articles are judged on the basis of length, style, subject and content. Editorial Procedure: The content of each issue is determined by unanimous consent of the collective. Where extensive rewriting of an article is required, the preference of the collective is to discuss the changes with the author. If this is not practical, reasons for rejection are sent to the author. An attempt is made to convey suggestions for improvement. If an article is late or excluded for lack of space or if it has non-unanimous support, it is generally passed on to the next collective. Editorial statements: Unsigned articles are statements of the editorial collective. Opportunities for participation: Volunteers for editorial collectives should be aware that each issue requires a substantial contribution of time and energy for a twelve-week period. Help is always appreciated and provides an opportunity for the helper to learn and for the collective to get to know a prospective member. There are presently plans to move the magazine production to other cities. This will increase the opportunity for participation. For legal purposes, *Science for the People* has become incorporated. *Science for the People* is now available in microfilm from Xerox University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48106, (313) 761-4700.

# ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Several questions are raised by the Chile article. First, to what extent can special groups like doctors be expected to divorce themselves from their associations with the dominant class and work for significant change? The article suggests that when it comes to a choice between class interests and change, most Chilean doctors chose class interests. Second, does the example of Chile constitute proof that change within a system is impossible in other countries as well? And third, what does one do toward a new system while living in an old one?

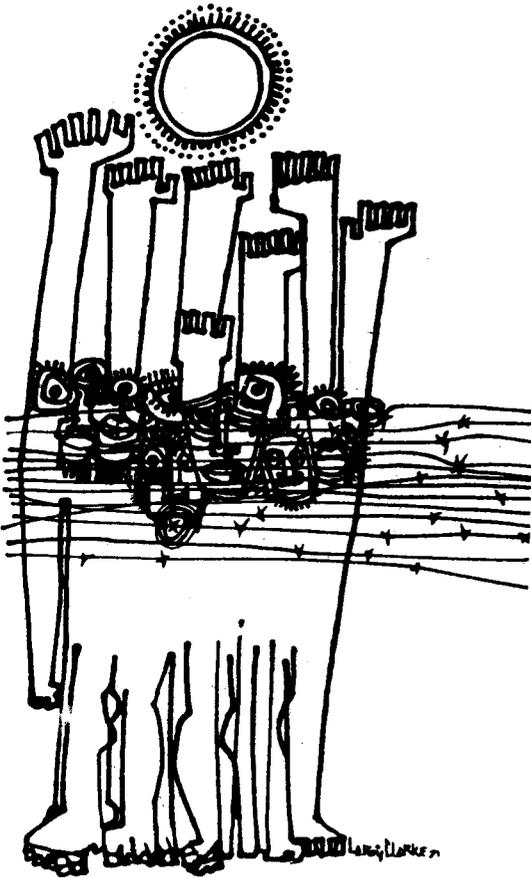
This last question led to disagreement between members of the collective. The original Chile article ended with a list suggesting what Americans might do to aid the people of Chile. We, the editorial collective, decided to eliminate those suggestions although this seems to contradict SESA policy to provide, whenever possible, suggestions for concrete actions. This decision was made after a discussion which disclosed disagreements between us. To some of us it seems that these suggestions, calling as they do for individual actions, propagate an illusion. The Chile article itself argues and some of us think that such actions, because they are not an organized attempt to change the system, are at best fruitless and at worst counterproductive. We do not wish to translate political problems into moral terms but rather to find an effective way of translating our moral concern into political action.

Given this aim, what Americans can best do for Chile is to organize a movement capable of challenging the system effectively. This means that what we can best do for Chile is to work for revolution wherever we are. What we can do for Chile is to make a revolution in America.

This is the limit of our agreement. How to make that revolution — whether it begins with individuals or organizations; how individual action becomes collective action; when moral action (like writing letters or not buying Chilean goods) becomes political action — is still a matter of disagreement.

The two articles about engineers and computer workers touch upon a problem of the “new working class.” Three questions are raised. First, are the interests of these technical professionals fundamentally the same as those of the working class? Second, is the ideology of professionalism a tool of management or does it serve some purpose contradictory to the interests of management? Third, do the conditions under which technical professionals work tend to diminish the differences between professionals and other workers?

Some of us would answer these questions by saying that the ideology and practice of professionalism serve only the interests of capital; that on a very fundamental level professionalism stands in the way of a communist working class conception of the social nature of production and consequently of the collective concept of responsibility.



# NEWS NOTES

## IUD'S CAUSE COMPLICATIONS, DEATH

The Dalkon Shield intrauterine device (IUD) may cause severe complications and even death if a woman using one becomes pregnant. Since the voluntary suspension of sales and distribution by the manufacturer in late June, the FDA disclosed at recent hearings that the number of serious problems presumably associated with the shield totaled 11 deaths and 209 septic abortions. A septic abortion is a miscarriage caused by an infection in the uterus.

In response to a report made by manufacturer A.H. Robins the Planned Parenthood Federation of America directed all of its 700 birth control clinics to stop prescribing the Dalkon Shield and to warn all women currently using the device of its dangers. In late May the anti-shield directive was reissued with a recall clause.

The Dalkon Shield, used mainly by women who have never been pregnant, has a failure rate between .5 and 5.1%. The company says that a maximum of 2.2 million women (figures run from 1.3 million) have been fitted with the shield, so a possible 122,200 wearers might become pregnant yearly.

The major danger of this device arises when a woman becomes pregnant. If a woman using a Dalkon Shield misses a menstrual period she should have a pregnancy test as soon as possible. And if she is pregnant she should have the IUD removed immediately whether or not she plans to continue the pregnancy.

The Food and Drug Administration is presently studying side effects of the Dalkon Shield and other IUD's so as to determine whether the problem is peculiar to the Dalkon Shield or all intrauterine devices.

—*Struggle*  
— *Science*

## KISSINGER, CIA FINANCE DESTRUCTION OF ALLENDE GOVERNMENT

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger personally approved the expenditure of \$8 million for CIA operations in Chile which incurred the fall of the Allende government. Kissinger issued those directives in his role as chairman of the powerful 40 Committee which supervises all secret CIA activities. Kissinger's actions were revealed when testimony delivered by CIA director William Colby in a secret congressional hearing was leaked to the press. Colby's assertions contrast markedly with previous denials that the U.S. was at all responsible for the military coup of September 11, 1973.

According to the latest evidence, \$500,000 was funneled through the CIA to right wing opposition parties to defeat Allende in the 1970 elections. After the election Allende's victory had to be ratified by congress. The CIA pumped some \$350,000 in bribes into congress in order to sway the vote. At least another \$5 million was earmarked for destabilization efforts during 1971, 1972 and 1973. During the last election before the coup, in which the Popular Unity forces increased their backing, \$1.5 million was directed to anti-Allende candidates. CIA funding also subsidized the anti-Allende press. There are also indications that \$1 million was received by leaders against the UP during the strikes of truckers and shopkeepers who opposed Allende's policies in late August, 1973, just before the coup.

In the U.S., Michael Harrington is requesting the House Foreign Relations Committee to conduct full scale hearings to investigate the CIA activities in Chile and to bring Colby and Kissinger under public examination. Harrington is being joined in the Senate by Frank Church in an effort which should clarify the clandestine activities of the CIA and the financier of the Chilean massacre.

—*The Boston Phoenix*

## ARMY SEARCHES FOR ETHNIC VULNERABILITIES

The U.S. military is currently involved in a genetic research program that could develop a weapon capable of wiping out specific races and ethnic groups while leaving others unharmed. [See *Science for the People*, Vol. III, No. 5, Nov. 1971].

Dr. Richard Hammerschlag, a neurochemist from California, spoke about the possibility at a recent meeting of the American Chemical Society in Los Angeles. He found the information in an article entitled "Ethnic Weapons" in the November 1970 edition of *Military Review*. Since then he has found two government funded programs conducting further research into genetic ethnic differences. Although the article did not suggest specific approaches, reported Hammerschlag, it clearly implied that the development of chemical agents to exploit genetic vulnerability could be expected within the near future.

This concept has grown out of recent research into blood proteins. "Many blood proteins (known as polymorphisms) exist in several different genetically controlled forms in human populations," said the doctor, and substances could be developed to affect populations with particular types of polymorphisms without affecting other populations.

Diseases associated with particular groups are already known to exist, such as sickle cell anemia which affects mostly blacks and Tay Sach's disease, a blood disease found only in people of eastern European Jewish ancestry.

Colonel William Dismore, chief of the Army's Chemical and Nuclear Division, denied that the military is considering using such weapons. He admitted that the Army is researching genetic characteristics of ethnic groups, but said it was for "medical purposes only".

— CPF (info from *Muhammad Speaks*)

## AT&T SHUNS WIRETAP STUDY

John D. deButts, chairman of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, has asserted that his company's research would never extend to development of sophisticated wiretap or eavesdropping devices.

Earlier this week at a news conference in Kansas City, Mo., he said: "We oppose wiretapping research and the invasion of a customer's privacy. We have never been approached by the Government to do such research and if we would be, we would refuse."

Mr. deButts added that telephone companies never actively participate in Governmental wiretap activities. "We just show them what box or line they want and let them do the rest," he said.

—The New York Times

## THE HORSE'S MOUTH

Who says working in a coal mine is dangerous?

A letter writer to the *New York Times*, angrily responding to some articles about mine hazards, recently wrote:

*I have lived more than three years of my life in Wise County, Virginia, Boone County, West Virginia, and Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, among the coal mining people. I can tell you that the overwhelming majority of mine workers and mine supervisors alike have little but scorn for the statements reproduced repeatedly in the Times, alleging that American coal miners are mistreated and underprivileged and work under basically unsafe conditions.*

The letter was signed, "E.B. Leisenring Jr., President, Westmoreland Coal Co."

CPF/from *The Guardian*

## WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE ASSAILS ZERO GROWTH

The U.S. government suffered a staggering defeat at the World Population Conference in Bucharest, Rumania, August 19-29. Altogether some 3000 delegates representing nearly every country in the world attended the conference.

The Washington delegation brought to the world's first international population conference all the beaten warnings of neo-Malthusianism and wanted them included in the final draft declaration that is to be approved at the coming United Nations General Assembly this fall:

*Excessive global population growth widens the gap between rich and poor nations; distorts international trade; increases the likelihood of famine in the relatively near future; adds to environmental problems; produces unemployment; enlarges the danger of civil unrest and promotes aggressions endangering peace.*

But the developing countries — which outnumber the industrialized by better than two to one — easily succeeded in reversing the original draft statement. Instead of discussing "overpopulation" and its alleged dire consequences for humankind, it stressed the importance of the economic and social development of a country as primary in implementing any population policy.

Virtually all the U.S. proposals were rejected. Instead of calling on all countries to adhere to a single birth control plan the document says: "Countries which consider their birth rates detrimental to their national purpose are invited to consider setting quantitative goals." But, the declaration stresses, "Nothing herein should interfere with the sovereignty of any government to adopt such quantitative goals."

The conference rejected outright the U.S. statement that there is overpopulation. For this clearly implies placing the burden of action on the third world countries, whose populations in the last few decades have been expanding rapidly — after centuries of imperialist and colonialist plunder and decimation.

Instead, the declaration puts much of the blame for the world's problems on the industrialized countries which consume a disproportionate amount of the world's resources:

*It is imperative that all countries and within them all social sectors should adapt themselves to more rational utilization of natural resources, without excess, so that some are not deprived of what others waste.*

The document also contains a special section calling for the promotion of the rights of women and noting the importance of their role in determining the birth rate. As long as women are oppressed and cannot take part in the social and economic life of their countries on an equal footing, the document suggests, they will not be able, on a mass scale, to consciously and willingly regulate their families according to their own or their countries' needs.

The declaration notes also that the death rate must be lowered in most countries, that child labor and child abuse must be abolished, that maternal and infant care programs must be expanded, and the like.

The conference significantly destroyed years of careful preparation of the Zero Growthers who were unable to stamp the conference resolutions with their Rockefeller plans for mass genocide.

— *The Guardian*

## RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The problems of Watergate have not gone unnoticed by the military-industrial complex. Stonewall International has recently announced its LIDIMAT 460 for the bulk laundering of currency. The device employs an organic solvent along with ultrasonics and a high-speed subterfuge to provide the necessary motions and safeguard against inflation. It accepts \$20, \$50, and \$100 denominations and is said to be non-polluting.

# EVOLUTION OR REVOLUTION: LESSONS FROM CHILE\*

This account is based on available written sources as well as observations of Chilean citizens and foreign visitors. One of us (Hilary Modell) worked from 1971 to 1973 as a member of a health team in Chile under a program sponsored by the UP [*UNIDAD POPULAR*] government; she was present in Chile during the September coup. Current information depends largely on foreign journalists and observers, as well as witnesses who left the country after the coup.

With the military coup d'état of September, 1973, 41 years of constitutional democracy in Chile came to an end. The purpose of our paper is to analyze (1) some of the changes that occurred in the Chilean health system during the government of Salvador Allende, (2) the political and economic constraints that limited the viability of the socialized health system in Chile, and (3) the dismantling of the health system that has occurred under Chile's present totalitarian regime. The implications of the Chilean experience for health care and social change in the Third World are clearly evident: health care is inextricably linked to a nation's political and economic systems; conflicts within the health system mirror the inherent conflicts of a stratified society; and incremental reforms in the health system have little meaning without basic change in the social order.

## Achieved Reforms

Health programs instituted by Allende's government were consistent with the World Health Organization's unified concept of health: "The concept of health has been defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being of the individual, and not only as the

\* Condensed from "Medicine, Socialism, and Totalitarianism: Lessons from Chile," *The New England Journal of Medicine*, July 25, 1974, Vol. 291, No. 4, pp. 171-177; and from "Medicine and Socialism in Chile," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XIX, 1974-75.

absence of disease." All children and pregnant or nursing mothers received 0.5 liter of free milk per day. The government instituted public educational campaigns, informing families about the nutritive value of milk.[8-11] To reduce Chile's high rate of infant and prenatal mortality, the government established a system of maternity clinics in small towns and worked to institutionalize the principle of free medical care in all hospitals. Recognizing the importance of environmental health, the government began aggressive programs to improve housing conditions and sanitation, and to require innovation in copper mining and similar industries to reduce the incidence of occupational diseases like silicosis.[13]

Facing a severe maldistribution of health care, which favored wealthier areas in cities while rural areas and low-income urban districts suffered from shortages of facilities and personnel, the government tried to increase inpatient and ambulatory services in rural provinces. A government sponsored "health train" toured the southern provinces, treating 30 thousand people.

## Democratization and Decentralization

None of these or other similar health reforms were particularly threatening to the Chilean medical profession. However, Allende also encouraged changes in the health system that supported increased worker and consumer control. These modifications aroused the anger and opposition of health professionals that ultimately crippled many of the more politically neutral reforms.

Even before the UP government took office, the Ministry of Health (NHS) had established a system of hospitals each of which served an area further broken down into neighborhoods; each neighborhood was served by a Neighborhood Health Center (NHC). Part of the UP

program was to decentralize and democratize medical care by putting greater emphasis on NHC's. To this end, Local Health Councils (LHC) were formed by representatives of all organized groups in the community (unions, schools, women's groups, youth groups, etc.), the union of nonprofessional health workers (aides, janitors, etc.), the union of professional health workers (laboratory technicians, social workers, psychologists, etc.) the separate category of medical professionals (physicians, dentists, and pharmacists), and the medical director of the NHC. The tasks of the LHC were to discuss the health problems of the community, suggest solutions, cooperate in the promotion of health campaigns (anti-diarrhea, bronchopneumonia prevention, garbage collection, etc.) and act as an advisory link between the NHS and the community.

Still on the NHC level, a second council acted as an executive body (*paritario*). This group included representatives elected from the LHC, in addition to the director of the NHC. The purpose of the *paritario* was to act upon the suggestions of the LHC, although ultimate decisions remained in the hands of the medical director. Analogously, at the area hospital level, parallel councils (*consejos locales del area*) and executive groups (*paritarios*) were also established, with similar tasks and advisory functions.

As a supplement to the LHC's, the NHS also initiated a Program of Sociocultural Development. The Program provided for an integrated health team to work with community members in identifying each locality's basic needs. This team encouraged collective action to combat diverse problems facing local residents, offered health information, emphasized people's direct participation as knowledgeable LHC members, and attempted to raise the level of medical and political consciousness among the people.

One clear weakness of the LHC's and health teams is that they did not provide a real change in power relations. They remained basically advisory in nature, the actual decision-making power remained with the medical directors of the NHC's. In spite of this weakness, the LHC's became increasingly viable forms of popular power in late 1972 and early 1973, by integrating themselves into broad-based organizations concerned with food distribution, transportation, local security, and industrial production. These groups provided a basis for the massive efforts needed to maintain health care during the periodic strikes and boycotts by the medical profession.[9, 18, 19]

Paralleling these changes on the neighborhood level, comparable democratization of decision making occurred in many large hospitals, especially those affiliated with the medical colleges. Within each specialty department (medicine, surgery, pediatrics, etc.) a governing council was formed. This council included elected representatives of nonprofessional workers (such as janitors, aides and orderlies), as well as health professionals (doctors and nurses). The governing council made administrative and staffing decisions that had formerly

fallen under the exclusive jurisdiction of high-ranking professionals. The influence of the departmental councils extended to the governance of the hospital as an institution, since the departmental councils elected representatives, including nonprofessional workers as well as physicians, to the council that made policy for the entire hospital. The restructuring of power relations in the hospitals reflected the conscious thrust toward democratization that occurred also in other Chilean institutions such as industrial enterprises and the universities. These attempts to reduce professional dominance[20] ultimately led to organized opposition against the UP regime by a majority of the Chilean medical profession.



### The Political Reality

In contrast to other countries with socialist governments, Allende made no direct attempt to suppress private practice, by either legal or economic means. Since the establishment of the NHS in 1952, physicians could choose to work for the NHS, to remain in full-time private practice, or to pursue private practice in addition to their employment in the NHS. Under certain circumstances, doctors could use NHS hospitals or clinics on a fee-for-service basis. The Chilean government continued to underwrite medical education, providing free tuition for medical students, but did not require any standardized postgraduate period of national service. Compulsory measures were applied only to the distribution of pharmaceutical supplies. In reality, the failure of the NHS was so widely acknowledged that separate health services were established for the armed forces, the railroad industry, and white-collar workers such as teachers, lawyers, and bureaucratic officials (*empleados*).[23] The NHS itself developed a huge bureaucracy, which became notorious for its size (by 1967 there were 40,656 administrative employees as compared to 6487 medical professionals [9]) and severe inefficiencies in delivering needed services. Despite the government's public intention to restructure the health system, little change occurred in the day-to-day details or control of private practice.

Although fundamental changes in private practice remained more a fear than a reality, physicians became increasingly anxious about the general democratization

and decline of professional dominance that the UP regime encouraged. The LHC's and hospital councils in several instances requested the removal of physicians employed by the NHS, on the grounds that these individuals' private practices outside the NHS interfered with their NHS duties. Doctors feared that the NHS would exert tighter control over the proportion of private patients they could see, especially within NHS facilities. The government's intention of training more paraprofessional health workers also potentially threatened professional dominance. In late 1972, some community organizations began training their own members in various medical tasks. Organized medicine viewed this democratization of expertise with great apprehension. Moreover, within the curriculum of Chile's medical schools, aided by the support of the UP government, the social sciences came to occupy a more prominent place. Because the social sciences fostered a deeper social consciousness and more critical attitude in young professionals, established physicians feared that their younger colleagues would provide an impetus toward more fundamental changes in the organization of practice.

Physicians' irritation with the UP regime, however, transcended these prospective and largely hypothetical changes that might affect medicine per se. As members of Chile's middle and upper classes, physicians suffered from the same shortages of goods and services that plagued the entire country during the last part of the UP government. As members of the privileged classes, physicians perceived these shortages as intolerable. In 1972 the Chilean Medical Association began a vigorous campaign against the UP government. Although approximately 30 per cent of the profession continued to support Allende's goals, the Medical Association released a series of public denunciations. During the paralyzing "strike" of October, 1972, which began as a lockout by the owners of the trucking industry, the majority of physicians refused to see NHS patients except on an emergency basis. The work stoppage by physicians led to a severe tension between professionals and paraprofessionals that persisted for the duration of UP government. During the weeks immediately preceding the military coup of September, 1973, a doctors' strike organized by the Medical Association incapacitated the Chilean health care system.[18,19] The medical profession, threatened by a redistribution of power and inconvenienced by economic instability, helped lay the groundwork for military dictatorship.

### **Chilean Totalitarianism and Its Implications**

With the military coup of September, 1973, Chile has entered a period of totalitarian rule that eyewitness observers liken to fascism.[27-29] Although information has been limited by the dictatorship's censorship and restrictions on travel, several outcomes of the coup — verified by multiple written accounts and personal eyewitnesses — no longer remain controversial.

The dictatorship has reversed almost all the changes in the medical system that occurred under Allende's

government. In the *poblaciones* and in rural areas, the new regime has closed nearly all NHC's and has transferred their functions to hospitals that are frequently located at great distances. As a result, low-income Chileans again experience severe difficulties in obtaining needed care.[40] The LHC's and consumer-worker councils that governed hospital departments have been disbanded. Control of the nation's hospitals has returned formally to the Chilean Medical Association, which consistently has supported the junta. Most of the preventive health programs (such as free milk distribution to children) have been discontinued or taken over by private entrepreneurs.

The Junta's Ministry of Health developed three categories by which medical personnel were to be classified: politically trustworthy; uncertain (to be judged by hospital boards); and politically dangerous ("irredeemable").[32,38] The secretary general of the Chilean Medical Association has acknowledged that physicians supporting the Junta have participated in denunciations of their leftist colleagues.[39] Generally, denunciations are directed against physicians who opposed the doctors' strike of August, 1973.[32] In addition, there are numerous reports that some military physicians have co-operated in the administration of torture, particularly by supervising the use of drugs during torture sessions.[32]

If for no other reason, the UP experiment was necessary to show that those who hold professional dominance (as well as economic and political dominance) will not permit a real redistribution of wealth and power without a fight. Though deeply disappointing to adherents of nonviolence, the Chilean experience documents that a medical elite generally will uphold orderly legal processes only while these processes do not threaten the elite's dominant position in society.

### **Analysis: Health Care, the State, and Social Revolution**

Three general themes emerge from the Chilean experience. These themes concern linkages between health care and a nation's political and economic systems, the inherent conflicts of a stratified society that are mirrored in the health system, and the problem of incremental reforms in health care versus fundamental change in state power and the social order.

*In the first place, in all societies, but especially in the Third World, health care is inextricably linked to a nation's political and economic systems.* Medical underdevelopment is a necessary feature of economic underdevelopment. Despite many progressive reforms in the health system, the UP government was continually hindered by the limited economic resources available for health care and other public-welfare functions. As several analysts have pointed out, Chile and similar countries could spend the same proportion of their wealth for health care as in a developed country like the United States, but the effect necessarily would be

restricted by the underdeveloped country's much lower level of wealth. One Chilean analysis concludes: "Consequently every health policy should be narrowly united with the general policy regarding development of the country." [41] In this view, the effectiveness of a socialized health system in Chile or other nations of the Third World depends in large part on the level of economic development.

A second general lesson from the Chilean experience is that *conflicts within the health system mirror in miniature the inherent conflicts of a stratified society.* Any socialist government must confront the problem of social class. Doctors, like bankers and corporate managers, possess economic advantages and customary life styles that they do not willingly sacrifice on behalf of the masses of people trapped in an existence of poverty. Besides economic interests, health professionals hold dominant positions in the institutions where they work. Because of their technical expertise, physicians believe

that professional dominance over health policies is justified. [20] Any innovations that tend to reduce the profession's power to control the conditions of practice are perceived as threatening.

Thirdly, and most importantly, *the Chilean experience shows that incremental reforms in health care have little meaning without basic change in the social order.* Since Allende had assumed the presidency through constitutional electoral procedures, he lacked true state power. That is, the coalition government remained heterogeneous and did not hold statutory control over the military, judiciary, legislature, and professions. [26,46,47] In the case of medicine, the lack of state power left Allende and his admirers impotent in their attempts to restructure health care. Distributing milk to mothers and children falls far short of the structural alterations needed to assure adequate care. Allende and his advisors recognized the inherent inequities of the private-public duality, a schizoid arrangement that always favors the financially advantaged at the expense of the poor. But

## *It's the same struggle...*



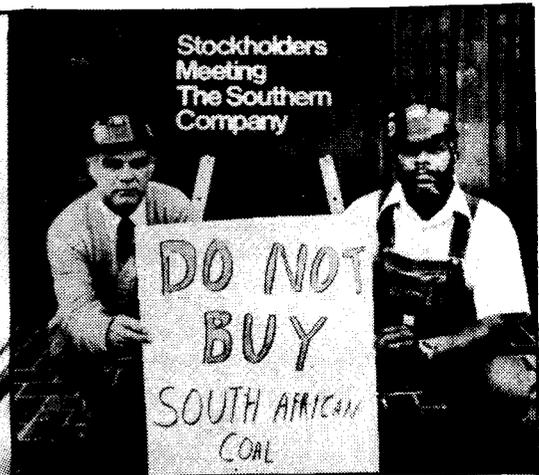
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because the government lacked true state power, it made no real attempt to nationalize the health system. The government's intentions of rectifying the inequalities of the private-public duality remained almost entirely theoretical.[48] It is difficult to see how Chile's huge problems of maldistribution could be solved without some compulsory restriction of private practice. Similarly, equity could not be achieved without some requirement that all physicians devote at least several years of their careers to national service in urban or rural areas lacking needed personnel.

Ultimately, Allende viewed his presidency as a transitional period in which a series of reforms would culminate in a true socialist restructuring of society. The government encouraged the establishment of LHC's, workers' organizations, and other new groupings whose eventual purpose was a thorough transformation of power relations in Chilean society. With occasional exceptions, however, these organizations did not achieve their goals of power redistribution, since real decision-making power remained in the hands of the medical directors.[22]

The experiment of Allende and the UP was truly unique. For the first time, a socialist government had been elected by constitutional and peaceful means in a major country of the Western Hemisphere. For leftists who espouse nonviolent methods, Chile held out the hope that the socialist revolution could be achieved peacefully.

As Paul Sweezy has pointed out, the overthrow of the UP shows that one no longer can realistically be both a revolutionary and a pacifist.[49] This lesson is particularly striking for health workers, since healing seems so basically contradictory to warmaking. Throughout the Indochina War, members of the Medical Resistance Union, Medical Committee for Human Rights, and other groups argued that participation in war was inherently inconsistent with the healing activities of doctors, nurses and other health workers. The experience in Chile, however, demonstrates that the type of revolutionary health system that many American health workers desire probably will not emerge through peaceful processes. Only in China and Cuba, which have attained socialist governmental systems through armed struggle, have health systems emerged that truly serve the people.

The result of pacifist actions for the health system, in general, are reformist and incremental in nature. Revolutionary change in the health system appears to accompany only a society-wide revolutionary struggle. Che Guevara noted that the health of entire peoples may ultimately depend on the destruction of smaller groups of people who themselves would use violence to prevent progressive change in society.[61,62] As a physician, Guevara chose armed struggle as the only possible road toward socialist revolution and a humane health system. Health workers in the rest of the Third World and in advanced capitalist countries now face a similar dilemma.

## Reactionary versus Progressive Reformism

As described above, most changes in Chile's health system that the UP government accomplished were incremental reforms, rather than fundamental structural modifications of the system. While improved nutrition, sanitation, occupational health, and distribution of clinics were all worthwhile in themselves, they did little to modify Chile's multi-class health system with its private-public inequities. Worker-consumer councils did not effectively challenge professional dominance over the health system.

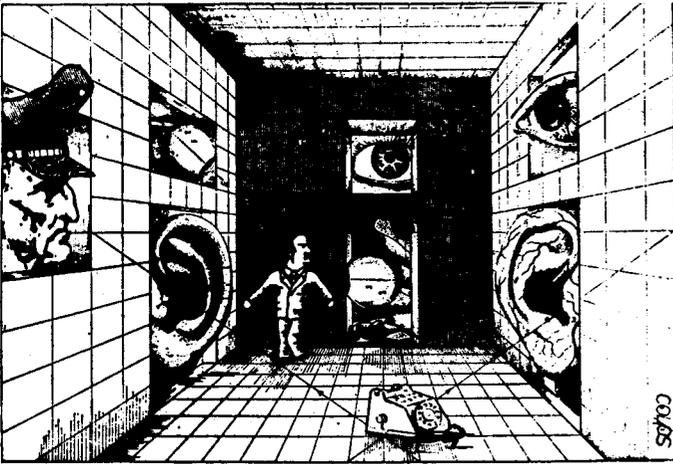
Many analysts, notably André Gorz, have discussed the problematic implications of reforms like those the UP government sponsored. Such reforms actually reinforce the current exploitative and stratified nature of society by providing small material improvements or establishing structures (like councils or committees) by which people can derive a sense of participation in policy-making. They leave the economic and political systems intact, while reducing opposition and thereby inhibiting progressive change. Hence they are *reactionary reforms*, or in Gorz's words, "reformist reforms."

*A reformist reform is one which subordinates objectives to the criteria of rationality and practicability of a given system and policy. Reformism rejects those objectives and demands — however deep the need for them — which are incompatible with the preservation of the system.*[63]

While the general thrust of UP-sponsored health reforms was "reactionary" in this sense, several developments during the UP period held a potential for true structural change in the health system. These innovations may be considered *progressive reforms*, since they implied an eventual end to economic exploitation in health care. Gorz describes this type of reform as follows:

*... a struggle for non-reformist reforms — for anti-capitalist reforms — is one which does not base its validity and its right to exist on capitalist needs, criteria, and rationales.*[63]

*So in terms of socialist strategy, although we should not reject intermediary reforms (those that do not immediately carry their anti-capitalist logic to its conclusion), it is with the strict proviso that they are to be regarded as a means and not an end, as dynamic phases in a progressive struggle, not as stopping places . . . But this approach [peaceful democratic reform] should be adopted not because it is viable or intrinsically preferable, but on the contrary because the resistance it will encounter, and the limitations and impossibilities it will bring to light, are alone capable of demonstrating the necessity of a complete changeover to socialism to those segments of the masses which are not yet prepared for such a course.*[64] (emphasis in original)



Progressive reforms do not simply improve material conditions and permit token participation while accepting the exploitative structure of the present system. Instead, they provide the potential for mass political action to change the system. Rather than obscuring sources of exploitation by small incremental improvements, progressive reforms expose and highlight structural inequities. Such reforms ultimately increase frustration and political tension in a society; they do not seek to reduce these sources of political energy.

### Strategies for Progressive Health Work

Chile's failure might be less painful to ponder if it suggested a viable alternative political strategy. Unfortunately, this is not the case. For Third World health workers, the lessons of Chile may be fairly clear. In the Third World, the goals of mass mobilization, progressive reformism, and armed revolutionary struggle are more than theoretical concepts. In the United States and other industrialized countries — where the resources of communication and infiltration available to the capitalist state are infinitely more sophisticated and the inequalities of class structure are less stark — the strategic implications of the Chilean experience remain ambiguous. Nevertheless, it may be worthwhile to conclude with some further tentative comments on the relationships between health care and revolutionary strategy. We focus first on the Third World and then on advanced capitalist countries.

*The Third World:* At the present time it is difficult to understand how revolutionary health work in the Third World can be effective without attempting to build a liberated zone. Previously, left-oriented health workers have gone about their daily activities assuming that the limited reforms toward which they work in the health system will contribute eventually to the process of socialist revolution. The Chilean experience indicates that this is a mistaken assumption. Unless an entire geographical area of a country is liberated, including all the major institutions in that area, progressive health work in the Third World holds little potential for lasting structural change. Even if local consumers and workers became

mobilized around health issues, as they did periodically in Chile, this mobilization has little meaning while the most powerful institutions of a society remain unaltered. With their wealth and weapons, the elites who control those institutions will always suppress peoples' movements that threaten to achieve major success.

*The "developed" world:* The strategy of liberated zones is unrealistic when applied to advanced capitalist societies. In countries like the U.S., for the present, the likelihood of successful armed struggle against the capitalist state is negligible. Revolutionary rhetoric cannot dispel the realities of a heterogeneous class structure, the technological and infiltrative capacity of the ruling elite, and the disunity and weakness of the left. Chile's torment does not suggest a coherent strategy for health workers seeking progressive change in developed countries. Nevertheless, it may be possible to derive some very limited strategic implications for progressive health work in capitalist nations.

First, health workers can seek to clarify the distinction between reactionary and progressive reforms. Furthermore, they can try to shape their own actions to oppose reactionary reforms vigorously while supporting reforms that have the potential to change the political and economic structures of the health system. For example, current proposals for national health insurance (NHI) in the U.S. will not reduce the inequities and exploitative nature of the private-public duality. If enacted, these proposals for NHI would facilitate fee-for-service medicine and would benefit the private insurance industry, but would not correct the severe maldistribution of health personnel and facilities throughout the country.[50,66]

Similarly, the current trend toward the establishment of health maintenance organizations (HMO's) does not promise structural change in the health system. By establishing HMO's, physicians may be able to practice medicine with greater economic efficiency, and medical schools and hospitals may be able to use affiliated HMO's to attract additional sources of funding and new patients during a period of declining patient censuses at many hospitals.[50] But that is all.

More importantly, by introducing slight improvements, NHI and HMO will probably reduce the current popular frustration and dissatisfaction with health care in the U.S. Hence both are reactionary reforms and should be opposed by health workers who seek progressive change.

True structural modifications in the health system of capitalist societies generally result from measures that explicitly restrict private, fee-for-service practice. Eventually, it will be necessary to nationalize the medical profession, under the auspices of a national health service (NHS). Since physicians under an NHS are employees of the government, they can be assigned to areas of need, often on a rotating basis. In many countries where health personnel and facilities previously were maldistributed or too costly for low-income patients, an NHS has greatly increased the availability of medical ser-



"GOD BLESS AMERICA!"

"I don't see why we need to sit by and watch a country go Communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people."

— Henry Kissinger, defending CIA involvement in Chile, as quoted in the New York Times.

"I don't wield economic power."

— Nelson A. Rockefeller, at his Congressional confirmation hearings.

vices. Unlike the proposals for NHI and HMO's, the establishment of an NHS implies a structural re-organization of the health system. Clearly, the existence of an NHS alone does not provide comprehensive solutions for a nation's health problems. For example, the co-existence of private practice and an NHS permits the inequities of the private-public duality to persist. This was the principal defect of Chile's NHS; similar inequities remain in Great Britain, Sweden, and other countries that have nationalized the medical profession while retaining capitalist economic systems and while allowing private practice to continue. In socialist countries that have suppressed private practice, the private-public duality no longer threatens the viability of the NHS. Therefore, nationalization of the medical profession, in the direction of an NHS that restricts and gradually eliminates private practice, is a progressive reform and deserves the support of health workers who are involved in local political struggles and who are attempting to educate the public.

A second strategic lesson for health workers outside the Third World pertains to the nature of effective organizing. Numerous situations in the U.S. and other countries offer the potential for effective coalitions

between health workers and consumers similar to the LHCs and consumer-worker councils in Chilean hospitals. In many cities, medical centers are attempting to expand into urban residential areas. This expansion often involves the planned destruction of low-income housing. Frequently the medical elites who desire to expand medical centers cannot justify this process when the health needs of the community are carefully assessed.[67] In several localities, active community groups have arisen in opposition to expansion and have been particularly effective when they have united in political struggle with workers inside the medical centers. In some cases, these coalitions of community residents and health workers have moved beyond the expansion issue to attack other local problems. In other instances, community residents have supported attempts by hospital workers to build unions or other worker organizations whose goals include meaningful control over the work process and improved patient care, as well as material benefits for workers.[68] This type of political effort can lead to concrete progressive changes on the local level. It represents coalition politics that, as in the Chilean example, contains the potential for significant popular mobilization.

Third, and most importantly, we must be serious about winning. We must develop strategic goals that can be realistically attained. Concerted political actions directed toward limited goals at the local level can succeed. Such actions can lead to lasting progressive changes that sensitize people to their own potential power and modify the institutions in which they work or receive health care. Nationalization of the medical profession — like the advent of socialism or the end of U.S. imperialism — probably is not an attainable goal in the near future. Although health activists should help clarify and raise to consciousness the long-range societal goals of current struggles, they also should be satisfied to wage more limited battles that can be won. For the present, victories are possible by organizing in specific health institutions and in the communities that those institutions claim to serve. The cumulative effect of many small victories in many parts of the world will give Chile's torment new meaning.

Howard Waitzkin and  
Hilary Modell

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#### MORE INFORMATION ON CHILE

##### FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS:

AFSC/Emergency Committee to  
Save Chilean Health Workers  
c/o Department of Social Medicine  
Montefiore Medical Center  
111 E. 210 St.  
Bronx, NY 10467

##### INFORMATIONAL SERVICES:

Non-Intervention in Chile  
Box 800  
Berkeley, CA 94701

# WOMEN HOSPITAL WORKERS

We are a group of women working in Boston area hospitals in various capacities — as medical students, receptionists, secretaries, aides and technicians. Most of us entered the women's movement a few years ago, relieved or excited to move away from abstract "movement" discussions about false consciousness or class analysis. No longer did we sit around talking into the night about rhetorical concepts. Instead, we drew conclusions based on our own experiences about the problems and pleasures of being a woman in this society.

In our initial enthusiasm for a women's movement, it seemed to us as if our common experiences as women — the expectation that we would all be housewives, our

lower pay, the degrading use of our bodies in a thousand different ways — were so overwhelming that we could overcome all other divisions which split us up. Working in the real everyday world of men and women, employers and employees, has caused some of us to reconsider.

This group, whose occupations cover a wide range of the hospital hierarchy, sat down one night to try to understand how our roles as women intersected with the other hospital roles we had to play. We discovered that our work experience has taught us several things: (1) that it is easier to relate to others on the same "level" as ourselves, men or women, than to relate to women on levels different from ours; (2) that for us as women who possess

a consciousness of women's liberation, decent, equal friendships with other women are easier to talk about than to achieve; (3) that a common struggle for sisterhood is buried in a work situation where the oppressions of class, rank, education, and sex merge together.

Two dynamics seem to be at work as we view our job experiences: how we are treated and how we treat other women. In many of the ways we are treated as women, it makes little difference what our position is. All women, of course, are treated with paternalism in an industry whose leaders and managers are predominantly male.

Eileen, a medical student: "One of my teaching doctors called me 'sugar' for the whole month I worked with him. With eight male doctors and one female doctor making rounds together, the men seem to feel, 'Isn't it cute that this little girl follows us around.'"

Lucy, a medical student: "Male doctors also seem to think that patting women on the head while explaining something to us helps our learning process."

Experiences like these are also common to technicians and secretaries.

Connie, a secretary: "I was blamed for losing an important key which a doctor had had in his possession all day long. Finally, when he discovered his mistake, he appeased me by saying that he admired my new coat, and patted my hair, saying it looked nice."

Sue Ellen, a secretary: "One doctor stops by our office to comment continually about our clothes and hair, as if this topic is the only thing that interests us, and the only thing which makes us interesting to the office." All women — nurses, secretaries, doctors — are expected to function as objects for male eyes and egos.

The isolation of various "intelligence levels," however, is part of what splits us up as women. There is a difference in the treatment accorded to women doctors and the treatment accorded to lower-echelon women. Male doctors seem to assume that women doctors are smart — although not as smart as male doctors — whereas all other women are not too bright. Hence lines like these:

Male doctor to female medical student: "Gee, it's really nice to talk to you because I usually only get to talk to dumb nurses."

"The nurses are really bad. I have to check everything they do."

Lucy: "When I hear other women put down all the time for 'stupidity,' it makes me feel like I can't defend them or identify with them. As a female medical student, I end up achieving respect only by negative comparison with other women in the hospital system. In other words, male doctors only see female doctors as 'smart' in comparison with nurses as 'dumb.' I'm made to feel that I'm putting my sisters down by my very existence, regardless of my politics."

Hospitals also promote a kind of "institutionalized stupidity" among technicians and lower level workers. For example, Sue, a cardiology technician, feels she hasn't learned much cardiology in the last year but not because people refused to teach her.

"It's not that I can't learn new things, but that I get rewards for things such as keeping the shelves well stocked, keeping the floor running well, having everything in its right place."

Secretaries are rewarded for taking accurate phone messages about blood counts and test results, not for understanding what these facts mean. Those are the kinds of jobs that consume mental time, like housework. They leave little energy or incentive to learn something for which you will not be rewarded, or even recognized.

These problems tell us that sex discrimination is certainly blatant in our hospitals — but that it is clearly divided according to the hospital hierarchy. The way doctors treat other female doctors, nurses, technicians, maids, and dietary workers is clearly an oppression of women. But it is an oppression of women *combined* with a class oppression. Many of us are college educated women, regardless of our rank in our hospitals. We all have trouble relating to young working class men who handle transportation and do maintenance work. On one level they oppress us by making suggestive remarks and pestering us as we pass in the hall. On the other level, we oppress them, by our connection with the system of property, birth and education which keeps them tied to boring, low-paying work. Our job opportunities are not so closed as theirs. The doctors treat even the lowliest receptionist — college educated, young, female — with more consideration than a dietary worker, orderly, or maid.

Among women, the crossing of these divisions seems particularly difficult when we must ask other women to do work for us. Given that we cannot revolutionize the hospital situation and share different kinds of work, we must sometimes "give orders." The medical students said they felt guilty when giving nurses orders. Eileen said she often felt so uncomfortable at being a woman in a so-called superior position that she was flabbergasted if a nurse volunteered to help her.

"When I do a messy procedure leaving bottles and dirty gauze around, I start to clean up after myself. But a nurse will always offer to do it. But why should she? I mess it up — yet my time is supposed to be more valuable than hers."

As he laments the difficulties of putting a field emission gun in a million volt STEM system, he states, "We could do it if we had ten people working for a couple of years, *but we've got one person and a couple of technicians.*" (Emphasis mine). One would have to search long for a more classic example of the depersonalization imposed upon technicians today.

J. Maurin  
College of Nursing  
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— From *Microstructures*, Vol. III, No. 5.

For men doctors, the harshness of orders is softened through sexual flirtation (or that's how the game is supposed to be played). But for women there can be no candy coating, and an attempt at an honest, open working relationship is not always recognized as such.

The problem of giving orders also exists for technicians and secretaries, in a different form. We usually feel bad asking people "below" us to do things. For instance, asking maids to clean up milk we have spilled, or asking secretaries to file things we could file.

Relations between levels on the hospital hierarchy seem to differ according to the nature of the jobs involved. The medical students feel the most tension with the nurses, whose occupation and tasks are closest to their own. The technicians and secretaries, on the other hand, most of whom are working in a self-contained ward or department, seemed to feel the greatest unity with all personnel (except doctors) in their unit, and the most tension with those far above them, or far beneath them, like the maids, who seem to be terrorized by the spectre of displeasing a ward's administrative secretary.

Women's consciousness is clearly not enough to surmount the barriers presented by the rigid hospital hierarchy. We are cut off from other potentially radical groups in the hospital because we are white, female, middle class. The only woman who finds it easy to make men and women friends and to talk about change in the hospital and in the country is a roving technician, whose rank is not clearly visible by uniform or task. No one else can quite define her job or identify her educational rank. But in most cases the lines which cannot be crossed are very clear.

For instance, both technicians in our group discussed problems in relating to women doctors. The "Aunt Tomasina" syndrome seems to be in evidence, in which women students and interns seem busily trying to improve themselves in a man's world by asserting their authority over everyone else, especially other women. Women who must work with them are caught in the difficult trap of trying to treat an oppressor as a "sister in struggle." It comes down to a question of whom to reach with the ideas of women's liberation. The answer for us is clearly that we want to reach those people who have the most need of banding together for collective action. And that's surely not the doctors.

This eventual conclusion makes it hard for women medical students since it seems to say that there's no point being one. "Even the women's movement doesn't support me in my work — who can I organize? Who is my sister?" Yet at the same time, those of us who are not medical students cry out for more women doctors, placing our medical student sisters in a double bind.

Despite the fact that the rigidity of the hospital hierarchy and the role of class in hospital job roles impede clear organization of women about sex oppression, the male doctor on the throne of the hospital needs to be deposed. Even competent female medical students, with strong consciousness about women's oppression, feel brainwashed into assuming that the women

colleagues won't be so good as the men. One of the few women Eileen could remember whose medical opinion was respected as a man's was a woman who was considered sexually unattractive, and not accepted as a woman, but as "one of the boys."

The picture for organizing women as women in hospitals does not seem bright to us. It is clear that economic oppression and the hospital hierarchy keeps people apart more than women's oppression brings them together. A way out of this situation, for us at least, has been to assert our women's consciousness in arguments with interested male doctors, to feel "liberated" if we have told a doctor to get his own coffee, or check his own charts. The complexities of dealing with hospitals as institutions have lulled us into a reactive role rather than an offensive move to unite women.

In some ways we have found this depressing, although not really any more depressing than many other things about the state of the world and our women's movement. We still feel that there are important things to try to do as women hospital workers.

(1) We want to try to create unity among workers in a department, floor, or station. This means trying to cross lines, not through favors or flirtations, but through conscious collective decision-making as to what is best for patients and workers. (This is our fantasy.)

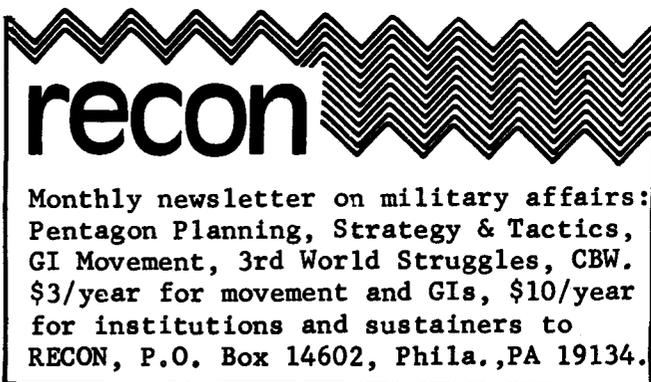
(2) We want to help destroy the myth of the competency and glamour of the male doctor. For those of us who work directly with the patients, this means trying to act as patient advocates, helping patients to overcome their fear and awe of the "doc."

(3) We want to avoid the pose of the lone women's liberation advocate. We want to avoid arguments with doctors on the politics of women's liberation, and concentrate on helping ourselves and other women understand each other's shortcomings.

(4) We want to try to create unity within our own levels; to understand how our jobs are oppressive, stupid, or useful. Especially in hospitals, where we care about patients getting optimal treatment, we care that the place where we work runs well even though it is headed by capitalist men.

Gene, Lucy, Sue Ellen, Eileen

\*Reprinted from *Women: A Journal of Liberation*, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1971.



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On November 30, 1973, 200 employees from George Washington University Hospital demonstrated in the hospital lobby to demand that the hospital administrator arrange for a Union 1199 representation election for approximately 750 clerical, technical, and nursing personnel.\* After refusing to meet with a delegation from the group and the local 1199 D.C. regional representative, the administration called in the police to deal with the remaining demonstrators. Fifty-five workers were arrested on criminal charges of unlawful entry. Later, 24 demonstrators were fired and 47 others were suspended for 5 days without pay.

For two and a half months the administration refused to drop the criminal charges and pressured the Assistant District Attorney to prosecute. On February 26, however, after a lengthy six-day trial, the demonstrators were acquitted.

# 1199

Local 1199 is the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees and has been actively organizing George Washington Hospital for more than two years. Workers are organizing to secure improved working conditions and better patient care. People have been drawn to the union on demands for higher pay and regular cost of living increases. (Starting pay for most secretaries is \$6500 when Washington D.C. is one of the country's most expensive cities to live in.) Other conditions under fire include poor benefits, fairly expensive and non-comprehensive medical insurance which is paid for entirely by employees, chronic short staffing, and poor opportunity for advancement. Supervisors are often brought in from the outside rather than promoted from within. Many departments feel the squeeze of short staffing, making necessary long hours and double shifts in order to care for patients. The heart station, which among other things is responsible for taking electrocardiograms, had its staff reduced by 2½ persons per week while the work load has increased. One consequence is a lengthened waiting time of up to two hours for EKG's. The administration seems much more concerned with saving money by decreasing staff, paying the bare minimum and excluding needed benefits, than with the quality of patient care.

In leafletting, talking, and meeting with the hospital workers, the union organizers have encountered some reluctance, particularly among upper level paraprofessionals:

- reluctance to engage in a strike or other work stoppage as an effective bargaining tool because of concern for patient care.

- a dislike for the policies of other unions and their lack of worker control (teamsters).
- suspicion that a union would induce featherbedding.

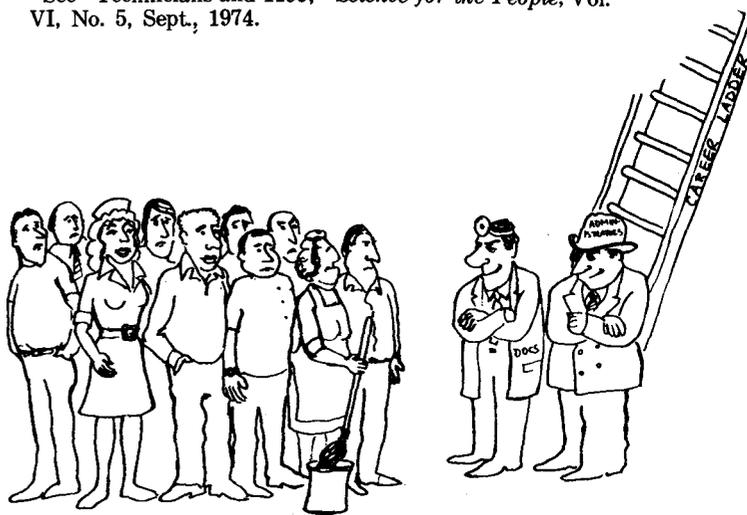
This fear has been ameliorated in part by the fact that most of the organizing committee members and strongest supporters are hard workers, and many of their demands for adequate staffing, seniority, and in-service training would enhance patient care. More generally, union organizers must work against attitudes of individualism encouraged by the hierarchical structure of the medical professions. Collective activity is regarded as a "cop out" for those without the individual talent or willingness to advance by their own merit.

Union activity has slackened at George Washington; the organizing problems include more than those attitudes noted above. Time is a crucial factor in strategy. On several occasions the union organizers were unable to immediately capitalize on discontent or a swell of prounion support. Many people have not been willing or able to maintain a long term commitment to activism. Many of the best young workers are heavily involved academically often working full time and going to school at night permitting little time and less energy for frustrating union activities. Alternative commitments, including a very intense commitment in time and energy to our work, deflect from constant organizing activity. It is critical that we realize that in the long run the best way to produce good work is to have decent working conditions and good pay which a union should help establish.

At George Washington the conditions are still present for union activities. There is still a core of people working for the union. The passage of an act incorporating hospital workers under the protection of the National Labor Relations Act in July was very encouraging. Perhaps that legislation will lend support to whatever unionizing activities continue at George Washington.

Diane Christoferson and Mark Geiger

\*See "Technicians and 1199," *Science for the People*, Vol. VI, No. 5, Sept., 1974.



# HEALTH AND NUTRITION

NEW YORK TIMES, Tuesday, May 21, 1974

David Rockefeller, chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, slipped and fell on Sunday night in Taipei, Taiwan, and broke his right hip. He will return to the United States today and expects to be confined in traction for about six weeks.

The accident occurred on a marble floor in his hotel when Mr. Rockefeller returned from the first of two days of scheduled business meetings in that city. Unaware of the nature of his injury, he did not go to the hospital until yesterday after having breakfast with United States Ambassador Leonard Unger.

Mr. Rockefeller was on his first visit to Taiwan for discussions with business and Government leaders there. He had been scheduled to fly to South Korea today and to Japan tomorrow for the opening of Chase's new headquarters building in Tokyo.

## IS DAVID ROCKEFELLER PISSING HIS CALCIUM AWAY?

### Or the Application of Dialectics to Broken Bones

Did David Rockefeller break his hip (see box) because he hates nuts, soybeans, and steamed green leafy vegetables such as chard, beet tops, kale, and spinach? If his diet lacks these and other magnesium-rich foods, he may be excreting excessive calcium in his urine, and have osteoporosis (porous bones), i.e. fragile and easily fractured bones.[1] We'll probably never know — at least I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for the *Times* to publish the results of his urinalysis.

Calcium carbonate, of which limestone and marble are made, is a prime ingredient of bones, and gives them rigidity. But bones, even in grown adults, are not the same as skeletons in museums — inert structures. In a living organism they are alive and in a state of dynamic equilibrium with the rest of the body. Having healthy bones takes a lot more than simply drinking milk.

To sense the nutritional complexity of having healthy bones, consider calcium, one of the essential components. Eating food containing a certain amount of calcium does not insure that the body will use it. Its solubility in the stomach and its absorption and retention by the body depend on many factors. For example, vitamins A, C, and D must be present in sufficient amounts. Too much magnesium or phosphorous can prevent calcium utilization. Too little fat decreases its absorption. Too much soda or any alkaline reduces stomach acidity, and with it calcium absorption. So does too much candy or other concentrated carbohydrate, by stimulating the flow of alkaline digestive juices.[2] Adequate balanced protein is

necessary for proper calcium use. And so forth. In turn, the state of each factor directly involved in calcium metabolism is itself dependent on other factors. For example, vitamin E is necessary to prevent destruction of vitamin A in the body.

Clearly, considering a few "essential" nutrients for healthy bones is inadequate. The entire diet is involved — some parts more directly, others less so. What is practical, given this complexity? It's impossible for each of us to become a scientific specialist in nutrition. Even if it were feasible, it would be inadequate, for two reasons: (1) nutritional science tends to focus on each individual biochemical reaction as though it is relatively separate from the others; (2) healthy bones require more than proper diet. Astronauts on meticulously planned diets had significant calcium losses during flights. Strenuous in-flight exercise regimes are being introduced to combat this loss.

The only practical and sensible course for us, foodwise, is to make a reasonable effort to get nearly all our nutrition from a sizeable variety of natural foods that are not overprocessed — foods to which body metabolism has been fine-tuned by the evolutionary process — so-called old-fashioned foods. And to avoid, as much as possible, heroic style assaults on our bodies with vitamins, minerals, and other nutritional supplements.

Human health, like the ecological integrity of the earth's mantle, is not to be dealt with piecemeal — by building a dam here, draining a salt marsh there, or drenching the system with massive amounts of vitamin C, regardless of what the Army Engineers or a Nobel Laureate in chemistry say to the contrary. It depends on nutrition, on exercise, on psychological well-being — indeed, on the entire environment in which we live, and on the social, political, and economic forces which, together with nature, shape that environment.

The interdependency and continual evolution of all these things is what biologists Barry Commoner and Rene Dubos call *holism* (as opposed to reductionism), and what Hegel, Marx, and Engels call dialectics. "Dialectics," wrote Engels, ". . . comprehends things and their representations, ideas, in their essential connection, concatenation, motion, origin and ending." So must we view our lives — whether healthy or not — if we truly want to understand them.

When Alexander Leaf went off recently "stalking the domesticated centenarians." — more precisely, the communities rich in them,[2] he found that the people who live long live vigorously. They not only eat natural, unprocessed foods, but also work hard with their bodies, live largely free of severe emotional stresses in rural environments, and are loved and respected by their families and communities. And they have strong and healthy bones without even thinking about it!

George Salzman  
(with the Health and Nutrition Column Collective)

1. Davis, Adelle. Let's eat right to keep fit.
2. Leaf, Alexander. National Geographic Magazine, January, 1973.

# CHINA

# SCIENCE WALKS ON TWO LEGS

## REPORT FROM THE AUTHORS

*Whoever wants to know a thing has no way of doing so except by coming into contact with it, that is, by living (practising) in its environment . . . If you want knowledge, you must take part in the practice of changing reality. If you want to know the taste of a pear, you must change the pear by eating it yourself. . . If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must take part in revolution. All genuine knowledge originates in direct experience.*

Mao Tse-tung  
*On Practice*  
July 1937

On the morning of February 21, 1973, ten Science for the People folks got off a train from Hong Kong. While loud speakers from the Chinese border station played the "Internationale,"\* we walked across a railroad bridge, handed our precious visas to smiling PLA (People's Liberation Army) soldiers, and entered the People's Republic of China. After all the books we'd read, discussions, plans and preparations it was finally happening — we were all in a pitch of excitement and disbelief that we were now in China! *China: Science Walks on Two Legs*† is our attempt to convey four weeks of intense experience, to report on questions answered and questions opened, to talk about the Chinese experience building socialism in concrete detailed terms by describing the institutions and roles we knew best.

We had wanted to go to China because of the tremendous excitement generated by reports of travelers to China, Cuba, North Vietnam, North Korea — images of socialism. We had read about the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and thought of China as an example of political transformation, of reaffirming revolution. All

†*China: Science Walks on Two Legs*, A report from Science for the People, Avon Publishers, New York, 1974.

\*World-wide workers' hymn.

of us were veterans of years of political work. Now was the chance to see first hand the successes — and perhaps the failures — of the Chinese in putting socialism into practice.

The preparation for our trip had begun over a year before. Ethan Signer, who had been to China in May of 1971, made some initial contacts with the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa and the Academy of Sciences in Peking about the possibility of a Science for the People trip. Early in 1972 "China" groups were formed in various Science for the People chapters, and a notice published in the magazine inviting applications from Science for the People members. The China groups took up the tasks of studying about China, and selecting a delegation to go. A couple of conferences were held to combine the efforts of the China groups and interested Science for the People chapters and individuals. By July, 1972 a delegation of fifteen and three alternates was selected. Work went ahead on the idea of a book about our trip. Finally, in February, 1973 we received word from the Chinese: a delegation of ten to come in three weeks! A hectic, frantic three weeks! Meetings, long-distance phone calls, choosing the delegation, finalizing a book contract, getting passports and visas, leaves-of-absence from jobs and schools. After all this, we were finally there.

The group was five men and five women from New York, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Louis, and Vermont. Each of us would describe ourselves first in terms of political activities: anti-war work, workplace organizing, prison reform, day-care organizing, environment and occupational health, community survival, health, teaching science for the people. We had three PhD's and two people with no college degrees, our jobs ranged from college teacher to state bureaucrat to nurse to computer programmer.

Traveling in China, the group acquired five more members — our hosts from the Chinese Scientific and Technological Association. Ch'iang Ch'i, a young woman, and Chu Ch'ing-ning, a young man, had been

through the heat of the Cultural Revolution at the Foreign Languages Institute, and were working their first big job as interpreters. Ch'ien Kao was an older, more experienced interpreter. We got very close to these three English speakers. Su Fung-ling and Chu Yung-hang ("Big Chu") were administrators. We met many other friendly people, but we saw these five on and off every day, and their seemingly unbounded efforts to make our trip enjoyable, interesting and productive added immeasurably to the value of our trip.

The main source of friction in our group was that we wanted to see everything — each person had a special interest: health-care institutions, prisons, multi-purpose use and recycling, industrial settings, farms, schools, universities, laboratories . . . The efforts of our hosts in meeting all these requests were quite amazing, but our interest was insatiable and we always felt that we hadn't learned quite enough.

Our hectic weeks of preparing for the trip were followed by four hectic weeks of intensive investigation. Every day we were bombarded with new impressions, emotions and experiences. Vast amounts of facts, figures, names and dates were kept carefully in our notebooks. Our daily schedules were very full. We usually broke up into two or more groups in order to visit a greater variety of places. There were visits in the morning and afternoon, and a cultural performance or movie in the evening. At each meal we would sum up for each other the various visits that day, tell anecdotes, give suggestions for improving the effectiveness of our questions, etc. Then, at night we would often meet to discuss the material we were gathering for the book.

We worked remarkably well together. Interpersonal disputes were effectively handled by the group as a whole, and everyone took responsibility for improving our work and minimizing hassles for our hosts. We all learned a great deal from each other as well as from the Chinese. Finally, on our last day in China, we met all afternoon and evening in our hotel to compare notes and impressions.

Returning to the U.S. we were abruptly scattered. As we shared our experiences with others through talks, slide-shows, etc. we each relived the trip many times over. But now there was a book to be written.

Individuals took responsibility for coordinating the material for each chapter, subjects were parceled out, and notes, tapes and slides were pored over to produce enough material. There was a heavy responsibility to each other, to Science for the People and to the Chinese to try to get the story out.

The work of putting out the book was much more than we had anticipated, and it strained our individual and collective strengths. Although we'd worked well together as a collective in China, we had many short-comings in our collective work back home. *Twenty-eight days in China does not make up for twenty-five years or more in the U.S.*

In late 1973 we sent off four chapters to our publisher as a first draft. Our publisher, who likes to think of himself as a radical who's realistic, got back to us saying,

"Look, democracy is all right in its place, but you can't write a book as a group. Get the person who wrote the 'Institutes' chapter and have him write the whole book and it'll be great." The 'Institutes' chapter, of course, had been written by five different people and was our most collective effort!

### CHINA: SCIENCE WALKS ON TWO LEGS

*A Report from Science for the People*

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We were still very far from having a finished manuscript, however. We still needed an Introduction; some chapters were very weak, others still unwritten. The immense job of editing all of our writings into a book was yet to be done. A person from the Boston Science for the People China group who hadn't gone on the trip and a person we'd hired to help with the editing worked together with us to edit all the material. Our book would never have made it even to a full first draft had it not been for the work of these two editors.

Finally, after missing at least four deadlines, the book was done. The finished product reflects the work of many hands, of many friends. It also reflects the process of political debate and personal development within the group — abstract ideas, political practice, life-style, individualism, competitiveness all came into play. We still need to sum up and analyze our total work style, manner of constituting the delegation, leadership, interaction while together, relationships with each other back home, subsequent political activities, and the value of the book; because taken all together it's an important collective experience.

In the book we hope we have shown that science, and in fact all productive work, is not autonomous. Its direction and uses are determined by the social and political structure. If science is to serve the people, the people must control science. China gives us some hints as to how to go about that task, and the optimism that it can be done.

John Dove

Minna Goldfarb

Frank Mirer



## THE CHINA BOOK REVIEWED

*China: Science Walks on Two Legs*, is a book which explores the scientific and technical achievements in China, as well as the theory which makes this practice possible. The book attempts to show that no productive work is distinct from a social context; to this end the authors use the vehicles of science and technical work to look at the political structure in China.

According to the authors, science in China is not viewed as the exclusive domain of those with highly specialized training, nor is it limited to advancing only profits as opposed to people. Rather, science is represented as "walking on two legs". Her ancient traditional knowledge together with advances made through regular scientific channels represent one leg; and the broad masses of ordinary people, who in the past have been denied access to scientific developments, represent the other. Essentially, the idea of "walking on two legs" means to exercise the under-developed leg rather than putting all the resources into the stronger one.

The authors continually stress the movement in China against the elitist forms of expertise and specialization and the return to a clearer reliance on the initiative of the masses of people. Thus, China has shifted emphasis away from urban concentration, toward the development of production and social facilities in the countryside, where the vast majority of the population lives. This is not to say





that no research or laboratory work is being done but rather that scientists now engage in more productive work than they formerly did. The process is broken down into essentially two parts. On the one hand, the scientists go out of their laboratories and institutes to meet with people in industry and agriculture, whom their work affects. And on the other hand, workers and non-professionals come into the scientific institutions and participate in the decision-making processes. In short, science is being demystified in China. The idea of science as the private property of scientists, and being too deep for ordinary people to understand, is being abolished. Instead, a tremendous exercise in sharing knowledge is taking place throughout China and its aim is to make science a part of the mass culture.

The authors explored many aspects of life in China, depending upon their interests and their time limitations. Thus the book is divided into chapters, each of which deals with a different branch of scientific and technical work. The authors explored such fields as agriculture, industry, research, education, health care, mental health, and city planning. In each chapter the overall theory of walking on two legs appears as it relates to the continuing struggle for better practice. One good example of this is the way in which industry has developed:

*Farmyard, street, and schoolyard industries have become more sophisticated since the 1950's. Our hosts told us that they now carry a significant share of China's productivity, freeing larger factories for more complex operations and giving millions of Chinese an intimate acquaintance with industrial planning and production. For example, young women of the Taku Fishery Commune, near Tientsin, began a multipurpose use factory in a mat shed they set up on a barren beach. After many experiments, they devised methods of extracting medicinal sodium chloride from the waste residue of a nearby chemical plant. Production has expanded and the one shed has grown to twenty rooms. Walking on two legs, even if unevenly, instead of waiting for the magic wand of heavy industrialization, has been the method adopted by the Chinese to fully utilize their country's resources and "turn wastes into treasures".*

The authors stress the concept of "turning wastes into treasures" as an important part of Chinese ideology, for it exemplifies the Marxist analysis of looking at the whole as well as the parts.

*In our country, what benefits the people, the country, and the whole, is given first consideration in everything that is done. Therefore some areas and enterprises allocate a certain portion of their funds for treatment of*



*sewage and other wastes. This may yield them little or no profit, but from the point of view of the whole, of preventing pollution of the air, rivers and water sources, protecting aquatic life and supporting agriculture, this means great profit indeed.*

The manner in which science is becoming a part of a mass culture is probably most evident in the way scientific research is carried out. According to the authors, China is attempting to create a system in which the research worker and the production worker are united in serving the people, and where eventually the distinction between the professional and the worker will be eliminated.

*Scientists spend time at the farms and factories where the work will be applied, living with the peasants and workers and participating in the normal routine of work and study, as well as carrying out their technical role. During these visits they teach the local people about the theoretical basis of the various practical problems they face. The local people, in turn, take part in the research work and help the scientists. Mass mobilization, such as insect-control work in Peking or cancer screening in Shanghai, has its advantages for scientific work. Likewise, working with the masses serves to re-educate the professional workers politically and give their research direction. In every research institute we saw evidence of this strong bond between science and the people. It is the open door to the outside.*

Not only is the interaction of the worker and the researcher emphasized, but also importance is placed on the worker learning to create as well as applying scientific techniques.

*After our tour of the Shanghai Computer Institute, several of our hosts took us over to the Shanghai Door Handle Street Factory. Street factories, small enterprises in urban neighborhoods of China, are collectively owned by the people who work in them. The workers are predominantly former housewives and other people who were previously outside the work force. Depending upon the skills and materials available in the area, the products of such factories vary from handicrafts to integrated circuits.*

*This street factory had 437 workers, 80% of them former housewives with almost no education. Its main products were door handles and arm rests for automobiles. In 1970, our hosts explained, the street factory established a computer section: 74 of its workers began to meet with members of the Shanghai Institute of Computer Technology and the Computer Science Department of Shanghai's Fudan University, to see if they could make computers at the factory. This three-in-one team set out to build advanced third-generation computers. Many obstacles had to be overcome, especially the lack of education among the*

*workers in the street factory. Some of them had no idea what a computer was. Yet within a year and a half they finished their first computer. The second was finished a year later: the machine that we had seen at the computer institute. The third computer was being finished after three months' work and they hoped to finish four more this year.*

*The workers in the street factory spend a great deal of their time learning about computers as they build them. Many of them visit the institute and the university, as well as other computer factories, to increase their knowledge, and a full quarter of the time at work is spent studying the fundamentals of electricity, electronics, and computer architecture. We were told that workers learn quickly because they are involved in the processes they are studying, and that their work improves as a result of their increased understanding.*

*People from the university and the institute do more than just contribute the plans and designs for the factory's computers. They spend one day a week working alongside the factory workers. The computer workers said that the scientists and the workers learned from each other. Both considered the three-in-one combination of factory, institute, and university an important step toward the goal of eventually eliminating the distinction between mental and manual work.*

In education the theory is the same, science is taught to be something that is useful and productive in practice.

*Here too, in the formal science classes, we found many direct links to the surrounding community and to production. Workers from nearby factories come to the schools to share both their skills and their experience as workers. We met a factory worker who was teaching the students how to make electrical motors. A carpenter taught model building. Another man taught the making of semiconductor devices. There is also a link with a nearby cable station, where the students go to learn how to send cables. Through these experiences the children gain not only scientific knowledge but also a deep respect for labor and for working people. They are shown from the beginning how important science is to everyday life and how ordinary people can understand and use it. Without being mystified or awed by the "magic" of science, they are learning that through science they can help build the new China. Science is taught as it is practiced: as a tool forged by the people's labor, to be used for the improvement of their lives.*

Thus the book cites example after example of how science in China is more broadly defined than it is in Western culture. For the Chinese, it is a process of thinking and developing rational thought through practice. As such it should not be regarded as something mysterious and special but rather as a natural part of everyone's experience and as a way in which problems are solved in day to day life.

— Purr McEwen

# ENGINEERS AND UNIONS

## Origins

Unionization of engineers received its greatest impetus not during the Depression years but during the war years (1943-45). That is to say, it was not so much economic deprivation which led to large-scale unionization, but rather the monumental change brought about by their employment on a mass basis in large war plants. The image the engineer had of himself [herself] as something approaching a "free professional" was inexorably deflated by the reality of having to punch in at the time clock. Much of the unionizing effort was aimed, however, at recouping the loss of professional status and recognition entailed by this change. In many instances, engineering unions were formed during the post-war years in order to prevent the inclusion of engineers in bargaining units dominated by "non-professional" employees. On the other hand, the gains won by production workers through union action were often the catalyst that spurred on engineers to organize (in part, in order to maintain the wage differential between the two groups). Despite these features of engineers' unionization which makes it appear a purely defensive maneuver (to define and protect their distinct professional status), basic structural transformations in industrial work processes were moving engineers in the direction of unionization. First of all, work was increasingly organized by groups or teams of engineers, so that the concept of rewarding individuals for their personal achievements had less and less real meaning. Second, the pressure to specialize ever more narrowly left the engineer open to the possibility of being pigeon-holed in a slot which, with a change in technology, would make his specialization obsolete. Third, job insecurity became a built-in characteristic of the engineer's work by virtue of the fact that their employment on a mass scale was premised on the continued existence of government contracts.[1]

In 1947, as a result of heavy lobbying by professional engineering societies, the Taft-Hartley Act was amended (section 9 b 1) to allow engineers to exclude themselves from bargaining units dominated by "non-professional" employees, unless a majority of "professionals" decided they wished to be included. For purposes of the NLRB a

professional was defined as "one whose work is predominantly intellectual and varied in character, involving consistent exercise of discretion and judgment, incapable of standardization, and requiring advanced scientific judgment." [2]

In spite of the Taft-Hartley law the movement towards unionization continued.

In 1952 a national engineering union was founded, Engineers and Scientists of America. ESA was more of a central clearing-house for an exchange of ideas than a national union with the power to call a national strike. Its main objectives were to participate in the process of accreditation of engineering schools, to promote the licensing of engineers, and to encourage engineering education.[3] It also kept statistics on the growth of unionization among engineers. It estimated that by 1957 there were about 55,000 engineers represented by collective bargaining units out of 500,000 engineers working in the country (this compared with over 70% in a country like Sweden); of these 55,000, 20,000 were actual members of ESA.[4]

From its inception ESA was split into two groups: "One essentially wanted to form a national labor union for engineers; the other wanted to form an engineering professional society that would sequester the collective bargaining franchises and place them in cold storage." [5] This divergence came out when ESA had to confront the question of mixed unions (i.e. those which included technical and/or production workers in addition to engineers). This was a decisive question for many engineers and tested the mettle of their class consciousness. At a time when the engineer's distinct professional identity was being threatened by technical developments requiring a diminished use of "professional skills," the inclusion of technical workers in engineering locals aroused the fear that the engineer's status might become indistinguishable from that of the blue-collar worker.[6] The mixed unions did in fact display a higher level of trade-union consciousness than the homogeneous units. Whereas the latter emphasized the use of tactics such as legislative lobbying and public relations, the mixed unions were more inclined to engage in picketing, to call a strike, to adopt a union shop, and to call for higher

dues and expenditures for organizing drives.[7] The issue came to the fore when the mixed unions attempted to affiliate ESA with the AFL-CIO. When this attempt failed, major locals (Minneapolis-Honeywell, Sperry Gyroscope, and Western Electric, among others) broke away from ESA and sought to establish a connection with larger labor organizations at the local level (Minneapolis-Honeywell with UAW and Sperry Gyroscope with the IUE). The schism debilitated the national organization to the point where it dissolved in 1960. Soon thereafter decertification of the unions at such major sites as Western Electric, Minneapolis-Honeywell, and Sperry Gyroscope took place as a result of NLRB elections; a majority of the engineers elected to withdraw from the collective bargaining unit. By 1967 the number of engineers represented by unions in collective bargaining had declined to 45,000 and the number of union members had remained constant at 20,000 while the number of engineers working had increased to over 800,000.[8]

### Opposition to Unionization

The main source of organized opposition to engineers' unionization has been the management-dominated National Society of Professional Engineers. This organization has been the primary vehicle for promoting the proposition that union membership is "inconsistent with professionalism." It has argued that the "regimentation" and "standardization" inherent in unionization are incompatible with the professional's sense of individual judgment and responsibility in his work. As a professional, the engineer recognizes the duty to maintain the highest standards in his work — a sense of duty which is buttressed by a system which rewards him on the basis of his demonstrated individual merit. As a union member, the engineer's personal relationship with management would be replaced by a system of impersonal rankings and classifications, and only those engineers who follow the lowest common denominator in their work would stand to benefit. Furthermore, collective bargaining would break down the internal unity of the profession, since supervisory engineers would no longer be able to evaluate their subordinate colleagues in a non-adversary posture.[9] The NSPE prefers "sounding boards" to unions; these labor-management councils would enable both parties to discuss differences in a professional manner, free of the stridency of union tactics. The longterm approach to improving the engineer's economic status lies in fostering professional societies which seek to "raise professional qualifications" and to win greater recognition of engineers' services from the community; i.e. the engineers really need "something like the AMA," as if they too were really independent entrepreneurs.

Even without the organized opposition of the NSPE and other professional organizations engineers as a group tend to have taken a heavy dosage of "rugged individualism" that disinclines them from collective action.

Engineering schools instill in them an identification with the aims and purposes of management; they imbue them with a pride in individual achievement and reward that overlooks the collective supports which are the premise for individual creativity. Engineers generally fear that unionization would mean that salaries and promotions would no longer reflect individual achievements; and the feeling is wide-spread that "the mediocre people want them (the unions)."[10] One opinion survey conducted in 1965 showed, for example, that 71% of the responding engineers rejected the argument that the need for a union was dictated by the reality of employment on a mass scale; 73% agreed that unions discourage individual achievement; 76% agreed that unions were inconsistent with professionalism.[11]

In addition, the great expansion in government expenditures in space research and weapons systems during the late fifties and sixties created labor market conditions for engineers which were highly conducive to individual bargaining. From 1953 to 1960, for example, engineers enjoyed a 48% increase in median annual income, much higher than for males in any other occupation.[12] Rugged individualism seemed to pay.

### Characteristics of Engineering Unions

Engineering unions have tried to counter the argument that there is a fundamental conflict between the principles of professionalism and unions by stressing differences rather than solidarity between workers. The contracts negotiated by engineering unions include terms which reflect the professional status engineers believe they have a title to: employer payment of professional dues; paid time-off to attend professional meetings and university lectures and to read professional literature; tuition refunds; leaves of absence for educational purposes.[13] Engineering unions intend to prove that their members are not "just another employee group." Much of the individualistic ethos of the ideology of professionalism also finds its way into engineering contracts in order to make this point. Contracts often stipulate the maintenance of certain qualifications in order to be able to perform particular tasks ("job standards"), thereby excluding those without "professional training"; usually no attempt is made to standardize pay rates, but only to ensure that individual merit is properly rewarded; telescoping of pay differentials (lessening the spread between the higher and lower grades) is generally opposed; seniority as a basis of promotion is also opposed, although it may be adopted as *one* of the factors in determining the lay-off schedule; the union shop is opposed on the grounds that membership should be voluntary among professionals; percentage pay raises are preferred to "blanket" increases; patent rights of individual engineers are made a matter for negotiation; pay demands focus on increasing the merit pool and moving up the top salaries, not the bottom ones, on the assumption that the shopworkers will see to it that the bottom is pushed up.[14]

Despite the unions' support for the principle of individual rewards and merit ratings, a number of their other

actions generally work to undercut this commitment. Engineering unions which are active bring "order, stability, and regularity to wage, job and personnel policy." They attempt to establish "demonstrable and reasonable criteria" to serve as standardized guidelines for promotions and merit increases, and they publish data on individual salaries and the average merit increase. To bring all of this out into the open tends to have a levelling, equalizing effect on salaries and promotions, since levelling is the easiest way to avoid the appearances of arbitrariness.[15]

Much of the power of attraction of engineering unions lies not so much in their economic power (its power to exact concessions from management) as in the services they provide their members (annual salary survey according to grade and length of service; grievance-arbitration process). A walk-out by engineers has limited short-term effect on the production process in most plants. This means that they are in a position the force management's hand only when their picket lines are respected by blue-collar workers. In most cases, however, the production workers' unions have demanded the affiliation of the local engineering union with the production workers' local in exchange for such support; and in most cases, the engineers have rejected, for "professional reasons," the idea (although during the fifties an engineering strike at Arma achieved success because the engineers pledged affiliation of the Engineering Association of Arma with the IUE in return for support at the picket lines).[16]

### Characteristics of Union Membership

Union membership does not appear to have anything to do with the social background of engineers (their class origins and education, whether their father was a union man or not), nor with their general political orientation (liberal or conservative political attitudes). Rather, it corresponds most closely with the engineer's degree of dissatisfaction with his work environment (intrinsic aspects of the job assignment; extrinsic rewards such as salary and prestige; treatment by supervisors; adequacy of equipment such as laboratory facilities).[17] Another study has shown that the more militant engineering unions have a high percentage of their members engaged in routine, repetitive work and that a substantial percentage of these members possess a degree from a night school or have no degree at all.[18] Length of tenure on the job also appears to be an important factor. This is to be explained by the fact that in the engineering field salaries level off considerably after the first 5 to 8 years and that one's job opportunities are limited by the narrow specialization encouraged by the firm (a specialization that also threatens to make one's knowledge and training obsolete with changing technology).[19] Thus, receptiveness to the notion of joining a union appears to be linked to phenomena which are generally associated with the "proletarianization" of technical workers.

### Professionalism and Unionism

Nonetheless it could be argued that there is more to professionalism than the ideology of professionalism disseminated by management. Professionalism also contains the germ of a sense of collective identity and consciousness which has nothing to do with its ideological form: the principles of rugged individualism applied to management/employee relations on a mass scale. The collective sensibility implied in the idea of membership in a profession pertains to notions about the most productive use of one's distinctive creative energies (or labor power). They entail a desire for autonomy: "the right to decide how [one's] function is to be performed and to be free from restrictions by non-professionals." [20] One's professional identity in this sense is often in conflict with the ends of management and capital. There are several cases to illustrate this.[21]

In 1970, Carl W. Houston, an engineer employed by Stone and Webster, was assigned to supervise welding at the construction of a nuclear power plant in Virginia. From his first day at the site, Houston noticed many defects in the welding of steel pipes which were designed to carry cooling water to and from the nuclear reactor. He pointed out to his employer that these defects were potentially dangerous. Loss of water through a break in the pipes would cause rapid overheating of the reactor, accumulation of radioactive materials, and their release into the neighborhood of the plant through steam explosions. Houston repeatedly tried to warn Stone and Webster in Boston of this situation. But his efforts were in vain. After only two months on the job, in April 1970, Houston resigned after he was told by a Stone and

## RADICAL AMERICA

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Webster welding inspector that he was to be fired for "lack of experience in welding," a charge Houston found hard to take seriously, since he had been a journeyman welder for twenty-four years and his engineering experience was mostly in welding. As of early 1972, he had been unable to find another job, and his court suit against Stone and Webster was floundering for lack of funds. He believed himself the victim of a blacklist.



Or consider another example. In 1966 Charles Pettis was assigned by his employer, Brown and Root Overseas, to be resident engineer on a \$47 million U.S.-financed road building project in Peru. Shortly after arriving in Peru, Pettis suspected serious problems in the engineering design and discovered that adequate geological borings had not been taken. He predicted serious rockslides and pointed out that the Peruvian government would have to bear the cost. In spite of his objections, however, the contractor, Morrison-Knudsen, proceeded with construction. Almost immediately afterwards, the rockslides did occur, causing 31 deaths. Morrison-Knudsen then asked Pettis to charge the cost of removing the slides to the Peruvian government. Pettis refused to do so, claiming that the slides could have been avoided and did not appear in the original contract. After two years of conflict between Brown and Root, Morrison-Knudsen and the American Consul on the one side and Pettis and the Peruvian government on the other, Peru finally terminated the contract and Brown and Root fired Pettis. Like Houston, he has been unable to find work since (as of early 1972). He received many job offers, but the offer was always withdrawn after the new employer reviewed his job references. He sought but received no help at all from the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Here are two engineers, experienced professional men, who held the public interest above the narrow interests of their employers. Both were fired; both were probably

blacklisted. Houston's professional integrity was of no consequence to his professional society, the ASCE, which like the other professional societies is apparently employer-dominated. Would union representation have preserved the jobs of these two engineers? Very likely it would have. Most union contracts prohibit firing without "just cause." With a good union contract, neither one of these men could have been fired without due process and a fair hearing before an impartial arbitrator. And with a strong union organization, the case might not even have gotten that far. Here are two more case histories, taken from the same book as those above, but both concerning blue-collar workers who were union members.

In 1966 Edward Gregory was a quality control inspector in a GM Fisher Body plant in St. Louis. He discovered a defect in the welding of Chevrolet rear-quarter panels which could permit exhaust fumes to leak into the car. He repeatedly pointed out the defect to his superiors and later to executives at the plant, but all to no avail. He only succeeded in being transferred to another department where his protests were less effective. It wasn't until three years later, after at least four motorists had been asphyxiated in their Chevrolets, that General Motors finally recognized the defect and recalled 2.4 million automobiles for repair of the rear-quarter panels. Once, when Gregory was subpoenaed as a witness in a trial involving the defective cars, he found himself terminated upon his return to work. Through the intervention of his union, the United Auto Workers, he regained his job back immediately, as well as back pay for the time lost in court. He also used the union grievance procedure to try to reverse his involuntary transfer and recently won the case in arbitration. The arbitrator awarded him his old inspector's job back.

Gilbert Pugliese is a steelworker at the Jones and Laughlin plant in Cleveland. On July 14, 1971, Pugliese was ordered to pump oil into the Cuyahoga River, already described by the City of Cleveland as a "fire hazard." Pugliese refused, and was given a five-day suspension with discharge likely to follow. His nearest union representative, the assistant chief grievance official, was unwilling to help. But his fellow workers threatened a walkout unless Pugliese was hired back, and the chief grievance official then stepped into the case. Two days later, Pugliese was reinstated with back pay. He found that J & L was now using drums to dispose of the oil — which was the same solution he himself had recommended.

### Conclusion

The interplay between tendencies moving in the direction of greater worker initiative and greater "proletarianization" is perhaps the key element for gauging the union movement among technical workers. The working class is still far from being homogeneous in its work conditions, and unions must take a differentiated approach to technical workers if they are to meet with success. The approach should take into account at least the following

differences in work conditions among technical workers: (1) workers in repetitive, fragmented jobs with regulated rhythms (so many operations per unit of time); (2) workers with margins or discretion in their work within the framework of subordinate tasks which no organizing or rule-making power; (3) workers with innovative functions (new products, new technology, new information systems) who have a large measure of discretion within a narrowly defined field of action, both in substantive and methodological terms; (4) workers in management functions with large margins of discretion within narrowly defined tasks and fields of competence (here the standards of efficiency are not technical-professional but those of the ends set by the firm); (5) researchers with non-repetitive tasks but highly fragmented and specialized, lacking autonomy in the choice of their activity and often subordinated to hierarchical structure of authority. The demands of the workers are likely to differ according to where the workers are situated along this continuum of "proletarianization."

Larry Garner

#### Footnotes

1. See Joel Seidman, "Engineering Unionism," in *The Engineers and the Social System*, ed. by R. Perrucci and Joel Gerstl, (New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1969), pp. 222, 227-28; Jack F. Culley, *A Primer on Engineering Unionization*, (Bureau of Labor and Management Publication: June, 1959), *passim*.
2. Cited by Seidman, p. 227.
3. George Strauss, "Professional or Employee-Oriented: Dilemma for Engineering Unions," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, XVII (July, 1964), p. 532.
4. Culley, *op. cit.*, p. 4.
5. ESA official cited by Strauss, "art. cit.," p. 525.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 526-527.
7. Seidman, "Engineering Unionism," pp. 241ff.
8. Archie Kleingartner, "Professionalism and Engineering Unionism," *Industrial Relations*, VIII (May, 1969), p. 225.
9. Kleingartner, "Professionalism and Engineering Unionism," p. 226; William Kornhauser, *Scientists in Industry* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1962), p. 110.
10. Cited by Kornhauser, *op. cit.*, p. 109.
11. Opinion Research Corp., cited by Seidman, "Engineering Unionism," p. 227.
12. Cited in Eldon J. Dvorak, "Will Engineers Unionize?" *Industrial Relations*, II (May, 1963), p. 61.
13. Kornhauser, *op. cit.*, p. 105; Strauss, "Professional or Employee Oriented," p. 528.
14. Seidman, "Engineering Unionism," pp. 238-240; Kornhauser *op. cit.*, p. 110.
15. James W. Kuhn, "Success and Failure in Organizing Professional Engineers," Proceedings of 16th Annual Meeting of the Industrial Relations Research Association, December, 1963, pp. 12-13; Strauss, "Professional or Employee-Oriented," p. 532.
16. Seidman, "Engineering Unionism," p. 230.
17. Bernard Goldstein and B.P. Indik, "Unionism as a Social Choice: The Engineers' Case," *Monthly Labor Review*, April, 1963, pp. 365-69.
18. Strauss, "Professional or Employee-Oriented," p. 526.
19. Kuhn, "Success or Failure," p. 10.
20. Strauss, "Professional or Employee-Oriented," p. 523.
21. This example and the two following ones were taken from an article by Gary Berenson, "Engineering and Unionism," (*Spark*, Vol. 3, No. 2).

#### American Society of Mechanical Engineers (A.S.M.E.) Excludes Employee Engineers from Policy Posts

A clue to A.S.M.E.'s lack of concern for the great body of employee engineers may be found in the Summer '74 "ASME Executive News Letter". This lists the individuals whom ASME's Nominating Committee has nominated for President and Vice Presidents of the organization. (Usually, nomination is tantamount to election).

President — one-year term:

Charles L. Tutt, Jr., Dean of Academic Affairs, General Motors Institute, Flint, Mich.

Vice Presidents — two-year terms:

Robert A. Baker, Executive Vice President, Public Service Electric & Gas Co., Newark, N.J. Region III

Kenneth T. Knight, Partner, Olsen Assocs., Engineers & Architects, Raleigh, N.C. Region IV

John E. Harder, Advisory Engineer, Westinghouse Electric Corp., Bloomington, Indiana Region VI

Arthur J. Clark, Jr. Manager, Systems Environmental Testing Dept., Sandia Corp., Albuquerque, N.M. Region VIII

J. George H. Thompson, Prof. & Head, Machine Design Section, Mech. Engrg. Dept., Texas A&M Univ., College Station, Texas Region X

Robert J. E. Roberts, President, Fred T. Roberts & Co., Wilton, Conn. Professional Affairs

Duncan R. McLeish, Manager, Plant Engrg. & Maint., Kentucky Avenue Plant, Eli Lilly & Co., Indianapolis, Indiana General Engineering Department

Earle C. Miller, Manager Client Services & Assoc., Chas. T. Main, Inc., Boston Mass. Power Department

Stothe P. Kezios, Prof. & Director, School of Mech. Engrg., Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Ga. Communications

Serge Gratch, Director, Chemical Sciences Lab, Ford Motor Co., Dearborn, Mich. Research

In addition to these nominations, the National Nominating Committee recommended and Council appointed Raymond J. Page, Director, Continuing Engineering Education, General Motors Institute, Flint, Michigan to serve as Vice President for Region V, commencing June 1974, a vacancy created as the result of the resignation of Norman R. Johanson.

Not a single employee engineer is named; the great mass of working engineers remain completely unrepresented against management's solid front. Also, only one name is listed for each post. As a result, the A.S.M.E. voter may choose only between the single management nominee listed and sitting on his hands . . .

# COMPUTER WORKERS AS PROFESSIONALS

The question of where to situate technical workers in the class structure focuses on the debate over their relationship to blue-collar production workers. Are the interests of technical workers linked to those of wage workers in general? Or to those of management and capital? Or rather do they, together with all other salaried, white-collar workers, constitute an intermediate class between blue-collar production workers and the owners? Much of non-Marxist sociology has insisted on the differences which separate white-collar workers from production workers. Its dominant theme has been that the mentality or "value system" of white-collar workers sets them off from production workers; while their income, and even their work conditions, may be closer to that of blue-collar workers, their perception of their social status leads them to identify with management.

On the other hand, certain currents in Marxist sociology have insisted that white-collar workers comprise a "middle-class" distinct from both the working class and the capitalist class. Laborers of this kind do not belong to the working class because they do not exchange their labor with capital but rather with revenue. To the extent that their labor does not augment capital they do not belong to the category of productive laborers.

The concept of a middle-class was subsequently extended to all those who enter into the capitalist's employ and perform services which, at an earlier time, would have been performed by the capitalist him/herself. The fact that these laborers appear to be substituting for the capitalist in many of his/her functions and that they do not bring about a direct transformation of a tangible object in their work, has led to the conclusion that they, like the "service class," do not add any value to the product produced. Since they do not produce surplus value but only "contribute to its realization," these laborers must also derive their income from revenue, i.e. from the surplus produced by other productive workers. Hence the intermediate, ambiguous position of this class of laborers: on the one hand, it must sell its labor in order to live, just like the working class; on the other hand, it benefits from the surplus value extracted from the labor of the working class, just like the capitalist class.[1]

With the concept of the "collective worker," Marx recognized the possibility that the process of production could reach such a point of complex interdependency of tasks that no single laborer would be able to produce surplus value without entering into a broad-scaled collective process.

*As the co-operative character of the labour-process becomes more and more marked, so, as a necessary consequence, does our notion of productive labour, and of its agent the productive labourer, become extended. In order to labour productively, it is no longer necessary for you to do manual work yourself; enough if you are an organ of the collective labourer, and perform one of its subordinate functions.[2]*

Marx states that an expanded concept of productive labor included "those who contribute in one way or another to the production of the commodity, from the actual operative to the manager or engineer (as distinct from the capitalist)."[3] In other words, the concept of the working class is extended implicitly to all those who contribute "useful labor" to the totality of the process of production of goods.

Among those who concur in the view that technical and clerical workers belong to the working class there are two divergent stances. One side considers the inclusion of these laborers within the working class to be substantiated by an increasing "proletarianization" of their work conditions: the repetitiveness, fragmentation, and regulated pace of the work process. The interests and demands of these workers will tend increasingly to resemble those of traditional assembly-line workers: shorter hours and higher pay.

The other side focuses on certain developments in the work conditions of technical workers which makes these workers a distinct, perhaps even a vanguard, stratum of the working class. For these workers the principal demands center around the lack of power over their own work conditions (a concern that harkens back to the demands of the earlier craft and artisan workers).[4] Under the conditions of automated industry the workers' intervention is increasingly relegated to the beginning

and the end of the work process: on the one hand, during the initial stages, the preparation and organization of the production process, calling forth creative intellectual energies; on the other hand, in the final stages, the checking and supervision of the machinery. They are led to develop a sense of mastery over their own labor power, and this provokes a resentment against its alienation under capitalism into an inert thing over which they have no control. Demands for full control over the use of their creative abilities in the work process come to the fore.

The heavy capital investments upon which these industries are based means that much of their revenues must be directed towards the amortization of their debts. This puts a high premium on the maximum utilization of the machinery without interruption. As a consequence, the workers must be "integrated" into the firm in order to assure that their performance will be regular and predictable. Their salary cannot be based on individual performance (too variable) but on the mass sum of personnel expenditures which the firm has planned for and which are distributed to individuals on the basis of their work roles. Their professional training is specially adapted to the nature of the machinery which the firm uses. Their professional careers are mapped out for them in a series of gradations which induces workers with experience not to seek employment elsewhere, thereby guaranteeing a stable work force.[5] Thus, the workers' sense of identification with the firm's undertaking is increased, but their ability to give direction to it is constantly being undercut by the criteria of short-term profitability which management adopts. They find that their abilities are being used in an unproductive, stultifying fashion and struggle against it; while management, in order to reassert its authority, attempts to fragment the work process in such a manner that the producer is reduced to the state of a passive object.[5]

*Definition of a Professional Employee Under the National Labor Relations Act.*

*Section 2 (12)* Any employee engaged in work (i) predominantly intellectual and varied in character as opposed to routine mental, manual, mechanical or physical work; (ii) involving the consistent exercise of discretion and judgement in its performance; (iii) of such character that the output produced or the result accomplished cannot be standardized; (iv) requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of service or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study in an institution of higher learning . . . as distinguished from a general academic education or from an apprenticeship or from training in the performance of routine mental, manual or physical processes.

## Computer Workers: Their Work Conditions

*Work Content.* The high capital investment entailed in the installation of computer equipment and the rapid rate of obsolescence of the hardware dictate the need for maximum utilization of the machinery during its life span. The worker finds that his/her work routine is increasingly subordinated to the requirements of the machine. When Rolls Royce computerized the operations performed by many of its engineers and designers it attempted to impose:

*The acceptance of shift work in order to exploit high capital equipment, the acceptance of work measurement techniques, the division of work into basic elements, and the setting of times for these elements, such time to be compared with actual performance.*[6]

The computerization of certain operations has placed a premium on synchronizing the various processes entering into the work flow; the maximum efficient use of the machinery demands that each element of the work process be prepared for its insertion at precisely the correct moment. This synchronization entails the fragmentation of the work process into measurable acts.

One of the main sources of feelings of superiority which office workers sense vis-a-vis production workers — viz., the conviction that their work required an individual touch which could not be paced and timed — goes by the board with the computerization of the office. The rationalization and standardization brought about by computerization deflates the office workers' claims for special status recognition. With the elimination of that small area of discretionary self-discipline which had been accorded to the pre-computer office worker, the workers come to feel like ordinary proletarians. One American study reports the effects of the change-over to computers on the workers' morale in a government office:

*Budget analysts who formerly did a complete job of preparing forecasts were reduced to almost blindly placing numbers in certain blocks on preprinted forms . . . What was formerly a dedicated team effort of proud and enthusiastic employees supplying management with valuable reports, changed to a highly automated, dull, and repetitious activity.*[7]

*Relations With Other Employees.* Relations between the computer staff and other employees in an office are often strained because of the position of power seen to be occupied by the former (at least by programmers and analysts). To have control over the flow of information is to have the power to determine the sequence, pace, and methods of work of others. This power easily becomes a cause for resentment on the part of the non-computer office staff, impeding the possibility of concerted worker action.

## Computer Workers: Prospects for Unionization

Salary differentials are likely to reflect this greater marketability of computer workers, but so too are the more visible prerequisites of their position. Set off from other office workers, computer staffs are often located in a place which is distinguished by its better lighting, better air-conditioning, and more sophisticated equipment.[8] Comments such as, "the company treats its machines better than its staff," are often a veiled expression of the conflict that exists between the "old staff" and the "new staff."

*Relations with Management.* Computer programmers and analysts find themselves in a relatively unique position in relation to management. On the one hand, they possess knowledge and skills which usually go beyond the ken of their supervisors and beyond the latter's capacity to establish hard-and-fast performance criteria. On the other hand, they are employees and therefore subject to the hierarchical organization of authority which the company imposes on all of its employees. The fact that it is often difficult to judge whether a given program has been written well or poorly means that programmers/analysts retain a measure of control over their labor which threatens management's structure of command. Management has instituted "professionalism" in order to reintegrate programmers/analysts into the hierarchical structure of the firm and to re-establish their subordinate position. Professionalism has been defined in terms of "universal job descriptions and standards, formulated, of course, by personnel managers; common training programs; and a common certification process." [9] Licensing in this instance is to be under the aegis of organizations controlled by employers; and the standardization of job descriptions is to serve the purpose of allowing management to set its own criteria for the efficient performance of programming jobs. In addition, the tasks of programming and systems planning are to be fragmented into the discrete elements of the process, and to each element is to be assigned a job title in a hierarchical social order.

By breaking down the work process in this manner management can monitor the performance of workers more readily, and the workers will be more inclined to discipline themselves in order not to jeopardize their movement up the career ladder. Through "professionalization," therefore, management attempts to reassert its control over the labor of programmers and analysts.

The U.S. Court of Appeals does not seem to put much stock in programmers' professionalism. In a judgement handed down in March, 1971, the judges ruled in a suit involving a dispute between the NLRB and Westinghouse that programmers and analysts were better described as "technical" rather than "professional" employees. A professional's work was deemed "intellectual" in character, whereas a programmer did not require a professional "measure of skill, knowledge, and independent exercise of judgement." From the *Law Journal*, March 31, 1971.

Market conditions have disinclined programmers and operators from unionization and, distinct strategies evolved by management have also had their effect. We have already mentioned the significance of the professionalism campaign as a means of ensuring that the worker will be not just expertly trained but also politically "reliable." Promotion of professionalism serves the purpose also of dividing the ranks of the workers. Certain categories of workers are elevated to the status of "professionals," while others remain merely clerical staff; a seemingly unbridgeable gulf separates the interests of the two groups. Furthermore, the entire thrust of the professionalism campaign is to fragment the ranks of the "professionals" themselves. To be a professional, in this managerial meaning of the term, is to establish a personal relationship with one's employer based on mutual trust. The employer is to treat the employee-professional "as an individual," and in return he is to be rewarded with the personal loyalty and devotion of the employee-professional. By such marks of individual distinction as job titles and merit ratings management recognizes the individual achievements of its employee-professionals. Since the relationship between management and the professional presumes to take into account the personal qualities and accomplishments of the latter, the worker is led to assume that only the slacker would stand to benefit by becoming part of an undifferentiated collective (union) category.

There exist, however, forces working to counteract the individualistic ideology propagated by management. The skill upon which the programmer bases his/her claim to professional status is increasingly being debased by the introduction of "canned programs," particularly in medium- to large-scale programming operations. These programs represent "pre-written solutions designed for problems which, while not identical, are similar in their basic features." [10] The upshot is to provide management with a steady supply of labor and with cheaper labor costs, as a result of the lower level of skills necessary to perform programming tasks. These de-skilled "applications programmers" find their work routine to be regimented in a way inconsistent with their supposed professional status ("fixed hours, short hair, ties, measureable performance" [11]). Under such circumstances, the programmer's vaunted professionalism reduces itself to the "possession and acquisition of particular information, a knowledge of particular instruments and techniques;" it has little to do anymore with the traditional concept of a professional's working ability: the "general capacity to confront a problem and resolve it." [12] The "applications programmer's" kind of "professionalism" does not generate cumulative, expert "experience," but instead becomes obsolete with a change in technology. A study of "black-coated workers" by David Lockwood has shown that unionization among white-collar workers increases to the degree that "bureaucratization" of the work place engenders

"blocked mobility" and standardized working conditions. Bureaucratization in this sense entails regulation by "impersonal rules which strictly exclude all forms of personal consideration between employer and clerk." [13] If "canned programming" becomes wide-spread in the computer industry, it may have this "proletarianizing" effect, dispelling the ideological force of professionalism. [14]

However, even for those computer workers, such as systems analysts, who appear to continue to enjoy the special personal relationship with management and the discretionary self-pacing characteristic of the "professional," another force seems to be moving them in the direction of collective bargaining. Recent signs indicate that the favorable labor-market conditions which had made individual bargaining so attractive are disappearing. One study, completed in late 1972, gave the following break-down on the employment situation: 560,000 programmers and systems analysts currently employed; 170,000 new programmers and systems analysts entering the job market each year; 71,000 new jobs opening up in programming and systems analysis each year. [15] These employment conditions increase the importance of job security, and call forth the need for collective action to circumscribe the authority of management.

The one major attempt in this country to organize computer workers as computer workers (rather than as a secondary element in a larger bargaining unit) did not meet with much success. In December 1970, the Committee to Plan a Computer Union met in New York to map out a strategy. The objective was to form an industry-wide, all-inclusive union which would span the gap between professionals (programmers/analysts/operators) and non-professionals (key-punch operators/tape-handlers). The major thrust of the union was to be in the areas of job security, job mobility, and "democracy in the workplace." [16] Some of the individuals associated with this effort had scored an earlier success when they forced the reinstatement of six programmers who had been fired from their work at Codon Corp. (Waltham, Mass.) for organizing efforts centered around opposition to the introduction of war-related work and the full disclosure of information on salary scales. [17] By November, 1971, however, one of the CPCU's activists had to admit failure in the democratizing-unionizing effort, ascribing it to the fact that most computer workers held values which prevented them from seeing "the meaninglessness of the work they are doing." He had to avow that "to attempt to talk to people about the issue of doing socially useful work really amounts to telling them to leave (their) jobs, . . ." since "good" jobs (i.e., socially useful ones) were always marginal in number in the computer industry. [18]

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This statement is tantamount to an admission that much of the CPCU's thrust presupposed the existence of the radical consciousness which it was the task of the union to create in the first place — a consciousness which could take shape only through a process of struggle opposing the interests of management/capital to those of labor, rather than through an intuitional recognition of the "meaninglessness" of one's work.

Larry Garner

#### FOOTNOTES

1. See Donald C. Hodges, "Old and New Working Class," *Radical America*, (January-February, 1971), pp. 11-32; Martin Nicolaus, "Proletariat and Middle Class in Marx," *Studies on the Left*, VII (January-February, 1967), pp. 22-49; Nicos Poulantzas, "On Social Classes," *New Left Review*, LXXVIII (March-April, 1973), pp. 27-35.
2. Marx, K., *Capital*, trans. by S. Moore and E. Aveling (Moscow: Progress Publishers, n.d.), I, 476.
3. Marx, K., *Theories of Surplus Value*, I, 156-157.
4. See Andre Gorz, *Strategy for Labor*, trans. by M.A. Nicholas and Victoria Ortiz (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968): "For the highly skilled workers, . . . the dominant contradiction is between the active essence, the technical initiative required in their work, and the condition of passive performers to which the hierarchy of the enterprise nevertheless still condemns them . . . Responsible for his work, he is not master of the conditions under which he carries it out. The company which hires him requires of him both creativity in the execution of his task and passive, disciplined submission to the orders and standards handed down by management" (p. 36).
5. Mallet, Serge, *La nouvelle classe ouvriere*, (Paris: Editions de Seuil, 1969), pp. 37-38, 41-42.
6. Cooley, Mike, "Computers, Automation and Technological Change," *Computers and Automation and People*, XXII (March, 1973), p. 16. The union fought these regulations and had them abolished.
7. Tomeski, E.A. and Lazarus, H., "A Humanized Approach to Computers," *Computers and Automation and People*, XXII (June, 1973), p. 23.
8. Rhee, H.A., *Office Automation in Social Perspective: The Progress and Social Implications of Electronic Data Processing*. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), p. 134.
9. Kraft, Philip., "Pushing Professionalism," *Science for the People*, Vol. VI, No. 4, July, 1974.
10. Kraft, Philip, "The Professionalizing of Computer Programmers," p. 13, unpublished manuscript.
11. Kuch, T.D.C., "Unions or Licensing? Or Both? Or Neither?" *Infosystems*, January, 1973, p. 42.
12. Unpublished paper of Italian IBM workers, n.d.
13. Lockwood, David, *The Blackcoated Worker*. (London: Unwin University Books, 1958), pp. 141-150. Under such circumstances, the "senior programmer" must wonder why the tape-handler working next to him receives extra for overtime, while he, a "professional" does not.
14. Indirect confirmation of this is found in the statement of one personnel director: ". . . The automated office with its key-driven equipment attracts a 'lower type' of help and also makes it harder for the office employee to relate himself psychologically to management instead of the mass of working-class people" (Hoos, "When the Computer Takes Over the Office," p. 111).
15. Gerberick, D.A., "Oversupply of People in Computer Field," *Computers and Automation*, XXI (December, 1972), p. 23.
16. See *Interrupt*, No. 13 (December, 1970), p. 1.
17. *Interrupt*, No. 10 (February, 1970); and No. 13 (December, 1970).
18. *Interrupt*, No. 16 (November, 1971).



*In search of a job beneficial to people . . .*

I am an electrical engineer seeking employment in an area of work that would combine my three areas of interest: education, technology and development.

After graduation from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, I took a job with the American Freedom from Hunger Foundation, knowing that most employers of engineers interviewing at the college represented firms whose work was against my moral and ethical persuasion. . .

Right now I am just looking for employment that will give me a chance to use my acquired skills, and which will give me a free conscience. I am very much interested in working as a technical consultant to projects in developing countries which are humanitarian and not interest invested; if you know of any of this type of project which could use my skills I would be appreciative to hear of them.

*And an answer . . .*

I think the game is one that cannot be played on the individual level. It may be possible for you to find in some remote corner the kind of work you are looking for, but my perspective is to accept the existence of ambiguities at the present time. This means recognizing that if some company hires you, it is hiring you in order to make money off your labor, that you will have no choice about what products you are contributing to or how well they are made or what they are made for. You will not be able to specify who will be able to benefit from the work you do. Inevitably in one form or another your labor will go toward enriching the rich, stabilizing someone's position of power, etc. That is what capitalism has meant and still means.

So given that this is a fact of life for millions of people, the real problem is how to eke out a living and bring about the downfall of this system at the same time. The ambiguity that we all have to deal with is how to continue to contribute to the maintenance of the system in a minimal way while working to create a new one in a maximal way.

People,

From the perspective of SESPA's resident anarchist, I commend and condemn the recent articles dealing with the Emma Goldman Health Center in Chicago [*Science for the People*, Vol. VI, no. 4, July 1974].

First, the commendation: It is a welcome change to feel not totally left out and antagonized by a *Science for the People* issue (as was happening recently). More importantly — the article does acknowledge that there are alternative views to capitalism, fascism and Marxism.

Now, the condemnation: The introduction is misleading: "The members of the Emma Goldman Collective, whose politics is anarchist, deal with the immediate health problems of women, but we, as socialists, believe that this is not an adequate solution to the problem. We believe that the central problem of health care in America is that the major facilities — hospitals, drug companies, health insurance — are controlled by a wealthy elite which profits by them." (P. 9)

There is a hidden definition of "anarchist" here as one who rejects revolution in favor of reform on a "counterculture" basis. This is not true. "Anarchism" is a broad term which elements of the right can embrace as well as the left. A more specific term describing the politics of the Emma Goldman Collective is Anarcho-Communism. The main line of anarcho-communism, built by Bakunin, Kropotkin, Malatesta, and Goldman, has declared itself a supporter of worldwide revolution by the working class to bring about a communist society — *sans* the centralization of Marx and Lenin. The women of the Emma Goldman collective are simply acknowledging the fact that a *woman* with undetected cervical cancer can't wait until after the revolution for a Pap test.

The introduction also makes an artificial distinction between "anarchism" and "socialism". Most anarchists consider themselves socialists. Left-wing anarchism is a kind of socialism.

And then there is the implication that anarchists do not believe that the central issue of health care is the people who control it. Anarchists of the left recognize class antagonisms, and it only takes a little common sense to realize that god Capital is at the core of the problem. In fact, this common sense, stripped of its revolutionary potential, can be voiced in the speeches of "liberal" politicians and the John Birch Society!

It is true that anarchists of all colors reject Marxism violently. We regard it as an unsound, unrealistic, and immature ideology that leads inevitably to totalitarianism — a variation on the theme of fascism. This prediction, first made by Bakunin in the 1860's, has been shown correct by *every Marxist government in existence*. We derive only mixed satisfaction from this, because we despise tyranny.

It is ironic that the issue containing the article on the Emma Goldman Collective had photographs of Marx and Lenin on its cover. Emma, after witnessing Kronstadt in 1921, left Bolshevik Russia and spent her last years speaking about the failure of the October Revolution, the tyranny of Lenin and raising funds for the

defense of imprisoned anarchists in Russia. If Red Emma was alive today, she'd throw a fit!

Long Live Anarchism!  
Laura Tisoncik

Dear Laura,

You are quite correct in pointing out that we have muddled some issues in our introduction to the article on the Emma Goldman clinic by mixing together our commentary on alternative clinics and a reference to anarchism and socialism. You also correctly point out the conflict is not between socialism and anarchism, but between Marxism and anarchism. In our introduction our intention was to raise two separate issues: (1) the question of strategy for the struggle for better health care (a question not addressed in the Emma Goldman article), and (2) to state that we were not in agreement with the anarchist strategy of revolution.

We welcome your raising the question of the difference between left anarchism (anarcho-communism) and Marxism. That anarcho-communism calls for "worldwide revolution by the working classes to bring about a communist society", and to wrest the wealth from the ruling elite is of course true. We also agree with these aims and have other aims in common, but we have differences as regards strategic principles. Strategic principles are not aims!

A revolutionary strategy typically involves aims and principles, for example; We aim for the end of all wars so that mankind can live in peace. Therefore, as a matter of principle we endorse the use of force and violence in the revolution to overthrow capitalism. In other words (a) we condemn the force and violence of the ruling class and (b) we specifically reject as counterrevolutionary the concept that all force and violence is bad.

Like the humanitarians and similar well meaning idealists, we believe the human race can develop beyond its present stage. But unlike them we know that to achieve this aim requires principles of dialectical revolutionary struggle. We also know we must deal with reality, with the actual contradictions and conditions of the masses, and with the actual ideas of the masses.

You assert that every Marxist government is totalitarian. We would agree that some self-avowed Marxist governments suppress their citizens in order to maintain the positions of their parasitic bureaucracy (for example the U.S.S.R.), but we would not characterize genuine Marxist governments in this manner.

We see the necessity for maintaining state power, for a period, after the revolution. The first reason is that the forces of reaction have always been strong and well-organized — witness the attempted counter-revolution in China, the Bay of Pigs, and the overthrow of Allende. The revolutionary forces must be stronger and better organized. For example, if the Chilean workers had been better organized, armed, and trained than the generals and the C.I.A., the coup might have been averted or suppressed.

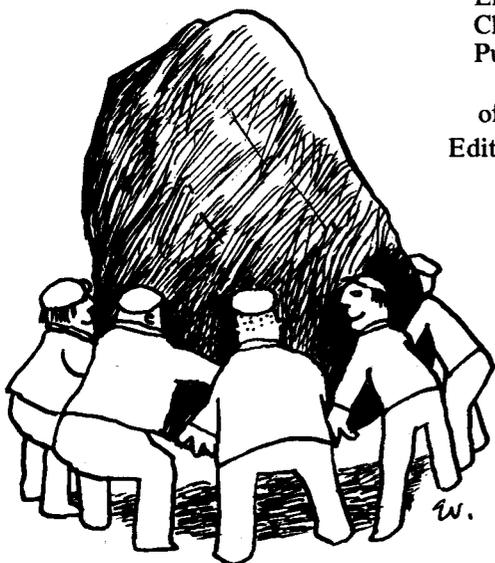
Secondly, in the transition period after the revolution, the pre-existing capitalist structures must be thoroughly

suppressed and dismantled. This process has never occurred spontaneously, but must be carried out in a systematic and well-organized fashion.

We hope that within SftP our differences on the strategy for creating socialism would not present a stumbling block to unity between those who agree with you and those of us who are Marxists. At the present time many of us are struggling for a higher level of unity in SftP by trying to develop more clearly defined political principles, program and organization. This will be a major theme of the Northeast Regional Conference in November. In struggling for this unity we must carefully distinguish between that which is irreconcilable in the future and that which is essential to unity now in order to carry forward SftP in its many struggles against the bourgeois use of science, against imperialism, and for the liberation of the oppressed nationalities, women, and the working class.

Larry Lambert  
Cindy Shapiro  
Bill Sampson  
Elizabeth Allen  
Chuck Garman  
Purr McEwen

of the July  
Editorial Collective



Dear SESPA,

I was very glad to receive the copy of *Science for the People*. Although the material was somewhat outdated (concerning the war) your philosophy is great. Like you I believe that modern science has the highest moral obligation to halt exploitation of the Third World and war research.

The only means of achieving this goal I think (do you?) is to participate and thereby gain control of the large scientific organizations such as the AAAS. This in turn, rightfully requires a commitment to the *advancement* of science. Not only is there a practical need to provide meaningful job alternatives for scientists, but any inhibition of scientific growth would indicate an obstruction of knowledge and attack the very premise of science.

I say this because by only attacking the status quo, *SftP* creates the impression of being against all science.

This is especially true when it warns against the corruption of any research. As a remedy I suggest weighing the value of research and attacking the source of corruption rather than the work itself.

Sincerely,  
Geoffrey Bernstein

*By calling our magazine and our organization Science for the People we are hoping to project a positive vision of the use of people's collective creative genius in productive ways. Thus, science and technology are necessary for the continued growth in human development, and will most certainly and definitely be a central component of any liberated society.*

*The science we have today is not some autonomous activity which evolves according to its own internal logic, apart from the rest of society. It is rather an activity whose methodology and ideology are largely conditioned by the context, social and political, in which it is carried out. It is not only that science has dealt with problems of interest to those who rule; but the very organization of scientific research, its philosophical orientation, and its ideological content are all in line with the needs of an expanding capitalist order. Science and technology rationalize the system not only through the development of automated weaponry, anti-personnel devices, behavior modification technology, etc., but also by justifying in ideological terms the oppression of blacks and women and the poor, by making it all seem "rational." In fact, the essence of establishment science is the prevention of the growth of knowledge — the limitation of understanding to smaller numbers of people, the hiding and sequestering of information that people need for their liberation. We must be ever conscious of the class nature of present-day science.*

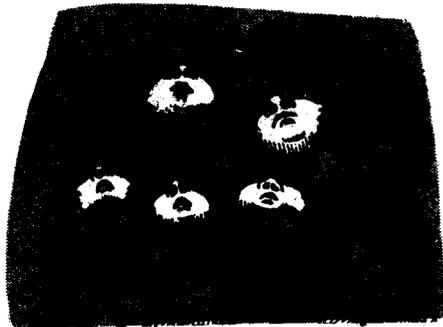
*We are glad to have you join us.*

*Position on zero population growth criticized*

... One thing that bothers me about SESPA, judging from that issue of *SftP*, [Vol. VI, no. 3, May 1974] is the question of whether ideology is being emphasized to the detriment of science, and perhaps to the detriment of general human well-being. The letter from Bonnie Mass, for instance, questions the motivation of birth control programs, stresses the necessity of "a class context which speaks to the needs and values of working class and Third World sisters", and makes a completely unjustified attack on Zero Population Growth. Anyone familiar with ZPG (and Planned Parenthood, World Population, for that matter) would know that these people recognize and report both the effect of rapid population growth in extending poverty, and the use by the middle and upper classes of most of the earth's non-renewable resources. Population limitation is necessary for America's working class-middle class if there are to be enough resources left next century for even a moderately good, below-present, standard of living. Most of the under-developed coun-

tries are already overpopulated with respect to their available resources and would remain poor even if imperialism was stopped and socialism or social welfarism was established immediately, though the most damaging effects . . . could be ended . . .

Yours truly,  
R.D. Hanson



Dear Carol and Al,

When I spoke of the "limitations of the present radical opposition to bourgeois science," I was referring to the general problem encountered by all leftists, that is, that they reproduce the structures of bourgeois society in their attempts to oppose that society, and resemble that society much more than they think they do. In some cases they explicitly affirm this society's basic assumptions as a starting point, allegedly so as to not "turn off" the masses, but really because they emotionally identify with their role in this society, much more so than they'd be willing to admit. This extreme form is exemplified by (but not at all limited to) the CP. Now, SESPA seems refreshingly non-defensive about this problem, and seems anxious to "go all the way" in overcoming it, so that's part of my attraction to SESPA, even though many of its limitations are immediately apparent to me. (These I've discussed in my intelligence article and my General Engineering critique.) Of course, ultimately these problems can be worked out only in practice, for which my articles represent a starting point but not a substitute. To work them out in practice, I'd have to make them concrete in political interventions, which I'd be interested in doing the next time you organize one in Phila or NYC.

Les Levidow

Dear Les,

You mention in your last letter about the way people reproduce the structures of bourgeois society in their attempts to oppose that society. We have tried very hard in the organization of the magazine, for instance, to not do that. The collectives that put out the magazine really do work in very non-heirarchical way, and the structure of having a new collective for each magazine is one of the most inefficient devices ever invented — but the product (the magazine) is not always the most important aspect of

the editorial collective work. The process by which new people learn and contribute and hash out political issues and reach consensus, and *in addition* put out a dynamite magazine, I think is very positive. Most people don't believe we do what we do. I hope someday you'll see your way to participating.

But aside from structures, which we can design to some degree, the hard thing to deal with as a remnant (as a dominant part of) the bourgeoisie society is people's practice and the experience that leads to that practice. Individualism of the bourgeois variety is acrippler, and especially among scientific types for which smarts and competition have been a primary part of work relationships, we do have some pretty severe problems. And because of their generally privileged form of existence and the abstract nature of their alienation (often a whole host of behaviors exist. Anyway these are the things we fight against everyday here in Boston — or struggle with I should say.

In solidarity,  
Al Weinrub

Friends,

Just a short note corroborating your "XYY" (September '74) article. Alice and I recently had a baby boy at Boston Lying In Hospital, and for the most part were impressed by their progressive attitudes and practices.

However, the "genetic screening" experiment was a notable exception. Although we had made prior arrangements for the delivery, and even visited the hospital for a guided tour, no mention was made of the experiment until the day of birth.

We were asked to sign a "routine" form as my wife doubled over with contractions. Glancing over it quickly, the word "experiment" caught my eye. I asked what the study was about, but the admitting clerk did not know. She merely explained that "everyone" signs, and that our child would not be harmed in any way. Because of the condition of my wife, I signed without further ado.

Had I been truly informed of the XYY aspects of the study and possible stigmatization of our son Christopher, I might not have consented.

In Solidarity,  
Mark Miller



# REFLECTIONS ON THE MAY ISSUE

At Stony Brook these days we feel excited whenever a new issue of SFP magazine arrives. We find ourselves reading the magazine very thoroughly, commenting about content, style and technical detail. Since we produced the May issue, we're much more attuned to mistakes and innovations. We feel a part of the production of each new issue and as a result very much a part of the organization. We feel from our experience that occasional production of the magazine outside of Boston would lead to a tighter organization and a more nationally representative magazine. We would like others to share our experiences, to know what to expect and what to avoid should they decide to work on an issue, so we have summarized the major aspects of what we learned.

First of all we would like to acknowledge the criticisms we received. We agree that it is necessary not only to present facts, but to follow them up with concrete suggestions for action at the end of each article. These can be in the form of names of people and organizations with whom to get in touch. It's also encouraging to present past actions in the body of the article, so that people are aware of what has been done to confront specific issues. This has been done to a much greater extent in recent issues. We've also realized that it would be quite useful for readers if the magazine cover explicitly represented the contents, listing the articles or at least the major topic.

Throughout the production process we found ourselves preoccupied with the question "Who will be reading this magazine?" In retrospect, it seems clear that we can really only construct a magazine for people like ourselves. Our ability to reach people cannot transcend our experiences. As our practice expands, so too will our ability to approach different types of people.

Few people seem to be aware that we collated the May issue by hand. Although we were left with indelible memories of the particular page for which we were responsible (which appear in occasional nightmares) and warm memories of good talks we had during all-night sessions, and although it did save us a considerable amount of money — next time we'll use a machine.

We did find that our job was much easier because the issue had a focus. Our interest in prisons (particularly with respect to Attica) led us to the topic of behavior control and its role in the oppression of specific populations. This focus changed in accordance with the particular material we received and with the broadening of our own knowledge through reading. We spent a great deal of time sifting through, editing and picking our articles. The editorial was being continually rewritten as we attempted to fit our knowledge into an analytical framework.

We supposed that having a focus to our issue would also be useful in terms of collecting material. It certainly made it easier to find graphics and photos and to plan out a cover. To solicit articles, we wrote up a detailed letter explaining the focus of the issue and the type of material we needed. This was duplicated and sent out to all the chapters. We eagerly awaited the flood of mail that would arrive. Of course, we didn't realize at the time that chapters overwhelmingly don't answer letters. The magazine coordinator, knowing in the ways of chapter correspondence, responded to our consternation (hysteria) by sending from Boston a list of contacts, newspaper clippings, articles and resources as well as the invaluable time schedule (what had to be done when).

The combination of our own cockiness and Boston's protectiveness brought on a good deal of teeth-gritting. Understandably we were amazed that they could doubt our capabilities. In retrospect a lot of these problems could have been avoided. For instance, little was said concerning the printing until we decided to use a local movement printer. Then came the questions: Who were these printers? What kind of work do they do? What do they charge? Do you really want to do it this way? Now these were all very valid considerations, but they should have been resolved before the magazine was started. So a lot of the problems came from failing to work things out in advance. In this respect, the handbook being produced by the magazine coordinating committee will be useful to future collectives as it will treat all details

(layout, page counts, proof reading, etc.). We at Stony Brook feel that we had a very rewarding and valuable relationship with Margot, Riley and Keith, who printed the May issue.

A problem arose over the autonomy of the editorial collective, and how far the decision-making process should go. This problem came to a head when we rejected an article intended for the regular science-teaching feature. As this feature was part of a move toward attaining continuity and regular input to the magazine, the coordinating committee found our move divisive. At the same time, we strongly disagreed with the premise and content of the article and felt we could not print it. This problem is part of a developing contradiction: On one hand there is a strong movement toward issue continuity in form, layout, features and political line. On the other hand there is a move to decentralize production and article input in order to create a more nationally representative magazine. Aside from the May issue, all issues have come out of Boston. Because there is really no national organizational line, decentralized issues would probably represent very different outlooks and characters. Any attempt to maintain political consistency would probably amount to superimposing Boston's outlook on the national organization. At the same time, the use of all chapter articles that came in would most probably result in a somewhat eclectic, inconsistent magazine. We have to decide whether we want a tight, consistent magazine or a representative national organ.

If the latter is our goal, we should stop worrying about a lowering of magazine standards and establish confidence in each other. From our experience, however, there is a definite lack of chapter response. This could mean (1) Chapters don't wish to present their views; (2) People have become accustomed to having everything done for them in Boston; (3) Chapters don't feel part of the organization as a whole. Given a lack of chapter input and responsibility it would be fooling ourselves to think that the magazine represents the organization as a whole.

Perhaps, then, the only way to establish a national line is for chapters to take on the responsibility of magazine production. In this way dialogue could be established around the concrete issues of this undertaking. With chapter views represented in the magazine, lines of communication would be opened, and the magazine could become a unifying factor. As members of the first magazine collective outside of Boston, we note that our greatest asset was in fact the resources and knowledge attained through our friends in Boston. The magazine coordinating committee was invaluable in terms of supplying information, contacts, newspaper clippings, work schedules and general expertise. The only way to appreciate the work that has come out of Boston is to attempt to put together a magazine. This combination of central resources and information with chapter responsibility and input is one good basis for a strong organization. We strongly recommend that other chapters get involved in magazine production.

The Stony Brook Chapter

## PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE MAGAZINE PRODUCTION

The magazine coordinating committee feels that it's time to propose a change in the way we produce *Science for the People*. We are having more and more trouble bringing together people to form editorial collectives; we have no credibility in soliciting articles for the magazine because we cannot promise that they will be used; we cannot plan ahead. Also we feel that the political voice of SESPANationally should not be controlled by new members who usually work on collectives; that rotating collectives prevent political continuity and frustrate new members who often wonder why they speak for the organization.

In lieu of rotating editorial collectives the coordinating committee has suggested the division of magazine production into three tasks to be coordinated by three separate groups: an editorial board, a production group, and a distribution group.

A full time editorial board would be responsible for soliciting, editing and selecting material for each magazine, and would be able to compile a store of articles to be drawn from in the future. A production group could coordinate a larger number of people to actually design and produce the magazine. An ongoing group would be able to build up a graphics file, search out cartoons and comics, make contacts with photographers and artists. A distribution group would assume responsibility for mailing the magazine and working to increase distribution.

This is a sketch of a proposal that the coordinating committee plans to present to the Northeast Regional Conference in November. The coordinating committee would appreciate response from other SESPAN chapters and members. We would also like to discuss ways in which chapters outside of Boston could still participate in producing issues of the magazine. The committee would also like to hear from any members who might be interested in working on any of the magazine boards should such a plan be accepted by the organization.

# MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

The Northeast Regional Committee of Science for the People undertook a survey of the membership, activities and political perspectives of SESPA chapters around the country. This is a first step in the direction of assessing the need and support for a national conference which would work toward a national organization. We were unable to elicit responses from all active chapters. Our own constituency, the Northeast regional chapters, and two from the Midwest returned completed questionnaires, but we have no information from four midwestern and the two far West chapters. The following summary is based on answers supplied from seven chapters, one of which — Boston — had reports from five subgroups. It had been agreed beforehand that the political makeup of individual chapters would not be described. Hence there may be an unavoidable lack of specificity in this report. Still in view of the upcoming Northeast Regional Conference, November 16-17, which will address the questions: whom shall we organize around what and why, the results of the questionnaire are of importance.

## Membership

Roughly 100 people are represented in the survey. Of these close to 50% are women. However the proportion of women varies quite a bit from chapter to chapter, with some chapters being predominantly composed of men. Black and Third World people make up only 3% of the total, while about 20% are over 35 years of age. Slightly over half are in academic occupations, including graduate students and some employed on the non-teaching staff of universities. One-third classified themselves as being in the medical and biological sciences, about one quarter in the physical sciences and engineering, 12% in the social sciences including psychology, some 8% in other occupations including community organizing, day care, laboratory work, switchboard operator. One chapter did not accept these categories and provided no information on them, but listed a long enumeration of collective knowledge resources. Not all the people on whom the above percentages are based consider Science for the People their primary political activity.

## Activities

The activities of the chapters cover a wide range: from study groups, actions at professional meetings, production of the magazine, preparation of pamphlets on professionalism, genetic engineering, health care, the energy crisis to technical aid for Vietnam, consumer protests against a local electric company, and research on pesticides affecting farmworkers; from workplace organizing to guerrilla theater.

SESPA chapters have engaged in joint activities with the Indochina Peace Campaign, the Union for Radical Political Economics (URPE), Committee for Social Responsibility in Engineering (CSRE), a Dump Nixon coalition, Socialist Feminists, Medical Committee for Human Rights (MCHR), Committee Against Racism (CAR), May Day Coalition, Honeywell Project, Attica Brigade, Energy Coalition which included October League, New American Movement, Revolutionary Union among others.

When asked about the political perspective of chapters, they replied in a variety of ways, some defining themselves as ranging from diffuse liberals or left liberals to radicals, socialists, Marxist-Leninists or anarchists; others expressed more the content of their views as anti-capitalist, strong emphasis on class analysis, or community and workplace struggles, struggling against racism, sexism and imperialism, anti-liberal and anti-social democratic.

Political education is engaged in by many groups regularly, some plan to have more of it in the future, some have political education at irregular intervals, only one chapter had none.

Three-quarters of the people covered in this survey subscribe to *Science for the People*, even more actually read it. Almost all acknowledge the magazine's usefulness in their work, although in varying degrees, such as in organizing and college teaching. Suggestions for improvement of the magazine were made by some chapters but at least half were pretty much satisfied with it or did not have any comments at the moment. One chapter likes special issues, another wants more on people-serving science, others hope for more reporting on successful SESPA activities, feedback on actions and articles, more on women, materials on interlocking institutions and foundations, developmental biology, Marxist anthropology, less rhetoric. Several mentioned that the magazine should have more humor.

## National Conference

All but one (outside the East) chapter were represented at last year's Northeast Regional Conference. Virtually all found it worthwhile; however one chapter qualified this with a "somewhat".

In response to the question whether there should be a national organization four chapters answered with an unqualified yes, two were not sure, and one wished to hold off until there is more evidence of local organizing.

The needs which a national organization would fulfill were coherence and communication (mentioned several times), leadership and coordination, increased political effectiveness and understanding, growth and spreading around of decision-making.

The political perspective that such an organization should have was most frequently characterized as socialist and Marxist. One chapter was not clear on the issue, one did not think it was possible to have one nationally, others said it should be representative of its members, non-dogmatic and non-sectarian.

As for a national conference, five chapters would like to see one in the near future, the summer of 1975 being most consistently mentioned as a possible time. Projected attendance at a national conference was up to four members from each chapter, a sizable women's group being a striking exception by stating that most of its members were likely to attend.

# N.E. REGIONAL CONFERENCE NOV. 15-17

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

At the first Northeast Regional Conference in October, 1973, this coordinating committee was created and charged to prepare a conference each year for the Northeast Region and build for a national SESPA/SftP into an organization with a clear anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist perspective and strengthening the structural features of the group. We will take the resolutions passed at last year's conference and the work done by the coordinating committee over the past year as a starting point. Although the time is not yet ripe for a national conference, we must continue to do groundwork for it so it can be held soon.

The decline of the economy and the attendant social unrest have replaced Vietnam as dominant issues in our political life. We now face many crucial questions as to the choice of areas of political struggle as well as to our methods. The need for a change in our orientation is reflected in our internal politics. For quite a while now, the magazine has not been gaining subscriptions, and new chapters have been formed at a very slow rate. Existing chapters do not grow in active membership very fast, and may seem to outsiders to be isolated from practical work. The Boston chapter still retains its dominant position in spite of sincere efforts by many in Boston and outside to change this. Some trouble has been experienced in forming editorial collectives from members with adequate experience in the group, and people in Boston tend to work so hard they burn out, while those of us outside Boston often cannot find a way of building enough of an organization to keep us busy.

These persistent weaknesses must be taken seriously and dealt with on a regional basis, before we can strengthen the national organization. Clearly, last year's conference only started this process, and we must now work together to develop clear principles of unity and correct these problems for the months and years ahead.

The Northeast Regional Coordinating Committee has decided upon the following tentative agenda for the conference:

- I. First Day: Progress in our ongoing work.
  - A. Workplace organizing, occupational health, energy crisis analysis, critique of professionalism, science teaching, Science for Vietnam, activities at science conventions, and other projects.
  - B. Struggling against racism, sexism, and elitism.
  - C. Internal SESPA/SftP structure, leadership, the role of the magazine in our work, methods of political work, format and tone of the magazine and other literature, membership in editorial collectives, political accountability of spokespeople to the group as a whole.
- II. Second Day: SESPA/SftP and the wider political struggle.
  - A. Who are we trying to organize around what principles and why? How do we formulate our positions on concrete political struggles? What should 'principles of unity' for SESPA/SftP be, and how should we change or extend them as the situation demands?
  - B. What role can the Northeast Regional Conference play in helping strengthen a national organization? What positive steps can we take to begin this task?

All of these topics are important political questions and require advance thought and preparation by members. We will solicit the cooperation of chairpeople for the workshops on the first day, people who have been involved in these various projects and can help us to deepen our understanding of them. Papers for the conference should be sent in advance to the regional committee, so they can be duplicated and sent out for discussion before the conference. These papers should be the work of groups, not individuals, and should represent clear, concise, and comradely thinking. Individuals who are not in a group should contact one of the SESPA chapters or groups and work with them. The regional committee may seek to prepare a draft statement before the conference, and we would appreciate letters or papers from members of the organization. We will also be issuing invitations to non-Science for the People groups who identify with our work, and to others who wish to attend as observers. For more information, call or write:

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In struggle,  
The Northeast Regional Committee

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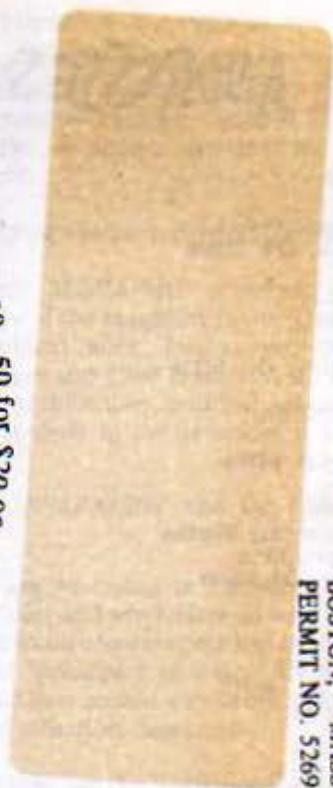


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PERMIT NO. 52696

**SUBSCRIPTIONS TO SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE AND MEMBERSHIP IN SESPA**

SESPA is defined by its activities. People who participate in the (mostly local) activities consider themselves members. Of course, there are people who through a variety of circumstances are not in a position to be active but would like to maintain contact. They also consider themselves members.

The magazine keeps us all in touch. It encourages people who may be isolated, presents examples of activities that are useful to local groups, brings issues and information to the attention of the readers, presents analytical articles and offers a forum for discussion. Hence it is a vital activity of SESPA. It is also the only regular national activity.

We need to know who the members are in order to continue to send *SCIENCE FOR THE PEOPLE* to them. Please supply the following information:

1. Name:  
  
Address:  
  
Telephone:  
  
Occupation:  
(if student or unemployed please indicate)

If you are working, do you work in industry [ ], government [ ], university [ ], other \_\_\_\_\_

2. Local SESPA chapter or other group in which I'm active:
3. I am enclosing money according to the following scheme: (a) regular membership—\$10, (b) indigent membership—less than \$10, (c) affluent or sacrifice membership—more than \$10, (d) completely impoverished—nothing, (e) I have paid already.
4. I will sell \_\_\_\_\_ magazines. This can be done on consignment to bookstores and newsstands, to your colleagues, at meetings. (If you want to give some away free because you are organizing and can't pay for them, let us know)
5. I am attaching a list of names and addresses of people who I believe would be interested in the magazine. Please send them complimentary copies.
6. I would be willing to provide technical assistance to community, movement, or Third World groups in the areas of:

Please add any comments on the magazine or SESPA or your own circumstances. We welcome criticism, advice, and would like to get to know you.

SEND CHECKS TO: SESPA, 9 WALDEN ST., JAMAICA PLAIN, MASS. 02130