

Trinity College

Trinity College Digital Repository

Resist Newsletters

Resist Collection

7-16-1973

Resist Newsletter, July 16, 1973

Resist

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter>

Recommended Citation

Resist, "Resist Newsletter, July 16, 1973" (1973). *Resist Newsletters*. 43.
<https://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/resistnewsletter/43>

RESIST

*a call to resist
illegitimate authority*

15 August 1973 - 763 Massachusetts Avenue, #4, Cambridge, Mass. 02139 - Newsletter #74

PIECES OF A NEW IDEOLOGY

ROBERT ZEVIN

This series of articles on the state of the movement and its ideology has been beating around the bush albeit a few steps closer with each succeeding essay. I would like to step part way into the brambles by presenting a less than completely coherent sketch of a new ideology for the Left.

We cannot begin without some agreement about what exactly an ideology is. An ideology equips us to deal with the present. For these purposes an ideology must always have two things. First, a model of how the world works and second, a set of moral premises. A model of how the world works should tell us what we must do in order to change something and should enable us to predict changes which are likely to take place in the absence of our intervention. Hence, most contemporary ideologies incorporate the existing natural sciences in their models dealing with questions of physics, meteorology and the like. However, Christian fundamentalists, Christian Scientists and Buddhists among others maintain ideologies which in varying degrees do not accept the contemporary natural sciences. A set of moral premises should enable us to choose between two situations which it is in our power to produce, particularly as regards relationships between people or between people and things. Thus "Thou shalt not kill," or "Might makes right," or "The Earth's resources must be preserved for future generations," are all examples of moral premises.

In my view an ideology is not essentially or necessarily a utopian vision of the 21st Century or some more distant ideal. Utopias are always implicit in the moral premises of an ideology. But, a utopia by itself is not very useful since it lacks the premises and models which would enable us to get from the present to the desired state of the world. Utopian visions can certainly be used to motivate people as is illustrated by their roles in recruiting and inspiring adherents of both Marxism and Christianity, among others. Preoccupation with a utopian future at the expense of an untidy present is usually symptomatic of ideologies which have lost belief in people's ability to significantly cope with the world around them. Moreover, it is possible and in my view realistic for an ideology to conceive of the struggle for an improved world as an essentially infinite process which can never hope in any fixed frame to reach its utopian objectives.

Thus, a viable ideology would enable its adherents to determine what to do tomorrow when confronted with a new situation. It may be that the situation or the ideology could be so complex as to make it impossible to reach a quick or unambiguous decision. However, if an ideology requires that its followers always be handed the party line from some higher authority, then, for me at least, it is not viable. I also assume that any model of reality can only be the imperfect attempt of human beings to explain the past in a way that can shed some light on the future. If this is so, any model must constantly be revised as the future unfolds in order to maintain its usefulness. A model which is presumed never to need revision

cont. page 2

CAMBRIDGE TENANTS ORGANIZING COUNCIL

ELLEN CANTAROW

Cambridge Tenants' Organizing Committee (CTOC) is a general membership organization whose perspective is anti-capitalist and working-class. Its 40 members are mainly ex-students and young radical professionals, a few working-class people, and folks holding "working-class jobs". The organization was born in 1970 of the Cambridge Peace and Freedom Party (not to be confused with the California organization), the major activity of which was a fight to get rent control for the city. CTOC itself has been central in subsequent mass struggles to preserve rent control; in mobilizing and distributing propaganda; in fights against urban renewal projects. It has been involved in two fights against police brutality; in strike support work (Harvard Square Waitresses' Union recognition fight; UFW); and in peripheral support of daycare activity. Such extra-housing matters have been continuously described in CTOC's newsletter, though CTOC members' actual participation in them has been only sporadic.

The organization is committed to meeting the "housing crisis" through militant activity like eviction blockings. Its policy is to discourage tenants from relying on the courts. The title of CTOC's thick and comprehensive handbook on the legalisms of rent control, "Legal Tactics", bespeaks the organization's conviction that legal solutions are only tactically useful in individual cases; they offer no long-range prospects for attack on the roots of the housing crisis in the banks, the tax structure, and the power structure behind real estate and land speculation.

Currently, CTOC is allied with The Hard Times, a small organization of working-class, anti-capitalist perspective, to fight an urban renewal project planned by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority for Kendall Square in East Cambridge. (The neighborhood is the home of The Hard Times and of half that organization's members; it is one of the few solidly blue-collar working-class neighborhoods remaining in the city.)

CTOC has also produced literature that has served as models for tenants' organizations across the country; this includes the aforementioned "Legal Tactics"; "Where We Stand", a statement of organizational principles; a pamphlet on the current battle against the Kendall Square urban renewal project; and the newsletter, once 8 pages, now 12 pages, published approximately monthly since 1971, and increasingly inclusive of other-than-tenant news (e.g. hospital strikes; articles on the history of particular jobs; analyses of city politics and municipal offices).

Behind this list of accomplishments, what are the political realities? One is the city itself. Its economy is dominated by the universities and their "spin-offs"--research and development corporations (often war-related and closely hooked into MIT); high-rise/high-cost housing; small shops with student and professional clientele. Such spin-offs and the professional, managerial and middle-level technical populations that have flocked to the city to staff them, have decimated the blue-collar light industry that created the

cont. page 6

is essentially mystical and, in my belief, of little use.

The remaining alternative is to win adherents by our practice, as well as the logic of our ideology. In such a world not only is it not possible for the end to justify the means, but in fact the means are the end. In this sense I think that the much maligned notion of counter institutions deserves reconsideration. Many of those who are most contemptuous of counter institutions profess great admiration for the writings of Mao and Che and the revolutions in China and Cuba. I believe that a reasonable reading of those men and understanding of those revolutions can be taken as an argument for the approach which I am advocating. After all, the revolutions did not begin in Peking or Havana but rather in the hinterlands. The attraction of the hinterland was precisely that the state was either unaware of revolutionary activities or unable or unwilling to unleash its counterrevolutionary violence at such remote and relatively unimportant targets. The method by which those revolutions took root and spread was land reform and a host of accompanying dramatic social and economic reconstructions. These are exemplary models of what I mean by counter institutions.

The hinterland in America is not so easy to identify. It is certainly not the Pentagon or the halls of Congress or IBM headquarters. It may very well be depressed smaller industrial towns or big city ghettos or depressed rural areas or all of these. It may not have a geographic location but rather consist of an alienated younger generation which has, to a large extent, disengaged itself from the economic system. We already see counter institutions flourishing in all of these areas: food coops, health clinics, women's centers and newspapers in the depressed industrial cities; all these and Community Development Corporations in the big city ghettos; black and white agricultural coops dating from 1964 or somewhat later in the rural South; hippie and movement communes and collectives everywhere. In my view, the first item on our agenda is to analyze, understand and advance the most successful aspects of this experience.

Until the Russian Revolution, Marxist ideology exemplified the characteristics which I have listed. Its models of reality, of capitalism, of human behavior and relationships had been constructed with great effort to successfully conform with history and it showed substantial ability to successfully predict events as they were unfolded. As a result of prolonged and intense ideological struggle among Marxists and between Marxists and other socialists and anarchists its moral premises were quite comprehensive down to the fairly minute details of revolutionary tactics.

Since the 1917 Revolution Marxism has become increasingly fragmented into national and ideological sects. The vast majority of these have poisoned the viability of their ideology by adding stifling overlays of mystical rigidity and hierarchical authority. Genuine efforts to revise Marxist models of reality and moral premises to take account of 56 years of new and significant experience have been few and far between.

The most notable American example is the work of Baran and Sweezy (Monopoly Capitalism). Their work provides many useful insights for American radicals. However, there is a constant tension in what they do between a genuine desire to truly revise the Marxist model and a thinly concealed (perhaps subconscious) desire to merely validate the correctness of the original Word by appropriately manipulating and categorizing more recent history.

Since one or another variant of Marxism is

2

the professed or implicit ideology of most American radicals who can be said to have a coherent ideology, it might be useful to begin thinking about a new ideology by examining some areas in which the Marxist analysis of 1917 has failed. The most conspicuous failure has been its inability to predict the relative stability of advanced industrial capitalism. By this I mean that the rate of growth of the industrialized capitalist economies has been rather more stable than one would have expected from reading the Marxist literature up to 1917. In addition, the ability of modern capitalism to at least moderate the cyclical fluctuations of the economy has certainly exceeded any reasonable reading of the prior Marxist literature. Furthermore, the distribution of income between labor and capital or between the rich and the poor has also been remarkably stable for more than the past half century. Finally, the degree of concentration of economic power among banks, manufacturers or other economic institutions has also been relatively more stable than was predicted.

This stability has been caused by other developments which have also not been thoroughly explored and explained by Marxist thinkers. In the first place, capitalism has shown itself to be far more flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances than one would suppose possible under the Marxist model. Second, the state has grown into a gargantuan concentration of economic, military and technological strength which dwarfs individual and almost any conceivable combination of private capitalist forces. Under these circumstances, it would seem appropriate to at least reinvestigate the question of whether or not the state can be viewed as the mere puppet of monopoly capitalism or whether it may not be more accurately viewed as a competing center of power with its own bureaucratic, institutional motivations. The latter possibility is reinforced by the observation that the behavior of the state vis a vis the apparent interests of monopoly capitalism is not so straightforwardly subservient as was the case before 1917.

This is not to say that the interests of the American state and the multinational corporations for an example may not be identical in many or even most cases; but, only that the state is indeed an independent creature with its own sometimes different interests dictated by its own different sources and uses of power. The war in Southeast Asia and the current crisis of the dollar may be two examples of the state pursuing policies for reasons of its own which are not identical to the interests of most major capitalist institutions.

Without going into the question of what may have been the original Marxist view of the question of power it can certainly be observed that the ideology of the contemporary American Left is vacuous on the subject. (In fact, the Marxist ideology of the 19th and early 20th centuries can be read in two almost diametrically opposed fashions on the question of power.) The questions which a radical ideology must answer are: what is the morality of power itself and/or of different ways of organizing the exercise of power; what is the foundation of power in our society and therefore what strategies are likely to succeed in gaining or altering power as it presently exists. A consideration of these questions must also necessarily deal with the problem of whether or not the pursuit of a good end can justify the use of an otherwise unjust means.

As for the sources of power I would only like to point out that power increasingly resides with those individuals and institutions which occupy the apex of social and technolo-

PIT RIVER OPPOSES INDUCTION OF TRIBAL MEMBER

KEN HALE

Members of the Tribal Council of the Pit River Tribe of northern California have ordered Mr. Bruce Wayne Gali, of the Ajumawi Band, not to appear in court in connection with induction-refusal charges brought against him. According to a recent press release received in the RESIST office, Mr. Gali was arrested and charged with "failure to report for induction" into the Armed Forces of the United States. He is currently out on bail and has been ordered by the Pit River Councilpeople: "(1) not to report to the magistrate on August 16, 1973 at 10:00 am; (2) not to have further correspondence or contact with the US officials; (3) not to leave the boundaries of the Pit River Territory for any reason that might be connected with the charge of the United States; (4) not to bear arms against other oppressed peoples." Members of the Council, long opposed to the induction of American Indian young men into the Armed Forces, have further announced that "if the US Government, or any branch of government, comes to Pit River to take Bruce Gali and force him into the military, the Pit River Councilmen will have no other recourse except to bring charges of KIDNAP against the United States." The Pit River Tribe has never surrendered to the United States Government, and many tribal leaders feel that reporting to the court on this charge would constitute an act of surrender.

In taking this position, Pit River tribal leaders have added to their already impressive record of courageous and progressive steps in the struggle against oppression, not only of members of the Pit River Tribe but of American Indian communities generally, and they have affirmed their solidarity with oppressed peoples everywhere. Support and further questions concerning Mr. Gali's case may be directed to Councilwoman Betty Craig, Ajumawi Band, General Delivery, Look Out, California.

New Ideology cont.

gical concentrations of the ability to subtly or grossly coerce others. By the same token, relatively less power resides with those who have accumulated vast evidence of financial wealth. Thus, the executives of General Motors or the bureaucrats of the state are increasingly more powerful relative to those who might own any given portion of General Motors stock. The reasons for this are both technological and sociological. The proof is at least in part suggested by the remarkable similarity in the structures and exercise of power in the United States and the Soviet Union where no one owns any stocks, bonds or other claims against private property.

A second aspect of the exercise of power deserves comment. That is that the exercise of any given amount of power requires the consent of an even smaller number of people. This is

3 purely a result of technology and has been the trend of technology for thousands of years. Nevertheless, the degree of this development in the 20th century requires reconsideration of 19th century political premises. What once required a large army can now in many cases be accomplished by a large aircraft carrier or a small fleet of planes. And what now requires a piloted fleet of planes will soon be possible with a totally unmanned air force. Intelligence which was once gathered by U-2's and countless C.I.A. agents around the world is now silently

absorbed and transmitted by orbiting satellites. Everyone's tax return is routinely examined by computer. Endless examples could be cited; but the point is that very significant amounts of power can now be exercised without the consent or willing participation of large numbers of people.

This is not to say that sophisticated technology may not be subject to ingenious methods of sabotage or that masses of people may not be able to impose restraints on the exercise of power. The civilian anti-war movement is an example of the latter. I cannot agree with the implication in Frank Joyce's article that American technology was defeated by Vietnamese ingenuity and ideology alone. It is clear that the United States possesses the technology to have totally destroyed all of Southeast Asia and that something less than this might have sufficed to effectively defeat the Vietnamese, Laotian and Cambodian revolutions. It is also clear that even what was done has imposed stupendous costs and burdens upon the revolutionary movements of those countries. I believe that the reason even more lethal technology was not unleashed on Southeast Asia is in some significant part that the anti-war movement erected a variety of social, moral, political and material barricades against the exercise of such force.

I conclude with a few moral premises of my own about power, means and ends. For me the existence of power is itself a political and moral evil. The utopia implicit in this premise is exactly the same as that envisioned by Marx when he saw the state withering away and men and women reaching their full liberated potential in a true communist society. The strategic objective of radicals should be not to capture power but rather to disperse and reduce it. Power, after all, does not mean anything unless it means the ability of some people to coerce other people into doing what they would not do of their own free wills. The nature of modern technology all too easily vests immense quantities of power in the hands of one or a few individuals whose theoretical responsibility to others becomes unenforceable.

The process of social change or revolution is essentially the process of winning more adherents to the revolutionary ideology. So long as the present system continues to perform more or less as well as it has in the past this is not likely to be accomplished merely by holding out a superior vision of a utopian future. One alternative is to build revolutionary cadres ready to lead the masses when the system falls into cataclysmic crisis. The trouble is that these cadres have lacked very effective models of how the system works and have rather relied on utopian visions of the post-revolutionary society which, in practice, have been easily coopted by a Roosevelt or a McGovern. Moreover, it is by no means certain that the system will fall into a cataclysmic crisis, at least in our lifetime. Furthermore, any strategy which contemplates a direct and violent confrontation with the state must reckon with the unprecedented means of violence that the state now commands and the relative handful of people required to exercise it.

ON THE REVOLUTIONARY EXAMPLE OF CHINA PART TWO

HENRY ROSEMONT JR.

4

(In part I it was maintained that the best way to measure the manifold accomplishments of the Chinese Revolution was to use a Chinese and not a U.S. yardstick because of important differences between the two countries. After briefly considering some basic economic dissimilarities the analysis turned to China's cultural tradition, focusing on the many Confucian qualities of Mao Tse-tung.)

It is premature to attempt to settle the question of the extent to which Mao Tse-tung has dressed Confucianism in Marxist clothes, or the reverse, because he is still thinking and writing; his views are not static, and may come to stress elements of one or the other ideology more as he believes changes in material conditions require it. But this much we know now: it was China, and nothing foreign, that "stood up" in October of 1949, and what Mao stands for is more than revolution. He symbolizes the Chinese Revolution, Confucianism, cultural tradition and all.

(There is not space to develop the point herein, but it can be noted in brief that the above analysis of Mao Tse-tung applies equally to East Asia's next most illustrious and successful revolutionary leader of this century, Ho Chi Minh. The area of S.E. Asia now known as Vietnam came heavily under the influence of Confucianism many centuries ago, which gives significance to the fact that "Uncle Ho" fully exemplified in life the high Confucian qualities -- as Diem, Thieu, Ky, et al did not -- and in death was mourned by the North Vietnamese people in a manner that was Confucian down to small details.)

Some knowledge of China's cultural tradition is also useful for understanding the roles and functions of the family in contemporary China. There is unanimity among recent travellers to the mainland that the family is not only alive and well, it is positively thriving, especially on the communes. This news may be puzzling to many Americans, who have been told for more than 20 years that the CCP had strongly attacked the family system.

Most accounts of events in China during the 1950's and early 60's, however, were provided by writers who had a higher commitment to cold war ideology than to full and accurate reporting. When one cuts through the anticommunist and racist rhetoric of their reports there is little hard evidence to show that the family in China was ever really threatened. All that is cited are quotations from speeches or editorials from party leaders declaring certain elements of the family system backward and feudal, and insisting on their abandonment.

To place these verbal attacks on the family system in their correct setting it is first of all necessary to note that the traditional Chinese family was not simply made up of father, mother and children -- the so-called "nuclear family" dominant in the U.S. In China all living paternal generations were under one roof, with grandfather (or great-grandfather, if alive) in the most honored position. It was also common for villages to be largely inhabited by people of the same clan, so that virtually every person a child would see on an average day would be a relative. Further, the Confucian tradition demanded primary loyalty to this extended family, constant and unswerving; only secondarily was allegiance to be given to the larger community or the state. In any conflict situation between family and the nation each person was expected to choose the former, even when it had transgressed the regulations of the latter.

For over three thousand years the extended family system has thus been the foundation of all social organization in China, which suggests that it met some basic human needs which there is no reason to believe changed drastically or went out of existence when the Kuomintang and its U.S. supporter moved to Taiwan.

But this situation presents a difficulty for revolutionary cadres, because the family, no matter how extended, is not a viable economic unit in a very large and very poor country that needs to increase agricultural production greatly in order to simultaneously feed an increasing population and provide a firm capital base for the development of industry. Everything from grain-growing, to saving, to providing health care for the elderly is better done on a community basis than by individual families; when the latter alone are responsible for work, capital and care, the work will be inefficient, the costs high and savings low, and the care distributed unevenly.



It is therefore to be expected that party leaders would make a concerted effort to get the people to reorder their loyalties somewhat, placing community interests (and the communes are communities in every sense of the term) above those of the direct family. If by this reordering the family itself benefits, as has been the case, then a situation obtains in which party and people are one, all profit economically, all progress socially, and a tradition has been strengthened by being challenged and modified to suit new circumstances.

In this regard China is to be envied the Confucian tradition, for that cultural heritage appears to be rich, varied and vibrant enough to sustain its upholders while they reshape it in the process of transforming in a fundamental way the forces of production and distribution in their economically backward society. Present leaders seem to share with their Confucian predecessors the belief that the significance and beauty of human life must ultimately reside in interpersonal relationships, especially as those relationships are defined by an enduring cultural heritage which has the pragmatic concomitance of stimulating collective efforts in the economic sphere. One person cannot build the Great Wall, nor a dike to stem the floodwaters of the Huang Ho; but together people can build for economic productivity, military security, and social well-being. Seen in this light the U.S. left should be neither surprised, irritated nor depressed to learn that the vast majority of young Chinese probably live less than an eighth of a mile away from their grandparents.

When looking at domestic events in the People's Republic of China then, two factors should be kept in mind in order to properly evaluate the significance of the Chinese revolutionary experience: an austere economic situation, coupled with a rich cultural tradition. By attending to the modest economic conditions, one will not be tempted to accuse the CCP of "selling out" the international revolution; any group responsible for the material needs of one quarter of the human race -- and the poorest quarter at that -- surely has its hands full at home. And by attending to the

cont. page 7

THE AGREEMENT & THE REALITY WOUNDED KNEE

5

GARLAND HARRIS

On May 8, 1973, after lengthy negotiations, the U.S. government and the Indian occupants of Wounded Knee agreed to the peaceful end of the occupation and the opening of a series of investigations and hearings on the treaty rights of Indians and the failure of the Bureau of Indian Affairs(BIA) Tribal Council system to provide representative government. Also agreed to were the terms of a referendum to choose new tribal leadership.

When they signed the agreement, the Indian occupants felt they had won a victory in their struggle for self-determination. Their confidence did not come from the government's willingness to sign an agreement. It resulted from 70 days of solidarity with traditional leaders, medicine men, Indians from other tribes, and probably most of all, from the courage and initiative of the members of the American Indian Movement(AIM) with whom the Oglala people had worked out strategies and discussed terms throughout the occupation.

During those 70 days the people of the Independent Oglala Nation in the village of Wounded Knee withstood the power of the United States government, represented by armed personnel carriers, M-16s and M-60s, CS gas and trigger-happy federal marshals. In addition to the marshals, F.B.I. and BIA police, armed vigilantes, among them white ranchers who lease reservation land at nominal fees, moved between Wounded Knee and the federal bunkers, firing at both sides in an effort to intensify hostilities. Few lives were lost, due in large part to the skill and restraint of the security force inside Wounded Knee.

The position of Justice Department officials, the major networks and newspapers in setting forth the situation at Wounded Knee has been simplistic with racist overtones. The government press statements and media investigators were unconcerned with immediate causes or even factual detail and clarity. A small group of "dissenting residents" were in the news for several days. There was no reference to the much larger and better documented group of supporting residents who signed affidavits that the "dissenters" were not representative, especially since one of their leaders was known to have been an F.B.I. employee who had moved a trailer onto the reservation a month before the occupation, after the initial protests had begun. There was no attempt on the part of any news writer to clarify the links between the "dissenting residents" and Richard Wilson's goon squad, a heavily armed and highly paid group who also manned unauthorized road barriers, stole food from lawyers who carried a court order permitting its delivery into Wounded Knee, and terrorized private citizens, particularly those sympathetic to AIM.

Although the Pine Ridge Reservation was occupied by federal forces and movement was often restricted, notably the press was confined to the town of Pine Ridge on several occasions, no coverage in the major media gave a hint of the terrorism on the reservation and the consequent fear which gripped many of its residents.

Throughout the occupation a handful of courageous Oglala people maintained a lifeline into Wounded Knee, carrying supplies on their backs through dark nights and driving rains, fording streams and dodging flares which lit the sky each night like the opening of a drivein movie.

Since the end of the occupation the supporting families have been the victims of harassment and terrorist tactics. Shots have been fired into homes, cars rammed by hit-and-run vehicles, etc. Although many local families supported the action, prudence kept them in their homes or at least away from public attention.

Attempts to organize peaceful support actions such as a march from the Rosebud Reservation by supporters from all over the country failed when the marchers moved off the friendly reservation to Bennett County. Rather than protect a peaceful and constitutional demonstration, the local police simply permitted the federal marshals to arrest the entire group for "unlawful assembly". Both Frank Clearwater's and Buddy Lamont's funerals were controlled by federal officers. Several hundred people were prevented from attending. Roadblocks were put up and taken down so frequently that it was impossible to predict what route would be open. Throughout the occupation, the press noted that there was a lack of visible Indian support and let the matter go at that.

It is well known that the government limited access to Wounded Knee, then limited its own statements about what was going on. It is less well known that the federal marshals fired thousands of rounds of ammunition into Wounded Knee, a fraction of which was returned. They fired flares that burned all of the plant life in their paths, as well as several buildings. The trading post which housed most of the Indian security force and the central food supply burned. The press never questioned this destruction, nor did it explain that there was no electricity and therefore no water with which to fight fires.

One of the few effective support actions was the airlift into Wounded Knee on April 17. At a point when rice and beans were all that remained, and coffee grounds were being reused, almost 2000 pounds of food were dropped within the perimeter of the village by three small planes. The food was provided by the anti-war movement. As the occupants gathered the heavy duffle bags and carried them into the houses, a federal helicopter appeared overhead, a machine gun in plain view; it fired, and the most violent confrontation of the occupation began. By the end of the day Frank Clearwater lay dying in a Rapid City hospital and five other Indians were wounded. The federal forces claimed no injuries. Subsequently, seven men were indicted in connection with the airlift. One was Tom Oliphant, a Boston Globe reporter, who described the event in his column. The seven were charged with conspiracy, crossing state lines to aid a riot, and interfering with a federal officer in the conduct of his duty--heavier charges than those brought against many of the occupants. The federal government has made its point clearly. Any alliance with the Indians by those of other movements will result in similar attacks.

At the end of the occupation, marshals and the BIA damaged homes and the interior of a church. They destroyed the peace pipe handed down from Crazy Horse, and other religious ob-

city's first wealth, and have precipitated a housing crisis that has grown steadily worse over the past decade.

CTOC may survive, and its politics may remain as unsectarian as they are in a city where sectarian "student radicalism" has killed many radical organizations almost at birth, because of the daily, humdrum service work continually generated for it by the housing situation. The life of CTOC's office in Central Square (a business district abutting on neighborhoods of primarily working-class population) is dominated by hundreds of service calls, and the filing of quantities of information--on landlords; on the details of local politics and politicians; on public housing; on tenant and housing work in other cities and countries; on the police; on other "working-class organizations" of left perspective; etc.

CTOC's tenant organizing hasn't proceeded through "targeting" particular landlords for attack. Rather, it has continually created a presence in the city through propaganda--for example, propaganda about across-the-board rent hikes by the Rent Control Board. Phone calls then come in in response to the propaganda, and building-by-building organizing is done in response to such phone calls.

That CTOC's organizing has been reactive doesn't mean that it has no base; it has a mailing list of 1800 people, a recognizable political profile in the city, and has mobilized over 1000 people for City Council meetings. But "reactive organizing", together with CTOC's past failure to do close follow-up work on the buildings it has organized, means that its base is "soft" and constantly shifting, even if its city-wide presence is continually felt through the pressure its members exert on the Rent Board, City Council, and city officials.

"Where We Stand", the organization's statement of principles, espouses a clear position of class struggle against capitalism, imperialism, racism, sexism. It commits the organization to fight for working-class housing at federal expense, under tenants' control; for the municipal takeover and conversion into low-cost housing of vacant buildings; for municipal rehabilitation of buildings under code for 3 months or more; for an end to all evictions; for full employment, and for the creation of new jobs geared to meet human needs like housing and mass transportation, etc. The question is how such values are projected in our ongoing work. Militancy alone (blocking evictions) can't do that; neither can the sort of tenant organizing CTOC has done in the past.

Up to now we have turned alternately to two possible solutions to our dilemma; neither has proved satisfactory so far. One is to cut down on the sheer service work we do while introducing particular tactical measures like collective bargaining into the work we choose to do. But clearly the introduction of any given tactic hardly substitutes for strategy, neither does a more considered, less reactive choice of work (recently decisions have been made to "target" landlords and build at least one or two unions in that way). An obvious possibility is that CTOC work towards the creation of a city-wide tenants' union. Several months ago we held a city-wide meeting to discuss such a possibility. But the general decision then was that CTOC continue to be a city-wide reference point rather than becoming a union itself, and that it not work aggressively towards the creation of a city-wide union, which was judged premature.

Another effort to begin sketching the outlines for future strategy was the organization's adoption in principle of the goal of a state-wide, anti-capitalist labor party. A minority of members considered the formulation at

6

least premature. Not only have we had no internal education that might found such a projection on the conscious choice of one historical tradition among several; it is also fairly unclear at present what steps will lead to the building of such a mass formation, or where a small organization like CTOC might fit into the long-term grand scheme.

That tenants' organizing is limited, and that CTOC should begin putting out feelers to organizations engaged in workplace matters; unemployment; childcare; the police; are facts about which everyone seems to agree. To some such end a "liaison committee" was created. It has met with tenant and other-than-tenant groups in Cambridge and in other parts of the state, but such meetings have been neither continuous nor systematic.

CTOC's commitment to such outreach has been reflected in its newsletter much more than in its daily work. To carry workplace news and analysis, for example, was a conscious choice by an editorial staff that has talked frequently about turning the newsletter into a community newspaper of working-class, left perspective, which might function as an organizing tool. The contributors to such a newspaper would come from CTOC allies like The Hard Times, as well as from community groups whose perspective is working-class but whose politics are far less clear than those of CTOC and The Hard Times, and much to the right of theirs.

CTOC's projections foreshadow party-building through general-membership coalitions. Thus the organization stands squarely apart from organizations that conceive of themselves as vanguard formations. At the same time, though, it hasn't constantly or systematically pushed for a clear articulation among its members of the way it should grow, train leadership, relate to organizations of influence in working-class communities, but to its right politically, develop and articulate its politics. (On the development of political perspective, it is noteworthy that CTOC has never used the word "socialist" in its literature, nor do many of its members think of themselves as socialists, but only as "anti-capitalist", "pro-working-class", etc. Only some of the members seem, moreover, to be troubled by this.)

Recently it was decided that a "membership committee" should be formed, some tasks of which would be political education; reviewing membership eligibility; balancing organizational priorities against its resources. This may prove to be a vehicle through which some of the organization's problems of political development can begin to be solved.

We at Resist have decided to discontinue issuing our High School Kit and our Movement Security Kit. Both are dated, and therefore of little use.

China cont.

7

cultural tradition, it will be clear that the modern Chinese experience has been uniquely shaped by its past, is thus not easily exportable, and consequently cannot easily serve as a model for revolutionary change in the United States.

It follows that the proper business of American revolutionaries is America. But to draw this conclusion is not to dismiss the Chinese example, because that example can be informative, inspirational, and a guide for our own efforts. It can be informative when we learn why, for instance, the Chinese resist specialization not only because of the danger of elitism, but also because it is inefficient; it can be inspirational when we appreciate that the Chinese are as materialist as any other people, but have learned to keep dignity, joy, and moral worth as essential ingredients of their lives even under adverse material conditions. And finally, the Chinese revolutionary example can serve as a guide to all political activists when it has demonstrated the importance of knowing, trusting and respecting the wishes of the people in whose name the revolution is carried out.

(The next NEWSLETTER will continue with an article on China's foreign policy.)

Erratum: In last month's article it said that Mao had left China only once, in 1950; he also left briefly in 1957.

Wounded Knee cont.

jects belonging to the medicine man Black Elk, grandson of the famed spiritual leader. Sworn affidavits by residents who occupied Wounded Knee and left their homes on May 10 state that the destruction took place after they left Wounded Knee when only the marshals and the BIA had access to the village. The May 8 agreement had specifically stated that residents, lawyers and a limited number of marshals were to have reentered the village together following the disarmament. Fearing the duplicity of the federal negotiators, the Indians attempted to prevent frameups by monitoring the disarmament. Other terms which were ignored were: that chiefs and headmen be present in the federal bunkers during disarmament; that no shackles be used on those arrested; that buses go directly to Rapid City, rather than to the Pine Ridge jail; and that legal counsel be immediately accessible. None of these conditions were met although all had been published a few days earlier. The press noted that the disarmament was effected "without incident" and dwelled on the property damage.

Thwarted in the military conquest of Wounded Knee by the reaction of thousands of citizens who opposed the use of force against the Indian occupants, the government will now attempt to prove in the courts that no matter how valid the claims of corruption and suffering, there is no justification for the occupation of a trading post owned by a white family which has profited by overcharging and underpaying and then buying the land of its destitute "customers" in exchange for last year's bills. Nor do they justify the open challenge to the Tribal Council system and its puppet Dick Wilson, despite those portions of the Bill of Rights which support the Indians' position.

The case for the defense of AIM's tactics has rarely been stated in the major press. A few of the racist highlights of life on the reservation are as follows: Indians on the Pine Ridge Reservation are unable to borrow seed money so that they are forced to lease their land to whites who can get loans. The BIA negotiates

these leases and distributes the money once a year. When an OEO office began to obtain loans for Indians, it was soon closed. Since there is no industry on the reservation, the land is the only potential source of income for most reservation Indians. The average family income is below 1500 a year. The suicide rate is 15 times higher than the national average; a high percentage are teenagers. Few students finish high school. Malnutrition is common. Most homes have no plumbing or running water. Unemployment is 50-70% year-round, and virtually the only employer is the government, so that every job is a political prize. Those who work for the government generally live where they work, in the town of Pine Ridge. Those who do not, live elsewhere on the reservation on welfare. This is, of course, a partial explanation of the failure of the Tribal Council system. Literally, the system represents the interests of about 5% of the residents.

The demand of the American Indian Movement is the end of the BIA Tribal Council system and a return to traditional Indian leadership which involves a return to the selection of chiefs from within the tribal group. This same demand was made by the Oglala people in their May 20 meeting at Chief Fools Crow's residence. The response came from White House counsel Leonard Garment in a letter indefinitely postponing the negotiations scheduled by the May 8 agreement. Garment stated that "no negotiation of the 1868 Laramie Treaty or any other treaty was in order since all treaties were superceded by the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act (which established the Tribal Council system). Needless to say, this information was known on May 8 when the agreement was signed which stated in its first paragraph that a Treaty Commission would be set up for precisely the purpose of renegotiating the treaties to which Garment refers. Also called for in the May 8 agreement is a referendum which Garment claims must be requested by the Tribal Council, that is by Wilson and his supporters.

The occupation represented the full-time commitment of approximately 500 Indian people. Every bit of that energy was necessary to prevent another massacre and at the same time begin rebuilding the Oglala Nation. The defense of Wounded Knee will demand similar commitment, and the role of supporters will be primarily legal assistance and fund raising. Bill Zimmerman and Larry Levin, anti-war activists and defendants in the airlift, have joined with other Cambridge activists in setting up the Wounded Knee Information and Defense Fund which will concentrate on fundraising for all those defended by the Offense/Defense Committee in Rapid City, as well as those charged with the airlift. The office is located at 595 Massachusetts Avenue, Room 213, Cambridge, Mass. 02139, telephone: (617) 864-0965.

CORRECTION

Dear Friends:

We caught the good article by Bob Zevin... on "Socially Useful Investments"... Bob meant to include The International Independence Institute as a tax exempt, tax deductible organization, rather than the International Foundation for Independence (IFI). The IFI is a non-profit banking institution with offices at 103 Water Street, Exeter, N.H. It is involved in making bank type loans for movement oriented enterprises, including coops and organic farmers, but is not tax deductible.

Robert S. Swann
International Independence Inst.
West Road, Box 183
Ashby, Mass. 01431

The View from Memphis: an Addendum

MIKE HONEY & MARTHA ALLEN

The April Newsletter carried an article we wrote concerning the growing movement to free political prisoners in the South, and the development of solidarity among black and white workers. An important factor in all that we outlined in the article was inadvertently left out when we (too hurriedly) wrote it--that is, the key role played by the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) in sparking and supporting these movements.

SCEF is a Southern interracial movement organization that has been going since the 1930s. It has consistently played a leading role in the struggles to break down racism in the South, and to bring black and white people together in common effort. Recently it has been organizing against repression in North Carolina, and was active in the campaigns to free such political prisoners as Walter Collins, Angela Davis and Thomas Wansley, to name only three of many.

Without the publicity given to all movement activity in the South through SCEF's Southern Patriot, most of us would never know about the people's struggles that are developing. The South and SCEF have been largely ignored by the mass media, and by omitting SCEF's crucial role in the South in our NEWSLETTER article we have, albeit unintentionally, done it a disservice. For those readers who would like to know more about the movements in the South, a Southern Patriot subscription is \$3, and is available by writing SCEF, 3210 West Broadway, Louisville, Kentucky 40211.

JUNE and JULY GRANTS

People for Adequate Welfare; 46 Second Ave., Bay Shore, N.Y. 11706. The organization tries to meet the legal and political needs of a low-income community. The grant is to help fund its newspaper, The Fair Hearing, and its welfare rights manual, Welfare is Your Right.

International Solidarity Committee (I.S.O.C.); P.O. Box 365, Hopewell Junction, N.Y. 12533. A support organization for anti-imperialist liberation movements in Africa, Haiti, etc. The grant is for communications equipment to be sent to the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Peacemaker Sharing Fund; 10208 Sylvan Ave. (Gano), Cincinnati, Ohio 45241. The Sharing Fund helps to support the families of those imprisoned for disobedience to the draft laws. People are still being tried, sentenced and imprisoned. Since Resist's beginning it has had an ongoing financial commitment to the Fund.

People's Farm; Route 1, Box 125-A, Browns, Alabama 36724. People's Farm grew out of the Poor People's Campaign of 1968. People on the farm are involved in setting up a free clinic, a welfare rights group, educational activities, civil rights and anti-war struggles. They want to organize a local organization of poor and working people and a farmers' union. The grant is to help buy medical equipment, literature, clothing.

AWIN, The Atlanta Workshop in Nonviolence; Box 7477, Atlanta, Georgia 30309. The grant is for the purchase of books for AWIN's Peace and Social Concerns Reading Room.

Stop Our Ships; 1409 Encinal, Alameda, Cal. A support and resource group for sailors who are resisting the military.

8

Mother Jones Press; 19 Hawley St., Northampton, Mass. 01060. A feminist print cooperative which provides movement groups with access to its equipment.

Coffee Break; 17404 John R., Detroit, Mich. 48203. Coffee Break organizes educational forums and rap sessions for working women. A steering committee of black and white women do most of the preparation for the gatherings at which problems and political strategies are discussed. The women who attend the sessions work in factories, restaurants, homes, schools, drug clinics, offices, and social service programs.

Liberation Support Movement; Box 338, Richmond, British Columbia. An organization whose work encompasses information and propaganda activities as well as providing material support for liberation movements. The grant is to help pay for a printing press to be sent to the Movement for the Liberation of Angola.

Hill Parents Association; P.O. Box 7005, New Haven, Conn. 06511. A community organization of Black, White and Puerto Rican people in the inner city. They are involved in advocacy counseling, tenant organizing, and have conducted a long campaign against cuts in federal and city public funding.

Allston-Brighton Tenants' Organization; 64 Harvard Ave., Allston, Mass. An organization working around the issues of rent control and the general housing crisis. It intends to bring people together in "more or less permanent union type formations."

United We Stand Bookstore; P.O. Box 1163, Jacksonville, Nth. Carolina 28540. The bookstore, recently bombed, has been a center for G.I. resistance since the fall of '71. It is also the central distribution and meeting place for the Marine produced paper "RAGE".

Norfolk Action Research on the Military; P.O. Box 11324, Norfolk, Va. 23517. An organization, which though primarily involved in research, has worked with the Jeffrey Allan Defense Committee and is actively opposing the NATO sponsored Azalea festival.

Pacific Counseling Service; 2588 Mission St., rm. 226, San Francisco, Ca. 94110. They are setting up a bookstore in central Okinawa for G.I.'s and military related people in the area who have little access to any worthwhile reading materials.

Lynn Tenants Action Committee; 115 Empire St., Lynn, Mass. An organization of 200 tenants uniting to protect their interests in relation to rent control.

Non-Violent Education Project; 1202 Logan, #1, Denver, Colorado 80203. A group doing anti-war and anti-ROTC work in the school system in Denver.

Oral History Project; 1538 Highland Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. 37916. A group of people gathering the oral history of working class communities in Tennessee with special emphasis on the Knoxville textile industry.

The Boston Community School; 132 Homes Ave., Dorchester, Mass. 02122. "A political school whose goal it is to provide political, educational and organizational skills to working people who want to build a popular movement to change America."