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• THIS ISSUE

This turned out to be some kind of special holiday issue. We hope Scoop readers will respond favorably to the unusual length and price. The small workspace at our listed address is too cold right now, so we have been working out of the West Bank firehouse, courtesy of the All Coop Assembly outreach committee and other folks there.

• HELP

Scoop is looking for your support: criticism, letters and articles, subscriptions and sales. We especially are looking for cultural material from cooperators: poems, drawings, songs, what have you. We need more workers too, people who can contribute a few hours or more to drawing, typing, or distributing the North Country cooperatives paper.

• EVALUATION MEETING

A Scoop evaluation meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 7, at 7:30 p.m., on the second floor of the West Bank firehouse, 4th St. & 15th Av., Minneapolis. Open to everyone -- give us your ideas and hear ours.

• STAFF

Phill Baker, Tom Copeland, Aggie Fletcher, Adole Goldberg, Dave Gutknecht, Warren Hanson, Barb Jensen, Cy O'Neill, Karen Phelps

• Thanks also to Delight Bosworth for her help. And credit from last issue is due to Tracy Landis for photographs and to Karen Phelps for drawings.



Illustration by Marvin Hanson, Bob Marstall (Cover, from Food Coop Handbook), and Karen Phelps.

SCOOP material is freely available for reprinting by non-profit groups in the food distribution system or other social change fields. Others please write to inquire.

SCOOP

#12, December 1975/January 1976

Send correspondence to

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a long article on

A QUICK TOUR

by Otto Didact

of food coops and collectives on the West Coast

Taking a break from the poverty and pugnacious politics of work in the Twin Cities food coop system, in early September I hopped a freight train to Washington to pick apples around Yakima. Later, in November, I visited collectives and coops in Seattle, Oregon, and San Francisco, leading to some of the reflections and questions which follow. How is the coop system in these areas working -- in what forms, with what problems, and in what new areas? With the accomplishments and failings and the controversies of the North Country food coop movement in mind, these were some of the questions I hoped to consider in writing for the SCOOP.

major part by weekly deliveries from collective grain and produce warehouses in Seattle, 150 miles to the northwest. A slow, friendly place, Hosanna is run by volunteers, with a discount to households contributing a few hours of work per month.

SEATTLE STOREFRONTS

Descending into the crowded peninsula of Seattle, I walk to Capitol Hill Coop, where the atmosphere is a relief from traffic and the city, the usual assault on one's sensibilities. The store looks and feels somewhat like North Country Foods in Minneapolis, though not nearly as busy; there is a corner up front for children and for reading. About half the bulk dry foods are in handy-attractive, glass fronted compartments in a unit someone built for them: thirty or more items, each in a space about five inches wide but deep and high, are filled from above and behind and dispensed by the shopper with a simple pull/push slot on the bottom.

Capitol Hill has a loose, all-volunteer structure, with a core of 15-20 regular workers divided into areas of cashiering, bookkeeping, and ordering. Extensive remodeling of the store a year and a half ago resulted in exhausted workers and an energy shortage from which they are only now recovered. Monthly gross is around \$12,000-16,000. The prevailing mentality, besides confusion, seems to be to do just enough to get by.



The very dry lands east of the Cascade Mountains have, like much of arid California, been transformed into a 'fruit bowl' through extensive irrigation, and the brown countryside is patched with the green of grape fields and fruit orchards. Unlike much of California -- source of 1/4 of the nation's produce, predominantly large agri-business and heavily mechanized where feasible -- most of Washington's produce comes from somewhat smaller owners and is picked by manual laborers. The United Farm Workers, despite intimidation and other difficulties around their newly-won right to union elections, are forging ahead in the California fields, and eventually the UFW probably will begin serious organizing efforts among the migrant workers in Washington. Perhaps 80% of the pickers there are Mexicans who, from their experience tend to be better ter pickers, harder workers. Many do not speak English; many are illegal immigrants, a phenomenon encouraged by the growers with the complicity of immigration authorities, who make a half-hearted attempt at enforcement in order to appease those who protest the cheap labor competition.

Hitching from Yakima to Seattle, I re-enter the realm of the forests and pass through the beautiful Cascades. One driver, a middle-aged office worker in a warehouse, is interested in cooperatives but wonders whether they can be economical competitive. During a conversation about food coops, he says: "So to you, then, the kind of food is just as important as the price?"

Yakima, a city of perhaps 50,000, has a very small, young coop storefront in the downtown area, selling natural foods supplied in

The oldest of the city's only four cooperative store fronts, Puget Consumers Coop (PCC), began as a food conspiracy, opened a storefront and incorporated in 1961, and in 1969 moved to its present location, just north of the U of Washington area. In growing, PCC aided in establishing the coop warehouse and other storefronts in the early 1970s. This fall it established a hardware and dry goods branch, PCC Mercantile, across the street. By far the busiest of the coop storefronts, PCC grosses at least \$85,000 per month. Their selection is mostly "natural" foods, or ones without chemical additives, but includes a large proportion of canned and packaged items.

PCC has 20 workers putting in at least 24 hours/week, starting at

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over \$3.00/hour, divided into 6 or 7 specific work areas. Store decisions are made equally by all workers including a manager, who has more of an overview but works in the store with the others.

Membership in POC is obtained through a \$1 initiation fee and a \$2 "capital share" fee every month until \$65 has been paid in, returnable upon withdrawal of membership. Markup is 32% for non-members and 16% for members. (The other three coop storefronts in the city have similar membership fees, with two providing the additional option of working for a reduced markup.)



COOPS AT THE MARKET

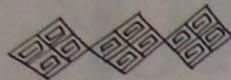
Near the waterfront edge of downtown, the Seattle Market is a lively, colorful area usually crowded with workers, shoppers, and visitors to the plethora of small produce, cheese, fish, and craft stands. Weekdays at the Little Bakery booth, run by members of the Seattle Workers Brigade, one can buy several varieties of pastries and breads -- from whole wheat to carrot and authentic sourdough, fresh or day-old. The project just barely pays for itself, I am told. On sale at the stand also: Northwest Passage, a counter-culture monthly from nearby Bellingham; a Seattle women's paper; the Black Panther Party newspaper and Osawatomie, from the Weather Underground.

Down the stairs to the Market's lower level is Soup & Salad, a small restaurant that was part of the original cooperating community. The only other vegetarian restaurant in Seattle I am able to find, Mother Morgan's, switched in mid-1975 from being a cooperative to private ownership and management.

Across the street from the main Market building, additional shops are being constructed, including another Brigade project, the Corner Market, due to open in December, selling a variety of produce and whole foods.

Behind and below the Market, descending steep steps toward the waterfront takes me directly to Community Produce, which recently moved into an old warehouse off the street along the water's edge and under a huge freeway viaduct. Their three cooler rooms and floor are filled with a wide variety of fresh produce, dried fruits, and fruit juices, plus small amounts of a variety of nuts, cheeses, and other items. Most of the food is organic, and most non-organic items are available with organic varieties of the same food. Sources range from local to British Columbia, Idaho/Montana, and California. Markup is 15-20%, depending on shipping and possibly other factors. A major proportion, perhaps 40%, of their sales are to commercial enterprises. Besides local deliveries, they make weekly runs to the Vancouver warehouse, to the Tacoma/Olympia area through the Brigade,

and twice monthly to coops in about 15 smaller cities in Washington, Idaho, and western Montana. Formed in late 1972, by mid-1973 Community Produce became a collective and formed a partnership. Their early history seems to have been one of loose and faltering operation, but now they are busy and growing, with a collective of about twelve.



SEATTLE WORKERS BRIGADE

The original Seattle food coop alliance no longer exists, succeeded in time by a small but tighter and more political association for a few, but no effective inter-coop mechanism for the rest. Cooperating Community (CC) was the name of the alliance formed during the initial period of the Seattle coops. It included CC Grains, CC Produce, Little Bakery, PCC, Capitol Hill, and a mechanics/maintenance collective. Cooperating Community members taxed themselves to finance a daycare operation; a guaranteed stipend for workers in member cooperatives was proposed too, but that never happened. By mid-1974 its members were divided over

the wage question and whether to tighten up through such means as bylaws or more collectivity and centralization. Those wanting more of the latter and a guaranteed wage for workers -- principally Little Bakery and CC Grains -- formed the Seattle Workers Brigade. CC Produce -- from uncertainty over the viability of the new project, fear of losing its autonomy and financial stability, and personality conflicts between it and Brigade members -- decided against joining. The Cooperating Community folded, with its assets and liabilities being dissolved or transferred through arrangements directly between the

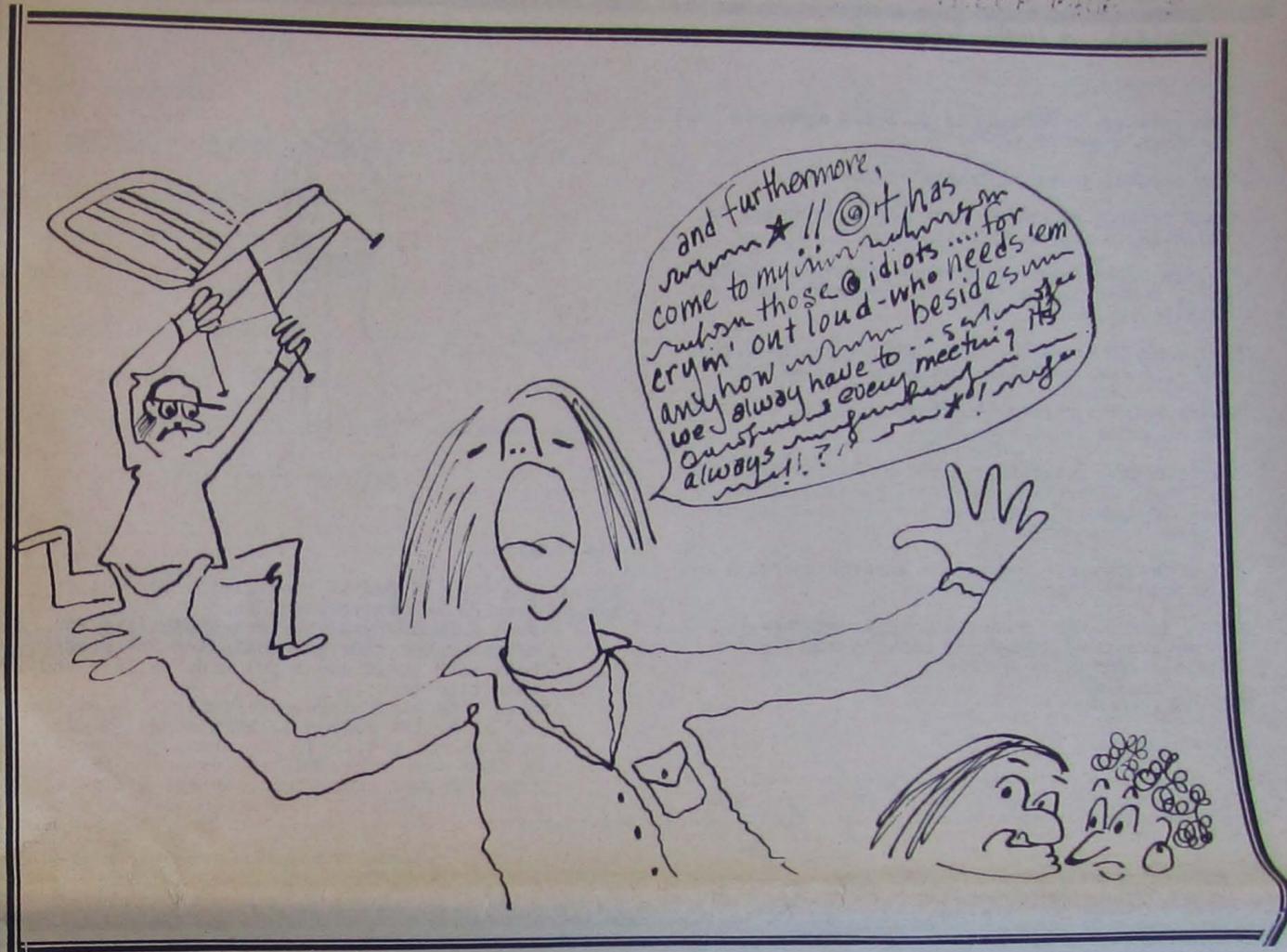
"... a small but tighter and more political association for a few but no effective inter-coop mechanism for the rest."

coops. Presently, there is some duplication in items provided by both CC Grains and Community Produce. But though the latter still seems unlikely to join the Brigade, relations between them have improved, and joint trucking to coops outside the city is an established practice.

The Workers Brigade established collective ownership and general direction for its members within a structure of work teams. Originally the Brigade included teams for the bakery, the warehouse, transportation and maintenance, processing, and bookkeeping. The new organizational form was launched with much enthusiasm and effort -- wages of \$350/month were attempted, and the Little Bakery's business was expanded. For the first several months, there were meetings weekly within the teams and for a liaison committee comprised of one member from each team, plus less frequent sessions of the entire Brigade body. But they were overextended; an ostensible political unity failed to produce clear common direction; there was internal uncertainty and conflict; the liaison committee didn't function as desired. Some of the work teams failed, including processing and transportation/maintenance. The warehouse lost money steadily til May.

The Brigade is much more limited and realistic in scope now and on a sound financial footing. Wages are in proportion to the gross margin and have been consistently around \$218-232/month, each person working about half the days in a month. There are but two teams, the warehouse and bakery -- bookkeepers seem not to be considered separately -- which determine schedules and most things around their workplaces and hold weekly meetings, while the entire Brigade, comprised of about 35 workers, determines wages, budgets, and broader issues and holds monthly meetings.

CC Grains is a collective of 13 somewhat more than half of them women and about half having over a year's experience there. They lease one building (Senior), in the northwestern part of the city, and rent a smaller space (Junior) in a building directly across a truck delivery area from their rear entrance. Junior includes offices for the Brigade bookkeepers. One of Senior's two large storage rooms includes a busy mill operation, where tons of flour are produced amidst dust and noise. While there I help unload 9 tons of wheat berries and several tons of rye, that week's shipment from Wheatland, a large organic grower in northern Utah, 800 miles away. The warehouse stocks a broad selection (comparable to but larger than either Twin Cities warehouse) of whole grains, cereals, flours, beans, oils, nuts, seeds, butters, pasta, cheese, and a few others. Most of the flour and grains, and a good proportion of the cereals, beans, and pasta are from organic sources. Markup is 20% except for cheese, which is 10%. Roughly a third of their sales are to private, profit-making stores or institutions.



"What this meeting needs is a chair..."
NOTES ON GROUP PROCESS

NANCY OKERLUND

cooperative effort.

These suggestions come from the experience of a year and a half of community-building within Flowshare Community (an intentional community of about 25 people located mainly in south Minneapolis) and from involvement with the Movement for a New Society, a network of autonomous groups committed to radical nonviolent social change, of which Flowshare is a part.

- continued next page

I am increasingly aware that cooperation is not only an attitude, a way of living, a political idea, an organizational basis - it's also a skill, one which needs conscious attention and practice in order to develop. This skill-nature of cooperating is particularly apparent when people gather, in large or small groups, to make decisions or plans. While the presence of a cooperative spirit in such gatherings is certainly vital, in my experience the degree of co-

operative skill has often been a crucial factor in determining both quality and quantity of accomplishment.

Since the building of our cooperative food system seems to involve a goodly amount of gathering together for meetings of various sorts, I would like to share some basic ideas about the nature of such group meetings and also make concrete suggestions towards developing skill in this aspect of our

PROCESS - cont'd from p. 5

Some Ideas:

- *The purpose in meeting is to build agreement, not to wield power or to "win".
- *The process is as important as the task.
- *Each person, no matter what her experience, is valuable, a source of insight.
- *People affirm each other's presence: the whole self, including feelings, is important, not just intellect, ideas.
- *All contributions are heard out; there is a testing of ideas; decisions are made by consensus.
- *Leadership is shared in a given moment, also rotated; there is no hierarchy.
- *Facilitating (chairing) involves clarifying, summarizing, mediating, balancing participation, tension-breaking, time-keeping, maintaining the physical environment.
- *It is appropriate for anyone anytime to point out problems, to suggest solutions.
- *There is a small group/whole group rhythm--to gather a maximum amount of ideas and allow for people's need to be heard.

Some Suggestions:

Written agenda:

When the agenda is in front of everyone, written on a chalkboard or large piece of paper with time limits indicated for the various segments; and the group reviews the agenda together for five or so minutes before the meeting proceeds, there are usually these effects:

- 1) There is a sense of beginning and end, allowing people to pace themselves rather than to wonder whether the meeting will ever end.
- 2) The review opens the agenda to change, giving people opportunity to voice expectations or dissatisfactions, to add, drop or otherwise adapt items. The meeting is thus a real extension of the group rather than something externally imposed. Power lies in the people.

Purpose:

In many cases, briefly stating a meeting's purpose and what it will try to accomplish has a clarifying and productive effect.



Time Limits:

Along with the setting of time limits for each agenda item go two understandings:

- 1) that someone must take responsibility for watching the time and reminding the group both when there are a few minutes left and when time is up.
- 2) that time limits are not static. If, at the end of a time segment, the discussion or task is not finished, the group can decide to take more time. But the decision must be conscious and made by the entire group.

Pre-planning:

Planning ahead, setting a specific agenda, gives a group a starting place. Even if the agenda is completely changed at the time of the meeting, a concrete plan which can be accepted, rejected, or changed is usually more workable than beginning in a vacuum. Also, getting input ahead of time from as much of the group as possible usually has a very positive effect on the actual meeting.

Facilitating (chairing):

Very often having two or three facilitators, who also do the planning, is better than having one because:

- 1) two heads are better than one!
- 2) Shared responsibility makes less work, and in difficult meetings, less tension for individuals.
- 3) It allows for continuity in planning a series of meetings: while facilitators-planners change from meeting to meeting, at least one from the previous planners can stay in the planning group each time.

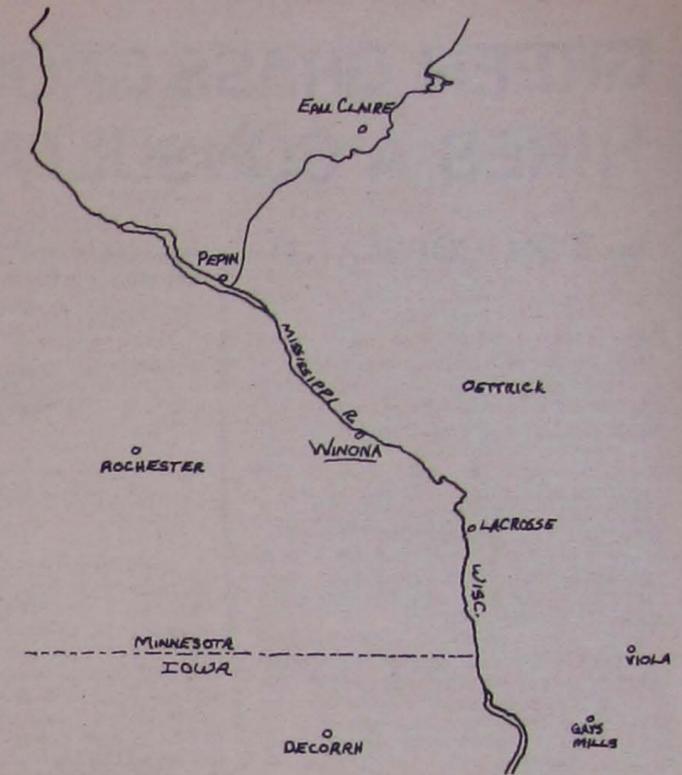
The work of the facilitator(s) is to help the group follow the agreed-upon agenda; to clarify and summarize when needed; to maintain a balance in participation (ex: frequently offering opportunity for input from people who haven't spoken); to be aware of the general mood, sense of the meeting and to respond accordingly. While certain people accept formal responsibility for planning and facilitating each meeting, facilitation is a group and individual responsibility, shared by everyone.

Evaluation:

The evaluation is usually the last agenda item (5-10 minutes). It provides opportunity for expression of feelings, observations, suggestions about the positive and negative aspects of the meeting: its process, content, individual involvement, etc. The evaluation is not a time for discussion but rather for concise statements. Emphasis is placed on suggestions for improving

~ cont'd p. 24

- DECORAH - ONEOTA COOP
- EAU CLAIRE - SUNYATA COOP
- ETTRICK - HEGG GENERAL STORE
- GAY MILLS - KICKAPOO EXCHANGE
- LA CROSS - LA CROSS PEOPLE'S COOP
- PEPIN COUNTY - SHANGRI-LA
- ROCHESTER - ROCHESTER PEOPLE'S COOP
- VIOLA - BLOOM COOP
- WINONA - PRAIRIE HARVEST WAREHOUSE
- FAMINE FOODS



an open letter on changes at PRAIRIE HARVEST

by Patti Mathiak, Sunyata Food Coop

Dear Fellow Co-operators,

Allow me to share my thoughts and feelings about co-ops, particularly Prairie Harvest Co-op Warehouse in Winona. I have found myself unable to give a totally factual and unbiased report. Consequently, I free myself of that responsibility by writing this letter.

On October 26, 1975, a regional meeting of the Prairie Harvest Co-op Warehouse was held. Delegations from seven co-ops, who have been buying there, came. This meeting brought on immense enthusiasm and reflective excitement, enthusiasm in the new ideas presented, reflective excitement in the possibilities in the co-op I'm involved with. Up until now, I have been doing what most co-op

meeting could make co-ops a permanent reality. The first proposal was to become a legally incorporated distributing co-operative, protected under Minnesota state law. This will protect both the co-op and its members. Say for example, the co-op got into a legal or financial hassle. No member could be blamed or prosecuted. The same would hold true if a member got into a hassle.

idea about this membership is that the working collective would be a member. They would be equal in voting power, mark-up, or any other privileges and responsibilities of a member. This collective is the one that has been doing the work of the warehouse since it began last spring. Now, they would be contracted to do the work for the new warehouse. The collective will retain the name Prairie Harvest. The warehouse will assume a new name. People at the meeting decided to go home and ask for ideas for a name from other members of their co-ops.

It would serve to unify
the country co-ops...

The co-op would not be responsible. Everyone at the meeting thought incorporation would be a good idea. The co-op warehouse would be stronger. It would serve to unify the country co-ops and make the co-operative movement in the country more stable. We would have a means of communication. A committee was appointed to start writing the articles of incorporation.

Besides a new name, this warehouse will also use a new mark-up system. Most co-ops mark their food up 10% over cost. In Winona,

... this warehouse will also
use a new mark-up system.

This meeting brought on
immense enthusiasm...

people do: follow. But when I experienced the creativity and hope going on at Prairie Harvest, I wanted to be one of the leaders.

Those feelings emerged because I felt the ideas proposed at the

As you may have noticed, I am using the word member. That is a new and important idea for warehouses. In order to buy from this new warehouse, people would have to be a member, that is, pay a membership fee. Another unique

instead of basing their mark-up on price, they will base it on poundage. Each item will be marked up a few cents per pound to cover handling, rent, utilities, etc.-- the cost of running the business. This seems to me to be more fair.

~ cont'd p. 26

GREEN GRASS GROCERY HIRES A CONSULTANT

by TOM COPELAND

For the first time ever, a Northcountry co-op has commissioned and received a consultant's report on the operations of its business. On October 25th Green Grass Grocery was handed a thirty-eight page report written by Al Wroblewski. The report deals with various problems of Green Grass such as the volunteer system and suggests a number of options for improving the store's future financial prospects.

Wroblewski recommends that the store greatly expand its food inventory, pay a manager with expertise to oversee the operation, and issue stock to finance these changes and help capitalize the store.

The decision to hire a consultant was made by the Board of Directors of Green Grass after their manager, Dave Olmschied, expressed dissatisfaction with the store's volunteer system. It was thought that an outside view of the store's problems with volunteers was needed. Wroblewski was brought in because of his contact with the store and its neighborhood and his experience with community organizing. After Wroblewski and the Board met, the consultant's role was expanded to include all aspects of the store and its future direction. Wroblewski was paid \$350 for his six week study.

They include keeping the store at its present size, expanding and issuing stock, starting a direct charge operation, relying on a worker collective and others. Because of limited space I have chosen to discuss only a few aspects of the report that I feel are controversial and vital to all co-op readers.

The two main problems of Green Grass in which Wroblewski was most concerned are a lack of expertise in the management of the store and the lack of a strong financial base. According to Wroblewski, one result of a large turnover of volunteers in Green Grass is the absence of an accumulation of expertise in how the store should be run. Detailed information about such things as sales, overhead, operating margins, and inventories is not well understood or organized. Without a clear method of accountability for those who do have knowledge and experience in the store's operation, power becomes concentrated in various individuals in a haphazard manner. More

Exerpts from the report on Green Grass

by Al Wroblewski



(FROM THE STORE DESCRIPTION SECTION)

Contrary to some people's thinking, I do not believe price is that significant a factor in drawing in shoppers. Other things such as cleanliness, friendliness, convenience, reliability, product selection, and location do more to build sales. A store like Green Grass cannot compete on price with the big chain stores. The disadvantage in price can be compensated by people having a say in the store and in the unique character of the store and method of control and distribution of surplus.

The present mark-up system, 10% for volunteers and 20% for non-volunteers should be abolished. In its place should be established a system which yields a 20% margin with a 25% mark-up on the average.

experience is needed in running a successful business in areas such as money management, pricing policies, buying and others.

For these reasons Wroblewski recommended the hiring of a reasonably paid manager experienced in the grocery business.

According to the report, the second problem of Green Grass is that of undercapitalization. The store cannot afford to make any mistakes because of its tight money squeeze. Other co-ops like SAP or North Country can lose some money and still survive because of their higher volumes. But Green Grass is susceptible to financial disaster in any number of ways; high water bills, cooler repair, theft, sudden drop in sales, etc. These emergencies could only be covered at present by cutbacks in inventory which would reduce volume even more.

The report is divided into two parts. The first covers general observations about components of the store such as the volunteer program, manager, bookkeeper, and Green Grass community. The second part outlines seven different options the store could choose from in making long range plans.

By instituting a single price, one that reflects the true financial needs of operation and market conditions, shoppers and volunteers would be placed on equal footing with regards to buying goods in the store. I recommend a method of shopper involvement used by the Rush City, Mn. food coop be adopted at Green Grass.

This is how it works: Everyone shopping at Green Grass is asked to save their receipt slips. At the end of every quarter shoppers bring in their receipts for the previous three month period. Whatever their total purchases amounted to, the store refunds 1%. For example, if someone bought \$400 worth of groceries over 3 months, he/she would receive a cash refund of 1% of \$400 or \$4. If monthly sales at Green Grass were to stay at about \$11,000, probably no more than \$20,000 in receipts would be presented at the end of a quarter. 1% of this would amount to \$200. This \$200 would be included as an operating expense. Rush City coop calls this their Sav-A-Tape program.

The advantages are that people get in the habit of saving their receipts (in anticipation of the day when the store can issue a patronage refund at the end of a prosperous year), people get rewarded for shopping at Green Grass, the bookkeeping for keeping track of purchases is spread out over the course of the year, and it creates a unique flavor sup-

Personal loans could be taken out but without higher sales these debts could not be repaid.

A more secure capital base is needed by Green Grass to ensure its survival. Towards that end Wroblewski urges in his report that the store issue stock at \$10 a share in order to raise \$5,000. Says Wroblewski, "Membership in the co-op would be based on ownership of 1 or more shares of stock. Each household interested could own stock; no matter how much stock a household owned, it would have but one vote." Most of the capital raised by selling stock would be used to increase the store's inventory. The rest would cover some expansion costs and would subsidize the salary of the manager until the expected increase in sales could cover it completely.

The idea of selling stock to raise capital to expand a co-op's business has long been a standard practice in the history of cooperatives but has yet to be tried by any Northcountry co-op. Jane Baird, a Green Grass Board member, said to me that the issuing of stock can strengthen a store by increasing its membership. More people will be attracted to a store and have more concern for its

errior to coupons which manipulate the buyer into purchasing a particular brand item (this system asks only that you buy things, anything, at Green Grass!). The cost of the program would include publicity, bookkeeping time (which exists anyway for the end of the year totalizing of purchases), some lost time by the cashier dishing out refunds, and the actual amount of refunds.

At this time, it is not economical for Green Grass to assume responsibility for keeping track of people's purchases. The shoppers themselves should assume the responsibility.

Green Grass is a legal cooperative. The only advantage to being a coop in a legal sense is that you can distribute your surplus to coop owners without getting taxed on them. But to distribute these earnings (or retain them in the form of stock purchases) it is necessary to have a record of people's purchases. The refund given at the end of the year which shares the "profits" is called a patronage refund. Thus, the sav-a-tape idea fits in well with the patronage refund requirement.

It is common that no patronage refund is actually paid out for 3 to 4 years because of the need to accumulate some capital in the store.

future when they have a financial investment in it, she said. Another advantage of having the co-op's members owning the store through the purchase of stock are that membership is well-defined, something which is tremendously ambiguous for most co-ops now. Also the financial burden is spread more evenly than by having several large personal loans. The one member-one vote principle, regardless of how much stock any one person owns, ensures broader participation and accountability. Issuing stock might attract more conservative co-op people, present and potential, with the feeling it gives of a sounder business operation and a stronger sense of stability. Those who could not afford to buy a share of stock could receive stock in lieu of part of their patronage refund at the end of the year (see excerpts from report for further discussion). Drawbacks of a stock plan are the extra bookkeeping time involved and the energy needed to sell the stock.

Wroblewski's report was called "thought provoking" and "a call to action" by one Board member. Art Danforth, Secretary-Treasurer of the Cooperative League of the USA who has corresponded with Wroblewski wrote, "you have done a monumen-

The absence of a patronage refund and the absence of a Board of Directors has prevented Green Grass from selling itself effectively as a consumer controlled enterprise. And this fact, that consumers have a say, is the most important characteristic of Green Grass. By publicizing the unique mixture of products available at Green Grass, the 1% refund program, the possibility of getting a larger return at the end of the year, the composition of a Board of Directors made up of consumers, and the overall coop philosophy, Green Grass can achieve a uniqueness which would set it on its feet.



(FROM THE STAY SMALL OPTION)

The continued exploitation of labor within the Twin City food coops is deplorable. If you have subsistence wages you are not being true to the employment needs of the people. I believe coops should set examples of fair, generous, and honest employment practices. Too often coop people mystify themselves into thinking they can beat the big chain stores on price. You can't. They have monopoly control over too many

tal job with your report on Green Grass." There is much to the report not covered in this article or the accompanying excerpts.

The Board's response to the report was split over the question of selling stock. Some fear that selling stock to those outside the neighborhood would weaken the present members' control over the store. Further meetings to talk over the idea will hopefully lead to a decision on this matter. Several of Wroblewski's recommendations have already been implemented at Green Grass. A part-time cashier has been hired and the old worker discount system has been abolished. In its place regular workers receive food credits based upon the amount of time they volunteer to work. There is general agreement among Board members that the store needs a manager with grocery experience. They are presently looking for one.

What is the relevance of this report to other Northcountry co-ops? According to Sherman Eagles, Green Grass Board President, in the long run it is very relevant to other stores. The real costs are often hidden in the running of co-ops and such items as wages, maintenance and taxes will eventually become expenses that cannot be ignored. The problems of capital-

steps in the food process. They can absorb a loss at one place in the food process. They can absorb short term losses. They can operate on minimal margins with huge volumes. It is time to face reality. Coops right now cannot compete favorably with the chain super markets on price if they are to pay labor costs fairly. Thus, the pressure on a stay small strategy for continuing to underpay or not pay the true cost of labor will always be present as long as people expect to pay less for food than they would at Red Owl.

I would not recommend the Keep Store at Present Size option. Too many factors indicate a short life; or if not a short life, a continual scramble to stay ahead of the creditors. If particular people on the Board or among the membership feel the personal benefits of participation would be lost on an expanded coop, I feel they should seek other avenues for satisfying that need. And I don't mean to belittle that need. It is a good, important need. However, I believe the coop model can provide a full response to that need only if economic needs of the store are fully met first. If the economic needs are ignored, no end to the number of headaches will be the plight.

-cont'd p. 29



DANCE REPORTS



The last time our statement was in the SCOOP (#11) we had hardly just begun. Now we are permanently at 200 3rd Ave. N. (338-5232) after having to move from our first site of business (thanks to the Health Dept.)

On Dec. 1 we are expanding our in-town deliveries to Monday, Wednesday and Friday and more and more out-of-town coops and buying clubs are coming to grips about their position in the struggle and are coming to us for their food.

We have drawn up our first papers for incorporation as a legal cooperative. We will be attending community meetings and setting up regional meetings in outlying areas to go over the meaning of these papers and work with everyone interested to define how we want to operate. On January 10 we will have a meeting here in Minneapolis to establish the voting members, the capital stock values, the election of a Board of Directors and the status of the worker-collective in relationship to its owners.

The first blastoff of energy which got DANCE off the ground has now become low-keyed in the sense of many of those people going back to their own stores and communities to work with moving the movement forward.

There are constantly confrontations of some sort between the two warehouses but to explain the details would be the start of a book about this struggle. The DANCE collective has talked and worked with other COOP warehouses all over the country. That there are now two warehouses here is a fact. The economic base, sometimes wobbly, still seems the only reason to compromise and get back under one roof; but, all the rest is still divided and is obviously going to take a long time for mending the wounds of emotions, losses, gains, personal or otherwise cooperative goals.

George Crocker

Strength through Cooperation,
The DANCE Collective

The DANCE collective at this writing has 6 full-time workers and is expanding to include 3 or 4 part-time people. We did about \$25,000 the first month and our inventory is growing all the time. Right now, we have really worked on the whole foods line and have a lot of products from Northcountry organic farmers besides the commercial brand. A member of our collective along with others in the community just returned from a trip to Duluth to set up a canned goods deal if and when it is needed for the projected community coop grocery stores.

In defining our goals we still need to look at many alternatives as to expansion. One of them is to operate with the DANCE name in separate collectives including whole food, canned food, grocery items, produce, cheese, dairy, frozen food, and baked goods - and the Warehouse office dealing with the trucking, distribution and purchasing to facilitate getting this to the people as cheaply as possible. All of these things could be dealt with by one collective but that seems an insurmountable task and also a technical question to some people about the food stocking policy and what that should include. Other alternatives are still to come out of community and store decision - what you want us to do and what services you want from your warehouse.

As a collective we are every day getting stronger and learning to work together more efficiently. We are receiving lots of support in many kinds of ways including the ACA committees who are handling a lot of detailed community work in-town and out-of-town. We are selling food to some new groups just starting in outlying areas of the Twin Cities.

We do want to thank those who support us in whatever way and hope you will stop by and let us know what you are doing too.

- George Crocker
- Edward Winter
- Annie Green
- Jim Otto
- Fran Mendenhall
- Keith Monjak
- Fred Grieco
- Robin Shaw
- Danny Nordley



CAN THE CO-OP MOVEMENT SUPPORT 200 WAREHOUSES?

by
Aggie Fletcher

...another update.

When the inter-coop split at the September Policy Review Board led to the formation of a new coop warehouse, there was much speculation as to the economic viability of two warehouses in the Twin Cities, and even more speculation as to which of the Northcountry coops would buy from which warehouse. There were meetings and discussions in all the coops the first weeks, with direct confrontations between representatives of the two warehouses, each trying to present their best points.

The old warehouse (Peoples Warehouse) charged the new one (DANCE) with being part of a long range plan to ruin the PW, supported only by the "coop establishment" in fear of the correctness of the revolutionary analysis presented by the CO. They said it was a cold and calculated economic boycott of the PW which would destroy it, and probably most of the smaller coops as a side effect.

The new warehouse charged the old one with secretive and incorrect decision-making process, asserting that they had had no plans to form a new warehouse until the middle of the second day of the September PRB. There were, and still are, DANCE workers and supporters who felt violent and destructive towards the workers in the old warehouse. However, the official position from the new warehouse, and that of most of the workers and supporters, was not to boycott the old warehouse as an economic revenge, but to encourage the growth of a second warehouse as a political and economic alternative.

After that PRB weekend, several coops, having received an order from the old warehouse on Friday on credit, decided not to pay that bill, and order from then on from DANCE. This caused much consternation and argument in the entire system, including threats and other cold war-like stand-offs. DANCE did not encourage this action, and payments were eventually made to PW. Still, there remains a strong feeling among many non-CO coop workers that "they took everything we built together, and we should have gotten something out of it." At present, however, the growth in experience of the last year's struggle is the only satisfaction they can receive.

DANCE did a large delivery run that very first week, to Seward, North Country, Whole Foods, Mill City, Good Grains, Wedge, Southeast, and Merrigrove. Their sales were \$1566.51 that first Saturday, October 3, and have grown rapidly. The Twin Cities coop bakeries and restaurants came to DANCE, as did over a dozen out-of-town coops and buying clubs, and several coop warehouses too.

Annie from DANCE asked a PW worker about their sales figures, and she was told she couldn't have that information. PW sales last summer were \$50-55,000 monthly, and around \$90,000 over the 74-75 winter. The Duluth warehouse has taken a big chunk of business away; they're doing from \$17-25,000 monthly now. DANCE did almost \$30,000 in November, leaving (after Duluth) an estimated PW sales figure of \$30-40,000 monthly.

DANCE has served many out-of-town coops in spite of the PW charge that they would not be able to do so on their new and small economic base. They carry almost every item that PW has, except a few like olive oil and tamari, which are on order.

Coops who have totally avoided DANCE (almost in a reverse boycott, although most of the coops buying from DANCE will order from PW if DANCE is out) include the Beanery, Selby, Our Daily Bread, Powderhorn, Marshall, and Mankato. SAP in St. Paul has ordered Kaste's cider and apples from DANCE, but nothing else as yet.

There is still a serious conflict between the two warehouses, as shown at a debate at the New Riverside Cafe recently, held for the collective to hear from both sides and then to decide which to order from, and how much. Their decision was to be made on December 15, just after deadline for this issue.

The debate raises two issues of general concern. If, as the CO says, it is necessary to deliberately heighten contradictions in order to resolve conflicts (as they apparently tried to do in the libelous "Opportunism" leaflets), who controls the process of heightening the contradictions? How "high" will they go?

And secondly, why is the CO so willing to discount criticism when they don't approve of the source? A broad cross-section of the radical community strongly criticized the CO at the recent "Re-unification" meeting. Asked about that at

~ cont'd p. 25

More leaflets, dinners, and discussions. C.O. UPDATE by Barb

"Discredit both Moe Burton and Bob Haugen." So began a leaflet written by Bob Haugen, one of the original organizers of the Coop Organization (CO). Bob condemns Moe, a worker at Bryant Central Co-op, for trying to "gain control of Bryant Central Co-op as his personal store." (Bryant Central is a new co-op just recently opened on the south side of Mpls. Bob condemns himself, "I was wishy washy and liberal.... I opportunistically supported Moe."

With this paper came a statement from the People's Warehouse. "Bob Haugen went to Bryant Central Friday noon to stop Burton from his bullying by having it out with him." The leaflet describes a fight, but it is difficult to figure out exactly what happened. People's Warehouse announces it has cut off all service to Bryant Central as long as Moe is there.

Several vocal non-CO co-op workers get phone calls from Jerry Path, another organizer of the CO, during the week. He asks their support for the CO and, not surprisingly, does not get it.

Several papers come out in the next two weeks. One is by Moe Burton of Bryant Central. It asks "Who is the hoodlum, members of the CO, or Moe Burton?...Remember their action of last May - treating friends as enemies" (He refers to the take-over of the People's Warehouse by the CO last May. See SCOOP #9). Moe concludes "You should give up and admit your wrong deeds but like all reactionaries, all you can do is make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again, make trouble again, fail again, on to your doom."

The CO announces it has expelled Bob Haugen. Ed Felien, a recently defeated alderman, puts out a Maoist criticism of the CO. He refers to the CO as "our leading cadre", feeling that they are the most progressive force in the co-ops. But he criticizes their "left dogmatism" and their "developing an antagonistic contradiction among the people." The CO responds, "We...believe that Eddie's political allegiance is to the working class... However, not being part of a revolutionary organization...his political decisions unmistakably denote political opportunism."

Two meetings are called by the CO. One, "a reunification dinner" apparently only for certain invited people and the other an open meeting called to form a "United Front Against Opportunism."

About thirty people attended "reunification dinner" at the home of two CO supporters. People ate spaghetti and talked small talk. Warren Hanson described the mood as "polite, nothing controversial." Non-CO people asked CO people if there was any planned discussion and were told no, just what's happening.

A discussion ensued about the CO's divisive "public relations." As far as I can tell, not having been there, non-CO people were saying they thought the CO had good intentions but were not appealing to the working class. Rather they were focusing their energy on attacking potential allies. Two hours later most people left.

The following evening the CO held a public meeting to organize the United Front Against Opportunism. From all reports the meeting was a series of various criticisms of the CO. For a detailed report read "The Footprints are Getting Clearer" page 5.

This first meeting was a madhouse. People with past co-op experience dominated the meeting. Some of this was coming from the CO people, but mainly it was other people who claimed they had experience, and wanted to be "organizers." Later, when needed, they didn't show up. It wasn't a lot of people there from outside the neighborhood just overanxious energy in the neighborhood itself. First meetings are always the most chaotic. A couple weeks later we had a meeting at Sabathanni Community Center, and at the third meeting we decided on the store site we now occupy.

After we got the building we started having weekly meetings, and looking for sources of funds. That is when Powderhorn got us \$800.00 (Bob Haugen was instrumental in that). And we got some money through the Enablers (about \$300.00) that we have to pay back "some day". Then we got \$500.00 from the Minneapolis Foundation, we borrowed \$200.00 from a private individual. We also got \$200.00 from Cargill Inc. as seed money with no strings.

It seems clear to me that the "fight" was part of the CO strategy to "heighten the contradictions", to make Moe appear to be a super-bully, a dangerous person, who must be purged from Bryant Central for the good of everyone.

In the following interview, done by Warren Hanson of the SCOOP staff, Moe tells his side of the story. The issues are complex and the personalities are enigmatic. We would consider doing an interview with Bob Haugen, if he were available.

INTERVIEW: MOE BURTON of: Bryant-Central food CO-OP

Q. The Bryant Jr. High School and Central High district neighborhoods would have benefitted from a co-op much before this. Why did a co-op start here now, and why not before?

A. The time is ripe for it. Before this, when we were doing community gardens we never showed any enthusiasm for the idea...even though certain friends of ours in the Northcountry co-ops were asking us if we wanted to take a run at it. But in May of this year...this little guy-white-come up here and said, "What do you think of starting a co-op up here?" and we said, "We like that idea, yeah." This guy, Bob Haugen, talking as a representative of the People's Warehouse, said, "Well we've changed and we've gone into canned goods and more mainline foods."

When he explained the changes about canned goods I said, "Yeah that would work, and I would devote some time to that." So we went and sat down in the garden and talked about it some more. Later I invited him to my house.

Other people in the community were talking about a co-op too. It wasn't just one or two of us. This thing was building, but it was still just a lot of talk. So we wrote a leaflet and called a meeting at St. Peter's Church here.

This first meeting was a madhouse. People with past co-op experience dominated the meeting. Some of this was coming from the CO people, but mainly it was other people who claimed they had experience, and wanted to be "organizers." Later, when needed, they didn't show up. It wasn't a lot of people there from outside the neighborhood just overanxious energy in the neighborhood itself. First meetings are always the most chaotic. A couple weeks later we had a meeting at Sabathanni Community Center, and at the third meeting we decided on the store site we now occupy.

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Q. What is the neighborhood like?

A. The neighborhood used to be, the history of it is white. When I went to Central High it was a white school, and then around 1962



everyone moved to the suburbs and property was bought by, or rented to black people more and more. People came in from the Northside of Mpls. or out of town.

In the last five years more and more young whites have moved into the neighborhood because the houses were good and the rent was low. The co-op is also that way. There are still racial undertones though, everyone is respected because they're a part of it.

Q. What personal criticisms did you receive in the last few months of working on Bryant Central Co-op?

A. You know it seemed to me that there was really an unusual amount about how I and a few others were doing all the work. But since the store opened vegetables have to be gone and got early in the morning...and when the time comes to do it somebody has got to be there. And likewise if the co-op store was to become a reality someone would have to do the work.

Q. How many people were in the core group that started the co-op?

A. Well it was always changing to some degree. I would say about 10-15 people who worked on manual labor inside of the store 3 or 4 days a week. Some of us worked every day.

Q. There are a lot of people that are curious about your political relationship to the CO.

A. One thing that hasn't been clear on a public level, but was very clear to Bob Haugen, myself and others in contact with either of us was that there is and always was a deep political grievance between Bob and I. We did agree

on most of the pragmatic things about organizing the store.

But he always came off like he thought he was the leader... even in this neighborhood he would come on like a white Jesus or something, he was here to save the Afro-Americans, bring us to co-op heaven, or CO heaven.

My ego was involved too. But it was really on two different levels. I don't have to compete with Bob Haugen...it rubbed me wrong to watch this guy come up here and think that he was organizing us.

Q. Do you feel like there were any problems between Bryant Central and the co-ops who have been opposed to the CO? Was Bryant Central ever under the wing of the CO?

A. First Bryant Central was not under their wing as CO propaganda said and this misunderstanding is partly my fault here. We never did take the time to investigate what the other side was saying, until real late in the game. You know. The first time I took any time to see what was happening with the other side - the DANCE warehouse and All Coop Assembly people - I was, all of us were, kind of shocked.

That was at the end of October. We heard there was a party for Bryant Central over at one of the DANCE stores to talk about helping Bryant Central co-op open. They wanted our co-op to feel free about getting support from all the co-ops and not just the CO party-line stores and warehouse. They were worried that we at Bryant Central were being told that certain non-CO stores were racist.

I told Haugen before the meeting "Let's go and confront DANCE." I thought the CO political analysis was right about the co-op system up until that time.

At the meeting we walked into there were people from DANCE warehouse, Mill City, Whole Foods, Coop Outreach, Seward Co-op and some others. They weren't expecting us; four of us from Bryant Central and Bob Haugen. We were welcome to stay and start talking face to face in the same room for a change. Before this our only contact with non-CO workers was occasionally one to one. No group process...seeing a lot of leaflets go back and forth, etc.

That night was the first time we got a glimpse at the total picture. Up until that we had been too accepting of other peoples points of view (the CO) because coming from just one side it sounded right.

That night we saw where there

Some background on the interviews ...

-aggie

There is a new co-op in town, Bryant Central, located across the street from Central High School, at 3401 4th Avenue So. One of the neighborhood people most active in the work of the co-op is Moe Burton.

Moe, now in his late 30's, has lived in the neighborhood since 1953 and was a student at Central High. He is a coordinator at the co-op, where there are about 30 regular workers, including children who come in to help run the register or clean up.

The co-op opened November 3, and serves the area from Lake to 42nd, between Chicago and Nicollet. Bryant Central

carries a broad range of food - commercial, processed, as well as bulk whole grains. Sales were approximately \$8,000 in November and expected to be higher in December.

Moe spent much time dealing with people from the highly political Coop Organization, who were very interested in Bryant Central as an example of a working class co-op.

Last month there was a series of disagreements between Moe and members of the CO, mostly workers in the People's Warehouse. Things escalated to a point where Bob Haugen, a major figure in the CO, went over to Bryant Central one day and there was a "fight" between him and

... we had been too accepting of other people's points of view... because, coming from just one side, it sounded right...

were inconsistencies. One was that these CO people, who were talking like they were working class, were really just the same old hippie intellectuals that has been laying a rigid hippie line on everyone before. Now they had "transformed" their line, cut their hair but they were the same old hippies.

The CO was also calling people racist. I don't think anyone ever paid much attention to racist accusations, at least not in our neighborhood. All whites are racist to blacks. Right now the only co-op that People's Warehouse won't sell to is Bryant Central. That is discrimination. It's also illegal according to fair trade and discrimination laws I'm sure.

We didn't know what was going on in the co-op struggle, that's not what we had our minds on anyway. We were busy on our own level. The break our co-op made with People's Warehouse came about because of the inconsistencies between what they were saying and what they were doing. They told four people at Bryant Central that they could have jobs at the Warehouse because all these others were leaving their positions there. Now, they told us this when we were a pillar for their reputation and added to their vanguard image.

Q. Could you tell us more about that?

A. One day Linda Jansen, who has somehow risen to be a, if not the, authority figure in the People's Warehouse, called me up and said I ought to come down there. I thought, "What does she want?" Well, I went down there and she tells me that this one fella that had been hired from the Bryant Central neighborhood, and had worked a couple of days, had been sneaking around trying to listen to conversations. Well, what did she call me for, I asked. She said, "Well, I want to fire him, will I get any resistance from Bryant Central?" Well at that time I didn't know what was going on. She ended up firing him. Now as I reflect back on that I can see their own paranoia because the CO practices what I call "Sneakyism."

They were real funny about the money too. Real funny about the money. They extend credit on the food, and then they ask for the sum total back in two weeks. Well it takes months to generate the capital back and they know it, but we were getting pressure to pay this money back. My opinion is that they are worried about their private property, and I say, "their" because it's like their private property - they have strict control over it - they don't have a group process outside of their power clique at that warehouse.

Q. We understand that you and Linda Jansen went around trying to collect money owed to the People's Warehouse. Why did you go out on collections?

A. Linda Jansen called me up again and said to come with her to collect money owed to the warehouse. Well, I said I would write some letters, but she wanted to go collecting. So I said I would go with her.

I wasn't antagonistic either, anywhere - other than I think I made one fella nervous at Whole Foods. This guy said he wasn't paying the money no matter what, that you could do anything to him. And so I said, "OK, remember you said it's okay to do anything to you." So quick he said, "Well I mean anything rational."

At People's Bakery we went in, ended up having a great big political discussion about why they didn't want to pay the People's Warehouse. We came to an agreement later about how much they would pay.

Q. Do you think you were used in that situation, as part of a power play?

A. I don't know...when I think about what she might have been thinking I would say that I was used. I'm big you know (physically)...when I walk into a place it's a different thing than if just she had walked in there. It could be that.

Q. Were you ever at the point where you wanted DANCe to close down and just have one warehouse

in the Twin Cities, and that it be People's Warehouse controlled by the CO?

A. At the point where were saying that we wanted to see just one warehouse, People's, we still could not see what y'all were fighting about. A number of us had begun to go around a lot, talk to both sides, to figure this conflict out for Bryant Central.

It wasn't over canned goods, we figured that out...because both warehouses agreed on canned goods. And it wasn't over support of Bryant Central Co-op. Everyone seemed to agree that the warehouse or warehouses would be helping poor and oppressed neighborhoods.

So we were trying to figure out what this fight was about. It started to become more clear when we would say, "Why don't y'all get together and form some kind of new organization - something like abolish the PRB (Policy Review Board) and get some new structure." Here is where I noticed antagonism on the CO side. They didn't like that idea at all. They wanted to work from the People's Warehouse and have tight CO control. What I say on one level was Linda Jansen in the Warehouse. Bob Haugen stayed further in the background, and probably had more control on other levels, along with other people.

Q. Why did you make a break with the CO?

A. We want to be open and above board, and the people at the warehouse have never been open and above board with us. They have been asked about it many times and they have agreed that the sneaky stuff should end, but they don't ever end it.

It just became a matter of principle. You can't call me comrade and then lie to me. Just like I told Haugen, I said, "Haugen, how long do you think I'm gonna let you continue to lie to me? I've given you five chances you get?" He would say, "I don't know...not too many more", "none more I guess" or he would just sit and be real quiet.

They wanted people to follow their line. They look at social change as a goal that can be reached by heavy handed tactics "among the people." Anything to expedite the revolution you know.

Q. The People's Warehouse put out a paper describing a fight between you and Bob Haugen. Could you tell us more about it?

A. What was happening about this fight was that Haugen had been calling me in the middle of the night for two nights straight telling me: "Hey...meet me out in front of Bryant Central at one

THE FOOTPRINTS ARE GETTING CLEARER

by phill baker



a comment on the CO's 'United Front Against Opportunism' meeting, held December 3 at Walker Church, Minneapolis

It became clear December 3rd that the CO is no longer looked to for leadership by various people who tried so hard, so sincerely, for so long to follow them. Certainly, December 3 wasn't the last of the CO, just as May 3 wasn't the first of them.

Their increasingly vituperative attacks (verbal and physical, with posters, leaflets and wall paintings), being forced to hold the meeting out of obvious internal contradictions -- like the split with Bryant-Central and their recent 'purge,' the poorer quality of writing and printing coming out of their committees, the departure of many of their 'followers,' the obvious maneuver of 'opening up' their bookstore to 'the movement' (with, of course, a 'committee' running it from top to bottom -- their emphasis) and the strong, cathartic, hopefully therapeutic criticism of the CO -- all these indicate that the authoritarians have fallen.

As far as I can recall, this was the first public gathering called by the CO -- outside some orchestrated presentations during the May crisis they precipitated. A pre-arranged agenda was listed on a blackboard. There was no discussion or participation solicited or had in developing the agenda. Two CO people chaired the meeting and chose questioners. They began with a rather long speech titled, 'The Manifesto of the United Front Against Opportunism,' by Jerry Path.

At first the meeting was attended by 'them' and a handful of mostly 'anarchist' coop workers. Slowly other people arrived -- from the Native American and southside Black communities, Tenants' Union people from the West Bank, an alderman, a couple people from NAM and some marxist-oriented community people from outside the coops and the CO. I saw half a dozen of what I call 'the old boys' -- long time politicians who have been influential and instructive in the past, but who identify themselves with their past work in a paternalistic manner.

Heckling began during the speech by a member of the Bryant-Central community, jiving the CO about their racist approach to the Bryant-Central coop. This is the same kind of loose, jivey harangue that the CO had manipulated and focused on 'us' for so long. Jive isn't 'principled dialectical language' that the CO demands and it was ironic to be hearing it poured on them.

Valerie Blake, a Native sister, spoke strongly about the CO's racism in her community -- explaining

how her people had been working toward a healthy-foods coop in their neighborhood for two years, not a corporate type like the CO wants to put in. She spoke well about her people's Nation, the Black Nation as exemplified at Bryant-Central and the white coop Nation we call the Northcountry. She said the CO has no right to go into 'sovereign Nations and tell them how to work, what to work with and how to manage their affairs.' She helped me solidify my thoughts about community and the validity of our 'Coop Nation' as liberating territory -- something precious to hold, to build, to fight for and not to be ashamed of.

Independent marxists criticized the CO for divisive tactics, for 'serious tactical mistakes...misusing and obviously misunderstanding marxism.' A couple marxists explained, sometimes extremely emotionally, how they've tried very hard to get into the CO's movement but could not due to their differ-



ent tactics and style. Personal slanders, disruptions and shattering of the community were pointed out. The CO's recent campaign of anonymous, personal and physical intimidation was criticized. One person from NAM did defend the CO vehemently.

The CO admitted to instances of bad judgment, bad leadership and bad analysis. In fact, the bad leadership came from Bob Haugen whom they now claim to have purged but who led their efforts through the spring and summer in a (now) admittedly racist and sexist manner. Their analysis of the coops and the coop workers' attitudes through last spring was admitted to be wrong.

It was pointed out that they have discredited themselves as 'leaders.' Their leadership is being rejected just as they purged their 'leader' for bad analysis and practice.

The sincere anguish and disillusionment felt by various 'independent marxists' was obvious. It is also obvious that there are contradictions in the marxist camp. I have been calling for a marxist criticism of the CO since May (updating the initial '3rd Force' at-

tempt at analysis). It was good to hear principled marxist criticism of unprincipled opportunists.

With marxist, Black and Native criticism coming down on the CO, where were feminist and anarchist criticisms?

Feminists were present and they did voice criticism, as did some anarchists. But I didn't hear any criticism by feminists or anarchists as such. The paternalistic and macho charade being acted out was too evident for either feminists or anarchists to need to say much (as when the alderman and a Tenant's Union man exchanged violent anger and a threat to 'punch you in the face.') I talked with a good dozen or more coop workers in the week before the meeting -- virtually all said they were too busy with their projects to go -- 'we are past the CO' was the general expression.

As an anarchist and feminist I have noticed the vast majority of the 'pivotal' coop workers doing the necessary work these last eight months -- keeping projects going, keeping each other going, building our 'infrastructure,' trying to rebuild public ('mass') confidence in these seemingly interminably squabbling coops, creating a whole new warehouse (!), expanding our community and going about the business at hand. Who is doing this? The pivotal workers -- anarchist in their day to day work if not in their intellectual politics, anarchist in spirit if not in their language. Exciting growth is going on in the anarchy-feminist community of the Northcountry. The strong Anarcha-Feminist position at the Anarchist Gathering in October is one example. Feminists in our community have been busy -- too busy to be playing neurotic political games.

There are many sexist and reactionary people and traits to be dealt with -- that's for sure -- but I feel honestly that the leadership of the feminists and anarchists in our cooperating community has gained the trust of these and other pivotal workers.

Now it is time to get back to work: strengthening cooperating people, building our communities into Nations and pulling them together.

To those who tried to follow the CO, to those who don't see any other progressive elements in our community: we have not been sitting by idly. We have been building somewhere that neither the CO nor the ruling class ever effectively can reach: at the bottom.

We can be seen by anyone with the eyes to see ... the footprints are getting clearer.



What does

morality

The week after the Sept. 27-28 PRB meeting, I attended a community meeting at Seward Co-op, where I shop. Much of the evening's discussion centered on People's Warehouse. One of the statements made by their representatives has stuck with me. The statement was about whether the P.W. should deal with health food stores - the representative defended the position saying, "by dealing with health food stores at a higher mark-up, we can deal with co-ops at a lower mark-up." Someone shouted out, "Isn't that immoral?" The reply: "What has morality got to do with what we're doing?"



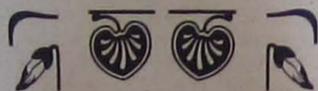
I feel that some people who are supposed to be my friends have come down on me very hard for some minor mistakes and flaws rather than help me deal with the fact I am young (and not always extremely omniscient) and that we all make mistakes in judgement. I am not saying that as a whole this has happened, but as they are people who have preached to me about co-operation and collectivism, yet who make me question the morality of the movement in saying one thing and doing another. I have had some very non-collective decisions placed on me, which when I questioned them, I was just expected to accept the judgement. I don't consider this co-operative or collective.

Are we dealing with the outside world in the same fashion? If we want to deal with anyone- including ourselves- we have to start being consistent because nobody likes to deal with a bunch of neurotics. (especially bankers, lawyers and government officials- as we depend on these for capital and advice we should at least look at how we sometimes bend the truth and refuse to make decisions).

On decisions, I thought that this movement was an alternative to the capitalist situation that most of America is caught up in- where all decisions are made for you by the bosses of big business, your husband, father, or by the career you choose. Aren't we supposed to bring as many people as possible into the decision-making process? Isn't part of this movement about self-government- we, ourselves, making the decisions which will most affect our lives. Looking back at the past few months, I have seen a lack in many people to make a decision,

have to do with what we are doing?

adelle goldberg



accept the moral responsibility for that stand, and deal with the situations as they come. There are always leaders and followers, the roles are interchangeable, depending on the situation. But no matter which we are at a given moment we still should question the morality of what we are doing, are we doing it for personal glory or is it really a benefit to those it affects?

Society has always had some form of a code of ethics, whether they were a nomadic tribe or a highly complex civilization. We, who are trying to form an alternative society need also to develop a code of ethics, a way in which we want to deal with ourselves and others, and then be willing to commit ourselves to that.

Progress comes thru struggle. We must each struggle inside ourselves to find out where we stand. Many of the positive aspects of the co-operative movement had some setbacks over the past few months- we are pulling away from the battle. The casualties were high. We lost some of our strength, wounded some, found some new, but we learned a lesson in dealing with people. Many people do not care about dealing morally with others or themselves. They would just as soon use and abuse people for their own advancement instead of working co-operatively for common good.

I know how I want to deal with people- as a person sensitive to the needs of others, with integrity, honesty and with love. I would like to be dealt with in the same manner. Once we come to the point of deciding about our own morality, then the rest is only making it reality.

Restructuring the restructuring at POWDERHORN

by A.F.

Remember Powderhorn? They made some big changes there early last summer, and a lot of folks thought that the CO had control of that coop the way they have at Selby, the Beanery, Our Daily Bread, and the Peoples Warehouse.

Last month, when there was a referendum on two hotly-debated issues, the Powderhorn Coop Council put severe requirements on the vote, threatening the right of the membership to be effective through the referendum process.

Well, here's the SCOOP: democracy is alive and well at Powderhorn, and it looks like people might be able to work together there--showing the rest of us how.

(I heard about some of their struggles, and wanted to spread the news. This article was written after an interview with a Powderhorn worker, and reviewed by several others.)

Powderhorn Food Community adopted a restructuring proposal last June which provided the coop with a Council, a Referendum process, and an opportunity to see if various groups with different political and nutritional concerns could work together cooperatively in the same store (see SCOOP #10).

According to the proposal, the Coop Council was created to supervise, hire, and fire coordinators; to act as the legal board of directors; and to implement the goals of the "temporary restructuring period", which were: to broaden the food line, broaden the membership, and to investigate and provide comprehensive information about all aspects of food. All of its meetings were to be open, as well as the monthly general meetings, to discuss progress reports from the coordinators, the Council, and small work-groups, as well as criticism and a chance to initiate the referendum process on any issue if at least 15 persons called for a vote by the membership-at-large.

This is confusing to me, for it implies that the referendum would be used mainly in response to a complaint or a controversy. By contrast, the section which describes the referendum process states, "Major decisions will be made by referendum." I could have voted for the entire proposal on the strength of that sentence alone, on its assurance that every member would be informed and consulted on major decisions. I like that process; I trust it. All the issues, involve workers in the various factors of the question, and let each person decide for herself.

correct its weaknesses, and most importantly their consensus and support of each other in the struggle gave them a strength that was not always present in the early battles with the CO.

They added two important elements to the proposal: a continuance of the monthly general meetings, to discuss store work and policy, and the referendum process. Neither were present in the original CO proposal.

It was not the CO intent to have major policy questions settled by referendum. It was a concession to the non-CO workers, and I am sure that the CO hoped to avoid using it even on controversial decisions. In any case, it was added, and it satisfied many people. Most of the proposal was adopted (a section to have only one mark-up for all shoppers was defeated), and the Council was elected.

The stage was set for the restructuring of the restructuring proposal.



What controversies came up, and how were they settled? At the Aug. general meeting, in a discussion about electing representatives to the All Coop Assembly (a new inter-coop structure started in June), a newly-appointed coordinator, and thereby a Council member, sidetracked the issue of elected representatives by questioning the validity of the ACA itself. Powderhorn only sent observers to that first Assembly.

In September, with the controversial Peoples Warehouse Policy Review Board meeting coming up, the Council decided at the last minute that the representatives from Powderhorn should be chosen from the Council, and by the Council. At the PRB, Powderhorn supported the CO Peoples Warehouse workers.

There was an uproar at Powderhorn following this decision, and two referendums were initiated. They were the first since the restructuring proposal went into effect. The questions were whether to join the All Coop Assembly, and whether to elect representatives to inter-coop meetings such as the PRB and ACA, by membership vote. Finally, major decisions to be made by the membership!

an intentional community called Plowshare had decided to get more actively involved in the coop...

In many coops where there was a confrontation, the CO were well-organized, firm about their leaders, goals, and rhetoric. They had an almost militaristic unity. The people who opposed them were usually of diverse opinions and decentralized by nature. Often, they were divided and overwhelmed in spite of their efforts. It was not so at Powderhorn.

An intentional community called Plowshare, with about 25 members, lives in the Powderhorn neighborhood, and a Plowshare food collective had decided to get more actively involved in the coop several months before. Their discussions of the original CO restructuring proposal, their work together to

REVIEWS: WE GOT THIS STUFF IN THE MAIL...

BY CY O'NEILL

Food Co-ops For Small Groups
By Tony Vellela
Workman Publishing Company
231 East 51 Street
New York, New York 10022
\$2.95

The Food Co-op Handbook
By The Handbook Collective
Houghton Mifflin Company
Boston, Mass.
\$4.95

Scoop received a couple of books about co-ops awhile back.

The first one to show up in the mail was *Food Co-ops For Small Groups* by Tony Vellela. Notes about the author say he is "... one of eleven founders of New York City's largest food co-op, the Broadway Local. (The organization now numbers 400 families.) As a consultant, he helps groups start and build food co-ops."

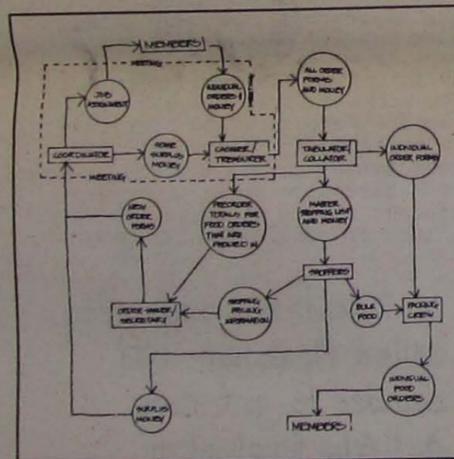
The book is a short and concise how-to handbook which attempts to take you through the step by step process of setting up a small buying club. Its utter simplicity is what makes the book at once useful and limited. There are chapters on how to pull people together to get a co-op off the ground, suggestions on how to research your group's food needs, and the ins and outs of locating and buying from various food sources. Perhaps the most useful part of the book lies in

... it's bound to be a useful primer...

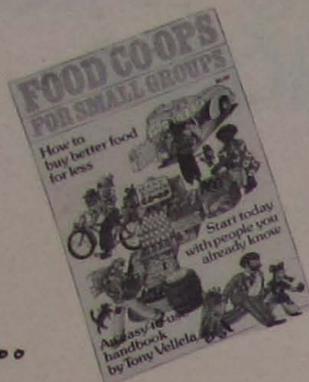
Tony's suggestions on organizing the nuts and bolts operation of a co-op: systems for handling the money, distributing the food, and organizing people's involvement in the store. To simplify the concepts he's trying to get across, he presents a few possibilities in each of these areas through the inclusion of "flow charts".

For a group of people who are taking their first tentative steps into the realm of co-ops, Tony's approach is bound to be a useful primer. What *Food Co-ops For Small Groups* lacks, however, is depth.

First of all, while most of Tony's information is geared to be practical, it's the sort of information that can only be used by an embryonic co-op. A case in point is Tony's treatment of financial records. Tony offers a few hazy suggestions on how to keep records



for both "pre-paid" and "pay on delivery" type buying clubs. But his treatment of this area of co-op organization doesn't reflect the fact that co-ops have this habit of growing not only in size but in complexity as well. My point is, Tony's information can only get you started. Beyond those first phases of co-operation, the readers are left to their own wiles. It's also skimpy on information in the broader food distribution system of this country. Granted, this kind of background information isn't necessary for people who are simply trying to get a buying club off the ground. But in leaving it out, Tony has passed up an opportunity of getting people to recognize the link between their particular frustrations and some of the consequences of agri-business.



"If, as is sometimes said, writing is lonely work, this book has been an exception to the rule," begins the preface to the *Food Co-op Handbook*, "from start to finish, it has been a collective project." The four authors were helped by more than one hundred

... co-ops have this habit of growing... in size as well as complexity...

people in the food co-operative movement who've contributed articles, advice, comments, information and, in some cases, entire chapters. The core group for the book have all been involved in co-ops in and around Boston.

Whatever other shortcomings this book might have, a lack of depth is not one of them. The book opens with a price comparison list for a co-op and a supermarket and goes on from there into an exploration of how and why co-ops can be cheaper. It's a discussion which becomes a fairly good introduction to the habits of today's food industry and the role co-ops can play in circumventing agri-business. All of this is followed by a brief history of co-ops, from the Rochadalle Society of Equitable Pioneers of 1844, right up to the roots of present day co-ops.

Not a bad beginning. The book moves on from there with a brief discussion of the basic formats for food co-ops today (pre-order types and storefronts) and then manages to reflect the particular needs of each when discussing decision-making, participation, and the "logistics" of operation.

All of it struck me as both useful and extensive (with source bibliographies at the end of each chapter, in case more information is wanted) for anyone getting started in co-ops. There is also a lot of useful information for more developed co-ops. There is an entire chapter on finances which runs the basics of record keeping and financial reports and includes some things to keep in mind when making financial decisions. There is also

-cont'd next page

a good section on inventory control for storefronts.

There are other points of interest in this handbook worth at least some passing mention. And they all flow out of the tendency of the authors to draw on the experiences of co-ops from around the country in getting across particular points. For me, the net effect was to broaden my knowledge of the organizational styles and directions of food co-ops in various regions of the country.

For instance, in the East, buying club type co-ops seem to have caught on as the basic unit of organization. The *Handbook* characterizes these co-ops as having high membership involvement simply because of the nature of their setup: people pooling their food needs and resources in order to buy in quantity. Here in Minnesota, of course, the trend has been towards getting that storefront going, anyway possible. I found myself wondering if maybe a buying club didn't suit my notions of a co-op



David, Marjorie, & Bill from the Handbook Collective

a little better than does a storefront. None of the complications of storefront operations; none of that gap between those who keep the store open and those that use the store. A buying club, you oughta at least be able to keep somewhat simple.

Ofcourse, in saying all of this, I could just be falling victim to the "grass is always greener" syndrome. After all, there's alotta talk in that handbook about the goings on up there in the North Country. Why in the Twin Cities

alone, they got 14 food stores, one(?) warehouse, two bakeries, three cafes, a bike co-op, and a co-op department store. Best of all, they got this thing called a PRB that runs on consensus, and manages to keep from being dominated either by its warehouse collective or the paid staff from the stores. My point is that the *Handbook* never reflected the real problems which were festering in our co-operating community all along and have led to our current dilemmas. And if our area was given such a cameo treatment, I'm a little mistrustful of the *Handbook's* presentation of other co-operating communities.

All in all, I think both books reflect much hard work, both in developing experience in the co-ops and in sitting down to compile the knowledge gained from that experience.

Would I recommend one or the other? Well, ah, like they say, it all depends on what you're up to. I'd say they're both worth checking out.

With this issue of SCOOP begins a regular feature that will speak to the particular problems and practice of store-keeping--the day to day work of maintaining a food coop.

After some five years of operation, the food coops in the north-country have accumulated a sizable range of experience in what it takes to run the kinds of operation we are engaged in. Everyday brings new problems and new learning experiences and hopefully these can be shared in this space, along with the various solutions employed. Here, too, newer coops can benefit from the collective store of knowledge and experience. And not only will the material aspects--stock, bookkeeping, outreach--be discussed, but also the problems involved in various systems of management such as work collectives, managers, etc. At the end of each column will be a review of pertinent information concerning the availability and condition of produce and other stock and announcements of interest to storekeepers.

All of this is intended to reflect a developing seriousness about the work of storekeeping that has grown as our experience of operating neighborhood food coops has expanded. We, as a movement towards a better way of food distribution, have grown from the initial "pioneering" stage of just figuring out what's what, to a new stage involving all the problems of long-range planning as well as simply "maintaining".

Of course, any "maintaining" that doesn't involve constant self-criticism petrifies and dies. Many coops have got to the point of figuring out what to do--the problem is how to do what we're doing even better. To that end it becomes even more imperative for us to share our skills and problems through the SCOOP, our federation the All Coop Assembly, and through personal contact. Hopefully, this column will be one small contribution.

JOTTINGS: Produce from California has been bothered by heavy rains, although United Farmworkers Union lettuce seems in good supply with the price down a bit...Notice the difference in avocados? Florida avocados are smooth and in season now. California's are knobby and not presently available...The quality of cashews available lately has been highly varied. It is inevitable with foods imported from other countries, and should be watched...The goats milk from Poplar Hills Goat Dairy Farm in Scandia, Mn., has really gone over well at most Twin Cities coops--most doubled their initial orders in a week...Steve Flagg of Freewheel Bike Coop is part of the new honey venture, Sunflower Honey. Contact him there or through the DANCE warehouse...Look for a Storekeepers Conference in early January sponsored by the Propaganda and Outreach Committee of the ACA.

(SCOOP invites all readers with input or questions about store-keeping to write in to this column. Collectivize our learning.)



PUMPKINS SQUASH



Pumpkins, hubbard, acorn, and butternut squash are currently plentiful in Minnesota. They are hearty foods and "putting them by" for the winter months or using them often is worth considering. Small pumpkins and squash can be baked whole or steamed. Steaming is possibly the best way to cook and retain most of the nutritional value. These yellow-orange foods are high in carotene, a pigment which the body converts into Vitamin A and which directly affects our vision (especially night vision) and skin. This should be of particular interest to us considering our increased use of night vision and rapid adjustments to glaring snow during the winter.

As a Commonplace worker this summer I became increasingly aware of the nutritional benefits of raw foods. However, most Minnesota summer foods are not as fibrous and starchy as our winter foods. Raw summer foods are more easily absorbed by the body, whereas winter foods such as squash, yams, and potatoes are more valuable to us baked or steamed, particularly if we are to benefit from the starches.



PUMPKIN WAFFLES:

1/4 c. pumpkin 1 egg
3/4 tsp. cinnamon 3/4 c. milk
1/4 tsp. nutmeg 1/2 tsp. salt
2 tbsp honey
1 cup whole wheat flour

Beat egg, add milk and salt. Mix in spices and pumpkin. Slowly stir in honey and flour. Beat well after each addition. Bake in well-greased waffle iron until brown.

cooking • canning • freezing • rootcellaring
• Karen Phelps

STEAMING--Pumpkins and winter squash can be cut into chunks and with the skin on placed in a stainless steel steamer over an inch of water and covered. I have found that when tender, one need not remove the skin: it tastes fine. Also, raw juice can be extracted for beverage or soup stock in an electric juicer. The seeds are great after being baked until golden on a cookie sheet (325 F) plain or slightly oiled and salted. You may find that these foods combine well with sweet fruit or fruit juices, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, cloves, rosemary, basil, mint, grated cheese or onion.

ROOT CELLARING--Along with winterizing our house, our family has been root-cellaring Minnesota fall foods for three winters. At their season's peak the very best and often organically grown onions, potatoes, carrots, apples, and squash are inexpensive and can provide a variety of good meals from November to March or April. To store, squash and pumpkin should first be conditioned at 70-80 F for about two weeks to harden the rind and heal surface injuries. They can then be stored through the winter months in a basement storage room or attic that provides a fairly dry humidity and remains around 55 F. Place them in rows on a shelf rather than piled in a corner.

	protein	water	calcium	carbo- hydrate	phos- phorus	iron	sodium	potas- sium	ascorbic Vita acid
ACORN SQUASH	1.9	82.9	39	14.0	29	1.1	1	480	1,400
BUTTERNUT	1.8	79.6	40	17.5	72	1.0	1	609	6,400
HUBBARD	1.8	85.1	24	11.7	39	.8	1	271	4,800
PUMPKIN (canned)	1.0	90.2	25	7.9	26	.4	2	24	6,400
PUMPKIN SEEDS	29.0	4.4	51	15.0	1444	11.2	-	-	70
	grams	%	mg.	grams	mg.	mg.	mg.	mg.	inter- nat'l units

Composition of Foods: raw, processed, prepared
Agriculture Handbook Number 8
U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1963

PUMPKIN BUTTER

Combine:

2 c. pumpkin
2/3 c. honey
1/4 tsp cinnamon
1 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1/4 c. unsulphured molasses

SEED DRINK

3 cups squash or pumpkin or cucumber seeds with membranes, scooped out of vegetable
3 cups water, stock, or milk
1 tsp basil
sprig of parsley
Blend until hulls are ground.
Strain, Serves 6.

SQUASH-CHESTNUT SOUP

1 quart stock
1 cup cubed squash
1 onion, chopped
1/4 cup celery and tops
1/4 cup carrots
1/2 lb. chestnuts
1 bay leaf
1 cup milk
1/2 cup milk powder
1 tsp. soy flour
3 tsp. nutritional yeast
1 sprig parsley

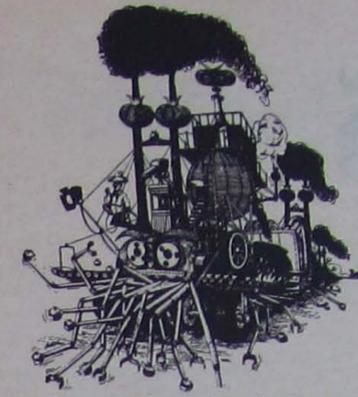
Heat stock. Add vegetables, chestnuts, and bay leaf. Cover and simmer until vegetables are tender. Remove bay leaf. Blend milk, milk powder, flour, and yeast. Add to soup. Heat thoroughly. Serve with parsley. Serves 6.

A.C.A. Outreach

New Buying Clubs and Storefronts
Co-op Outreach - What are you doing?

The Co-op Outreach Committee of the All Coop Assembly has been active in helping other groups and organizations start buying clubs and storefronts in the Twin Cities and outstate. Among the new buying clubs are those in the Northeast section of Minneapolis, and in a senior citizen's highrise on the southside. A new storefront food co-op will soon be opening its doors in the Linden Hills area of Minneapolis, and one is being developed on the East Side of St. Paul. Outstate, there are now buying clubs in Walker, in Bemidji, in the Lindstrom area, and in Oelwein, Iowa.

Outreach has also given a series of presentations at West High School in Minneapolis during October. The cooperative idea was discussed in history, social studies, civics, and health classes. The four week long unit ended with a tour of the various Twin City co-ops by one of the classes. The



entire sequence has been requested again by the school for the new semester after New Year's and the holidays. Members of the Outreach Committee gave whole foods luncheons for fifty senior citizens at the Horn Towers near 31st Street and Nicollet Avenue in October. The luncheons were followed by talks on the nutritional aspects of the food they ate. The group was then given a tour of the Mill City Co-op the following week.

Work is being done on an internship program for both highschool and college students, where they will be able to obtain accreditation for

studies about and relating to co-ops. One part of this program has begun at the Common House Alternative Highschool in the People's Center. Outreach has finally been able to locate and set up its office in the old Firehouse on the West Bank of the University of Minnesota. Much thanks is given to the Minnesota Geographic Society and Earth Journal for their help with the office. An address and a telephone will enable us to help serve the entire Northcountry cooperative system and let us establish ongoing communications with other cooperating regions in the country. We are an all volunteer organization as are all other committees of the All Coop Assembly, hence, we can always use any time and energy people have to share with us.

If anyone wishes to contact Co-op Outreach or any of the other committees; Legal and Finance, Equipment and Resources, Farm, Food Research, Political Study, Purchasing, or Distribution, please write in care of the committee you want at -
1501 South 4th St.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55454
1-612-333-3015

Adele, Dave, Kathy, Kris, Barb, Ellen, Mike, Craig, Chuck, and Cy.

Dear SCOOP,

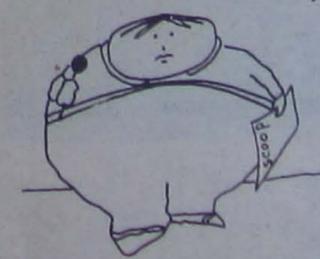
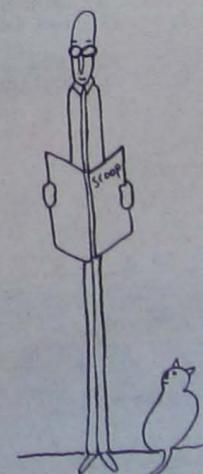
This is to notify you that I've taken matters into my own hands. I mean, how long can an argument over "Who decides" go on? Just about every subscription on our mailing list has run out. We're going broke. All my efforts to get the rest of you to come up with ideas have only resulted in me receiving one anonymous suggestion - for a letter:

"Hello, SCOOP is having a subscription drive. And we're turning to you to see if you'd like to renew your subscription. You thought it was pretty neat getting all those free SCOOPS right? Well, no more, kiddo. If you want, you gotta pay the price: \$4.00 for one year. Cough it up, SCOOP."

I could hardly see it as a serious possibility. Therefore I have composed and am sending out the following letter, as soon as we can afford postage...

"Dear Sir(Ms.), I'd like to take this opportunity to inform you of the subscription drive and Bicentennial Celebration we at SCOOP currently have underway. We call it Project Independence. For over a year now, we at SCOOP have been struggling to keep open communications channels amongst people involved in all aspects of co-operation. People like yourself. At first as a newsletter, and later as

SCOOOP
SUBSCRIPTION



an extensive publication on co-operation, we have been struggling to meet your communications needs.

In the past year, SCOOP has kept you up-to-date on the development and diversity of co-ops thru-out the five state area, as well as information about co-ops across the nation and around the world. And SCOOP has made a special effort to keep you informed of the "fluid and dramatic events" which have engulfed the Twin City co-ops since last May.

All of this, of course, costs money. So far, SCOOP has been able to subsist on over-the-counter sales. This has almost paid for production and circulation costs. But none of the staff has ever gotten paid. We've been very fortunate in securing a special grant from the Pillsbury B. Centennial Poppin Fresh Dough Boy Fund. They will match, dollar for dollar, every new subscription we take in between now and July 4, 1976.

So we thought we'd turn first to those of you who's subscriptions have run out. Please help us at SCOOP and help the COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT as a whole onto a more independent footing. Subscribe today.

Signed, B.G. Donne
Circulation Manager
for SCOOP

Letters

Christopher Robin Press
An Open Letter

This is a statement to the co-operating community about a decision that has been made by Christopher Robin Printing Collective. The decision is to print no more material for the Co-op Organization the Mass Organization, the Working Woman and Man's Bookstore or any other name that group of people takes on. This is a step not taken lightly, for we at Christopher Robin feel strongly about the need for a lot of discussion, debate and sharing of ideas in our community. We also feel responsible for helping provide the printed information that makes possible that discussion. We do not want to be part of anything unusual.

We have made this decision for the following reasons:

1) The print shop exists to serve movement organizations and community activists. The people who work in the shop do so for political and economic reasons. Our work in the shop is seen as part of our political work. The shop is much more than a low-cost, high-quality print shop. The propaganda that we produce is an essential tool to building our movement.

2) In an effort to avoid criticism and confrontation with the print shop, the members of these organizations have brought only their more principled and less controversial material to us (such as The Food Reader, the Reader on Women, the article on dairy farmers) and have taken their sectarian writings and mud-slinging attacks on individuals elsewhere. We feel used as workers and disrespected as comrades in this arrangement. They view us merely as a cheap print shop. This is a shoddy, dishonest and uncommon way for us to be treated.

3) The Co-op Organization has played a destructive and divisive role in our community since it presented itself last spring. The experiences of people who have tried to struggle with them have taught us that they are not working for unity or even clarity of differences.

4) We are not anti-communists, on the contrary, we take this step because, as principled people building the revolutionary movement, we have strong disagreements with their tactics, politics and analysis.

5) At the present time, the slate is clear, the shop has completed the last job from them, and has been paid. There are no outstanding debts on either side.

We welcome criticism and input from SCOOP readers. We will listen and respond. Feel free to call us (823-0795).

In solidarity with
all people in struggle,

The Christopher Robin
Collective



Dear friends at SCOOP:

Viewing the happenings in the North Country from afar is confusing for many of us here on the west coast. I found this confusion complicated by the Oct./Nov. issue of SCOOP. This issue was biased in the extreme against P.W. In the SCOOP notes following a letter by Pat O'leary, SCOOP went so far as to indirectly refer to the P.W. workers as "vulgar Marxist-Leninists" and then referring the reader to Wilhelm Reich and a book about Fascism! What kind of journalism is this anyway?

This brings up the question of what is SCOOP? That is which faction in this struggle do you represent? If you do come out and say so, if you are not the organ of any particular faction, could you folks please make an effort to be an unbiased forum for opinion and growth in the North Country.

Yours in Criticism
Terry Barksdale
Warehouse collective member
So. Cal. Co-operating
Communities

Dear Terry,

It is good to hear from readers around the country. The situation here has been confusing, and we strive to clarify it as we can.

The SCOOP collective does not agree with the position taken by the CO in the coop struggle.

The Reich book was being read by several coop workers in the Twin Cities, during the summer, and his description of the mis-use of Marxist-Leninism seemed to fit the CO. We are sorry if the reference was not clear.

SCOOP



The Time to Make an Input
for Peace

A new bill before Congress opens the way for anyone who opposes war and pays taxes, to have their tax dollars put into a fund called "The World Peace Tax Fund." A new bill (H.R. 4897) would create this Fund and--

- 1) offers taxpayers who oppose war a legal alternative to paying taxes for military purposes.
- 2) establishes a "World Peace Tax Fund" to use these taxes for peace-related projects.
- 3) provides that "World Peace Tax Fund" must be in addition to regular appropriations for domestic and U.N. programs.
- 4) models the "World Peace Tax Fund" after existing Federal Trust Funds.
- 5) helps to build a peaceful society by supporting research and other efforts to foster non-violent methods of resolving international disputes.

I personally contacted Representative Donald M. Fraser and his reply indicated that chances were slim for its passage without strong constituent response. The military-industrial complex lobbyists are understandably opposed to H.R. 4897.

So the reason I'm writing this is to urge everyone who feels they have a responsibility in this, to write and let it be known. If you can't get out of paying taxes, then this is a good way to know where they are going.

Write to:
Donald Fraser (House of Reps)
Room 1111
Longworth House Office Bldg
Washington DC 20515

Hubert Humphrey (Senate)
Room 232
Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington DC 20510

Walter Mondale (Senate)
Room 443
Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington DC 20510

Also, if you would like a copy of the bill, simply indicate so when writing your representative. Any other questions, please contact

National Council for a
"World Peace Tax Fund"
2111 Florida Avenue NW
Washington DC 20008
(202) 483-3752

in struggle,
Jim Bird
Coordinator
Mill City Coop



Dear Readers,

Over the past months we have come to realize that there are problems within the coop movement. Some of these problems come from valid criticism and some come from an undying line of political rhetoric. One of the tragic effects to the movement is the loss of many people as strong supporters and workers of the movement. The constant leafleting by the CO with such phrases as "pinning the movement" and "opportunist hippies" aimed at people who have spent years of their lives trying to build a society in which they want to live. Those people who have worked for years are urged to move on to other enterprises in stead of being respected and admired for their dedication, strength, and love of an ideal.

Now is a time to tell those folks who constantly get trashed on because they have been in the "lime-light" of coop history in the past few months and did not "join the revelation" how much they are loved, cared about, and appreciated for their hard work.

With much love and caring
Adela Goldberg



HELP WANTED: Manager for small cheese/cold cuts deli, possibly fresh produce. Experience preferred, but not necessary. Salary will include profit sharing and be partially based on experience. Contact David Olmscheid People's Meat and Cheese. 873-2213

A MUSIC COOP?

A group is interested in forming a coop or collective that sells musical instruments and accessories at more sensible prices. Some of the fantasies are:

wooden instruments (strings & winds)
music (sheet or books)
hard to find records

perhaps some instrument repairs. But to make it happen takes interested people, money, ideas, energy, work.

Give me a call if you're interested. -- Mike Bird, 332-7760

Or come to the meeting, Monday night, January 12; 7:00 at the Seward Cafe, 2129 E. Franklin Av.



FREEWHEEL LIVES!

We at Freewheel Bike Coop don't hibernate all winter -- as any sensible person should. We now handle cross country skis and snowshoes for sale and rent. Coop workers receive discounts. So cruise on in -- use our equipment to pine tar your ski bottoms or to work on your bike in the people's workshop. Open all winter 11-7; closed Wednesday & Sunday. 3336 E. 25th St. (that's 5 blocks off West River Road); 722-3232.



ON TO THE NORTHCOUNTRY!

PROCESS - cont'd from p.6

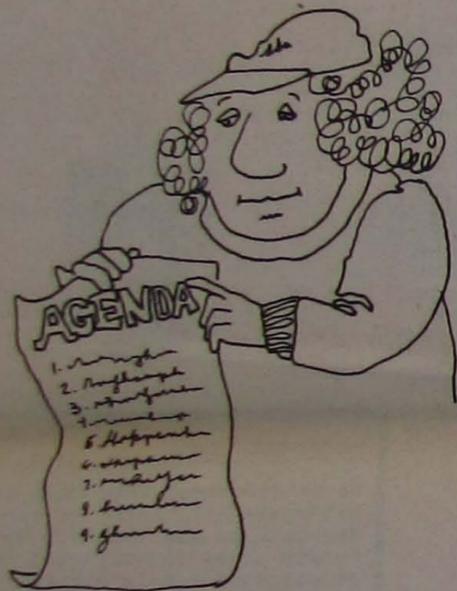
future meetings and it is usually helpful to record the evaluation on a wall chart for the group to see as statements are made. It can also then be used by planners of future meetings.

Recording material:

Having large sheets of paper available to be used as wall charts can be very valuable for recording important ideas, lists, facts, questions, decisions, etc. to be considered by the group. Not only do such charts make pertinent information available to everyone, but they also tend to have a focussing and clarifying effect. Newsprint and computer print-out paper work well.

Physical Environment:

Some factors which affect the character of a meeting, and which should therefore be considered by facilitators are: seating arrangement (seats comfortably close and in a circle encourage communicating); acoustics, lighting, whether wall charts are available and visible.



Brainstorming:

Brainstorming is a process used to get a large number of creative ideas or questions on a given subject from a group in a short period of time (usually less than 20 minutes). Participants are encouraged to throw in ideas no matter how wild or impractical they may seem. Each idea is recorded on a wall chart in front of the group. It is important to neither discuss nor evaluate ideas during brainstorming. Once a list has been gathered, the group can go back and evaluate the ideas.

Force Field Analysis:

Force field analysis is a tool which can be used to organize information about an upcoming decision or dilemma in such a way as to clarify possible solutions and their implications. For example, if a coop were considering going from a two-markup to a one-markup policy, the question would be asked: "Should we be using one markup?" The group would then analyze forces contributing to the policy's success or failure by making two lists, which would be written on a wall chart or blackboard as follows:

Should we begin using one markup?	
forces contributing to success (+)	Forces contributing to failure (-)

Much of the value of the force field analysis is in the shared thinking through of the factors to be put on the lists. When completed and placed side by side, the lists offer a wholistic per-

perspective to an extent which is often not developed in decision-making.

Think and Listen:

When a discussion has become tension-filled or destructive; or if an impasse has been reached in a decision-making process, it is often helpful to suspend the process for a few minutes; to maintain a period of silence, which allows people to regain self-control; to clarify thoughts, or to gain a new perspective on the situation, after which the regular process resumes.

When it is important for the group to hear in some depth what each person thinks about a particular topic or question, time (with limits strictly observed) can be given to each person to share thoughts with the rest of the group, which listens without comment. If time is a problem, the group can split into "think and listen" pairs, and then bring important points back to the whole group.

Overparticipation:

If overparticipation by dominant individuals becomes a problem, it can be addressed in several ways:

- 1) direct but considerate and respectful confrontation of the individual at the time she overparticipates
- 2) a prior group agreement in which people who tend to underparticipate in groups will count slowly to three before speaking, while overparticipators count slowly to ten before speaking.
- 3) an arrangement in which people sit in pairs for the purpose of support in participation. Just before the meeting begins partners in each pair will share with each other whether they tend to under- or overparticipate. Through the course of the meeting the partners will give each other the kind of support which encourages a balanced level of participation among people. Women pairing with women, men with men seems to work well.



Settling in/introductions:

Five to ten minutes at the very beginning of a meeting for introductions, if people don't know each other, or for informal group conversation tends to draw the group together if people are milling around and to start the meeting on a positive note.

Small group/whole group rhythm:

Because large groups tend to be unwieldy and unproductive, it is particularly important to break into smaller groups whenever possible in large-group situations. Dividing into pairs for "think and listen" sessions, or into groups of 4-10 for brainstorming when a number of topics need ideas, or into small groups for discussion prior to making a decision, all provide ways for broader participation than is allowed if the entire meeting time is spent in one large group.

200 WAREHOUSES - cont'd from p.11

the Cafe debate, the PW rep., Linda Janssen, said that they had had a meeting to discuss the validity of the criticism, and considered the source of the criticism.

As they said in their response to criticisms from Ed Felien, they "want to first consider the source of the charge, to determine if the charge has any validity." This is too cut and dried for my taste. To stereotype a source as valid or invalid, and then automatically discredit its criticism is part of the problem in communication that has led our coop movement to this current division.

* * * * *

At the Cafe debate, the PW

representative said that it was only a rumor that PW was failing, and not true that December was a "make-or-break" month. She said they were "a little tight, of course, but in no danger of defaulting." The December PW newsletter starts off with a description of the move of the warehouse offices from the first floor to the second, with many other remodeling and freshening jobs being done too, in "a burst of energy."

It is not clear at this date how the legal confusions between the coops and the old warehouse, and between the old and the new warehouses, will be resolved. The PRB officers, Kris Olson and Tracy Landis, began polling coop workers informally in November to decide whether, and if so, how, to call another PRB, in order to keep the Peoples Warehouse, Inc. legal structure up to date. They have called for definite response from the coops by December 20, and will try to act on that input.

DANCE itself is planning to incorporate as a cooperative, and sent to each coop copies of the preliminary papers, visiting

meetings and requesting coops to set up legal committees to keep the coop informed, and to give input to the warehouse. A planning meeting was to be held on December 15, to organize the details of the Incorporation Convention on January 10, the Peoples Center.

All coops are invited to this Convention, where a Board of Directors will be elected (10 to 15, depending on Convention decision) from members of coops who will be members of the DANCE cooperative structure. Coops will become members by purchasing a \$50 share of capital stock, which may be paid for as the coop is able. One vote per member-coop, of course.

The Board of Directors will then be responsible for legal, community, and political organization for DANCE, allowing the collective to stick mainly to the work of running a coop food warehouse, serving the coops of the Northcountry. Their collective meetings are open; starting in January, they will be held on Thursday evenings at workers' homes. Please call DANCE if you want to know time and place. All persons are welcome.

PROCESS cont'd from p. 24



I have felt an impressive growth in process skills within my community as we have experimented and struggled with new ideas, and we are happy to share those ideas and experiences however we can (write Plowshare Community, 3628 Park Avenue So., Minneapolis, Mn., 55407, or call 825-8644).

But learning to work together in ways that are caring, cooperative and productive, is an ongoing challenge--one which needs a broad perspective. I would like to suggest an exchange of group process ideas among our cooperative community. How about some letters to the SCOOP?!

POWDERHORN cont'd from p.17

Voting was to begin on October 29. On October 23, the Council decided that a referendum must be voted on by 75% of the membership in order to validate results. They said they wanted to protect the coop from decisions made by a small minority, and estimated 75% to be a good standard. (Ironically, they themselves were elected by only about an estimated 40% vote.)

However, this would be difficult to accomplish, for two reasons. Voting is prescribed for a one-week period only, and no one can say for sure the number of "members" at the coop. The file box may have one card for a family, but two or more persons in the family may consider themselves "members".

More importantly, it was a change in the restructuring proposal, which reads, "a simple majority of those voting is necessary to carry a question" (on a

referendum), and "any alterations or resolutions of controversy will be resolved through referendum."

The non-CC workers rose to the occasion, printing a leaflet describing this ridiculous and unjust Council ruling. They mailed it--the first "membership mailing" in the history of Powderhorn--and generated a storm of protest which eventually caused the Council to extend the voting for a week, and then to drop any "per-cent of members" voting requirement. (It is disheartening to note that a Council member insisted even at the last that it was not a change in the proposal, but an interpretation, that the Council had every right to make.)

The vote to elect representatives carried with a large majority and joining the ACA was also approved, by a margin of only 10 votes. (There was resistance to the ACA at Powderhorn on two counts. The PRB meetings had been a disappoint-

ing inter-coop experience, and there was some suspicion that the new coop warehouse, DANCE, had been first started at the August ACA. This is not the case--see SCOOP # 10).

The results of the voting are important to many people, but equally important is the fulfilling of the democratic decision-making process--a decision on two controversial questions by the membership, using the referendum. It is a big step forward, and about time, too.

What next for Powderhorn? Well, that restructuring proposal was for a six-month period, to be revised and adjusted, and voted on again by referendum. The Plowshare people have been joined by other concerned Powderhorn workers in studying structure, process, and decision-making at the coop, and they are working on revisions of the proposal. They are ready this time, and hopefully will be ready the time after that, and after that. As a great person said, Vigilance is the price of freedom. We are learning the hard way, but we are learning.

FILE #44

SUBJECT : ██████████

- 1) PERSONAL BACKGROUND - Born 1947. Grew up in over a dozen homes around South Chicago. Father drives taxi. Mother sorts clothes at a Salvation Army store. Kicked out of high school for selling 16 sets of Stevie Wonder darkglasses on campus. Presently sells used cars on weekends.
- 2) CO-OP EXPERIENCE - Has worked for Bozo State Bankers since 1973. Eats canned foods exclusively. Joined the Mass Organization but dropped out shortly after realizing he could not get along with the other four members. Was co-chair with ██████████ at the November PRB where he gained notoriety for moving the agenda forward and getting all the business done by Saturday evening.
- 3) SEXUAL CONTACTS - Our Bozo Bankers contact reports that subject's personal life is largely unknown. He has few friends and spends most of his free time locked in his apartment where he plays the saxophone into the night.
- 4) POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS - Member of Third World Community Club (recruited during membership drive in April, 1974). Carries a gun. Potential member of the "rising forces" once his credentials are fully checked out by the CO Admissions Committee. Presently wary of our organization because he says no one will admit to being a member of the CO. Subject could be valuable asset to our organization and after initial training could eventually become legitimate working class leader, with close supervision.

FILE #76

SUBJECT : ██████████

- 1) PERSONAL BACKGROUND - Raised in South Minneapolis. Parents have radical histories (both volumes). Graduate of Carlton College with honors. Arrested three times during anti-war demonstrations for carrying the sign "US Out of North America."
- 2) CO-OP EXPERIENCE - Has worked for People's Pancake Collective since 1970. She is active in the inter co-op trucking of leaflets and manifestos and is considering joining the six person trucking collective.
- 3) SEXUAL CONTACTS - Lives in an eight woman commune. Currently she is seeing three different men, one of whom is seeing another woman who is going out with CO member #21 who has been informed that he must break off this relationship at once.
- 4) POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS - Dangerous anarchist. Said to believe in autonomous women's organizations. Shuns political parties and United Unification Front gatherings. Rabid anti-CO. Should be silenced during the "Uprising of the Proletariat", Act Three, Scene Four.

If any Northcountry co-op worker wishes to find out whether the CO has a file on them they should call the Secrecy-Security Room of the People's Warehouse at 824-2634. According to the recently-passed Freedom of Information Act the CO, like the FBI, must reveal the contents of their file on you. But remember, if you request such information and the CO does not already have a file on you, they will start one after you hang up. Have a good day, and good luck.



PRAIRIE HARVEST

- cont'd from p.7

But they were interested in keeping the price of all food low. Buying in bulk, directly from the farmers, they realized, was a good way to do this. Capital is needed for this to happen, since farmers need cash and do not extend credit. With only operating costs covered on a poundage mark-up, no extra capital will be coming in. Therefore, each member will have a capitalization quota to fulfill. This will be based on the average monthly purchases of each member. The purchases will be reviewed regularly and the quota adjusted if necessary. In order to reach that quota, an additional 5% mark-up will be added onto the the price of the food. Once the quota is reached, the 5% will be deducted. A member could pay all or

part of its quota at once in the form of a loan. Or they could buy food coupons from the warehouse. At 10%, the inexpensive items are not bringing in enough revenue to pay their way. Bran, for example, at about nine cents per pound, when marked up 10%, only brings in a penny per pound for handling it. Almonds, on the other hand, at about \$1.33 per pound, bring in thirteen cents per pound. Consequently, the almonds are paying the way for the bran. At the new mark-up, both almonds and the bran will be marked up an equal three of four cents per pound. Sure the price of the bran will be higher than at 10%, but the price of the almonds will be lower. The actual amount of the mark-ups has not been decided. It will probably be about three or four cents. Most people at the meeting thought it was a good idea to start working on.

The member could then turn around and sell them to its individual members. These coupons would then be redeemable in thirty, sixty or ninety days for food. This would be like paying for your food in advance. That advance would be deducted from your quota. The sooner the quota is achieved, the sooner the 5% will be deducted from your food bill. The fact is, no matter which way the money is raised, it will offer an alternative to both producers and consumers. It seems so ironic that we live so close and yet both go to The Cities to do our business. What a waste of fuel and energy! Hopefully, this money will bring us all home. It will offer us an alternative to the big corporations. That is one of the reasons Prairie Harvest started in the first place. Isn't that why most co-ops started?



Coop Directory

For the North Country

Minneapolis

- Good Grits
1343 LaSalle Av. S.
333-9984
- Mill City Foods
2552 Bloomington Av. S.
721-2072
- North Country Foods
2129 Riverside Av. S.
338-3110
- Northside
1111 W. Broadway Av.
522-2236
- Powderhorn
3440 Bloomington Av. S.
724-5588
- Seward Coop
2201 E. Franklin Av.
338-2465
- Southeast
1023 S.E. 8th St.
331-8770
- Wedge
715 W. Franklin Av.
871-3993
- Whole Foods
2502 1st Av. S.
824-3474
- hardware: *****
- North Country General Store
(drygoods, hardware, books, art supplies, music dept.)
2002 Riverside Av. S.
336-4708
- Freewheel Bicycle Coop
3336 E. 25th St.
722-3232
- other services, unions, & collectives: *****
- Christopher Robin Printing
823-0795
- Free Hand Construction & Remodeling
823-5546
- People's Center
(medical, veterinary, & counseling services)
2000 Riverside Av. S.
332-4973
- People's Warehouse
123 E. 26th St.
824-2634
- Distributing Alliance of the North Country (DANC)
200 3rd Av. N.
338-5232
- Red Star Apothecary
3406 Lyndale Av. S.
824-8124
- Cheese Rustlers
c/o M. Blount, 1913 Stevens Av. S.
874-0869
- restaurants/cafes: *****
- New Riverside Cafe
329 Cedar Av. S.
333-9924
- North Country Kitchen
1701 University Av. S.E.
331-4082
- Seward Cafe
2129 E. Franklin Av.
332-1011
- bakeries: *****
- Garden Bakery
820 W. 36th St.
825-4169 (or 822-4309, 724-1736)
- People's Company Bakery
1534 E. Lake St.
721-7205
- food stores: *****
- Beanery Grocery
3008 Lyndale Av. S.
824-5161
- Bryant Central
3401 4th Av. S.
824-3526
- People's Clothes
(not retail)
1211 E. Franklin Av.
871-7550
- Seward Day Care
3200 E. 24th St.
724-3030
- Tenants Union
2000 Riverside Av. S.
376-1093
- Twin City Women's Union (T.C.W.U.)
2953 Bloomington Av. S.
729-6200
- St. Paul
- food stores: *****
- Green Grass
928 Raymond Av.
646-6686
- Merri Grove
1675 Selby Av.
644-7033
- Saint Anthony Park (SAP)
1435 N. Cleveland Av.
646-9173
- Selby
516 Selby Av.
227-1453
- restaurant: *****
- Commonplace
366 Selby Av.
222-9242
- bakery: *****
- Our Daily Bread
383 Michigan Av.
224-3484
- other: *****
- Tenants Union
224-9186

(over)

Coop Directory (cont.)

Minnesota

Duluth Whole Foods
631 E. 8th St.
Duluth

Commonwealth Warehouse
1732 London Road
Duluth

St. Cloud Coop
306 1st Av. S.
St. Cloud

Community Food Store
307 S. Broad St.
Mankato

Family Foods Coop
413 Mason
Marshall

Wintergreen Coop
103 N. Broadway
Albert Lea

Swan Valley Coop
Box 9
Leader

Prairie Foods
306 N. Plum
Northfield

Famine Foods
120 E. 2nd St.
Winona

Prairie Harvest Warehouse
120 E. 2nd St.
Winona

Riverbend Cafe
3rd & Main
Winona

Wiscoy Valley Community Farm
Rt. 3
Winona

Dakotas

Food Coop of Grand Forks
1202 2nd Av. N.
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Pure Prairie General Store
110 8th St. S.E.
Minot, North Dakota

Plain Foods Coop
c/o Ron Reamer
Rt. 1, Box 138
Kindred, North Dakota

East Dakota Coop
118 N. Philips
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Upper Michigan/ Wisconsin

Keewenaw Coop
409 Sheldon
Noughton, Michigan

Marquette Coop
230 W. Ohio
Marquette, Michigan

Whole Earth Store
116-1/2 E. Elm
River Falls, Wisconsin

Sunyata Coop
840 Water St.
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Menomonie Food Coop
Rt. 1, Box 64
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Rice Lake Coop
c/o J. Gobler
119 S. Wisconsin
Rice Lake, Wisconsin

George Washington Carver Memorial
Peanut Butter Collective
c/o Peoples Farm
Wheeler, Wisconsin

LaCrosse Peoples Coop
430 Avon
Lacrosse, Wisconsin

Iowa

Oneota Community Coop
c/o D. Bratzl
1007 Paine
Decorah, Iowa

Sioux City Coop
465 Wabasha
Sioux City, Iowa

Blooming Prairie Warehouse
529 S. Gilbert
Iowa City, Iowa

GREEN GRASS - contd from p. 9

FROM THE EXPAND THE STORE AND
ISSUE STOCK OPTION)

Under this option, the volunteer system as now conceived would be abolished. The dual pricing system would likewise be axed. One price would be paid by all, goods would be marked up an average of 25% above cost. This would produce a 20% gross margin.

A capitalization program would be developed. The necessary components would include a 5 year plan for borrowing and debt retirement. Essentially, all debts should be paid off within 5 years and new borrowing undertaken only if all financial indicators show that Green Grass is making it.

To begin with, a loan of \$5,000 would be needed. Approximately \$3,000 of this amount should go into inventory. The rest should be used to pay increased salaries for two to three months of operation.

Given this debt and the necessity to include debt retirement as an integral part of the store's financial picture, I recommend quarterly goals be set in terms of sales. Then a one year and two year goal should also be established. Assuming this option would be implemented beginning the first of the year, 1976, possible sales goals would be: \$20,000/month by March 31; \$30,000 by June 30; \$45,000 by September 30; and \$60,000 by December 31. Considering several Twin City food coops already do \$40,000 a month (Seward and North Country), these goals seem to me to be rather conservative. It would be a responsibility of the manager to achieve these goals.

A volume of \$300,000 a year seems to be a minimum for keeping the store on sound footing and paying decent wages. At the present volume the store could expect sales of \$125,000 a year.

Where would the \$5,000 come from? There are several possible sources. The first source is stock. I recommend stock be issued at \$10 a share with a goal of selling 200 shares by January 1, 1976. By March 31 another 200 shares should be sold. People should be encouraged to buy more than 1 share. Membership in the coop would be based on ownership of 1 or more shares of stock. Each household interested could own stock; and no



matter how much stock a household owned, it would have but one vote.

I prefer the stock option to the personal loan method of raising capital. For one thing, the stock method fixes a clearer relationship between the setting of policy and the actual base of support for the coop. Although people holding loans to Green Grass have a financial interest in the store, there is no legitimate avenue for them to make that interest known and part of the organization. Also, the terms of stock transfers, i.e. people redeeming their stocks can be set so that the money cannot be pulled out capriciously.

I am not an expert on stock or the issuance of stock for a coop. However, this expertise is readily available within the Twin Cities. Namely, M.D. "Doc" Zeddies, formerly of Midland, is more than willing to assist in setting up such programs.

The personal loan route should be abandoned; a push should be made for people inclined to offer personal loans to put their money into the coop through stock purchases. The reason I recommend axing the personal loan route is that it requires too much energy on the part of the bookkeeper to keep track of all the individual arrangements and agreements. It is simpler, more uniform, and legally sounder to establish one method for raising capital from the general public.

The question has come up that issuing stock may result in the power from the neighborhood being diffused and control of the store might slide into other people's hands. This is a very real and perceptive concern.

Control of the coop cannot go to the person or people with the most dollar value in the coop. It is based on numbers of people owning stock. Thus, the people in South Saint Anthony could make a strong push to sign up everyone in the neighborhood as members (i.e. stock holders). This would

assure the neighborhood that when a critical issue came before the membership, it would have the votes to prevail in its point-of-view.

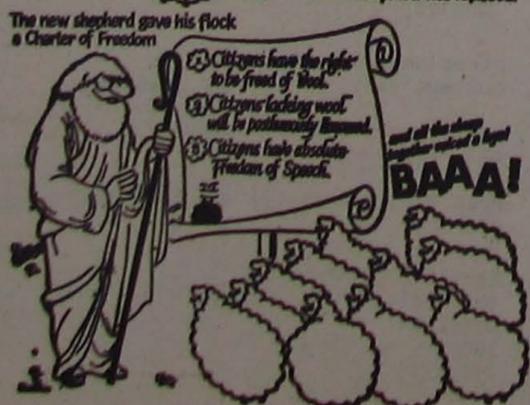
On the other hand, I am doubtful the residents of South Saint Anthony alone could purchase \$300,000 worth of groceries from the store every year. If there is a commitment to the ideal that the coop is consumer controlled, owned and directed by people who use the store, then it is likely people from outside the neighborhood not only would get elected to the Board, but from my perspective, should get elected. Green Grass should not be hoarded. It can easily meet the needs of local residents and other's needs as well. In 99% of the cases, everyone's needs would be the same. Grocery needs, lifestyle, income level, buying habits, etc. are pretty similar throughout the general region in which Green Grass is located.

Control is not some abstract thing which descends on a project like magic. It is related to the amount of energy, assertiveness, time and dedication applied to a particular issue. If people from the neighborhood became lazy and disinterested in the coop, why should they continue to set policy? Because the store happens to be located near their homes? No. If people from the neighborhood do not participate in the store, the fact that the store is near at hand does not give them license to control it at arm's length.

Getting back to the issue of raising capital, along with the stock idea, it might be advantageous to contact Mutual Services Co-op and the Cooperative Insurance Company and the Cooperative Foundation to explore possibilities of financial support either in the form of loans or grants of some sort.

Generally, I am in agreement with Argie (Green Grass bookkeeper) regarding debt. I don't like it! But, somehow the store needs to get ahead of a nickel and dime

financial base. Slow growth has its merits, it prevents getting over-extended. I think borrowing \$5,000 or raising that amount in sale of stock is not getting over one's head. It is a very modest indebtedness secured by the existing inventory. Presently the inventory is about \$5,500. If another \$3,000 were added, this would cover existing personal loans and whatever new loan or stock obligation were incurred.



BURTON - cont'd from p. 14

o'clock tonight because I'm gonna get you." The first time he said this I said, "What you mean meet me at one o'clock at night in front of Bryant Central? I ain't gonna do that shit..." Then I said, "Hey Bob-" and he hung up. It got me kind of worried. I didn't know where he was coming from. I thought, "What's that dude thing about?"

So then he called through the night, you know? Ten times in one night and wouldn't say nothing. He'd ring it and ring it, and then when I would answer the phone he'd just be sitting there, quiet. And I don't know who this was... it didn't have to be Haugen... it could have been a whole group of them.

They did this for two nights straight. Then on Friday, November 21 at noon I'm sitting down here at the house and Haugen

door, Haugen came out from inside and started immediately at me. So when we got to each other we grabbed and started struggling-like. At that point these three other men from the CO started coming in on me, getting behind me and moving in.

Now there was one person from Bryant Central who was supposed to be refereeing but a kid on the street got mad and popped Haugen in the head twice while I was just holding Bob. At this point it all gets hectic. Some people from around the store grabbed these other CO people so they don't get at me and Haugen.

In the meantime I held Haugen from behind, and sat him down on the ground. We were both on the ground, me on top, and I said to him, "I don't want to fight you, man. It's not gonna do me any good to fight you." I held him down so he couldn't hit me. Then I let him up and kept him from hitting me.

And here is one reason I respect him because I don't always think I'm bullying people because it's me, you know? But I do come off that way a lot of times. So I'm not gonna say Haugen is all bad...

So we talked then, down the street, about that stuff. Haugen said, "Well okay, I just want to try you again. Let's fight one more time for friend's sake." That's what he said. I said, "No man, I don't want to fight you."

And he said, "you gonna fight anyway." Then he run and tried to tackle me. I just grabbed him, threw him down, and wrapped my legs around him and held him. He finally quit and said, "Okay." He let go of him and he got up and I let go of him and he got up and left. I went in the store. That was it.

Q. Do you see any ways that all the co-ops can work together? Or is it perhaps too early for Bryant Central to think of that, do you feel the need to focus on yourselves at this point?

A. That's what we are doing. We're training our people... getting everyone acquainted with the day to day business, and focusing on our community so that anyone who wants to know about what's going on in the co-op can learn. Nothing hidden. No secrets. No sneakyism.

Going way back to the Rochdale principles of a co-op, you know... we are aware of those, and work with those principles. We are also aware of a whole co-op system developing across the country. We want to know what is going on nationally. We want to work with other local co-ops on food and nutrition...and politics too. I think Bryant Central is something political, and is going to be political...what's the sense of it existing if it isn't?

The Little Bakery, the other main part of the Brigade, has a collective of 15 people working full-time, only 3 of whom have done so for over a year. About half of their sales are to coops and conspiracies, including out of town -- the rest being to commercial outlets. October marked the Brigade's best month to date financially; that month, after a bad September, total sales were over \$83,000, and they cleared over \$10,000.

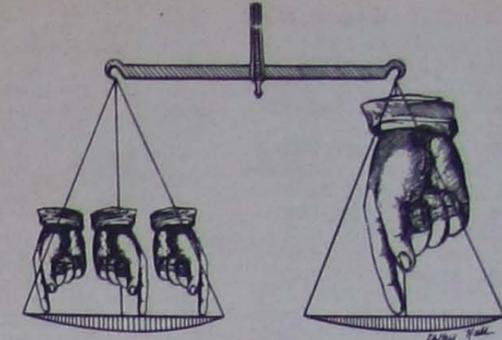


THE MINNESOTA CONNECTION

Visiting CC Grains, I am pleasantly surprised to meet Kris Melroe. She had just recently left the Twin Cities, so I catch up on news and we exchange stories. She and Ed Winter were the last of the non-Coop Organization people to leave the People's Warehouse, and they had helped start DANC, the new warehouse. She had found the coop scene there increasingly intolerable. Her strong political motivations are to her as far removed as possible from the Coop Organization's style in the coops and in the women's movement. DANC, she thinks, was pretty disorganized and in danger of becoming reactionary. Asked for examples of the latter, she cites the resistance of some in DANC to handling white sugar and a falling into unchallenged sex roles. (Later, in San Francisco, a warehouse worker there makes a similar remark, noting with seemingly "obvious" disagreement a DANC statement's affirmation of non-violence. Not wishing to grapple with a defense of the whole concept, I merely point out the local context, with intense struggle within the coops bordering on violence, in which the statement took place.) Kris has begun working at CC Grains and is hoping to become full-time and a member of the Brigade.

Several CC Grains workers express interest in the Twin Cities situation -- the latest Scoop is on the office desk -- and ask about events and People's Warehouse acquaintances ("What's Dean doing?" "Say hello to Jane."). At a warehouse weekly meeting I attend, the group approves an offer by Kris to lead a discussion of the People's Warehouse situation. A healthy re-examining of priorities seems to have been provoked even out here. On the specific matter of food, more processed and conventional foods are being considered but don't seem likely to be added in the foreseeable future.

A few other individuals with whom I speak, workers in the Bakery and two of the storefronts, are very interested in the struggle in Minnesota, eager to ask questions and read recent issues of the Scoop. This experience is repeated later further down the coast. During a quick stop at the Eugene warehouse, I pick up a coop newsletter from southern California and find it begins with a statement to the effect



that this issue's early appearance is due to events in Minneapolis-St. Paul which have produced turmoil in the food cooperative community.

In general, however, awareness and understanding of the controversy and of broader coop issues in general, seems concentrated in the collective warehouses and is much weaker and more scattered in the storefronts and other locally or neighborhood-oriented institutions. Even a Brigade member who has been working at the Little Bakery for over a year complained of her isolation from the large picture compared to the warehouse situation, where there are clearer links to in-town, regional, and national cooperative efforts through trucking, personal contact, and correspondence.



AT CC GRAINS

After initial uncertainty, it is easy to talk with Brigade workers -- I anticipate their seriousness and political commitment but, especially compared to the frenetic and harsh political struggle around the Minneapolis warehouse, the friendly, supportive, and attentive atmosphere is not hard to notice and appreciate.

In the warehouse office, looking for a copy of the October Brigade meeting minutes (which no one could find), I overhear one end of a phone conversation between Val, a relatively new worker, and a dissatisfied customer. It becomes apparent that it isn't her first call on the matter and that she is having a rough time. After she finally hangs up, the other man working in the office asks her about it, quickly brings out her tears, and suggests she take a break, which she does. Later, reviewing the matter at the weekly meeting, the group decides to send the customer (one of their commercial outlets) a letter apologizing for their mistake and criticizing the caller's abusive manner.

In the bookkeeping office, where I am allowed to sit and read through reports, one worker -- whom I later hear criticized for laying his heavy revolutionary morality on other Brigade members -- while on the phone strongly criticizes the Little Bakery, where he had worked, for not being clean enough. A cockroach had been found, apparently for the first time, and he attribut-

ed it to...a lack of analysis! -- meaning, he then said, failure to plan for enough people/work on cleaning.

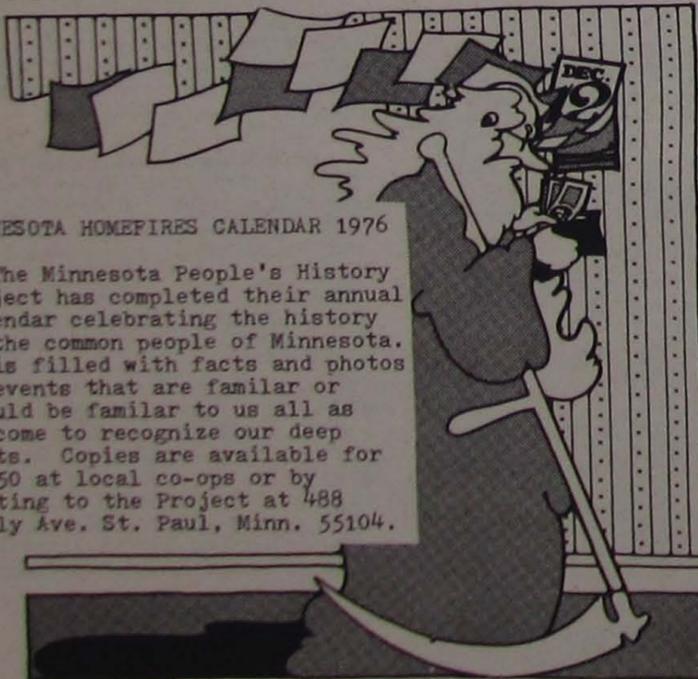
I attend their weekly meeting and notice their direct and open style of dealing with one another, a clear understanding or acknowledged collective process that enables them to work together well, taking care to bring out their own and others' points of importance or dissatisfaction. They are slow in starting, occasionally sidetracked, and somewhat cumbersome, the meeting's facilitator at times frustrated and ineffective. A long list of fairly ordinary business matters is discussed, including approval of full Brigade membership for a new worker of four weeks and whether to add a fourteenth warehouse worker. There is a tendency to postpone discussion and decisions -- such as a proposal for reduction to a 32-hour work week, or the issue of the 'political' choices involved in the possibility of differential markup -- to next week's Brigade meeting or, the day after that, a one-day warehouse retreat. It is agreed that future regular weekly meetings will be divided into a 2-hour session for business and smaller matters, followed by a session of a general or more basic nature: "political, policy, personal." I write in my notes, reflecting on the continuing problem of integrating them.

At the meeting and the workplace, the Brigade seems distant from the workers -- real and supported, but not a strong concern or something from which they gain strength. Two Brigade members later, upon my inquiring, say the larger meetings have not been very interesting or productive, except for two women's gatherings they attended.



Talking after the CC Grains meeting with a man who is a long-time warehouse and Brigade worker, I review events in Seattle and the Twin Cities. He thinks it may take a few years to get clearer indications of where coops can go and what they can do. For example, broadly, is the cooperative or collective "form" or its "content" (such as the kind of food) most important? What is

ANNOUNCEMENTS



MINNESOTA HOMEFIRES CALENDAR 1976

The Minnesota People's History Project has completed their annual calendar celebrating the history of the common people of Minnesota. It is filled with facts and photos of events that are familiar or should be familiar to us all as we come to recognize our deep roots. Copies are available for \$2.50 at local co-ops or by writing to the Project at 488 Holly Ave. St. Paul, Minn. 55104.

MONDAY NIGHT FIRESIDE CHATS AT SEWARD CAFE

December series is a Radical Retrospective

- Dec. 22 - Reflections of a Radical- Mulford Q. Sibley
Dec. 29 - The Life of a Trotskyist- Larry Slakey and others

Sponsored by the Society of Friends of Seward cafe 2129 East Franklin 7:30 P.M.

SUNDAY PANCAKE BREAKFASTS!

Beginning in January, Commonplace Restaurant in St. Paul will be having their pancake breakfasts the first and third Sundays of each month. Dairy and dairyless pancakes will be served. Commonplace is located at 366 Selby Av. Breakfasts are served from 10 to 2. Organize a car pool!

BENEFIT BOOGIE COMING UP!

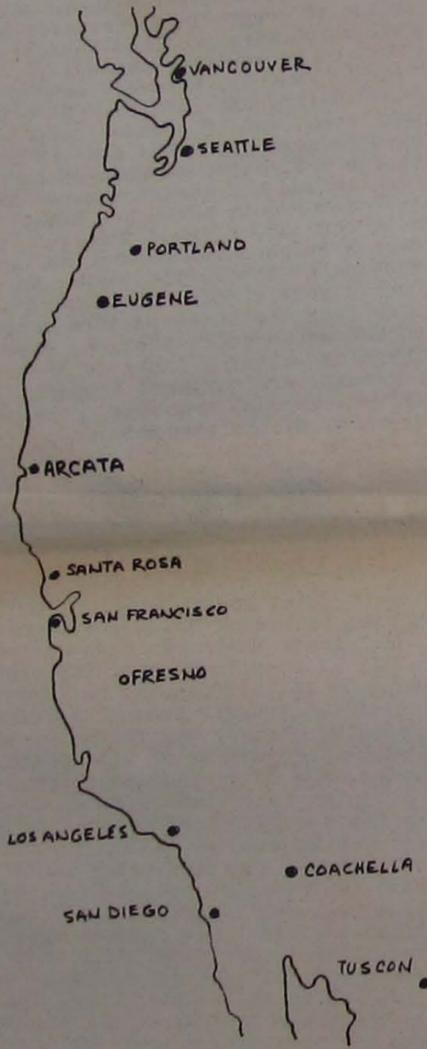
Plans for a benefit are being made by Commonplace Restaurant and People's Bakery. January 10 is tentatively scheduled for a bake-sale and dance to help the two projects. Watch for posters.

the balance? I observe that the Coop Organization seems to have abandoned both the cooperative, non-hierarchical style of organization and the commitment to healthy food.

Forging stable alliances among food coops and collectives is a vital but difficult step in strengthening and expanding the alternative distribution system. I point out that basic to the brigade concept is uniting several teams or separate activities/institutions under a common program or umbrella -- yet the history of the Seattle Workers Brigade thus far is one of reduction or simplification of teams rather than expanding or even maintaining a variety of projects. He responds that this may reflect a reaction to the overambitious beginning effort in 1974. The future of the Brigade seems to be more solid, with a stronger financial base, and possibly more involvement in political actions with other groups. Diversification seems likely only in the addition of a small new project, the Corner Market, and in possible re-establishment of small teams.



THE TRUCKING NETWORK



One of the most interesting and exciting aspects of the alternative food distribution system on the West Coast is the developing network of profit warehouses and trucking routes connecting from Vancouver and Seattle to Portland and Eugene, San Francisco and Oakland and elsewhere in northern and southern California, south to Tucson, Arizona. Already over 400 tons of food move up and down this route each month, and the system seems to be cohering and growing quickly.

The first conference of the West Coast coop warehouses was held in Santa Rosa, CA, in September, and a second will be held in January in Arcata, CA. Several accomplishments from the conference, and the likelihood of more to come, make the growing regional ties a frequent topic of conversation. A regional newsletter was established, to be rotated among the warehouses. The first issue, edited by members of the Seattle Workers Brigade (the next will be by Portland), includes a good exchange on the essential question of selling to profit-making privately owned stores. Seattle, writing in favor of it, seems to suffer from theoretical overkill. San Francisco, speaking against the practice, deals more with its actual effects and seems to me more persuasive.

A major topic at the conference and a task with great potential already being explored by the participating warehouses and trucking collectives, is collective buying. Each warehouse has taken responsibility for researching one product. By way of example, the first such possible arrangement was made by Arcata with an organic rice grower. Up to a half million pounds

or more per year could be contracted through Arcata, with a possible price break that would benefit all the coast warehouses and the coops they supply.

The conference also dealt with better coordination of trucking, present and potential, including east-west runs to elsewhere in the country. Also, the participants will begin study groups, with three books selected to begin with for background to their work: Fanshen, Factories in the Fields, and Anarchist Collectives in Spain. And there was discussion of racism, sexism, and classism in the coop movement.

Besides that first newsletter, I learn much from a 26-page pamphlet, "Beyond Isolation: The West Coast Collective Food System As We See It," by Las Truckaderos, the Berkeley trucking collective. This production is one of the most valuable pieces of literature I've seen come out of the food cooperative movement anywhere, and like the best political pamphlets, its appearance marks a qualitative change in the understanding of the readers and the social situation with which it deals. (I recommend strongly that interested readers check it out, at the Scoop office or by sending a few coins for your own copy from Las Truckaderos, 1600 Woolsey St., Berkeley, CA 94703.)



TRAVELING SOUTH

The collective food distribution system includes a bi-weekly run by the Seattle Workers Brigade to the People's Warehouse of Portland, where they are met by Starflower, the Eugene warehouse; part of Seattle's and of Eugene's loads go to each of the other two. On alternate weeks Starflower drives all the way from Eugene to Seattle, about 400 miles, to exchange their load. I have planned to go south, so I ride with two Brigade women on the run to Portland. After warm farewells at CC Grains, we start a bit late and arrive late in Portland, where we learn that the part of the load we picked up at Community Produce is slightly incorrect. The joint CC Grains-Community Produce trucking apparently isn't always completely smooth, and later the Starflower drivers complain about the work at Seattle's end of their arrangement.

The People's Warehouse of Portland was formed last spring by the 3 or 4 coop storefronts in the city and with the aid of the Seattle, Eugene, and Oakland warehouses and trucking collectives. It is still quite small but growing. We unload Seattle's goods for them and for Starflower, then load Starflower goods for Seattle. The truckers trade riders too: I go with Starflower, and a woman and child from that truck join the Seattle people. The Starflower drivers have planned

for supper before leaving, and we go to Hamburger Mary's, a gay males restaurant in downtown (there's another in San Francisco), where the food is good, the prices a little high, and the music too loud. They are both hungry and order too much, eating speedily and giving themselves stomach aches. We talk about the difficulties in getting good food and rest while trucking. I remember that in Seattle, before we set out, the driver had mentioned eating junk food, so I had made sure we had veggies, fruit, nuts and cheese along.



I don't get to learn much about Starflower, but they strike me as being solid and lively people. They term themselves a feminist collective; only one of their 18 workers is a man, plus two in the botanical (apothecary), apparently a separate operation. Though suffering from a sense of isolation in a small city like Eugene, they do a lot of trucking, as far north as Seattle and as far south as San Francisco. Now four years old, they gross over \$100,000 monthly, including some to profit-makers. Starflower owns two three-axle trucks and leases a full-length diesel semi.



SAN FRANCISCO

A week later I am traveling down 101, the beautiful coastline highway, south through the redwoods under a rising full moon. We go through Arcata and Santa Rosa, homes of new coop warehouses. But in Oakland under darkness we pass a startling, motionless scene: scores, perhaps hundreds of Safeway semi trucks lined up at a distribution center -- a reminder of what we are up against.

After arriving in San Francisco, I visit first the Food Factory collectives, several different groups listed at the same address in the food coop directory. In an old section south of downtown, is an old, 3-story corner warehouse that has been used by the food coop

movement for over a year now, with utilization of the space gradually increasing.

Veritable Vegetables, a one-year old produce collective consisting of 4 part-time workers, delivers to about a dozen stores in the Bay area. It is a low-volume, struggling operation, not yet able to pay wages. People's Bakery, which has around 15 persons working 3 days per week, supplies a like number of stores with 500 loaves per day plus granola and goodies. Their workers receive \$10 for a 7-hour shift, with plans to raise both prices and wages soon. A note next to the sign-up sheet and information for new workers says "temporarily open only to members of the Third World community." In back of the bakery room is the Flour Power Mill. Upstairs is Yerba Buena, selling herbs and spices to about 10 stores; they have 6 paid workers. On the third floor, Amazon Yogurt, a women's collective, is in the midst of constructing an up-to-code yogurt manufacturing operation. Also in the building are a milk collective and a printing collective and newsletter, Storefront Extension.

The October issue reprinted Paula Giese's North Country Anvil article on the death of the old political coops (also once reprinted in the Bellingham NW Passage at the suggestion of the Seattle Workers Brigade, and by someone in the Madison coops). The November issue of Storefront Extension includes a letter from the Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, emphasizing that article's conclusion that the alternate food system, by itself, cannot pose a threat to the corporate capitalist economy, but must link up with larger struggles in the society; the letter invites participation in forming the San Francisco Unemployed and Welfare Council, modeled on the large and active unemployment councils during the struggles in the 1930s and similar to recent projects in the Twin Cities.

The largest and perhaps strongest of the groups in the building is Red Star Cheese, a collective of 10 working at least 3 full days per week and paid, according to need, from \$50 to \$175 per month. Their volume is increasing rapidly. Markup is 11%; October gross was \$60,000. Red Star delivers to 10 storefronts and three warehouses, carrying a wide variety of cheeses. Their office is busy but friendly; I help unload cheese, pick up some literature, and talk about their operation and Twin Cities affairs, about which there is much interest. Their office has an excellent literature file on other coop ventures, including the Scoop.

Red Star also delivers eggs coming from Left-Wing Poultry, a new and promising development in the collective food system. Last spring, with the aid of a \$3000 loan from Red Star, 2280 chickens were purchased from a small producer being squeezed out of a field increasingly dominated by huge ranches and vertically integrated corporate production. Some people moved onto a small chicken farm

near Morgan Hill, a short distance south of the Bay area, and began rehabilitating buildings, learning about chickens, and planting a garden and small crops, operating collectively and organically. They are learning a lot about agriculture and rural food production, are making contacts with small growers, and have applied for membership in the National Farmers Organization. Another 1000 hens have been ordered, with an estimated 3500 necessary to generate enough money to keep the farm going and 8000 to supply all the San Francisco storefronts with cheap, organic eggs.

Less than a mile from the above collectives is the San Francisco Cooperating Warehouse (SFCW). Established in late 1973, SFCW remained small and grew slowly till this year, in part because of an unrealistically low markup policy. Formerly 5% to stores and 3% to warehouses, it is now 10% and 5%. And sales have greatly increased, partly to additional stores but more importantly through the growth of regional warehouses supplied in part by SFCW -- formerly 3 and now 9. Besides the warehouses, 15 storefronts, 2 bakeries, and buying clubs, they also supply three free food programs (at the lower markup) and recently initiated additional use of the warehouse space as a bulk buying center for individuals.

Last September they moved to adequate warehouse space and acquired a forklift. September gross was \$71,000; October total sales were \$96,000, a new high. About half of their business is in the Bay area; about 20% is with the Midwest.

New workers and increased rent have been taking up the income generated by the higher markup and volume. There are from 11-15 people working 3 full days per week. Pay is only \$120 per month, a cause for complaining, and they are aiming for increased wages soon. Recently they restructured their work into five committees: purchasing, distribution, accounting and evaluation, communication, and co-ordination. By reputation and from what little I have time to see, their strong points include a commitment to working collectively and investigation of their food sources.



I arrive at SFCW on a Monday morning when only one person is on the floor and start talking, asking questions, and helping move some food. Soon the place is humming with workers, pallet jacks, and trucks pulling up -- including Starflower's semi and folks from Tucson. (The latter, I learn, has warehouse and trucking collectives totaling 12-14 people working together, and a federation of around 20 organizations dealing with general coop policy; the Tucson driver wants to learn more about the Twin Cities.)

The SFCW building has a long office space running along the front on the second floor level, with windows overlooking both the street and the warehouse interior. I wander up and down, talking, observing, reading. I notice the latest newsletter from the Minneapolis People's Warehouse and a recent issue of Working Papers which includes a good article on the Washington, D.C. coop federation.

Returning to the desk of the man I first encountered in the morning, I ask when their meetings are, whether I would be able to sit in. He balks, then says they've had a problem with too many white males (he is one also) in their meetings. He criticizes me for not integrating myself with the work at the warehouse that day and demands to know why I want to attend the meeting. But the person he had directed me to help hadn't needed it, and most of the activity seemed well handled already. I want to learn from the literature and other people there too, and though I can enjoy moving 50-pound sacks, a collective meeting is more educational. (Later, another worker simply tells me that the collective has closed meetings, though some people think it strange, and I make it clear that no offense has been taken.)

Trying another tack, I ask about the All Coop Meeting, the area alliance which is attempting to establish more links among the coops; he responds that people don't relate to it strongly. I comment on the problem of storefronts, as contrasted with warehouses, being more prone to isolation and failure to see or value the broader coop system problems and potential. Well why don't they, he demands, they must see it, they must! A short while later, still by his desk, I am discussing with a Starflower worker the political consciousness of that collective, and she describes how some members are satisfied simply with it being a feminist group, whereas others want that and a broader political view, links with other groups in the food system and in the society. "That's what keeps me going," says the SFCW worker enthusiastically, "knowing that my work is part of a much larger effort" -- working with, helping, changing other people. And I feel it, I think he is right, with all the dangers of abstraction and moralism -- so long as the here and now is the basis of our political understanding and vision, so long as that vision helps us enjoy the concrete work and people we are with and not merely the reverse, work and people used only as means to that vision.

"... the standards and process food coops and collectives elsewhere must struggle with."



TRYING TO UNITE

The SFCW building is the location of a December 6-7 Bay area food system political education conference. The printed agenda I have lists these main topics: (I) internal political education: collectivity and non-hierarchical practice; study groups/communication systems; class consciousness in the food system: racism, sexism, and ageism. (II) external political education: what information do we need to find out to better serve our communities; how do we convey information on the politics of food; how is it possible to facilitate political growth and struggle in our communities.

I inquire of several San Francisco coop workers concerning the All Coop Meeting, but no one seems very involved or interested. A lot of discussion does seem to be taking place around a set of criteria for groups in or joining the food system and what groups they should deal with. Crucial questions concerning exactly how these criteria will be ratified and applied do not seem to be completely settled, but it appears to be a serious and important attempt to establish a more concrete and explicit standard of unity within a group of people and institutions that, here and in most places, is too loose and amorphous to realize its potential.

Keeping in mind that I have only the proposed set of criteria, the following summarizes not only

what is being attempted in the Bay area but obviously is close to the standards and process food coops and collectives elsewhere must struggle with. These criteria would determine what groups are allowed in the food system and what groups they may sell to:

- 1) The food handling groups are operated collectively.
- 2) A definition of profit and an understanding of non-profit needs to be stated clearly.
- 3) Decisions by consensus.
- 4) A quarterly financial statement posted and available.
- 5) Struggle to eliminate manager/worker hierarchy.
- 6) A conscious effort to understand and eliminate racism, sexism and ageism.
- 7) Continuing economic and political dialogue amongst ourselves.
- 8) Markup to cover costs including wages but not to generate value for any individual or group.
- 9) Open meetings and decision-making.
- 10) Wages and markup set by workers, with a means for community input.
- 11) No food sold to groups that conflict with or are not willing to struggle around these matters.
- 12) Food is not used to force or coerce a group or individual to act or think a certain way.



SUPERMARKET COOPS

A friend in San Francisco works with Consumers Cooperative of Berkeley (CCB), the Twin Pines chain of coop supermarkets and various other services, so I take the opportunity to learn first hand about one of the largest of the 'old' coops. CCB formed from a 1947 merger between two Berkeley consumers coops started in the late 1930s and includes a Bay area system of 13 supermarkets, 4 liquor stores, a gasoline station, garage, a camping equipment store, and a savings and loan association. Growing in a "progressive" university area, CCB has thrived financially in a way few of the '30s coops have. It offers a wide variety of services to its members; besides the institutions just mentioned, there are home economists and childcare rooms in the food stores, a weekly newspaper, chartered travel flights, pharmacies, a hardware, and others. CCB has about 8,000 members -- who have little contact with the actual operation of the coops, though they receive the Coop News and can attend Board meetings and elect its members. Purchase of a \$5 share is required for membership, with annual patronage refund based on a percentage of the member's purchases. Persons investing \$50 or more in shares also receive an annual dividend based on their investment. Along with other consumer cooperatives in the West, CCB is a member of Associated Cooperatives, the regional wholesale distributor for canned foods under the Coop

Label and other items. AC and other regional cooperative wholesales in the U.S. and Canada own and control Universal Cooperatives, the nation's principal coop distributor, located in Alliance, Ohio.

The largest of the CCB stores each gross over \$100,000/week. In fact, in northern California there is no supermarket chain, including Safeway, that does more business. This giant size has developed under a strong commitment to continuous expansion, "neutrality" in politics, and a very centralized, bureaucratic structure. (A short item in Coop News begins, "Three promotions and a transfer have brought new managers to two Co-op centers and new assistant managers to two others.") Both in appearance and actual content, it is like a straight capitalist operation. The members, management, or the Board may be concerned to buy UFW lettuce or ban aerosols or have unit pricing; but I wonder where I am when I walk down their aisles to piped-in music, can't find any granola that doesn't have sugar in it, and see that the magazine racks contain only a few like TV Guide and Better Homes and Gardens (prime addictions of the mass consumer society: noise, sweets, and vicarious excitement).

But let it be said by a CCB member, in a letter to the weekly paper:

As we compete with the Luckys and the Safeways and the other big commercial chains, we grow more like them. More and more, the competition is in strictly economic terms; the almighty dollar is the only highroad to success. Hard-headed, efficient management, contribution-to-overhead, gross margin -- you've heard all the terms -- are everything. People-feeling -- what we used to call the one member-one vote principle, or the spirit of cooperation, or economic democracy -- has come to mean less and less....

You know the old saying, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." I'm not saying we can't beat Safeway, but an easier way might just be to merge with 'em -- or at least buy a major hunk of Safeway stock.

Or we old-style Co-ops can just say, "A plague on both your houses," and shift our allegiance to one or more of the new-style/old-style co-ops that are springing up all over.

There are other signs of discontent within the membership with the size and commercialism of the Berkeley coops, especially in opposition to a recent move by the Board toward signing a "management contract" with a privately owned supermarket chain in northern California. But outside of the establishment during 1974 of an elected Center Council for each store, with merely advisory powers, control of the operation remains remote from the stores and members. At least two different restructuring proposals have been made by some: that CCB become a federation, or that future expansion be in the direction of small stores.

These suggestions would seem horribly inefficient to Art Danforth, secretary-treasurer of the Cooperative League of the U.S.A., whose comments appear in the Coop News and in the Working Papers article. He doesn't like collectives either, but the present giant co-ops have almost none of either worker self-management or member/community control. Without these, the commercial coops' limits on profit-making pale before the drive to merge and consolidate, the ethic of continuous expansion. "Events are in the saddle and ride mankind."

level. And again, link up with other groups struggling for a more just, sane order.

My friend claims that the small non-profit food coops manage to survive mainly because they are labor intensive and because they offer alternative and bulk foods. There is some truth in this, but it is not entirely unfortunate, for even these relate directly to needs of ourselves and the society we must create. What is the balance -- what are our priorities? Work that is labor intensive can be wasteful, but can also save energy and bring more personal involvement. Bulk foods require a little more time and attention from the consumers but give them more discretion in shopping, save on packaging waste, and cut costs (the markup on bulk items in the supermarket coops is very high). Alternative, whole foods can be promoted in a cliquish or arrogant manner, but in our coops, whether commercial or leftist, if we don't think that part of our aim must be changing the quality of food and the society's general attitudes toward food and eating, then we are being very shortsighted.



Preparing to end this personal investigative tour and head back to the storms of Minnesota, I remember my last day in Seattle: I climb a low brick tower in a park for a 360-degree view of the earth. Remarkably, the sky is completely grey clouds overhead, but all along the horizon it is clear, creating a rare view of the magnificent mountains surrounding the city: Olympus to the west, the Cascades an unbroken chain on the east, others to the north -- white, rugged, and imposing. I mention it to a few residents, coop workers. One says it's great, he hasn't seen the mountains since March; another says she didn't even know some of them were there!

It is a metaphor of the possible, I decide -- of revolution? Daily we struggle with ourselves and the conditions that cloud our vision. But in those moments of beauty and love we see and gain strength from the mountains where we in fact abide.

THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS



How then do we overcome the power of agri-business and the state? Besides strengthening what we have, two general directions become more and more apparent: Expand the anti-profit collective food system into the production



CO SEX FILES BARED!!

A scoop from the SCOOP!



by Tom Copeland



One night last week, a plain brown bulky package appeared at the front door of the SCOOP office.

Carrying the package indoors, one SCOOP staff member who wished to remain anonymous wondered, "What could this be?" Other SCOOP workers gathered around. The package was carefully opened. Inside were a number of file folders with a cover letter on top. "Read it! For God's sake, tell us what it says!" burst out another staff member who also wished to remain anonymous. The letter was read out loud:

"To the SCOOP collective :
Greetings Comrades! This is the first comminque from our weekend underground organization called Workers Against Sneakyism, Trashing and Elitism (WASTE). We have liberated a complete copy of the infamous "Criticism, Discussion, Self-Incrimination" files held by the CO in the People's Warehouse. We are enclosing a copy for you. The files include information gathered on present workers in the Northcountry co-op movement - their personal backgrounds, co-op experience, sexual contacts and political consciousness. The mat-

erial is largely based upon gossip and rumor. In all, there are files on eighty-five co-op workers."

"This is outrageous!" broke in another SCOOP staff member who did not wish their name to be used. "What a break!" shouted someone else. Tense with excitement, yet keeping their professional cool, the staff bolted the door, let their barley casserole burn in the oven, and listened eagerly to the rest of the comminque.

"WASTE stole these secret files from the People's Warehouse by breaking into their Secrecy-Security Room with three sharp can openers. Once inside, we quietly xeroxed two copies of the twelve pound files while the CO in the next room continued undisturbed their six hour political debate on the question, "What was Lenin's most embarrassing self-criticism?"

"WASTE is turning over a copy of these files to SCOOP because you have a reputation for fearlessly reporting more boring rhetoric than any of your readers can stand. We feel that the groundswell of indifference that will greet the publication of these files will lead

to the collapse of local political consciousness. One more flurry of unexplainable leaflets will trigger a shoppers' revolt that will refuse to read anything with the words 'struggle', 'contradiction', or 'opportunism' in them. SCOOP has a clear responsibility to print this material. Down with Secrecy! Peace, Bread, Land! All Power to the Soviets! End Sloganering! Signed, WASTE."

A meaningful silence fell over the SCOOP office following the reading of this comminque. The anonymous faces were drawn and serious. A decision was reached quickly. SCOOP decided to print excerpts from the enclosed files in the public interest. All the names have been deleted to protect this muckraking journal from damaging lawsuits. What follows are typical entries from individual files selected at random. The SCOOP assumes no responsibility for the content or the accuracy of the information here revealed publicly for the first time.



FILE #18

SUBJECT : ██████████

- 1) PERSONAL BACKGROUND - Raised in suburb of Edina. Parents are typical capitalist ruling class pigs. Two years at the U. Dropped out to join a hippie commune farm in Oregon. Returned to Minnesota after entire soybean crop got eaten by Asian beetles. Works as day laborer to pay rent.
- 2) CO-OP EXPERIENCE - Has worked for Cedar Co-op since 1972. Every six months he "burns out" and is not heard from for a month. Eats organic food and thus shows utter class contempt for aluminum can manufacturers. Our block informant #63 overheard that ██████████ once was seen entering a Burger King with an unidentified female companion. Further investigation is being conducted to locate possible compromising photo taken during this event.
- 3) SEXUAL CONTACTS - No known high school steadys. Is said to have been friendly to at least eight different women while at the U. Left behind a baby goat in Oregon. Seen in frequent company with ██████████ at co-op meetings and afternoon movies although subjects are never observed holding hands and their conversations are about favorite books, nutrition and problems of working in groups.
- 4) POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS - Has long hair and a complete set of Joan Baez albums. Voted Republican in 1964 and for Eldridge Cleaver in 1968. Disillusioned with politics currently. Still retains middle class membership card #4125 and white skin privilege identification number AR542. Subject is definite bourgeois material. Avoid prolonged contact.

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