

Women's History

The History of Women's Survival Project is seeking contributions from women of all ages and walks of life for a publication about the history of women's survival -- a cultural and political study of the Midwest. We need interviews, songs and music, prose, poetry, drawings, copies of old and newer photos, woodcuts, crafts and objects to be photographed, or other related art work.

We chose this theme of survival because most people's history relates to keeping alive themselves and their cultures. Women of many nations have maintained traditions and preserved histories when the men of their societies were ineffective or were being destroyed, as well as in groupings of independent women fighting for their identity. Where are all the photographs and stories of women? We are offering a place for women to share these moments of common wisdom, humor, pain, work, struggle, and creative expression.

The theme opens many dimensions: culture and art, jobs, skills, food-getting, mental health, sex, work in the home, co-operatives, visions and dreams, drugs, unions, federations, organizations, nutrition, body health -- anything that relates to women keeping alive, even in bleak times. What gave them hope to go on?

* * *

Contribute to this effort, please. The latest deadline: June 1 (we'd like material sooner, if possible). We cannot guarantee publication of every submitted piece, but we will try. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for materials you want returned.

We cannot pay; we are but independent volunteers. The Minnesota People's History Project is funding the printing. But we will exchange several copies of the publication with contributors.

For more information, call Tracey Baker in the evenings at 227-4476 or Gayla Wadnizak in the daytime at 823-3534. Or write to History of Women's Survival Project, 488 Holly, St. Paul, Minnesota 55102.



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SCOOP

NUMBER 14

COOPERATION IN THE NORTHCOUNTRY

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- DEPRIVATIZATION
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 - MIDWEST WAREHOUSES
 - COOP SHELTER
- and more!

North Country Co-op



Warren Hanson

Inside North Country Co-op the night seventy West Bank residents secured the store and fired four coordinators.

RECENT NEWS: NORTHCOUNTRY CO-OP

UNITY REACHED AT NORTHCOUNTRY CO-OP

Saturday, February 14,

At a workshop for North Country Co-op four CO affiliated coordinators agreed with the rest of the participants on six concrete goals for the advancement of the store in the service of the entire neighborhood.

Also formed was a truce committee delegated with the responsibility of advising and consenting on any actions taken by the workers at the co-op.

Everyone present agreed that the primary task at hand was to make the store more attractive to poor and working class people. Special emphasis was also placed upon the necessity of involving the residents of Cedar-Square West (the West Bank highrises), the unemployed, and senior citizens.

It was also pointed out that autocratic decision-making on the part of the CO affiliated coordinators was inimical to the principles of cooperation.

UNITY BREACHED AT NORTHCOUNTRY CO-OP

Sunday, February 15,

A leaflet characterizing North Country Co-op as a "transformed filthy hippie whole foods store" was produced and distributed by one CO affiliated coordinator. A few leaflets were distributed in the West Bank highrises, but other distribution was averted by residents who were "shocked at the divisive and destructive tone of the leaflet".

"ANOTHER CHANCE"

Tuesday, February 24,

Progressive residents on the West Bank met at North Country Co-op to demand the resignation of the coordinator who had distributed the "filthy hippie" leaflet in the West Bank highrises.

The coordinator promised he would not repeat such actions in the future. He also admitted that he had "only about four months" of political experience. Neighborhood residents decided to "give him another chance --because his self criticism seemed genuine enough".

ANOTHER BREACH

Tuesday, March 9,

An announcement was unilaterally made by 4 CO affiliated coordinators to discontinue the 10% discount given to volunteers who contributed 4 or more hours of work at the store each month. A leaflet was also produced announcing the same. None of the 3 other (non CO) coordinators, the Truce Committee, or Board were consulted.

This was also the night of the second meeting at which the 4 CO affiliated coordinators attempted to fire one of the non-CO coordinators on the grounds that (she) was allegedly preventing the most rapid "transformation" at the co-op. The first meeting was March 2nd. She refused to quit, however, on the grounds that the community or Board must make such a decision.

FOUR "CO" COORDINATORS FIRED

Thursday, March 11,

Seventy West Bank residents met and decided to fire four CO affiliated coordinators at North Country Co-op. It was also decided to occupy the store all night as a security precaution against possible takeover attempts by other CO cadre.

The four CO affiliated coordinators were fired for violating common agreements made between themselves and other workers/shoppers at the co-op. These agreements had been made at the February 14, North Country Co-op workshop.

The specific violations were: making major policy decisions without notifying or consulting other co-op members; and the publication of "divisive and inflammatory" leaflets which were threatening the unity of the neighborhood in facing common problems.

The meeting was originally called to discuss a boycott of North Country Co-op in response to the practices of the CO affiliated coordinators, but it was unanimously agreed to that a boycott would be "too liberal".

As photocopies of the legal incorporation of the "Interim Board" of NCC were passed out the meeting overwhelmingly decided to use the Board's legal powers to take control of the store's finances. Earlier in the day, all assets had been transferred into the Board's account, to be managed by a group of workers accountable to the Board and members.

The transfer of assets was done to protect the finances from being "taken over or frozen by a CO faction within the store" announced one Board member.

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from the Scoop

The Scoop is published by and for the cooperative movement. We welcome your letters, criticisms, and contributions. In dealing with articles, whether solicited or unsolicited, we reserve the right to make criticisms and suggestions to the writer. If interested, please contact us by mail at 2519 1st Av. S. in Minneapolis or at 225-5026 (Tom) or 227-5506 (Dave).

Scoop needs regular and occasional help on distribution, writing, typing, layout, graphics, etc. We hope to have moved by next issue to new office space, so we also need office equipment, especially desks and chairs. Meanwhile, we still are using the basement of Merri-Grove Community Foods in St. Paul -- thanks to them for the help. And thanks to the Minneapolis Foundation for a special grant which enabled us to buy an IBM Executive typewriter with a "Mid-century typeface." We hope our readers like the new look.

Please subscribe: \$5/year regular, \$10/year sustaining or group rate. We need to increase our sales, especially through subscriptions, if we are to be able to continue meeting costs, rent an office, and possibly pay some of the staff (as we have for two issue coordinators this time, a first) a token amount for many hours of work.

This issue went to the printer April 1, 1976.

All fools: Phill Baker, Tom Copeland, Aggie Fletcher, Dave Gutknecht, Warren Hanson, Cy O'Neil, Karen Phelps, Kathy Sharp
Friends of the Scoop: Barb Jensen, Mike Gotzsch, Susan Shroyer, Merri-Grove folks
Cover graphic by Warren

North Country cont.

NORTHCOUNTRY CO-OP CONT.

MOOD FOR DISCUSSION? POLICE CALLED

Friday, March 12,
Police were called at 10:00PM to clear about 40 members of the CO and Committee to Support the Aims of the Co-op Movement from North Country Co-op.
The decision to call the police was made at the People's Center, two blocks away, where 60 people had gathered minutes after the CO and Committee members had entered the co-op. An extensive phone-tree network had been used to contact non CO people.
The sentiments of those at the People's Center were that a discussion with the CO/Committee in this situation would only lead to further bitterness and possible violence, since a number of residents desired to use physical force in a confrontation with the CO.
(Members of the CO/Committee had stated they were at North Country Co-op "to have a discussion with the community.")
The residents group marched two blocks to the co-op and announced to the CO/Committee members that there was no interest in a discussion that night, the store was closed, and if the store was not cleared in five minutes the police would be called.

Twenty minutes later the store was still occupied and the Interim Board called the police.

CO/Committee members left the store with the comment: "We are going to the People's Center to struggle with you people!" No arrests were made and no complaints were signed.

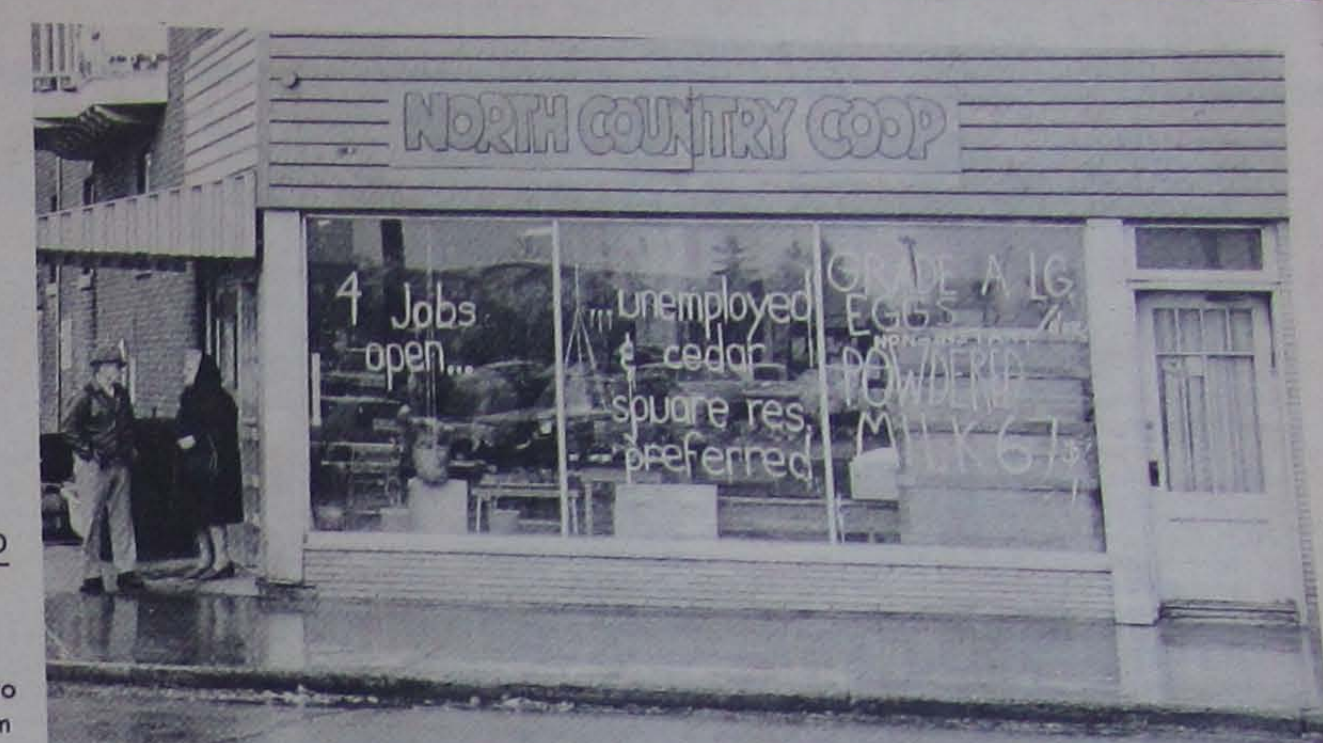
Almost all CO/Committee members went to the People's Center, as well as about half of the residents and supporters. Others had gone home or to the bar.

At the Center people confronted each other with criticisms and accusations. There were no incidents of pushing or shoving. At 11:30 point members of the CO/Committee left.

BOGUS BOARD "IN OVER ITS HEAD"

Monday, March 14,

About 30 people congregated in front of North Country Co-op at 5 pm to attend a meeting called by the CO in a leaflet dis-



Mike Gotzsch

Transition and transformation at the Mother co-op.

tributed in the West Bank highrises. All but about 5 of the 30 people were CO cadre.

The store had been closed since 3 pm by the Interim Workers "to avoid a potentially dangerous confrontation in the store." (A sign on the window announced a co-op meeting for Tuesday night at the People's Center for discussion/debate "Everyone come!". Another sign announced that there were 4 jobs open "...Unemployed and Cedar Square res. preferred".)

A meeting was then organized in the West Bank highrises for 7 pm by the CO in which CO members orchestrated an election of a "new board of directors for North Country Co-op." The legal board immediately proclaimed the "new" board to be a "bogus board" and later stated: "This board is utterly without legal foundation. We would be delighted to prove the same in court."

The following day, one of the highrise residents who had been elected to the CO's bogus board proclaimed that she was in "over her head", and that she was afraid she was being used. After examining the legal documents of the co-op she was sure of it "and she was angry", stated those who had spoken to her.

MORE ARRESTS. CHARGES DROPPED.

Monday, March 15,

Four members of the Committee to Support the Aims of the Co-op Movement were arrested and charged with trespassing after refusing to leave the store. The four were released on their own recognisance, and the charges were later dropped.

About 30 members of the "Aims Committee" had entered North Country Co-op earlier and announced that there was going to be a meeting.

Interim Workers in the store asked them to not stand in front of the checkout counter and to hold any meetings during shopping hours in the basement.

"Aims Committee" members continued to stand in the store and were told that police would be called if they did not leave. All but the four who were arrested left.

GRASS ROOTS SINGED

Monday, March 15,

Eight representatives from the Co-op Organization attended a West Bank Tenants Union meeting and demanded that a resolution concerning the use of the police in the current co-op struggle be discussed at the meeting.

Members of the Tenants Union informed the CO reps that the meeting was concerned "with housing problems and tenants' rights" and that "it could be talked about at the end of the meeting". Amid strong objections from the CO representatives this motion was passed.

At the end of the meeting a majority of those present decided they did not want to discuss the resolution and, amid more strong objections by the CO representatives, the meeting was adjourned.

In the previous days the CO had been distributing leaflets in the West Bank highrises accusing the West Bank Tenants' Union of working on the side of corporate landlords. The West Bank Tenants' Union is a grass roots organization that is responsible for withholding over a quarter of a million dollars in rent from Cedar Riverside Associates, developers of the West Bank highrises.

FACE TO FACE... FORMAL AND INFORMAL

Tuesday, March 16,

160 people gathered at the People's Center to discuss the recent conflicts. About half of the people were from the CO/Committee and about half were from the neighborhood.

The chair outlined an agenda but the topics essentially were tabled for political struggle and dialogue over the theory and practice of both sides.

The meeting broke up when the vague direction of discussion erupted in loud shouting matches. One West Bank resident commented: "...it was the only way it was ever going to end anyway. There was a lot of good informal discussion afterwards."

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ANTICS, CLIQUES & GOALS

STATEMENT BY THE BOARD OF NORTH COUNTRY CO-OP

This is a condensed text.

North Country Co-op has been the focus of the most recent struggle in the co-op movement. The Interim Board of Directors of North Country Co-op wish to clarify our position in this struggle, which is becoming increasingly bitter.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IS NOT SIMPLY THE CONTROL OF A CO-OP FOOD STORE, as important as that may be to many of us. But what is at stake is the solidarity of the entire neighborhood at a time when it faces a most serious challenge. Soon, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) will receive the property currently held by Cedar-Riverside Associates (CRA). CRA, the builders of the West Bank highrises, has been all but destroyed through the efforts of neighborhood residents and organizers. When HUD acquires the property, there will be a long and complicated struggle to insure that the people of Cedar-Riverside win and retain complete control of the land and buildings in which they now live and work.

The sectarian antics of five isolated coordinators at the store are politically significant chiefly because they constitute a threat to such community solidarity at this time.

It is for this reason that representatives of all the progressive community organizations in the neighborhood have taken an active interest in the struggle of the store:

- The East West Bank Tenants Union, which is withholding over a quarter of a million dollars in rent from CRA.
- The Cedar-Riverside Environmental Defense Fund, which has effectively blocked any further construction of high-rise, high density projects, and has brought a large corporate pyramid to its knees.
- The Project Area Committee, the chief political voice of the residents and small merchants in the neighborhood.
- The Cedar-Riverside Community Development Corporation, the grassroots neighborhood agency building for a future under the economic and political control of the people.

These are the people the CO has described in a recent leaflet as "a tiny clique of selfish hypocrites". These are some of the people who have realized that the CO meddling in our community cannot be tolerated.

On January 9, Mill City and Seward Co-ops were attacked by the CO. On the same day, a large group of shoppers, stockholders and other community residents gathered at North Country Co-op in response to fears that we too might be attacked.

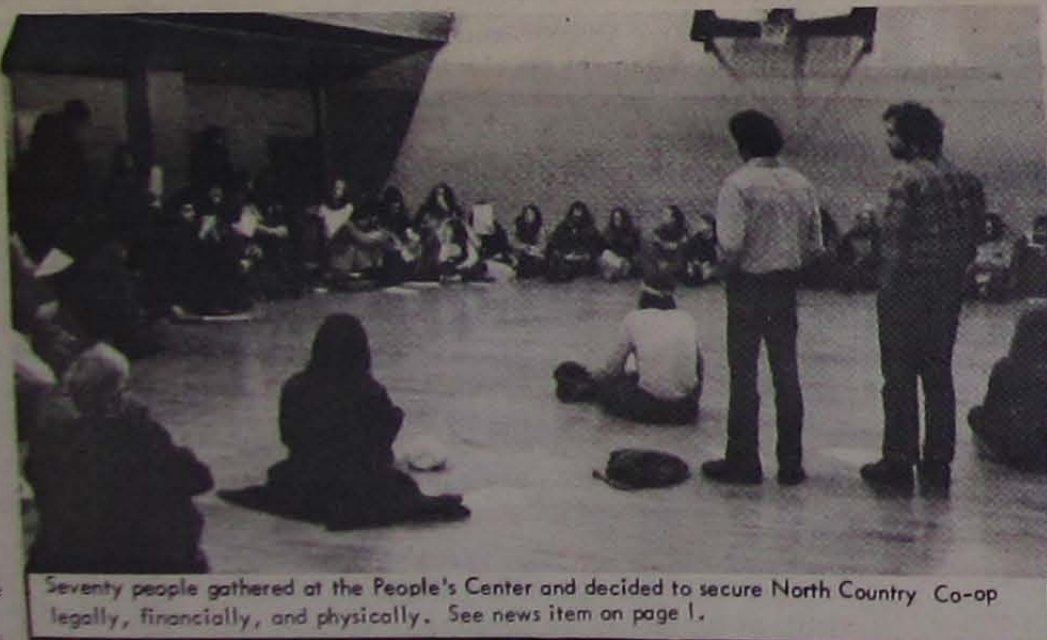
At that meeting it was decided to activate the dormant corporation which had existed since the foundation of North Country Co-op five years ago. The purpose of reactivating this corporation was to assert genuinely progressive control over the store, and to guard against any CO attempts at a takeover by legal means. Such attempts had been made at Seward and Mill City.

On January 21 a neighborhood meeting was held. At issue was which warehouse to patronize. The shoppers had given a clear mandate in favor of buying from DuffCo, and against buying from People's Warehouse. Four of the Coordinators had chosen to disregard this and had forced a compromise under which half the store's business was to go to each warehouse.

At this meeting it was decided that a workshop would be held at the People's Center on Feb. 14. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss alternative legal structures and various other matters of policy.

On February 14, the four CO-directed coordinators took over the leadership of the meeting and substituted their own agenda. After a long ideological statement about "hippies" and "food faddists" and "social clubs", discussion was allowed to commence. The non-CO progressives at the workshop were ready to admit that much of what was said in the ideological statement was true. That is, there had been a tendency toward elitism and insularity in the store. For many years, the store had not in fact been interested in serving the needs of the working class. And whatever may have been true in the past, no one expressed any interest in any kind of food policy which might be construed as elitist. NO ONE AT THE WORKSHOP WISHED TO DEFEND FOOD PURISM.

Everyone agreed that the primary task at hand was to make the store more attractive to poor and working class people. But it was also pointed out that autocratic decision-making on the part of the four CO-directed coordinators was inimical to the principle of cooperation upon which the store is built.



Seventy people gathered at the People's Center and decided to secure North Country Co-op legally, financially, and physically. See news item on page 1.

Special emphasis was placed upon THE NECESSITY OF INVOLVING THE RESIDENTS OF CEDAR SQUARE WEST, SENIOR CITIZENS AND OTHERS—especially poor, unemployed, and working class people.

The coordinators agreed to make no major policy changes without the consent of the Supervisory Committee elected at this same meeting by all present. (This agreement is especially important in view of later events.)

Most importantly, everyone at the workshop agreed—as the foundation of a progressive synthesis—to work TOGETHER in pursuit of six concrete goals for the advancement of the store in the service of the entire neighborhood:

1. Rehabilitate the store.
2. Expand the foodline to carry a variety of popular foods not now carried.
3. Organize the bookkeeping.
4. Centralize the work in the store through work committees immediately.
5. Establish a delivery service for senior citizens and a shuttle service to help them get to the store.
6. Form an outreach committee to involve more people in decisions and operation of the store.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that THESE PROGRESSIVE GOALS WERE AGREED TO UNANIMOUSLY; and it was understood that we would all work toward them.

But on the very next day after this progressive synthesis was apparently achieved, one of the CO directed coordinators produced an inflammatory leaflet*, intended for use in Cedar Square West. This leaflet* began by characterizing North Country Co-op as a "filthy hippy whole foods store". This coordinator distributed some of his leaflets... but a large scale canvassing was averted by those who were shocked at the divisive and destructive tone of the leaflet.*

This coordinator's action posed a grave danger to the neighborhood solidarity we are trying to build. No one is served—least of all the working class—by insinuating everyone East of the highrises is a "hippy" who shares no interest with anyone who lives in the highrises.*

Such actions have the appearance of a deliberate provocation, which make it very difficult to trust or to work with their perpetrators.

This young coordinator at a meeting on Feb. 24, admitted he had very little political experience (about four months, he said)—a fact which is becoming increasingly apparent. He promised that no more

information of this kind would be published except through the work committees. His self-criticism seemed genuine enough. So, the progressives in the neighborhood who had come to demand his resignation decided to give him one more chance. This decision in retrospect appears to have been liberal.

Two weeks later, March 9, the CO-directed coordinators unilaterally announced a major change in the store's pricing policy. Another leaflet had been printed, announcing that the 10% discount was no longer to be given to volunteers who put in four hours per month or more at the store. This action was taken without consulting anyone.

Furthermore, no one was asked to help to mobilize community opinion behind the policy change. This fact revealed a really pathetic idealism regarding political realities and processes on the part of the CO-directed coordinators. Evidently they thought that the "correctness" of their ideas alone, without any reference to the concrete political conditions in the neighborhood, would carry them to a glorious victory.

It was clear that the CO-directed coordinators had no intention whatsoever of

working with any of the progressives of the community toward the common goals. It was equally clear that all they were interested in was the imposition of their own personal will over the store.

On Friday, March 12, representatives of the Committee to Support the Aims of the Co-op Movement came to the store and refused to leave, claiming they represented the legitimate owners of the store. Their claim to legitimacy was based on a petition of a number of highrise residents had signed in support of a "one price for all" markup policy.* This was not the real issue of the controversy. It was simply another example of CO manipulation of poor and working class people.

On March 14 the CO called a hastily meeting in the West Bank highrises* claiming it was organized by the highrise residents. At this meeting the CO "elected" a new board of directors for North Country Co-op. This "board" is utterly without legal foundation. We would be delighted to prove the same in court.

On the following day, one of the residents of the highrises paid a visit to the Project Area Committee office. She said that she had been elected to the CO's bogus board, that she felt that she was in "over her head" and that she was afraid that she was being used. After examining the legal documents of the real Board of Directors, she was sure of it and she was angry.

On Monday a well attended Tenants Union meeting was held in Cedar Square West. It was obvious at this meeting that the progressives in the highrises* recognize their common interests with the rest of the organized tenants in the neighborhood, and that they had very little sense of solidarity with the CO outsiders.

In the near future, preparations will be made for a stockholders meeting to elect a permanent board of directors, transform the store to a permanent board of directors, proceeding democratically. This permanent board will have full authority to set policy at the store and to employ the management of the store, in the name of the stockholders. Before the stockholders meeting more shares will be issued at a very low cost to residents and workers in the neighborhood. We wish to insure the widest possible participation in this meeting, which will determine the future of North Country Co-op.

THERE ARE JOBS OPEN AT NORTH COUNTRY NOW. PREFERENCE WILL BE GIVEN TO RESIDENTS OF CEDAR SQUARE WEST AND UNEMPLOYED PERSONS.

For the Interim Board of Directors:
Fr. Bill Teska, pres.
Kate Sullivan, v.p.
Ralph Witcoff, director

* This line was paraphrased, not a direct quote.



Powderhorn



Police were again unable to determine who had legal control of a co-op on Saturday March 27, at Powderhorn Food Community. Police were called two times and on the second call they ordered the store cleared pending a decision by the city attorneys office. See story page 6.

POWDERHORN RESTRUCTURING

Saturday, February 14

Two restructuring proposals were presented at the monthly general meeting of Powderhorn Food Community. It was decided that an election committee made up of supporters from the two proposals would draw up guidelines for a store-wide referendum on the proposals. The proposals were presented in compliance with the Six Point Restructuring Plan, which had been adopted at PFC last June and called for an evaluation of the restructuring after six months.

One proposal, entitled "Best of Both Worlds," outlined its four basic goals to be 1) to provide cheap, nutritious food; 2) to do so through a cooperative effort on the part of those using the store; 3) to insure that those using and working at PFC would have a role in decision making; 4) to turn PFC into a model of democracy for its workers and shoppers. The proposal outlined a structure which would rest the decision making process at the store in the store's volunteer work groups.

The store's Co-op Council presented its own proposal of six goals for the store. It criticized the current structure at Powderhorn as fostering the idea that the co-op was separate from the neighborhood. It focused on a number of store policies geared to "serve the poor and the working class." The policies included providing low cost food, operating efficiently and creating jobs for the unemployed. The proposal offered no structural plan for the store.

"Best of Both Worlds" proponents insisted the council draw up a proposal outlining how decisions would be made at the store.

It was agreed both proposals would be included in the February newsletter and that elections could be held the third week in March.

NEGOTIATIONS BREAKDOWN

Saturday, March 6

Proponents of Powderhorn's "Best of Both Worlds" proposal announced a breakdown in election committee negotiations. They called on Powderhorn shoppers to boycott the store until an agreement on election procedures could be reached.

The election committee reached a deadlock on its third meeting. Proponents of the Centralized proposal asked that votes in the election be gathered by petitioners going door to door in the Powderhorn neighborhood. They said they wanted to insure broad participation of the community.

"It's obvious," said a "Best of Both Worlds" leaflet, "that this kind of indirect ballot box stuffing cannot produce a fair election." "Best of Both Worlds" supporters said the Centralized proposal had little support among Powderhorn workers and shoppers and that the petition's real purpose was to circumvent that lack of support.

At the third meeting of the committee, representatives of the Centralized proposal tried to break the deadlock by appealing the matter to Powderhorn's Co-op Council. "Best of Both Worlds" people objected, saying the Council's authority had expired some weeks back along with the initial restructuring plan.

A representative of the Council attended the meeting and gave the Council's support to the neighborhood petition. The Centralized proposal was written by members of the Council.

Following the meeting, supporters of the Centralized proposal said the referendum would go ahead as scheduled.

BOARD ELECTED

Saturday, March 20

CO-OP TUG OF WAR

-- by Cy O'Neil

The monthly general meeting of Powderhorn Food Community elected an interim board of directors today and instructed it to return control of PFC to the store's workers and shoppers. The meeting also voted to declare the election currently being held by backers of the Centralist proposal to be invalid.

The meeting was attended by about 70 Powderhorn workers and shoppers. There were no supporters of the Centralized proposal or members of the store's Co-op Council at the meeting. Both actions by the meeting received near unanimous support from those attending. Board members elected were Nancy Okerlund, Ken McCormick, Bob Foucault, Barb Joseph, and Ethel Vogen.

In other actions, the meeting authorized the board to secure the store until it could be operated peacefully. It also approved a motion that the board could call on police only when damage to the store or injury to the store's members seemed imminent. It was urged at the meeting that people continue to boycott the store. So far, the boycott has cut Powderhorn's weekly sales volume in half, from roughly \$2,000 down to \$1,000 a week, according to store bookkeepers.

FROZEN CHECKS

Tuesday, March 23

Bloomington-Lake Bank froze the checking account of Powderhorn Foods today. The bank took the action following attempts to gain control of the accounts by contending boards of directors at PFC. One group presented papers showing that it had been duly elected by a general meeting of PFC in accordance with the by-laws of the store. The other group presented papers showing that Powderhorn's Co-op Council, as the old board of directors of Powderhorn, had validated the results of a store election. The results of the election favored the Centralist proposal and a board of directors comprised of Tim Lund, Barb Halloran, Shirley Ojile, Lori Hanson, Jeff Johnson and Dan Rybeck.

Powderhorn cont.

"OPEN SUNDAY"

Sunday, March 28

The sign in the window of the Powderhorn Food Community read today "Open Sunday". The store was staffed by supporters of the Centralized Board of Directors and the Co-op Organization.

BUY - IN

Saturday, March 27

A buy-in staged at Powderhorn co-op today led to the closing of that store by police. The buy-in was called for by the Board of Directors elected at the March 20 Powderhorn general meeting. The goal

of the action, the Board said, was to demonstrate Powderhorn community's right to assert control over the store. The Board asked people to break a three-week old boycott of Powderhorn by shopping at the store this morning and paying for the food with checks made out to the Board's Treasurer, Bob Foucault.

After about an hour, the buy-in was stopped by Tim Lund, a member of a rival Board elected through a neighborhood petition. Lund and two members of the Coop Organization entered the store and locked the door behind them, trapping about 10 of the buy-in demonstrators in the store. The buy-in continued briefly while demonstrators smuggled bags of groceries and checks out the bathroom window of the store.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND ON POWDERHORN

- by Cy O'Neil

Powderhorn Food Community (PFC) has always been characterized by strong efforts at neighborhood involvement in the store and at worker control.

Up until last June, Powderhorn functioned as a series of volunteer work groups staffed by about 250 Powderhorn shoppers. All work and all decisions were based in these work groups.

The non-hierarchical volunteer approach did have its drawbacks. Participation in the groups was irregular, leaving some shouldering more responsibility -- thru default -- than others. At the same time, no single person or group had clear responsibility for the overall continuity and cohesion of store operations. The arrangement caused a certain amount of confusion and inefficiency at the store. It also demanded a degree of commitment from people shopping at Powderhorn -- a commitment that a lot of neighborhood people were unable or unwilling to make.

In June, Powderhorn was restructured and it is out of this restructuring that Powderhorn's current dilemma grew (See Scoop #10 and #12).

The reorganization of the store was the result of a six point proposal which had been drawn up by some Powderhorn members who supported the Co-op Organization.

Among other things, the proposal called for the creation of a Co-op Council of six people who would be responsible for pursuing three goals: broadening the food line in the store, broadening participation in the store to include working class people in the neighborhood, and to initiate education on food politics and nutrition.

The proposal also called for the hiring of two co-ordinators to oversee the day to day operation at the store.

Work group decision making was scrapped entirely, with the only possible decision making outside of the Council's control to be done thru special, store-wide

referendums.

The proposal also set its own expiration date. A new proposal was to be written up and voted on six months after the initial restructuring.

A number of Powderhorn people opposed the restructuring saying it subverted the work groups and concentrated power into the hands of a few. Further, they saw involvement by members of the Co-op Organization in the restructuring as a prelude to a take over at the store by the CO. But the overall goal of widening neighborhood involvement in the store struck a responsive chord among a majority of Powderhorn members and the store work groups eventually approved the proposal.

As the months passed, things changed at Powderhorn. New foods were added to the inventory, attempts were made to initiate a child care program to encourage more neighborhood people to shop in the store, and the Powderhorn neighborhood was leafletted in attempts to attract new people to the store.

There were also problems. People who used to be active in the store began to withdraw their support. A card file of people actively involved at Powderhorn shrank from 250 in June to roughly 100 by January. People said they felt their involvement, particularly in the area of decision making was not wanted by the store co-ordinators or the Council.

The situation took a turn for the worse in October when a small group of Powderhorn members initiated a store wide referendum to get Powderhorn to join the new All Co-op Assembly, a move opposed by the Council.

Six days before the referendum, the Council ruled that 75% of the membership would have to vote for the referendum to be valid. The decision was obviously geared to stifle the referendum as an effective decision making channel.

The decision was also indefensible. As soon as organizers of the referendum notified Powderhorn's workers and shoppers of the

The police arrived about twenty minutes later in response to a call from "the manager of Powderhorn Food Co-op." Police said they had been told food was being stolen from the store. Unable to determine who had legal control of the store, the police closed the store pending a decision from the city attorney's office.

Both groups denied calling the police. Buy-in demonstrators, numbering about 20, clapped and cheered as the police cleared the store and the buy-in demonstrators trapped inside were released. Close to \$500 worth of inventory was sold during the buy-in, according to the demonstrators.

decision, the Council backed down.

But the whole episode sparked a growing opposition to the Council.

In January, the Council initiated a referendum of its own calling for a single mark-up pricing policy at the store. Like many Twin Cities co-ops, Powderhorn operated under a varied mark-up pricing system: 10% for shoppers who worked in the store, 20% for those who did not.

The Council felt the 20% mark-up discriminated against working people in the neighborhood and discouraged them from shopping at the store. The Council wanted a 'one mark-up for all' pricing policy.

Others felt the lower 10% mark-up was essential for maintaining involvement in the store. They saw the Council's push for one mark-up as an attempt to dampen further people's involvement in the work and decisions of the store.

For the referendum, the Council dropped any percentage requirement to validate the vote. They also ruled that anyone who had a sincere interest in the store could vote.

Not surprisingly, the referendum passed. In February, the restructuring plan came up for evaluation. Essentially the Plan and the Council's term had expired.

During its six months, the Council had made efforts thru broadening the store's line of foods and instituting a single mark-up policy to bring more working class people into the store.

But at the same time, the Council and many of Powderhorn's members had become divided. Members said it was over the issue of how decisions would be made at the store. The Council maintained that most of the store's membership was trying to thwart the goals of the restructuring.

With the expiration of the restructuring plan and the convening of the February general meeting to evaluate the past six months, the door was open to a struggle for control of the store.

More News

RADICALS ORGANIZE

Wednesday, February 11

A meeting of about 60 persons was held in Minneapolis in response to a leaflet calling for radicals to organize against "infantile and divisive leftism." The group agreed on plans to write a critique of the Coop Organization's practice and theory and to work on forming a federation of non-CO radical organizations. (For more details, see p. 23.)

CONFERENCE ON POLICE REPRESSION

Friday, February 13

Friday the 13th was the first of three days of talks and forums on police repression, sponsored by the People's Front to Repress Police Repression, a Coop Organization group. Held at Metropolitan Junior College in Minneapolis, the conference featured films, local speakers, and a talk by a man from Counter Spy magazine. About fifty people were in attendance.

ALL-COOP ASSEMBLY MEETS

February 13-15

The second semi-annual All Coop Assembly conference was held on February 13-15 at the site Center in south Minneapolis. Representatives from about 25 coops from around the region met in workshops and general sessions to view current coop-related projects, discuss and approve funding for ACA committees, and elect new committee members.

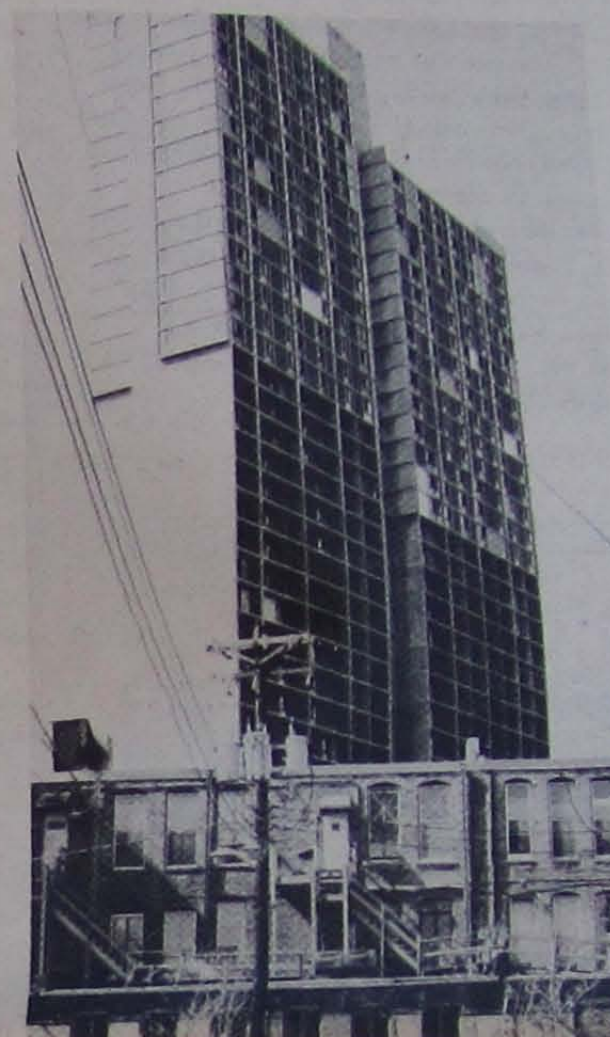
The ACA is a federation of co-ops, service unions, and work collectives in the Northcountry, most of them food related and over half of them in the Twin Cities. The founding meeting was held in late August near New Ulm, Minnesota; it was attended by about 50 persons representing around half that many co-ops. Since then, ongoing ACA work has been done in outreach, financial and legal investigation, in food research, and by a coordinating committee.

The first day of the February conference was a fair attended by many people, with tables and displays by many groups, ranging from clothes and crafts to political literature. Various workshops were held. Lunch was catered on three separate days by Twin Cities co-op cafes and a restaurant.

Saturday and Sunday were spent with the full group discussing the work of the ACA, drafting a statement of purpose and approving qualifications for membership. Budgets for the above-mentioned committees and equipment and resources were approved, totalling around \$2200 for the next six months. Each member will contribute to the ACA through a two mil tax on the member's gross receipts (\$2/1000). New members were elected to the legal and finance, outreach, food, farm, equipment, and coordinating committees.

Minutes of the meeting and an ACA newsletter were sent out in late March. (See ACA report on p. 19.)

SINCE LAST ISSUE

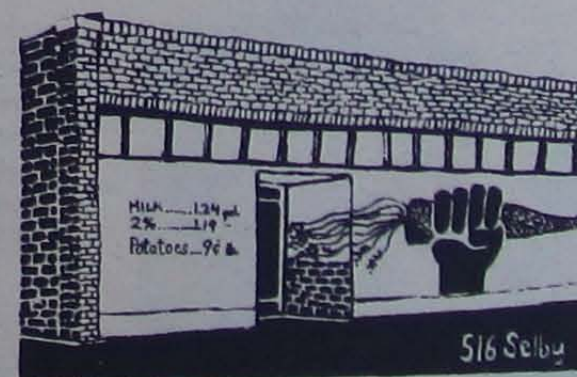


Looking west to the Cedar West highrises from behind the east side housing along Cedar Av., on Minneapolis' West Bank. The neighborhood, and the highrises in particular, have been the locale of much recent activity involving North Country Co-op, the Tenants Union, and the Coop Organization. (See p. 113)

SELBY INCARCERATION

Wednesday, February 25

A twenty-two year old black man was sentenced in Ramsey District Court to one to ten years in Stillwater Prison on a charge of aggravated robbery for the October 16, 1975, holdup of Selby Community Foods, St. Paul.



MIDWEST WAREHOUSES MEET

February 26-28

Representatives from 8 Midwest food distribution collectives and the San Francisco coop warehouse met for three days in Chicago. The purpose of the conference -- the third such meeting since last fall -- was to explore the political

basis of unity of the alliance and to establish a brokerage, Trung, to serve the Midwest coop warehouses. Trung brokers will coordinate trucking, sources, and buying; it will have an office and one full-time staff in Madison, funded by the participating groups.

On the second day of the conference, People's Warehouse of Minneapolis walked out when the other representatives refused to exclude DANCe. San Francisco, however, announced through their representative that they would boycott DANCe and supported PW. This was followed by a show of support for DANCe from the other Midwest groups and a subsequent decision to cut off all orders from San Francisco by Trung.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 27-29 in Iowa City. (See story and map on p. 20.)

COOP ORGANIZATION PROSECUTIONS

Friday, March 5

Negotiations were held at an assistant city attorney's office in Minneapolis with some of the ten Coop Organization members arrested at the January 9 attempted takeovers at Seward Coop and Mill City Foods. The negotiations concerned a proposed continuation of the charges for a year if those arrested agreed to certain restrictions -- specifically, that they stay away from the stores and the individuals they attacked. This proposal was rejected by the C.O. members, and their trial has therefore been placed on the court docket. It is not expected to come before June.

Assault and breach of the peace charges face Mark Johnson, Michael Holt, Bob Malles, Rick Owens, and Bob Craft -- filed by Kris Olsen and Leo Cashman, store coordinators who were thrown out of Seward on January 9. In addition, a civil suit stemming from this incident has been filed also, seeking \$1000 in damages and a permanent restraining order forbidding their presence at the store, naming the above five plus ten John Does and Mary Does, unidentified C.O. persons who took part in the takeover attempt. Summons had been prepared and were expected to be issued in late March. Upon receiving one, the person named has twenty days in which to reply.

The other five persons who will be part of the upcoming trial face misdemeanor charges stemming from incidents at Mill City on January 9. At that coop, Judy Long, Paul McClusky, and Jeff Frank are charged with breach of the peace and unlawful assembly for their part in a similar takeover attempt that morning. That evening, C.O. persons returned to the store, broke in, and were arrested after the police were again called. Judy Long, Paul McClusky, Lorrie Stern, and Mark Zembycki were arrested and charged with trespassing. Charges from these incidents are being pressed by Pete Simmons and Chuck Phenix, store coordinators.

More News

COOP ORGANIZATION VISITS NORTHSIDE

Saturday, March 6

Northside Community Foods in Minneapolis was visited by members of the Coop Organization/Committee to Support the Aims of the Co-op Movement, who passed out leaflets giving their usual criticisms of the coops: that the store is being run by an elitist group, that the co-op should not have a reduced markup for volunteers and should employ more people, that the store doesn't sell canned goods, and that people in the neighborhood don't like the store. The CO/Committee leafletters gathered around the entrance, blocking it, and Northside workers called the police in order to have it cleared. For the rest of that day and on subsequent days, the leafletters stayed on the outer part of the sidewalk. The CO/Committee later in the month also distributed leaflets throughout the neighborhood. A Northside worker counted 8 or 10 persons who turned away from the store in one afternoon after talking with the leafletters. Another Northside worker said, in reply to the CO/Committee criticisms, that the volunteer and reduced markup system was necessary to keep prices down, that Northside has sold canned goods for many months, and that business by neighborhood people has been steadily increasing. The last day in March on which the leafletters came, Saturday the 20th, the store took in a high of \$905.

NEW DANCE MONEY POLICIES

Monday, March 8

DANCE warehouse announced a new credit and capitalization policy designed to meet an immediate crisis of capital and long-term capitalization needs. The crisis was created by overextended credit and by a rapidly rising demand (sales were \$46,000 in January and \$62,000 in February), which was making it

difficult to maintain an adequate inventory. The new policy, recommended by the collective and approved by the Board at their March 6 meeting, eliminates all credit except for up to \$300 for new coops, and it requires a repayment agreement with coops which presently have credit with DANCE. Secondly, it calls for DANCE members to capitalize DANCE by buying an amount of stock that is equivalent to the member's weekly warehouse bill, payable through an additional 5% charge per week for 20 weeks or through an alternative method if proposed by the member.

Later that week, DANCE released a profit and loss statement and balance sheet for their first five months, ending February 29. Net sales were \$209,531.15. Gross profit was \$17,406.66. Net income, after expenses, was \$2408.71.

NEW CO-OP -- LINDEN HILLS

Sunday, March 21

An open house and pot luck was held at Linden Hills Co-op, 4303 Upton Av. S., Minneapolis, to celebrate the opening of the store the next day. Visitors were enthusiastic and the fresh spirit of friendliness and co-operation was infectious. "Veggie people, I like that name!" exclaimed one older woman with years of business experience who will be ordering vegetables for the co-op.

Behind the counter a young woman sold membership cards for \$5 to raise capital for the co-op (see photo). It entitles members to work in the store and participate in decision-making. Over 200 have already been sold. The store is incorporated as a legal co-operative. A 10% discount is available to those who work four hours a month. Five dollar food coupons were also being sold to help raise immediate capital. The coupons are redeemable over the next 18 months. Linden Hills is buying from DANCE warehouse.



At the open house for the new Linden Hills Co-op

PEOPLE'S WAREHOUSE WORKERS FIRED

Monday, March 29

Three People's Warehouse workers were fired today, and a notice was posted on the door saying PW was closed for restructuring. PW has been controlled by the Coop Organization since their May 1975 occupation and takeover. New workers, some of them not CO members, have since filled most of the positions in the PW collective, which at the time of the firing consisted of 7 persons.

At least one of the three -- Terry, Arlene, and Steve -- was known to have expressed dissatisfaction with the CO control of the warehouse operation. A long-time PW worker and CO member stated that the three workers were fired for "taking an economist line" within PW by pushing for higher wages. PW is known to face a very difficult financial situation, with sales volume very low and continuing payments due on the building's contract for deed.

CO leaders at PW and the PW accountant since last fall, John Harding, have had several meetings in recent weeks with representatives of the Policy Review Board -- the legal governing board of PW since 1974 -- and a lawyer aiding the PRB representatives, Dick Rahders. PW representatives claim that they are governed by a new, legitimate Board of Directors. The meetings between the two sides have explored the financial and legal situation of PW. The same day as the firings, Harding called Rahders concerning the new developments. Few details were available from either side, however.

NEW NORTHEAST MINNEAPOLIS CO-OP

Wednesday, April 7

On April 7, a new co-op at 1946 Johnston St., N.E. in Minneapolis will be opening.

To become a voting member one can purchase a \$2.00 voting stock plus work 4 hours each month. Northeast is the only local legal worker cooperative, which means each voting member must work 4 hours a month. However, one can hold a \$2.00 share of stock without working and become a non-voting member. The board of Directors has 6 members.

They are getting started with money from stock funds, loans and a spaghetti dinner which was held on March 27.



Co-ops in the Northcountry

GOINGS ON ...

News and information compiled by Kathy Sharp, with help from Tom Copeland.

Bryant-Central

Gary

Seward Coop

Kris

Bryant-Central had its first annual spring festival on March 27. A boogie at the Native American Indian Center was held for the occasion. We're growing and working hard.

We're expanding our food line and are now carrying white rice, brown sugar and various canned and jarred items. Various committees have been formed: neighborhood committee, maintenance, food research, outreach, and newsletter committees. New shelves have been built for shopping convenience. We're discussing becoming legally incorporated as a co-op.



Seward Cafe

Mich & Terry

We're breaking records for weekend breakfast! Our volume is growing and our grill space has been increased. The outside will be opening soon and more tables are going to be set up to seat 25 people.



Southeast

Bruce

The store is the tightest it's been in a year. We're looking for a collective to help with opening the store and co-ordinating in exchange for food credits. Southeast is an all-volunteer co-op, and more people have been helping out. Two new coolers have been added.

Red Star Herbs

Rebecca

Car Shop

Rocky

Since our new addition of Doug last month, we're now a 5 member collective. This is the season for making contact with farmers for growing herbs. We had hoped to contract with some farmers at the OGBA conference, but had no success. We decided to close the store for retail business on Tuesdays, opening for out-of-town and out-of-state co-ops only.

We have two new mechanics, one working in the office keeping the books together and working as a service manager, giving estimates, making appointments, and giving general information. The other new worker is in the shop. We've started getting into a little bit of body work. A coffee pot and oscilloscope are our latest new equipment.



Seward Day Care

Lynn

We're accepting resumes for a teacher to start around May. What we're aiming for is a non-sexist, creative, free flowing person who can stand up to 22-28 kids and adults hammering at her/him. The shift is 4 days a week, 5 hours a shift. We're planning on studying the stars, charts and personalities of all our kids. If interested, call Colleen at the school or Lynn at 721-6835 nights.

Our kids are eating trash food that the city of Minneapolis supplies us. We're trying to change this, and we need equipment, money, time and energy. We need to find people to make lunches that are up to public health officials' coded kitchens.



Mill City

from the newsletter

At the February community meeting, a proposal forming a food committee was presented and accepted. The committee will set up some general guidelines for Mill City's food policy and also handle decisions as they come up. Three basic things the committee will be considering are food quality, store economics, and community needs. The committee's decisions should reflect both community input and store workers' opinion.

Mill City incorporated itself as a legal co-operative. Membership is defined as ownership of one share of Mill City stock, now on sale in the store for \$3 each. All stock holders will be eligible to vote at the membership meeting.

Freewheel Bike Co-op

Bill

We had a good winter renting and sealing cross country skis and snowshoes. We've got six stands ready for bike repair and are fully stocked with bikes and parts.



Northcountry Drygoods

Vicki

Men's shirts are now on sale. Summer designs are in and special orders can be taken from patterns available. Pots and potting soil can be bought also. The only paid person, Vicki, has now worked at the Drygoods for over four years.

Northcountry Hardware

Jerry and Larry

The garden store is doing well with a large selection of bulk seeds available. They would like to provide wholesale hardware goods to those co-ops interested in selling them. Both Whole Foods in Duluth and Famine Foods in Winona now carry hardware items. The store will be having a whitewash party soon to paint the outside of their building. They need an artist to paint the store's name and address.

A board of directors election was held in January. We've broadened our inventory to canned tomato products, unsweetened grape juice and crunchy nuggets. We've got two new co-ordinators, Diana and Paul. Business has picked up considerably. Two weeks ago we came within \$15 of doing \$8000 worth of business in a week! -- an all time record.



Whole Foods

Phil

We recently took a survey on whether or not to carry canned foods, and the response was 50/50. We've got two new coordinators, Mike and Phil. The volunteer hour quota is changing to 3 hours a month. The store was televised in a short program which included an interview with Jan Havens. Marcia, a coordinator, had a baby boy!

Co-ops in the Northcountry cont.



Peoples' Company Bakery

In a leaflet entitled "Where Is Cooperation Now?" Peoples Company reprinted a letter from Paul McClusky from Our Daily Bread. The letter says that ODB has no record of a \$500 loan from PC made in March, 1975, when PC helped ODB get started. The leaflet denounces ODB for "sneakyism" and reproduces the cashier's check made out to ODB. In response to this ODB recognizes its debt but refuses to pay the remaining \$420. (see ODB below) "Will the Northcountry cooperating community continue to let a small group make a mockery of the concept of cooperation?" asks the leaflet.

Our Daily Bread

In a leaflet entitled "Why Does Our Daily Bread Bakery Refuse Peoples' Company's Demand For Money?" ODB criticizes PC for not serving working class people. It was written in response to a PC leaflet (see PC above). ODB claims to be serving working people because they recognize that their resources come from working people. Until PC understands and agrees with this, ODB says it will not pay back their \$420 debt to PC.

Mayday Bookstore Steven and Janis

Open since November, 1975, Mayday is an "independent left bookstore" located at 365 Selby Avenue in St. Paul, across from Commonplace. They carry a variety of political books as well as a selection of non-sexist, non-racist children's books. Hours are 12-8 M-F, 10-6 Sat. Books are sold at publisher's prices.

OUT OF TOWN

St. Cloud Food Co-op St. Cloud, MN

Marya

Things are picking up in St. Cloud. We'll be moving out of the Newman Center within a month, since we've found a storefront on East St. Germain St. It's a beautiful place but needs some work to comply with Health Dept. regulations.

Anybody with a line on a nice veggie cooler? Business is growing daily as what used to be a college students' store sees more families from the community shopping and working. In the last few months we've instituted a working committee structure, and at the last membership meeting, a 7 member board of directors was elected from the committees.

We currently have one paid coordinator, Roger Dahlin, who will be training a person to coordinate when he leaves. We're experiencing a fantastic amount of growth and change, which is sometimes a strain but always beautiful.

Commonwealth Warehouse Duluth, MN

After spending our first year in a building on the east end, we have just completed a move to 1620 W. Michigan St. The building boasts of a loading dock, newly painted walls, and beautifully sanded and varnished wooden floors. The offices are spacious, having been built and designed by us. We initiated ourselves and our new building with a potluck dinner and square dance on March 13. We are in the process of incorporating as a cooperative association and hopefully will

Whole Foods Co-op Duluth, MN

We're getting too big for our space, and there is lots of talk of starting another store either in Superior or another part of Duluth. Hopefully this will happen soon. Reorganization is going on in response to booming sales. We're growing and changing and all learning a lot in the process.

Famine Foods Winona, MN

Randy

Famine is Winona's local retail storefront co-op, open since 1972; it now has 500 members and is growing too fast. Famine is engaged in several changes in its operational structure to better meet the demands placed upon it. A "sounding board" was formed to fill a go-between role between membership and coordinators. Two coordinators have been hired for full-time positions to facilitate more organized operation and help the part-time coordinators. The "cooperative learning group" has been collecting information and short write-ups have been posted on the food containers in Famine which describe the products' point of origin, processing, and nutritive value and uses.



Sunflower Honey Collective

Michael

The Sunflower honey collective is comprised of 3 people, two of whom are beekeepers and two of whom were formerly food co-op coordinators. We buy unprocessed honey and repackaging it for distribution among the co-ops. If a store's honey begins to crystallize, we're available for help. In addition, we are trying to provide a market for small beekeepers in the area who have little choice but to try to market their honey themselves or sell it to a processor.

The honey that comes through us is not processed, which means it hasn't been heated to the temperature at which nutrition and flavor are impaired. Our honey is raw and comes from within 100 miles of the Twin Cities except in unusual cases. One problem is having access to more honey than we can sell to the co-ops.

Sunflower honey is stored at and delivered by DANCE; in exchange for services there, we work a day or so each week.

Great River Wholesale Co-operative/Prairie Harvest Collective Winona, MN

Randy

The GRWC recently formed under Minnesota co-operative statutes as a federated (co-op of co-ops) wholesale having a membership of eight locals presently, recently assumed much of the business formerly performed by Prairie Harvest Collective. Prairie Harvest continues to make sales to individuals and groups who are not members of Great River and is under contract with Great River to manage and operate Great River's day-to-day business. Great River continues to operate as a weekly preorder operation, although "front" deposits, collected by a 5% surcharge on purchases since the end of November and treated like a loan from member co-ops, have brought in enough additional capital that the inventory is beginning to expand, largely to provide reserve stocks on hand in case a supplier is out or goods do not arrive in time.

Wintergreen Community Co-op Albert Lea, MN

Rodney & Sara

In October '75, we moved into a new location after spending several months remodeling our new store. Business has been steadily increasing, and we are becoming well known in the community.

A group of 9 coordinators runs the co-op and meets monthly. We have a volunteer pool of about 40. Workers and senior citizens receive a 10% discount. A food run is made every 2 weeks, and sales average \$80 daily. A good foods cookbook should be available for sale in the summer. We're also trying to finance a cooler.

Our store is run on an all-volunteer basis; no one person is in charge. Any input from co-ops organized on this basis would help us.

Co-ops in the Northcountry cont.

LaCrosse People's Co-op LaCrosse, WI

from the newsletter

Stock is growing but space isn't. One-inch boards are being sought to accommodate our larger inventory. A bake sale was held, and the money made went to the electrician. An interest in starting a construction co-op has been voiced. Anyone with any ideas or interest should contact Tim Pendleton at (507) 482-6878.

St. Luke Community Co-op Minnetonka, MN

Lucia

St. Lukes started as an outgrowth of the Hunger Task Force. Two groups within the Task Force, the Alternative Life Style and Peace & Hunger groups, initiated the co-op. We received church support and were able to borrow money to get started.

We're selling refrigerated items now, since we recently acquired some refrigerators. People in our co-op are becoming more aware of their eating habits, and changes are constant.

Our membership committee will be following up on new members with an introductory letter, and all new members will be required to attend a workshop on running the store, both storekeeping and committee work. In order to encourage members to work, the markup has been raised from 20% to 25%. Workers will still be paying 10%, but the required hours has risen to four per month instead of two. Hopefully with this new policy, the store will be open more often, and a larger group of people will help with committee work.

Blooming Prairie Warehouse Iowa City, Iowa

Theresa

BPW in Iowa City serves 6 co-op storefronts, 7 buying clubs, 2 school-type institutions, and 2 proprietorships with hazy notions about co-operating. There are 4 of us in the collective who work closely with the general membership. The latter is composed of representatives from each member organization. We're growing rapidly and have recently expanded to provide the region with herbs and cheese. We're trucking to the north and northeast to get our goods directly from the source.

Concerns at home include moving to a "real" warehouse (on the ground floor with a loading dock) and contracting for co-ops from local producers.

The largest co-op in Iowa and the BPW share the same building, and there's lots of co-operative activity coming out of the place. Recently created were the car co-op, the credit union, dance co-op, and the Stave-Soup co-op restaurant.

Staff of Life Co-op Bemidji, MN

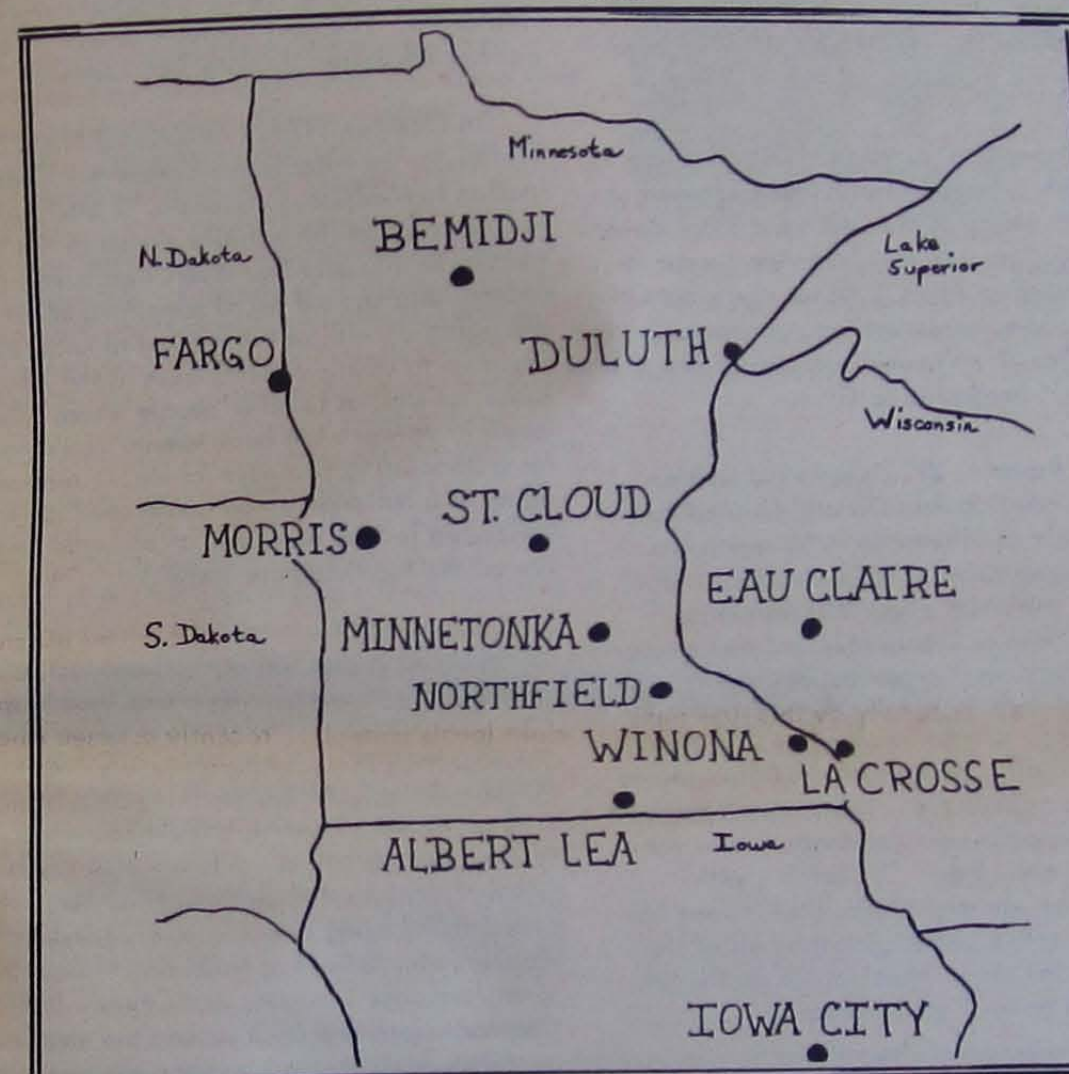
Mary

We opened December 22, 1975, are licensed by the state, have permission to accept food stamps, and are being set up as a non-profit legal co-operative. There are no paid workers. In three months we have grown to over 200 members, a cross-section of the community. There is a membership fee of one dollar, and a majority of members are senior and others on fixed incomes. If anyone knows of an ounce scale for sale, please let us know.

Northfield Co-op Northfield, MN

Bobbie

We have weathered 4 winters and are alive and flourishing. We concentrate our members' buying power and their work efforts so that there are only two paid positions (director and treasurer). Everyone puts in labor, one hour per adult per month average. We sell only whole foods, mostly organic, plus cheese. Membership fees are a once-in-a-lifetime affair, \$5 if people can afford it. We're housed in the Congregational Church and our board of directors meets once a month. Paul Mundt is our present director. Open Wed. & Thursday, 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. -- stop in.



Pomme de Terre Foods Co-op Morris, MN

Beth

We will be celebrating our first anniversary in mid-April. Since we are located in a rural area, many persons drive 30 to 40 miles to shop in our co-op; so business has grown slowly but steadily. With newspaper advertising beginning in March, we hope to increase sales and membership considerably.

Our biggest problems are keeping food in stock and drawing in enough volunteers to work during store hours. We have hired a trucker to transport our food. With hard work and support from our area, we hope to become a firmly established part of our community.

Sunyata Food Co-op Eau Claire, WI

Patti

Sunyata was a year old in December. Since beginning, we've gone through many changes as we've explored cooperativeness in Eau Claire. One problem has been getting people involved, and a lack of communication seems to be the heart of the problem.

Plain Foods Buying Club Fargo, ND

from the newsletter

Plain Foods began as a small coordinated effort among a few friends to find cheap and healthy foods through nonexploitative food purces. Our membership started out at about 10, and in six months we grew to about 200. We are looking for a new store, but there seems to be an increasing interest in staying where we are and just make improvements. To better utilize space we are building movable shelves. A refrigerator was purchased from the Salvation Army.

About 30 people showed up for our general meeting on Feb. 1. Several committees have been set up: a food committee, ordering committee, building and maintenance committee, work committee, membership committee, and a finance committee.

Anyone interested in working towards a land-based co-operative arrangement in west central Minnesota, write: Box 87, Ellsworth, MN.

GIMME (CO-OP) SHELTER

-- by Tom Copeland

Hundreds of thousands of people live in co-operative housing throughout the United States and Canada. The Twin Cities are a fertile ground for co-operatives of all kinds, and housing is no exception. Here can be found over twenty housing co-operatives containing as few as a dozen residents and as many as several thousand.

Gita Sweeney and Dennis Kuhlow live in two of the larger local housing co-ops. The co-ops are members of The North American Student Cooperative Organization (NASCO). Both Gita and Dennis have served on the NASCO board of directors for more than three years. I talked with both of them one afternoon to learn more about this organization and to share ideas about cooperatives in general.

The North American Student Cooperative Organization (NASCO) is a federation of mostly student housing co-ops. It grew out of a conference of student co-op representatives held in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1968. The participants felt that the co-operative movement could only be spread by active organizing and education. NASCO serves as a clearing house of information for student housing co-operatives. It provides technical assistance and continuing education through conferences and publications such as *The New Harbinger* journal for its member co-ops. In this country, the major centers for student housing cooperatives are Ann Arbor and East Lansing in Michigan, Madison, the West Coast, and the Twin Cities.

We met in Gita's livingroom at Commonwealth Terrace Co-operative, near the Uni-

versity of Minnesota campus in St. Paul. Commonwealth is a housing complex for married students and their families. It consists of over 500 townhouse units on 42 acres with about 2,000 residents. Gita was very active in its formation as a co-op and has lived here since it began in 1969. Thirty years old, she is majoring in housing management through the College of Home Economics at the University. Her three children played outside while we talked.

Commonwealth joined NASCO "because we saw a need for some sort of outside communication so that we could find out what other co-ops were doing," said Gita. "We didn't want to make the same mistakes." Since there are many kinds of housing co-operatives, participation in NASCO "has given people a broader idea of what co-ops are," according to Gita.

Dennis Kuhlow, 29, lives in the Chateau Community Housing Association, located near the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. The Chateau student co-op is a modern high-rise of 130 units with about 350 residents. Dennis has been active in several local co-op housing management organizations and is planning on entering the field of property management. His term on the NASCO board expired last fall. He says that NASCO serves as a support organization for its active members and their managers who can share similar problems with each other. "By talking with everyone else you might learn that if your co-op has 10% active participation by all of the members living there, then you've really got a good deal going," said Dennis.

NASCO is "an association of student co-operatives that are primarily housing cooperatives," said Dennis. Each member co-op is autonomous and helps to support NASCO through its dues. As board members, Gita and

Dennis pass on information coming through NASCO, help other co-ops to get started, and do general public relations for housing co-ops.

NASCO offers at least three conferences each year for its member co-ops. The latest one on housing co-ops was held February 13-15 at the University Students Co-op of Berkeley, California. The next conference will be on member education in Waterloo, Ontario.

(In October 1975, I attended a NASCO conference on Alternative Community Coordination in Madison, Wisconsin. I attempted to explain some of the volatile events in the North country to a hundred co-ops from across the country who had all heard something about what was going on with us but wanted to know more. Exposure to young students fresh to the co-op ideas as well as to older people whose experience in co-ops went back twenty years made for a stimulating two days for me. I recommend going to a national co-op conference for anyone interested in new ideas and an adjusted perspective on the Northcountry scene.)

NASCO is just one of the many national cooperative federations. Gita and Dennis spoke about two others. The National Association of Housing Co-ops in Washington, DC, does intensive lobbying efforts as its primary function. It is composed of low-to-middle income family housing co-operatives. Closer to home, there is the Minnesota Association of Co-ops, which also does lobbying in our capitol. It has as its members such co-ops as Midland, Mutual Service Insurance Company and Cenex. Both Commonwealth and the Chateau are members as well. Agricultural issues are the main concern of its largely rural membership.

On an international level, there is the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), headquartered in England. (See box. One



"We saw the need for some sort of outside communication so that we could find out what other co-ops were doing. We didn't want to make the same mistakes."



"I believe in an alternative to capitalism. I believe that there is one. I guess that's probably radical -- but radical in a very traditional sort of way."



"I also very strongly see the need for keeping records and books and that kind of thing. Some radicals believe that, some don't."

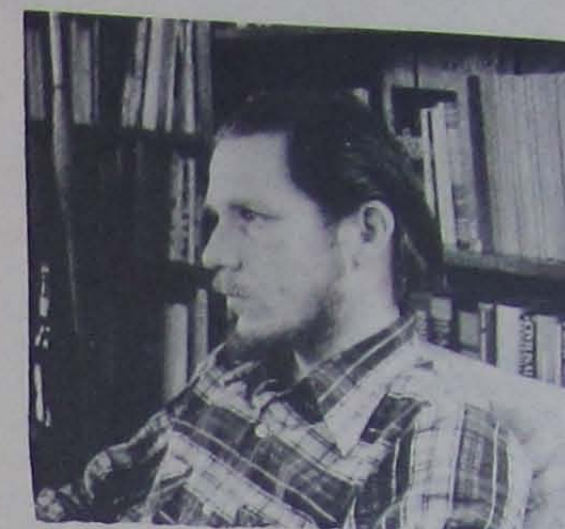


of the Co-op Principles used to be "political neutrality." It warned co-ops to guard against binding alliances, but was dropped because "nobody could agree on what it meant," said Dennis.)

I asked about differences within NASCO and was told that about half the people in NASCO join co-ops for their financial rewards and about half join because they see co-ops as a movement for changing society. The two sides were described as one being more structured and business-oriented and the other being more interested in co-ops as radical alternatives to capitalism.

But as Gita said, the two are not really incompatible. I asked her if she saw herself as a radical. She replied, "I believe in an alternative to capitalism. I believe that there is one. I guess that's probably radical: but radical in a very traditional sort of way. I also very strongly see the need for keeping records and books and that kind of thing. Some radicals believe that, some don't. There has to be some stabilizing factor or it's not going to be a movement at all. It's going to be a bunch of people, and in six months that bunch of people are going to be gone, and there's not going to be anything. There has to be some structure."

Our conversation ended as Dennis talked at length about the nature of a co-operative: "A co-operative is a business entity. Whether you want to consider it or not, a co-operative is a business entity. It may take a slightly different form or work for different



"A cooperative enterprise is controlled by the people it serves. Any other enterprise is controlled by the investors. So it's a question of user control vs. investor control."

purposes, but it's distributing food or it's providing day care facilities or providing farm supplies or providing food processing...

"A co-operative enterprise is controlled by the people it serves. Any other enterprise is controlled by the investors. So it's a question of user control vs. investor control."

"I look upon a co-operative as simply being being a tool that people use to achieve whatever they want to achieve. A co-operative is used by a group of people to get control over something that they don't have control over right now. Which might be housing. So they hire their manager and they don't have to deal with some absentee landlord. A co-operative doesn't exist for the end of being a co-operative. A co-operative exists for the benefit of the people who are using the co-operative as their particular tool at this particular time."

After talking with Gita and Dennis, I realized that there is a vast world of co-operatives that I was unaware of before, and that unlike the experiences of those of us in the Northcountry, cooperatives are oftentimes very traditional institutions. We can hardly ignore the need for the whole society, not just our particular groups, to be more co-operative and collective. But for me, despite the wide differences to be found among co-operatives of all kinds, I still find that co-operative principles make a lot of sense. And I think our work in the Northcountry is both significant and exciting.

CO-OP PRINCIPLES

The 1966 Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance has approved these wordings of 6 Co-operative Principles:

1. Membership of a co-operative society should be voluntary and available without artificial restriction or any social, political racial or religious discrimination, to all persons who can make use of its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.
2. Co-operative societies are democratic organisations. Their affairs should be administered by persons elected or appointed in a manner agreed by the members and accountable to them. Members of primary societies should enjoy equal rights of voting (one member, one vote) and participation in decisions affecting their societies. In other than primary societies the administration should be conducted on a democratic basis in a suitable form.
3. Share capital should only receive a strictly limited rate of interest.
4. The economic results arising out of the operations of a society belong to the members of that society and should be distributed in such a manner as would avoid one member gaining at the expense of others. This may be done by decision of the members as follows: (a) by provision for development of the business of the co-operative; (b) by provision of common services; or, (c) by distribution among the members in proportion to their transactions with the Society.
5. All co-operative societies should make provision for the education of their members, officers, and employees and of the general public, in the principles and techniques of Co-operation, both economic and democratic.
6. All co-operative organisations, in order to best serve the interests of their members and their communities should actively co-operate in every practical way with other co-operatives at local, national and international levels.

International Co-operative Alliance, 11, Upper Grosvenor Street, London, England W1X 9PA

A Co-operative is a form of corporation owned and controlled democratically (one person, one vote) by its membership. The Co-operative Movement is said to have begun in Rochdale, England, in 1844, when a group of people opened a store (which grew to many stores and diverse businesses) in which user-ownership was open to the people who bought from the co-op. This consumer-owned framework was given a backbone of principles which have come to be known as the "Co-op Principles." True co-operatives today operate according to these six Principles.

-- from *The New Harbinger, A Journal of the Co-operative Movement*; a quarterly publication of NASCO; \$8/year; address: Box 1301, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106. Latest issue is on "Politics" and contains a clear, well summarized article on "Crisis in the Northcountry."

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is a world-wide co-operative federation. Now in its 81st year, ICA has over 650,000 member co-ops in 63 countries, making it the largest non-governmental organization in the world. ICA provides information, communication and research for its members.



Motley, semi-abstract paintings of strong black faces stare out on Selby Avenue.

A hundred people applaud nine or ten women who clap back and urge the audience to criticize their play.

Seductive pronouns, line breaks, punctuation as masculine or feminine expression are discussed by a poet in a restaurant booth.

Silence and motion describe a mime's phatic perception of the devastation of Guatemala.

Renaissance musicians and dancers wait backstage in English period costume, while African tribal dance rhythms are practiced by the next act.

Thirty children squeal in delight as a puppet theatre spoofs upper class sexism.

A dozen stuffed dummies recline in pews, watching a 'haphazarding' in a community church.

Parochial students listen to workers' songs a cappella while three jugglers amaze with magic and balance.

The Magic Theater? A Fellini set? Strange days in the horse latitudes?

Yes, all these and more. The above images are culled from the current flowering of the peoples' culture in the Twin Cities. This article intends to explore a few ideas about the nature and value of cultural work in the Northcountry cooperating community.

The hundreds of progressive cultural workers in our community will, of course, be familiar with at least the obvious implications of peoples' culture. But perhaps the thousands of observers, participants and members of audiences haven't grasped the importance of revolutionary culture.

A prime concern of radical cultivation is to break through the passive relationship between bourgeois artists and audiences. Process and involvement are terms that come up repeatedly in talking with the peoples' artists.

An important thing to remember is that cultural work involves more than 'the arts' only. The role of intellectuals in shaping culture is stressed by such as Voline -- the Russian anarchist and intellectual of the early

TOWARD PEOPLES' CULTURE

by phill baker

part of this century -- and Mao. Lenin's statement that "without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement" means that the cultural movement, informed by revolutionary intellectual work, is of prime importance for the practical revolutionary movement.

Social revolution, as distinguished from political revolution, is where the anarchist and Communist movements differ. In both approaches revolutionary cultural workers agree that it is the people who are the source of revolutionary culture.

There are two precautions that American -- and our local -- cultural workers would do well to consider. One is the suspicious, anti-intellectual nature of the American people. This is due to the close identification of the academics with the ruling class. 'Experts' have long been the barkers and bouncers for the programs and institutions of the owners and bosses of this country. Our new wave of cultural workers will do well to identify with the people and to focus on their needs.

The second danger to our cultural workers is the cooptation of their energy by a rigid, authoritarian line, party or construct of any kind. The Bolsheviks brutally devoured a whole generation of eager, dedicated revolutionary cultural workers.

Writers alone provide a grim list of frustration and death: the great poet Mayakovsky wrote a note in his own blood, then hung himself, unable to turn out more slogans and cant; his friend, Yessenin -- a companion of Isadora Duncan's during her Russian visit and travels -- not long afterwards shot himself; Osip Mandelstam was worked to death in a prison camp, placed there for decrying in a single short poem the autocracy of Stalin's regime. Pasternak's decades-long silence and Solzhenitsyn's recent odyssey are better known examples of what happens when culture is made 'Official' and Catholic.

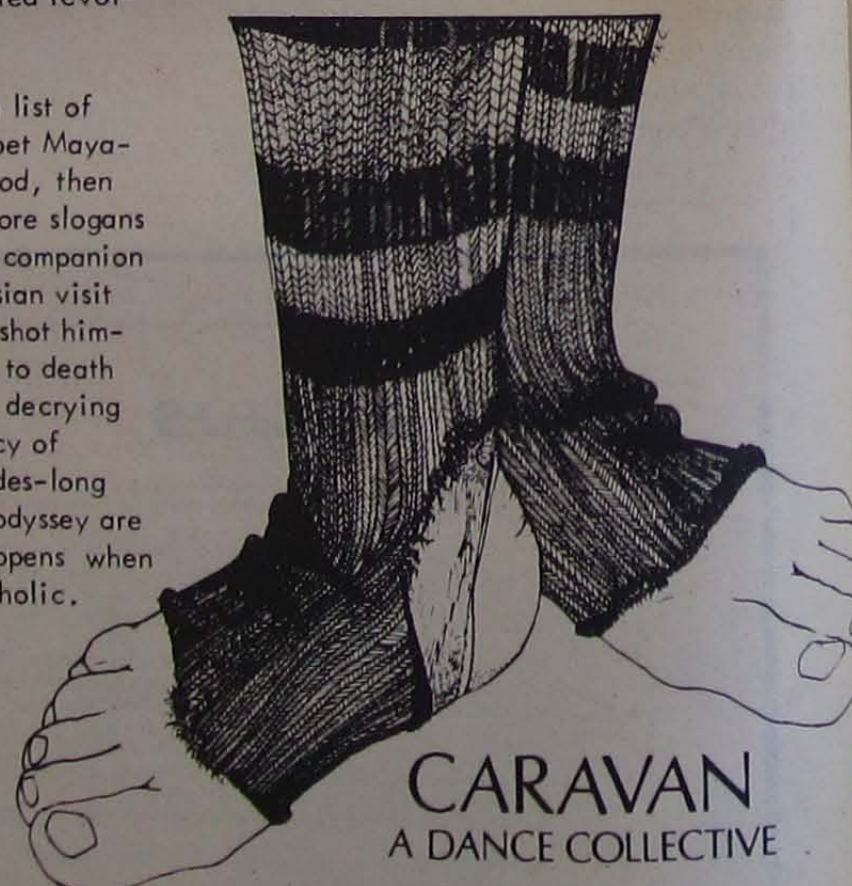
Recent news of the ludicrous bulldozing in Moscow of unapproved abstract art exhibits and then the 'officially' sponsored showings of the same artists furthers the warning.

It is significant that while these examples of betrayed cultural workers are all men, and in a male-dominated political revolution, it is the women's movement that is leading the cultural struggle in our context.

The San Francisco street artists' struggle two years ago against official harassment is being echoed by the Street Artist Guild here in the Twin Cities, dealing with the legislative problems facing people who want to take their work out on the streets.

This article, indeed, was generated in part out of frustration with a narrowness of view within the Scoop staff regarding cultural expression. The inclusion of poetry in the pages of Scoop has generated differences of opinion and occasionally strong emotions. In a belief that 'the coops' must broaden their perception of our movement to include cultural as well as food workers, this story was self-assigned.

At this time peoples' cultural work is often dependent on State backing. If we are to determine our own lives, we must control the development of our culture. To do that we must nurture and support our radical artists and intellectuals as surely as we struggle to build and protect our food cooperative chain.



Groups or individuals involved in cultural work who are interested in sharing news of their projects can write to me, Phill Baker/Scoop, % 1675 Selby Av., St. Paul, MN. 55104. A regular column or calendar could be had in Scoop.

I had hoped to do a 'Goings On' in the cultural movement in the Twin Cities area. As I circulated in the cultural community, I realized that the task would be too broad (and maybe too exclusive) to complete for this issue. Outstate projects, like the Duluth Anarchist Theatre and the Duluth, Mankato, Hibbing and Winona radical press weren't included because I didn't want to be too spotty. Hopefully, they will be covered in future articles.

For this issue, as an opener, a partial list of peoples' cultural projects in the Twin Cities:

- Caravan: A Dance Collective -- 330 N. Prior, St. Paul
- Powderhorn Puppet Theatre -- Walker Church, 3104 16th Av. S., Mpls.
- Circle of the Witch: A Collective Feminist Theatre -- 2953 Bloomington Av. S., Mpls.
- Palace Theatre -- % Walker Church
- Alive & Trucking Theatre -- socialist troupe, not performing these days due to internal political differences
- Minnesota Laboratory Theatre Co. -- 729-3814
- At the Foot of the Mountain (feminist theatre) -- 825-2820
- Northcountry Chautauqua (cultural & political events) -- 374-1881
- Extimpor Coffeehouse (nightly entertainment) -- Cedar & Riverside, West Bank, Mpls.
- Friends of Seward Cafe (put together evening cultural events) -- 21st & E. Franklin, Mpls.
- Riverside Cafe (nightly entertainment) -- Cedar & Riverside, West Bank, Mpls.
- I Groveland (gay coffeehouse Friday nights, women's coffeehouse Saturday nights) -- Mpls.
- Redstockings (feminist) Coffeehouse -- Macalester Chapel, St. Paul
- June Apple Musicians' Coop (performers) -- above Extimpor Coffeehouse
- art & music supplies (at coop prices) -- 2002 Riverside, West Bank, Mpls.
- West Bank School of Music -- 7th & Cedar, West Bank, Mpls.
- What's Happening In Music (WHIM) -- 823-8207
- Hungry Mind (bookstore) readings (poetry) -- Macalester Chapel, St. Paul
- The Loft readings -- upstairs at Savran-Rusoff bookstore, Dinkytown, U.S.A.
- Poetry workshop (Friday afternoons) -- Commonplace Restaurant, 366 Selby Av., St. Paul
- Twin Cities Women Poets -- contact Marisha at Commonplace poetry workshop
- Kush Bey's Art Gallery (Black visual arts) -- Selby at Victoria, St. Paul
- Stevens Avenue Gallery (a cooperative) -- 26th & Stevens Av. S., Mpls.
- The Underground (art gallery, recent installation of prisoners' art) -- 811 W. 50th St., Mpls.
- West Lake Gallery (women's) -- 1612 W. Lake St., Mpls.
- Southside Neighborhood Arts Council (SNAC) -- % Walker Church (?)
- also a Northside NAC, but no address found
- Street Artist Guild -- Suite 211, 89 S. 10th St., Mpls.
- Pig's Eye Kumpania (jugglers, musicians, magicians) -- at large
- Women's Film Collective -- still going?
- U Film Society (for the latest) -- Bell Museum, U of Minn., Mpls.
- Xanadu (films) -- 1209 4th St. S.E., Mpls.
- Fresh Air -- trying to put a truly peoples' radio station on the air; being blocked by Minnesota
- 'Public' Radio in the courts
- North Country Anvil (magazine) -- Box 37, Millville, MN. 55957
- Goldflower (anarcha-feminist newspaper) -- Mpls.
- So's Your Old Lady (lesbian magazine) -- Mpls.
- Common Ground (magazine about the neighborhoods of the Twin Cities) -- 2314 Elliot Av. S., Mpls.
- The Empire Builder (newspaper) -- 2011 Aldrich Av., Mpls.
- Minnesota Leader (newsheet) -- 2314 Elliot Ave. S., Mpls.
- Lake Street Review (soon to publish, with a south Mpls. focus) -- Mpls.
- Moons and Lion Tails (literary) -- Mpls.
- Center for Internationalizing the Study of English (workshops, festivals, publishes) -- 628 Grand, St. Paul
- Rainbow Distribution (radical & progressive literature, posters, calendars) -- % Seward Coop, 21st & E. Franklin, Mpls.
- with somewhat more of an established superstructure, but artistically innovative:
- Guild of Performing Arts -- West Bank, Mpls.
- Guthrie II (theatre) -- seven corners, Mpls.
- Dudley Rigg's Brave New Workshop (satire, rather like Chicago's Second City) -- seven corners, Mpls.
- with close links to the State:
- Experimental College (writing, dance classes, more) -- Dome City, U of Minn., Mpls.
- Video Access Center -- Rarig Center, U of Minn., Mpls.
- The Place (Twin Cities Arts Alliance) -- Butler Square, 100 N. 6th St., Mpls.
- Minnesota Literature Newsletter -- % Minn. State Arts Board, 314 Clifton Av., Mpls.
- Plains Distribution Service (small presses in the Midwest) -- PO Box 3112, Room 406, Box 6, 620 Main, Fargo, N.D. 58102
- Community Programs in the Arts & Sciences (COMPAS) -- Room 700, St. Paul Bldg., 5th & Wabasha, St. Paul
- Arts Resource & Information Center/Artsline (Mpls. Institute of Art) -- for films & showings, call 870-3131
- community arts centers (Minneapolis only):
- Afro-American Cultural Arts Center -- 24 E. 31st St.
- Matthews Community Center -- 2318 29th Av. S.
- Pillsbury-Waite Cultural Arts Center -- 724 E. 26th St.
- Arts at Walker Church -- 3104 16th Av. S.
- Minneapolis Regional Native American Center -- 1530 E. Franklin Av.
- Metropolitan Cultural Arts Center -- 1530 Russell Av. N.
- YWCA Children's Center -- 900 Lincoln
- Minneapolis Park & Recreation Centers (Powderhorn, Lindhurst, Van Cleve) -- central office, 348-2226
- Minneapolis Library System -- 300 Nicollet Mall



PRB Court Order Forces CO Out of People's Warehouse

This is a special insert to the April-May Scoop, #14. Page 8 of that issue briefly explains the firing of three People's Warehouse workers by the Coop Organization and the recent meetings between PW persons, representatives from the Policy Review Board, and a PRB lawyer. On the date of Scoop publication, April 1, a temporary restraining order forcing the CO to vacate PW was obtained by representatives of the PRB.

The PRB, legal governing body of PW since 1974, has been dormant since its September meeting, which failed to resolve the conflict over PW and gave birth to a new warehouse, DANCe. Since then, representatives of the PRB have been laying the groundwork for a legal challenge to the CO's assertion of ownership and control of PW. An attempt to obtain a "declaratory judgement" in court had been planned, but events accelerated with the firing of the three PW workers by the CO. Discontent with the CO "bosses" and the discovery by PW accountant John Harding (who also uses the name Steve Brandreit) that over \$2000 of PW money had gone to the CO for "political work" during March, led him to bring this information to the PRB and their lawyer. In order to stop this "bleeding of the assets" of PW, an injunction was sought immediately.

Thus far, the only CO response has been to denounce Harding and Olsen as agents of the state. The court hearing for obtaining a temporary injunction will be held within a few days of this writing, April 9. If the injunction is obtained, PRB officers will then call a PRB meeting, at which that body of co-op representatives will discuss what to do with PW and the building.

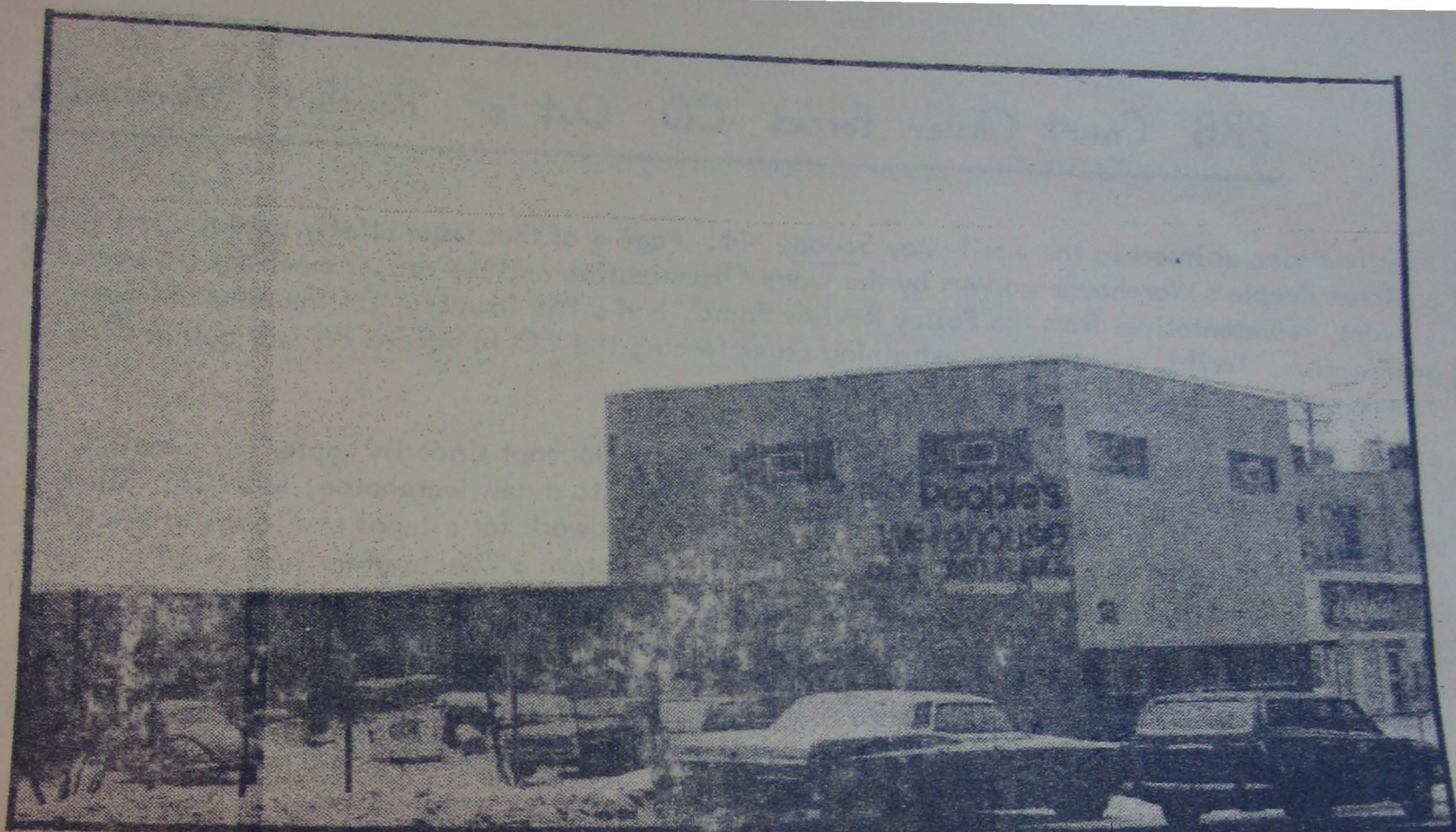
Meanwhile, some of the PW workers and PRB persons are continuing to operate PW. In addition, since the issuance of the restraining order, a statement has been issued by an ad-hoc group of Twin Cities co-op workers, calling for efforts to establish non-state arbitration or a people's tribunal to debate and resolve the dispute over PW. A meeting toward this end was called for April 13.

Following is the complete statement issued by the PW workers and a PRB officer. The first sentence is in error and should say Thursday, not Wednesday. More importantly, the statement errs in describing the April 9 court appearance: It will be for the purpose of obtaining a temporary injunction. A permanent injunction can only come as a result of a trial, which would not come up for months.

PEOPLE'S WAREHOUSE BULLETIN

On Wednesday morning, April 1st, the Policy Review Board obtained a court order which restrains the Co-op Organization (the CO) from further occupancy of the People's Warehouse. The PRB is now operating PW with business as usual.

Over the past few months, there has developed increasing discontent among the workers at the Warehouse. These workers, hired by the CO as a token of their self-proclaimed interest in "serving the working class", became increasingly concerned with CO interference in the operation of the Warehouse.



The CO attempted to force its political line upon the workers. The workers responded by beginning to organize for worker control of the warehouse, whereupon they were relieved of their duties, and the Warehouse was closed for three days for "restructuring".

Since its inception, the Co has posed as a representative of the interests of the working class. But the CO's practice has consistently contradicted and exposed this aim of "fostering working class solidarity on the job and off the job": NO MORE OBVIOUS CONTRADICTION COULD BE IMAGINED THAN THE DISMISSAL AND LAYING-OFF OF WORKERS BECAUSE THEY WERE ORGANIZING FOR WORKER CONTROL! The working class is not served in this way; nor is it served by the diversion of warehouse (community) assets to unspecified private uses.

One of the workers dismissed, a business consultant hired by the CO, discovered evidence of irregular financial dealings. This evidence is the basis for the PRB's complaint and for the temporary restraining order issued by the Fourth District Court on April 1. The order requires that certain CO members appear on April 9 to show cause why the temporary restraining order should not become a permanent injunction. The hearing will be held at 9:30 a.m. in room 1756C of the Hennepin County Government Center. A copy of the legal documents filed in regard to the People's Warehouse vs. "the Co-op Organization" will be available in all the co-op stores for your inspection.

For now, the affairs of People's Warehouse are being administered by the PRB, represented by its executive officers, and the working staff of the warehouse, four women and two men. The staff has the warehouse open for business as usual, wholesale and retail, with the following exceptions:

- there may be temporary shortages on certain items;
- a cash-only policy may be instituted temporarily to prevent any possible attempt to bleed assets by ordering on credit and not paying.

THE PRACTICE OF THE CO HAS FINALLY CREATED AN INEVITABLE RESULT. LET UNITY RETURN TO THE CO-OPS OF THE NORTH COUNTRY.

(signed) Eileen Adams, Linda Harris, Kris E. Olsen, Jenise Crane, Steve Brandreit

"DEPRIVATIZATION" group problem solving

by
aggie
fletcher

In our Northcountry cooperative community, there has always been an interest in developing new ways of living, working, and loving. Some of us in Minneapolis have become an intentional family unit within the community. Our group meets weekly for several hours, to share our individual lives more fully and regularly. We call it a support group, because we believe that people need a base of love and support in order to deal adequately with consciousness raising and criticism.

Before we started meeting, we knew each other, that is to say, we knew of each other. Now we are related in a very personal way. The needs for support, understanding, feedback, and continuity were never as clear to any of us as when we started to feel them satisfied by this experience.

Living in the city, being busy and spread out, kept us from having a family group. Living with house-mates or being work-collectives can be, but often isn't, this kind of supportive family experience. It seems that the practical requirements of work- or house-sharing cut into the energies available for personal contact and growth.

We have discussed many things in the last four or five months, such as work-place relations, politics, economic and health problems, lover relationships, parent-hood, room-mates, and even mis-understandings within the group. It has been a growing and broadening experience.

One specific process which we have started to use, and which we encourage others to use, is called Deprivatization. The principle behind this process is that when two people have a problem, there is probably an unequal power relationship between them: one of them may feel intimidated or threatened by the other; that this and other feelings usually inhibit true communication; and that, therefore, it is not realistic to expect the two people to be able to work it out between themselves to an equalized situation.

Deprivatization begins by a decision of the persons involved (or even just one of them) that they want and need community involvement in a problem. Each person chooses several people from the community shared by the two to come to the formal deprivatization meeting.

In the experiences we have had, the people have been close friends of both the persons having the problem. The support web thus created is a great advantage in encouraging honest and brave communication, with a clear understanding that each of the two persons is respected and loved by the community. There is gentle group pressure on the two to try to understand how they have come to be at odds, to understand the circumstances of their problem.

Several months ago I needed Deprivatization for myself and a close friend. I knew that there were things between us that were not clear, to me at least, that could lead us into an emotional tunnel with much wasted time and energy. I was afraid to confront my friend about these things, but I was equally afraid to have them continue.

Luckily, my support group had been talking about Deprivatization, and had even done one a week earlier; I had high hopes

rough spots; still, I was able to say things I hadn't before, or hadn't wanted to, and my friend also talked frankly and openly about our relationship, and this problem in particular. We talked about the past, the present, and the future. We talked about specific and general behavior patterns that had encouraged misunderstandings between us, and were amazed by and then reassured by this shared information. The confusing patterns shouldn't and wouldn't continue.

We made agreements about behavior, about more honest and immediate communication, especially in our problem area, and we agreed, at another friend's suggestion, that we would talk about it again in two months, to guard against any unconscious recurrence.

I left the house alone, walking home, and I felt really great. I understood my friend and felt we could count on each other again, that we would not hurt or confuse each other. It was such a light and warm feeling I wish everyone could achieve it.



Warren Hanson

for the process. This one was planned by myself and mutual friends, who also wanted to prevent a disaster in our friendship. From that point on, I was not alone in my struggles.

I had several panics before the actual meeting, when I was sure it would be a disaster on its own, and that night I was literally incapacitated by nervousness. I couldn't talk, and kept avoiding looking at others, hoping it would never start.

However, the other people who were there had taken the responsibility of sharing in the problem, and of working it towards a solution. A woman from my support group opened the discussion and carried it for several minutes. I had never been so painfully grateful to anyone in my life.

We all talked for hours, and there were

Of course, Deprivatization between co-workers, room-mates, or political comrades may not always give such personally elevating results, but, as we have seen it, at least you will experience more honest and fair communication, with the potential for re-building the relationship through community effort.

Practical Suggestions for Planning a Deprivatization --

1) At least one of the persons involved in the problem must be in favor of the process. If the other one resists, it may be part of the problem, and friends can try to reassure that person, explaining the process, inviting her/him to make

continued

-- by Barb Jensen

the blinding spin of exhaustion
of isolation
the nameless fear of self control
An end to the belief that colors of skin make one
less than human, that a free and experimental
sexuality is evil, or sick
An end to the companies that tear the earth and the people apart
standing like mountains, like gods
mountains always, finally, crumble
the gods have begun to fall
revolution is consciousness

3.
Social Order
America's order is no more absolute than the snow
out the window
it will melt
it will be replaced
But how very carefully we must think
as we light our matches
as they turn into blow torches
as we apply them to the ice cold power of competition
While it melts
confusion gushing around our ankles
We must be ever so careful what we build
What is revolution?
we must look all around us
our eyes open wider than ever before
remembering we are Americans
conditioned our whole lives to repeat
the senseless patterns
revolution is imagination
We must be ever so careful what and how we build

4.
The snow has stopped falling
Occasional gusts of wind still scatter the fresh white powder
blurring the scenery only slightly now
The houses and trees reappear and become solid,
cars crunch by,
people shovel sidewalks
the cat beside me wakes and strides into the kitchen
Change is sometimes so gradual
it is almost imperceptible
but everyday
every day
is new

1.
It's snowing
the city grinds to a halt
It's snowing
everything is turning blurry and white
simple
uniform
stark
A dozen obligations and their accompanying fears
move in clicking like vulture beetles -- they surround
the emptying space in my head
I push them away...
I need time to
look out
the window
Today I return to the chair by the window
The sky and the ground the same
Bare black trees look like veins
connecting whiteness with whiteness
seasons
cycles
movement forward
What is "revolution"?
a "collective"?
a government?
a "job"?
a "lover"?
white dust swirling swirling
the houses and trees become vague and elusive
insubstantial
I think of time
months from now this snow will be gone
centuries from now these houses and trees will be gone
replaced by what?
and humans?
will there be humans?
my life fades in and out of view
time warps open and swallow America, Reality
now
What is human life?
Where are we going?

2.
revolution
not a single line but a vast sphere
reflecting infinite aspects of human and oppression
and hope
and progress
revolution is growth
women loving women
people growing strong
working without fear
An end to the blinding spin of days. Sleep, wake, eat
work, eat, fuck, sleep, wake, eat, work....

Co-operative Process

Deprivatization, cont.

suggestions, express fears, and if necessary, make demands, such as length of time, subjects, degree of confidentiality, persons attending.

2) Each person should invite several people who have, hopefully, some knowledge and understanding of the problem-relationship. It is better if persons attending are not there primarily to support or defend one side, although this may be necessary and workable if all the various attendants are supportive and respectful of each other.

3) Plan at least 2 hours, and 3 to be safe. I have seen them run longer than 3, and it is good if most of the persons don't have to leave in exactly 2 or 3 hours. There is ideally a relaxed time after the formal discussion to begin rebuilding the community feeling between the two persons.

4) Choose a place that is private, not likely to be interrupted frequently by phone or visitors. Things usually get intense, and it is hard enough to keep focused on all the various factors without distractions. A comfortable and circular seating arrangement also helps.

5) I would recommend tea or juice, with fruit or some other simple snack, on the table

at the start. It is an aid to relaxing, but should not be an interruption.

6) You may wish to have a chairperson or the facilitator. It is probably not necessary if the group is small and competent, with each person feeling responsible every time they speak.

7) Every participant should be on time -- the wait for a late-comer can be painful and is potentially damaging to the atmosphere.

8) Every person attending should understand the degree of trust and shared responsibility implicit in being invited to the session. You will become part of a problem, committed to working with everyone towards its solution. It takes every kind of energy, and a great deal of responsibility. It is worth it.

9) We usually begin by explaining the principles behind the process, with some personal statements of unity and good will. We value each of the persons and want them to be straight with each other.

10) We encourage the two persons to do most of the talking, directly to each other, assuming that this is what has been most lacking, but others will speak from time to time to clarify points or add another perception of the exchange.

11) Try to discuss specifics as well as general attitudes and feelings. Situations that gener-

ated negative feelings are usually important and should be discussed. It may be that there is an overt belief -- he doesn't want me around his house -- covering a secret fear -- he's hiding something I should know about... Trying to discover deeper feelings and thoughts is tricky but rewarding.

12) Proceed very slowly, trying to study each emotion or interpretation for its source. Encourage each of the two persons to give their own view of what happened, or what was meant. This is basic, and may clear up major problems, if honesty and trust can be generated.

13) We close, as we open, with the belief that each person there is now part of that problem, intimately, as witness and sharer, that a sub-community has been formed, that coping with the problem is no longer the private work of the two involved. They are urged to call on any of the participants for further discussion and to feel confident that another session could be planned anytime.

We recommend Deprivatization to you. It is another way of being honest with each other. It is another way of using our group strength. We need to do these things more and more, in the hard times we share.



MINNESOTA FOOD COALITION

ONGOING FOOD COALITION PROJECTS

(Note: Project task forces will meet at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 10, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis -- call Paul McHugh for details, 822-7543.)

-- by Paul McHugh,
ACA Food Research Committee

1) better school lunches

Kids in all Minneapolis public schools and many day care centers will soon be eating lunches prepared at a central food factory, frozen, delivered a day ahead of time, and reheated in microwave ovens. St. Paul is about to embark on the same course, though it may still be stoppable.

The Food Coalition is working to research the Minneapolis lunch program and mobilize parents who now have to live with it to push for the healthy, tasty meals their children deserve. If you want to be one of those parents, contact Marlene (729-4744, days) or Paul (822-7543).

2) consumers' rights

The Universal Product Code (UPC), those parallel black lines you see on every supermarket product, is part of a computerized system that will allow stores to eliminate not only prices on individual products but also the jobs of many stock clerks. "Item pricing" laws preventing this have passed in many states, but an item pricing bill was canned in the Minnesota Senate. So we plan to bring the battle to the city councils.

Last year's Food Day handbook title sums up what the co-op movement is all about: Food For People, Not For Profit -- a slogan that challenges the power of the \$175 billion/year food industry.

Last year Food Day was the occasion for community dinners and educational events at co-ops around the country. But the massive corporate power we're up against means that educating the public about food can only be a first step. The second has to be mobilizing the people-power to begin changing that food system to serve people instead of profit -- which is the main thrust of this year's Food Week (April 3-10) and Food Day (April 8).

Your co-op may want to celebrate Food Week with a neighborhood good food event. On the political side, there is another kind of co-op Food Day project -- the Minnesota Food Coalition. The Food Coalition is a new community-based group that got started with the help of the All Co-op Assembly's Food Research Committee. We're not a large organization yet, but we have 25 active members and are growing -- including senior citizens, community clinic workers, progressive nutritionists, church activists, teachers, co-op members. Mill City and Wedge co-ops have become organizational members, and we're in the process of talking with other co-ops about both Food Week events and ongoing projects on Unit Pricing, Universal Product Code, and the school/day-care hot lunch programs.



modern school lunch from ITT-Morton System

Unit Pricing is something different. It means that the store must post labels showing the price of every product per pound, ounce, or quart. While only a stopgap measure, unit pricing is a way of fighting back at the monopolistic food processors who keep prices high and avoid competition by preventing comparison shopping through oddball package weights. We're planning to push for a Unit Pricing ordinance in St. Paul, and to defend the existing (though weak) ordinance in Minneapolis against expected heavy lobbying by the chain stores to abolish it.

Help us take on the corporate food chain -- and win. Contact Anne (827-1846) or Paul (822-7543).

All Co-op Assembly

THE ACA LEGAL-FINANCE COMMITTEE'S

GUIDE TO INCORPORATION

TYPE FEATURE	COOPERATIVE	NON-PROFIT CORPORATION	CORPORATION	LIMITED PARTNERSHIP	PARTNERSHIP	SOLE PROPRIETOR	UNINCORPORATED ASSOCIATION
OWNED BY	Members	not owned (in business sense)	stockholders	partners and minor partners	partners	the owner proprietor	verbal or written agreement
WHO ARE	people who buy stock or volunteer or meet other criteria	the npc exists for specific purposes as recommended by state codes	investors interested in a successful business	same as above	partners with a view for financial gain (generally)	'de Boss'	principals or designates
DECISIONS ARE MADE BY	general membership meeting or thru Board elected by members	Board of Directors or as delegated in bylaws	Board of Directors	same as above	partners	'de Boss'	whomever is designated by verbal or written agreement
VOTING RIGHTS	1 member, 1 vote the co-op principle	may be based on co-op principle, extent of investment or other criteria	bases on extent of investment	partners or as designated	partners or designates (gen. mtg)	nothing to vote about	by written or verbal agreement
FINANCED BY	notes to members and shares of stock; no registration with Securities Exchange if sold to members; build up of member equity	usually sells various classes of membership applies for grants	financed by stock investment and borrowed funds	investments by major and minor partners, loans, etc.	anything the partners can swing	anything the owner can swing, loans, plowing back in of profits	any loans donations investment available
PERSONAL LIABILITY	no liability for debts of corporation	no liability for debts of corporation	no liability for debts of corp.	limited for minor partners, unlimited for major part.	unlimited partners may be liable for each others acts	unlimited	unlimited particular management
TAX LIABILITY	same as corporation except earnings distributed on patronage basis are excluded from gross income and are not taxable	dividends and reserves are taxable until such time as the IRS grants exemption under section 501 c3	pays corporate tax 22% of \$50,000 + 48% of excess is federal tax - 12% of earnings for state tax	any dividends on investment are double taxed as in corp. otherwise like partnership	each partner pays according to net earnings	pays taxes on earnings as individual	principles, like partners must declare taxable income
DISSOLVED BY	a vote of 2/3 of the membership	courts oversee dissolution to insure that assets are distributed to an acceptable alternative npc or charitable assoc. No member may lay claim to any assets. Courts may allow Bd of Directors to choose alternate.	majority of votes at a stockholders mtg	generally needs written agreements	any change in membership incl. death	change of intents	
ASSETS DIVIDED BY	according to member equity		according to stockholders	verbal agreements and equity	can't determine without written agreements	belong to owner	treated like a partnership usually
DISTRIBUTION OF PROFITS	based on patronage rather than stockholdings		extent of stockholdings	by written agreements	by partnership agreements based on % of ownership	owner's decision	principals divide assets equally unless otherwise provided for

This document reflects a somewhat less than total understanding. The Legal Finance Committee apologizes for any small inaccuracies that may exist.

Some Things Worth Knowing Concerning The Legal Status of "Co-ops"

Personal Liability

Perhaps the first order of business is the concept of personal liability. Businesses may or may not be incorporated. Sole proprietorships and partnerships are generally not incorporated. Examples of incorporated associations include the corporation, the non-profit corporation, and the cooperative. The state recognizes incorporated associations as legal persons. And hand in hand with this recognition goes the concept of limited liability wherein involved persons in the business are not responsible for debts incurred by the association beyond their financial investment in the business. If the business is sued, in other words, you are safe unless you are found guilty of gross mismanagement or negligence (somebody slips on a zucchini you left on the floor and breaks their tailbone). However, if you are involved in the management - ownership of a unincorporated association or unincorporated partnership, you may be liable for debts incurred by the association even though you had nothing to do with the creation of those debts. This is the concept of unlimited liability. Each partner is liable for the acts

of any partner. Therefore, be aware when you get involved in co-op type businesses that act (operate) on the hazy edge of "legality". Getting sued may be an unpleasant experience. Watch out for your posterior.

The three forms of corporate association, the corporation, the non-profit corporation, and the cooperative, generally offer ownership on a broader basis, often through the sale of stock (as a means of capitalizing the venture). It should be noted at this point that one of the main problems in our co-op movement is undercapitalization. Instead of building a base of equity (investment) capital, we operate on debt (loan) capital. How fortunate for us that our debtors forgive us our debts....

Decision Making

Let's say you own a couple of shares of stock in a corporation. Your voice in the decisions is one vote per share of stock. The biggies on the Board with 5,000 shares or 50,000 shares have that much more control or ownership than you. The business is run to suit those who control the stock. However, in a cooperative an individual has one vote no matter how many shares are owned. This

is the heart of the cooperative idea; one member, one vote. A co-op is run to serve the majority. This may or may not suit a group's needs, depending on their point of view. A non-profit corporation may or may be set up on a stockholding basis, and the possibility exists for decision-making to be set up on the cooperative principle of one member, one vote.

When we look at the numbers of "co-ops" in the region we find that many are now incorporated as non-profit corporations. The reasons for this situation include: 1. the relative ease of incorporation due to, 2., many lawyers' unfamiliarity with co-op statutes, and, 3., the ease of fitting loose "co-op" structures into, 4., the less complicated and restrictive chapter of the Minnesota Statutes on non-profit corporations.

However, because the statutes are not as crystallized as those for cooperatives, it is incumbent to have clear understandings on paper somewhere concerning who has what power to make which decisions checked by what accountability procedures. Taking an easy route in the present may lead to future problems as experience shows.

MIDWEST COLLECTIVE WHOLESALE FOOD DISTRIBUTION



co-op warehouses launch brokerage

-- by Dave Gutknecht

In recent months, cooperative food warehouses in various regions of the country have been associating more closely and in a more organized fashion than before -- through trucking and sales, meetings, and mailings. This tendency is also true in the Midwest, where since 1972 three or more widely-separated cities have had co-op warehouses and have utilized a trucking collective's regular run to the West Coast co-op warehouses and back.

Last fall, a long-felt desire better to coordinate trucking with the West Coast and within the region -- and hopes of establishing a brokerage to serve the Midwest warehouses -- led to further efforts among these groups to work together. Representatives of eight warehouses and a trucking collective met in September and again in December 1975. The third meeting of representatives from the collectives was held February 26-28 in Chicago. Such Midwest conferences are now held quarterly, and the next will be in Iowa City, May 27-29.

The groups represented have been People's Warehouse, Minneapolis; Distributing Alliance of the Northcountry Cooperatives (DANCe), Minneapolis; Commonhealth, Duluth; Prairie Harvest, Winona; Blooming Prairie, Iowa City; Intra-Community Cooperative, Madison (ICC); Greater Illinois People's Cooperative (GIP-C), Chicago; People's Warehouse in Ann Arbor; and the Dick-Freeman trucking collective. (See accompanying map.)

DANCe representatives and observers were: George Crocker and Annie Young from the collective, David Gutknecht from the Board, Mick Cassel and Susan Shroyer from the All Coop Assembly.

At the February conference, the two issues that have dominated the short history of this budding alliance both came to a head:

1. A new collective business -- Trung Brokers -- was established. It is serving the co-op food system by collating sources information, coordinating trucking between the Midwest and West Coast warehouses and within the Midwest, and engaging in joint buying and selling for and with the Midwest groups. (Trung is the name of two Vietnamese sisters who led the resistance to Chinese imperialism in 40 A.D.)

Three people from ICC had agreed to do the groundwork for organizing Trung after the December meeting. One of them, Laura Roberts,

was approved at the February meeting to be the first full-time paid staff; a second person from another warehouse is expected to be approved at the May meeting. A total budget of \$1000/month for salary and maintaining an office in Madison was approved, with each warehouse paying for this proportionately according to their volume with the brokerage. A part-time, probably temporary, salary also was approved for David Reed of GIP-C to continue his research into legal questions regarding trucking and brokering. Many difficult questions regarding the control of the brokerage by the warehouses, the legal form Trung should assume, and other aspects, were discussed, and many questions remain.

2. People's Warehouse of Minneapolis -- in hostile and intense struggle with DANCe since the latter began last fall -- at the February meeting demanded that DANCe be denounced and boycotted. PW has made known to other regional warehouses, through the mail and in person, their "indictment" of DANCe for allegedly attempting to destroy PW and for representing the interests of the ruling class. When the other collectives represented in Chicago refused to boycott DANCe, PW declared the alliance "unprincipled" and walked out. Representing PW at the meeting were Linda Janssen, Michael Rachlin, Kris Garwic, and Jeff Jackson.

In addition, San Francisco Cooperating Warehouse, represented at the conference because of their extensive dealings (about 1/4 of their volume) with Midwest warehouses, announced that they were aligning themselves with PW and would boycott DANCe. The eight other collectives represented in Chicago passed by consensus this response:

This group will not honor a boycott of DANCe. We ask SFCW to honor orders from DANCe. If they will not, then the Trung brokerage is responsible for finding other sources for DANCe orders. A statement to this effect will be taken back to SFCW by their representative.

Shortly after the conference, upon confirming that SFCW would not fill DANCe orders, all Midwest ordering through SFCW by Trung was cut off; other sources have been or are being arranged. SFCW has been criticized for its action by coop workers in San Francisco, in the Midwest and elsewhere. Their statement, and excerpts from a lengthy response by DANCe, are printed along with this article.

On the first day of the Chicago conference, preliminary to a direct PW-DANCe confrontation and the PW demand and walkout, there was a long and difficult discussion around the political basis of unity of the alliance. PW

insisted that its version of "the aims of the coop movement" be the basis of the discussion. Their statement of aims -- widely promoted in the Twin Cities by the (Coop Organization) Committee to Support the Aims of the Coop Movement -- contains ideological assumptions and rhetoric and other stylistic features offensive to many, and it omits important points relating to community control, the nature of work in a cooperative, food quality and other environmental concerns, and so on. A partial and, again, difficult attempt to improve upon the original points resulted in the following statement of aims, approved by the Midwest groups (Winona abstaining):

1. To struggle against the monopolistic profit structure.
2. To help alleviate the high cost of living by distributing food at low costs.
3. To help create jobs for the unemployed and foster working class solidarity on the job and off the job.
4. To educate the unemployed and the working masses on the politics of food; that is, the interconnectedness of: working class low wages, high cost of living, billions of hungry and starving people in the world, farmers forced into bankruptcy, and huge profits for monopoly capitalists.
5. To implement these goals in a fashion in which the workers and shoppers in the cooperating community are the constituency to which the structures of the cooperating community are accountable.

Reservations were expressed about several aspects of these points, and they are by no means the final statement of political understanding by the alliance. More is sure to be presented and discussed in future meetings and newsletters (the first issue of which is being coordinated by DANCe).

Further consensus agreements at the Chicago conference stated that:

The warehouses have an obligation to support Trung and Trung the warehouses. The collective and warehouses must attend the alliance meeting. The brokerage and warehouses will work together in selecting staff, with the brokerage collective having final say over hiring and firing. The intent of the brokerage is to improve the flow and cost of goods to the food coop system.

Warehousing cont.

San Francisco

[Following is the statement made by SFCW on their recent decision to boycott DANCe, and excerpts from a response by DANCe. In both cases, the statements reflect the views of the particular collective and not necessarily those of the city's co-op community at large. The background to these statements is given in the above article.]

We at San Francisco Common Operating Warehouse have decided we can no longer remain neutral in the struggle in Minneapolis between two competing warehouses. Our decision is to critically support People's Warehouse and to stop selling to DANCe.

Our reasons for not selling to DANCe are based on their following actions:

1) After a power struggle at PW, one opposing group, instead of organizing and struggling with the Coop Organization, began using economic warfare by starting a competing warehouse, obtaining some of the funds by having sympathetic coop stores run up credit and giving the money to DANCe, and also withdrawing large "individual" loans from PW.

2) Calling the police against Coop Organization members and never repudiating the action and/or disciplining the members who participated in this use of armed state power against coop workers.

3) Attempting to reinstate the concept of a consumer coop rather than worker control led coops, by selling voting shares in DANCe.

4) Lack of class analysis by the DANCe people and their assuming an "apolitical" stance when the above actions and their literature demonstrate a definite political stance (petit bourgeois and anti-communist).

We feel that the People's Warehouse has a responsibility to progressive workers in DANCe who are willing to engage in principled struggle with People's Warehouse and who support their overall goals. These workers should be given a chance to work in the Minneapolis coop structure.

Why we give support (critical) to the People's Warehouse

We support PW and the Coop Organization because they helped to clarify the question of class control in the coops and raised a lot of questions that the coops all over the country have

had to start to deal with. We support their overall aims as stated in their poster "The Aims of the Coop Movement." We respect their class analysis and agree with their class position. We are currently trying to work out our own analysis of who we are and who we serve. The struggle in Minneapolis has raised our level of political consciousness. We hope other warehouses and collectives are trying to deal with these same issues. We, as PW, see the coops as a political rather than economic movement.

We criticize PW for being overly dogmatic and rhetorical ("We fulfilled our historic mission by taking over the warehouse," etc.). Nor do we understand their use of the term "democratic centralism" as they have yet to describe to us any accountable structure of the Coop Organization. We disagree with some of the tactics used by the CO because they seem to us to have alienated and divided many sectors of the community that are not the enemy.

We hope that this criticism is accepted in the spirit in which it is offered, that of support and hope that we all can learn from our errors.

Onward in struggle,
SFCW collective
February 27, 1976

SAN FRANCISCO & DANCE WAREHOUSES: AN EXCHANGE

DANCe

We are DANCe are sorry that the SFCW statement took so long to arrive. The communication between the Midwest Region and SFCW would have been much clearer if the statement would have been available at the Midwest Regional meeting. We also are sorry that the SFCW statement is, or appears to us to be, based primarily upon misinformation, lack of information, and invalid assumptions rather than fundamental ideological and political differences. There was no attempt made by SFCW to check out the facts. Such a fundamental error by SFCW is very difficult for us to understand. We would like to take this opportunity to clarify the situation, in the hope of reaching some mutual understanding.

Before we focus on the SFCW reasons for boycotting DANCe, we would like to define some of the principles on which DANCe is founded. We are a cooperating warehouse. The community DANCe collective works with, and is accountable to, is a cooperative community. The stores we serve are dependent to a large degree upon the volunteer labor of the people who shop there. It is only logical, then, that those who work and shop in the stores are the people to whom the DANCe collective is accountable. The distinction between worker control and consumer control is thus not as clear as it perhaps is in San Francisco.

A cooperating community is a community of people whose needs are not being met by the capitalist structure, and who have decided to get together to define their own needs for themselves, and to organize themselves to meet their needs. We are a focal point of the economic,

hence political (This CO dichotomy between economics and politics is a false one and very un-Marxist) growth of that community, and must therefore be accountable to it. We do not exist "to serve the people". That is the cloak of capitalists, capitalists' politicians, and other tyrants. Instead, we are of the people, including ever larger numbers of "poor and working class" people, and we serve each other. We are not an isolated collective that has somehow gained the wisdom to speak for and act in the name of nebulous masses, but rather we are a rapidly growing community of cooperatives and collectives struggling to achieve a common goal.

These common goals are not defined by a central collective in a central warehouse for general consumption by those unwilling or unable to decide for themselves what is best. Our goals are common ones, agreed on by the people in the cooperating community. Our goals include working for the destruction of the corporate empire. Our goals include getting good food to ourselves and others at reasonable prices, providing jobs, educating people about the nature of the society in which we live, and struggling to create a better one. Because of the divisive tactics of the CO, we have a lot to contend with, so we aren't as efficient as perhaps we could be -- but that's all happening here. On the other hand, we are not about to substitute one bunch of tyrants for the others.

On to the stated reasons for the SFCW boycott of DANCe:

[See number 1, above.]

The power struggle was and is not "at PW". The struggle is in the cooperating community and focused on PW because a small clique

(currently numbering between 75-100 people, according to reliable CO sources) assumed that they knew the "correct" way for everybody, and on the strength of that assumption alone, took over the People's Warehouse. (Economic warfare, perhaps?) Even that was not enough to cause the community to set up alternative structures to meet their needs. The next five months were spent "organizing and struggling with the Coop Organization." But how to struggle with people who act as if they always know all the answers to all the questions? In the course of that struggle it became clear that the CO was indeed "overly dogmatic". The CO was unwilling or unable to accept and act upon valid criticisms of their structure and their rhetoric. This is recognized as far away as San Francisco. So the message sent to PW became more focused. Individual loans were withdrawn from PW, and not only large ones. Over \$20,000 was withdrawn before PW refused to allow more money to be taken out. A simple case of people "voting with their economics".

Meanwhile, CO tactics went from bad to worse....The coop community had the choice of becoming pawns in the hands of petty tyrants or setting about the enormous task of creating another warehouse.

It is not necessarily valid to criticize stores for running up credit at PW. The stores involved were few and they acted autonomously. If the money (about \$700) involved has any relationship to the financial situation at DANCe, it was a small one, and an indirect one. Like the loans which were withdrawn, the money involved was not exclusively PW's in any event. PW did/does not "own" the capital resources of the coops any more than DANCe does....

continued next page

Warehousing cont.

[See number 2, above.]

In spite of the fact that collective members felt physically threatened, and the fact that inventory of DANCe was threatened by people from PW, DANCe refused to legitimize the tactic by calling the police....Both sides have used such tactics. We have not and will not call the police. Yet we are not the controlling force in this struggle, and must therefore deal with some very unprincipled behavior in the way we can.

[See number 3, above.]

This one is difficult to understand, but as stated earlier, the stores and buying clubs we work with are dependent upon the labor of the people who use them. The warehouse is the repository of these people, and it is to them, our membership, that the DANCe collective is accountable. In the North Country, this third SFCW criticism seeks to create a false dichotomy and at best a gross simplification of a very complex situation.

At best, we see a parallel with the coops of the 30's which went through similar political struggles with the communist party. Out of struggle membership coops formed and in the process lost much of their initial direction in

responding to the communities with whom they were cooperating. We hope we are learning from their mistakes.)

[See number 4, above.]

In view of the fact that we can only guess what literature SFCW was referring to, and considering our responses to their first three criticisms, the last part of their fourth criticism warrants no discussion beyond the points that we are not petit bourgeois, and we have not acted in a petit bourgeois manner, and "anti-communist" sounds a lot like anti-red baiting to us. Sort of like if we don't agree with everything the CO does and says we somehow become the enemy. We resent that deeply, SFCW.

The first part, however, seems to indicate a need for further clarification. DANCe and the community with which DANCe cooperates recognize two primary classes. There are the 1 or 2% of the population who own and control the empire, and there is everybody else, and everybody else is getting screwed to one degree or another. It is unfortunate that this classist CO rhetoric, high-handed tactics, and arrogant, centralist philosophy, serve primarily to alienate, antagonize, and confuse the vast numbers of people who must find ways of unifying and getting together if the Empire is to be dismantled.... DANCe is not "apolitical". Yet it is not

the DANCe collective, or any other isolated group that defines the form and content of the political struggle in the North Country. Those definitions come from a federating coop network through the All Coop Assembly and the membership of DANCe. The definitions we are working with are moving us forward quite rapidly.

[See SFCW criticisms of PW, above.]

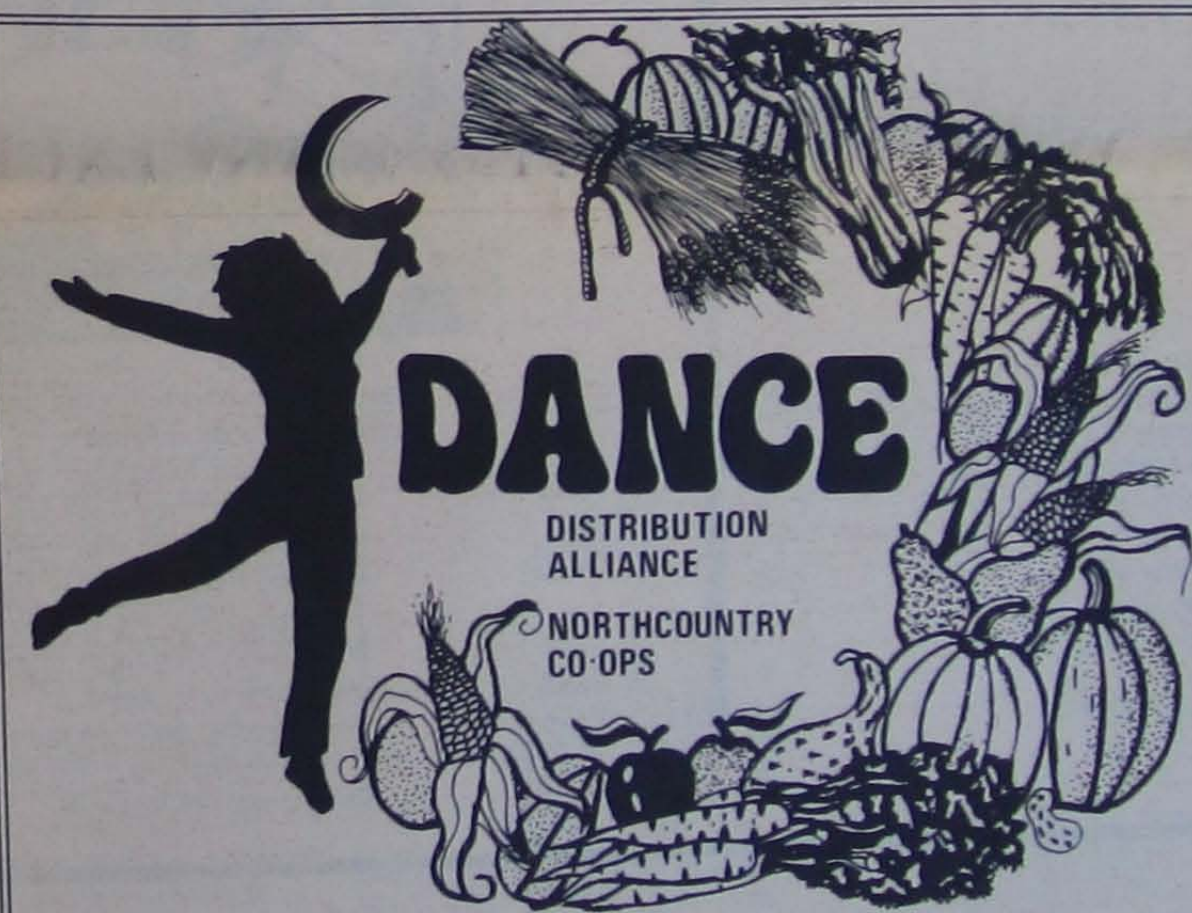
The people who have been struggling with the Coop Organization wish SFCW knew the degree to which these criticisms are true.

We again criticize the SFCW collective for initiating severe economic sanctions against a cooperating warehouse without having first even taken the time or energy to check out facts and come to a rational understanding of the situation.

We further criticize the SFCW collective for attempting to treat the entire cooperating network as its own private property by establishing a history of boycotts, threatened boycotts, and other unilateral actions against participants in the cooperative movement with whom they think they have a disagreement. If we are to move forward together, such actions have got to stop.

We hope that these criticisms are accepted in the spirit in which they are offered, one of support. We hope that we all can learn from our errors.

Onward in struggle,
DANCe



RADICALS ORGANIZE

-- by Barb Jensen

Though there have been many meetings to organize against the Coop Organization since their May 1975 takeover of the People's Warehouse, February 11 was the first open, city-wide attempt to do this. The meeting was called by Pat Christensen, Fluffy Golod, and myself. Posters,

up in all non-CO coops and in various neighborhoods, read as follows:

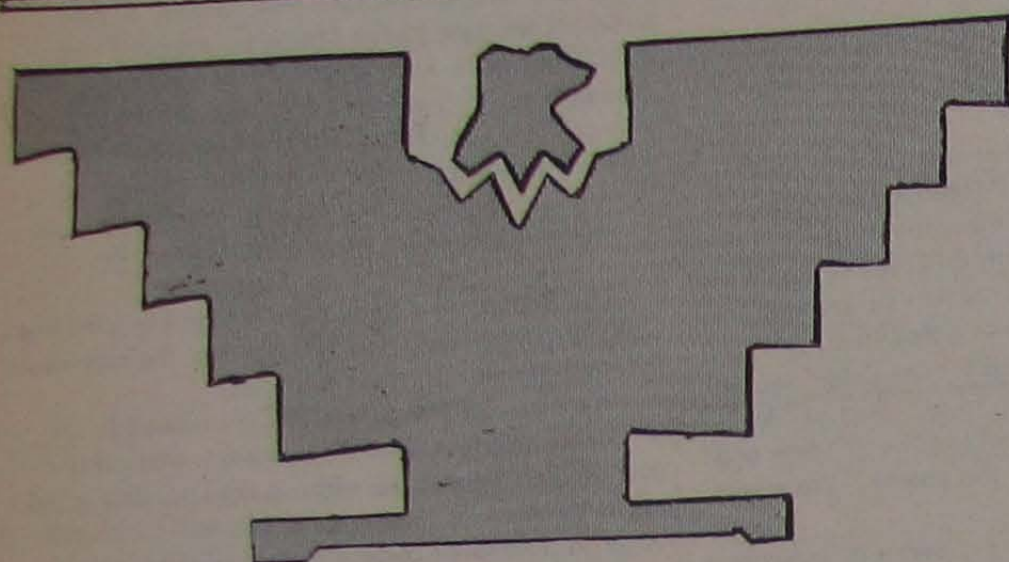
RADICALS ORGANIZE: expose infantile and divisive leftism, organize against its agents, explore and expand our revolutionary potential and projects.

The meeting was held at Waite Neighborhood Center and drew some 60 people. It was organized into large and small groups, interspersed with music by myself and mime by Nancy Sugarman. Two ideas for projects were largely agreed upon. The first was the writing of a leftist criticism of the CO; the other was to form a self-defined federation of interested groups. Emphasis was placed on challenging the CO with positive

values we hold in common that they have violated, e.g., the need for a unified left. It was said that this way we can strengthen ourselves as well as challenge them.

A mailing went out calling another meeting to follow up the ideas of the first. No more than ten people came to this meeting, a surprise to us after the enthusiasm expressed at the first meeting. (I attribute this largely to a lack of publicity.) The group was small but ready to work. We discussed the content of a criticism paper concerning the CO and set up a meeting to further this project. A group of 5 or 6 people has continued to meet and expects to distribute a paper in April.

Bits & Pieces



UFW

UFW has added Sunmaid Raisins, Sun-sweet Products and Diamond Walnuts to their boycott list. The Agricultural Labor Relations Act that passed in August, 1975, ran out of funding in February. This law gives farmworkers the right to free secret ballot elections to determine union representation. Without this law elections can not be held. Sunmaid and Sunsweet/Diamond are large grower cooperatives in Calif. who are lobbying with the legislators to oppose more funding to the ALRA.

During National Farm Worker Week, (May 2 to 8) there will be a 65 mile solidarity walk through the Twin Cities. People are encouraged to show their support for the UFW and walk with us during this time. For more information contact UFW, 1308 E. Franklin Ave., Mpls., MN. 55404, 874-0123.

WOMEN

Interested in a women's softball team? Spring is here! Contact Kathy at Red Star, 824-8124. Bring your bats and balls.

I am interested in joining forces with women who want to control their birth experience by demanding personalized care through birth attendance, by preparing themselves physically and emotionally to find harmony in their labor and birth rhythms, and by fighting the passivity fostered by hospital environments. I'd also like to gather and exchange information on local obstetrical practices, midwife alternatives, and home birth possibilities.

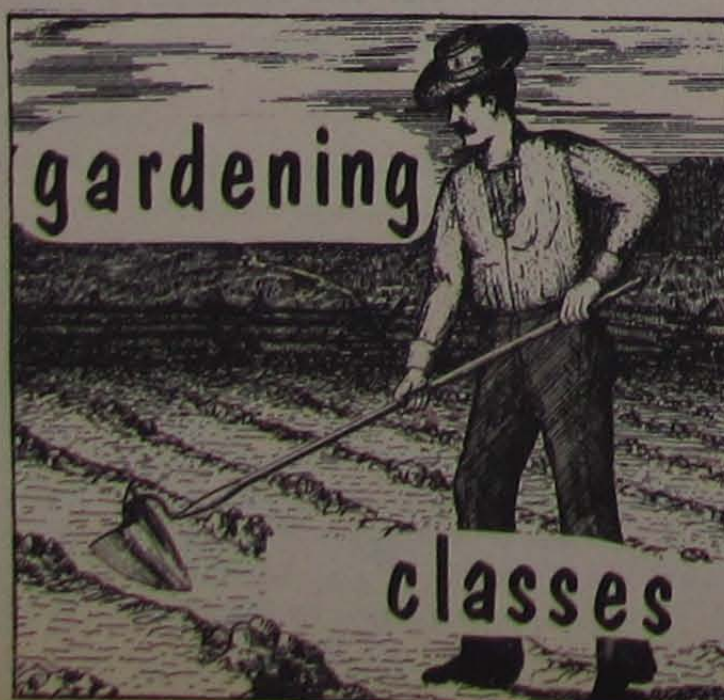
Rebeca Barroso, 721-6082



Good news from the Denver co-op, Common Market, reported on in the previous *Scoop*. From their latest newsletter:

CO-OP BREAKS EVEN

For the first time since we opened the California Street storefront, our co-op has shown a profit! For the month of January, 1976, we showed a profit of \$1,022.69. We have finally realized our break-even point; but we must maintain this point in order to achieve financial stability. We have seen that the Co-op can make it



The Community Design Center is co-sponsoring gardening classes this Spring with several inner-city neighborhood groups. One session, covering starting plants indoors and planning a garden to get the highest yield from a small space will be held:

Monday, April 12, 7:30 pm
Seward PAC office
2421 Franklin Ave. E., Minneapolis
Tuesday, April 13, 7:30 pm
Cedar Riverside People's Center
200 S. 5th St., Minneapolis

A session dealing with garden planning -- variety selection, companion planting, inter-cropping, etc. -- will be held at

Wilder Parent Center, conference room
34th & Chicago Av., Minneapolis
Wednesday, April 14
7:30-8:30 pm

If you would like to help arrange a series of classes in your neighborhood, call Barb Yonda Harris at 827-2608.

If you need gardening space this Spring, call the Center for Local Self Reliance at 870-7777 (Mon.-Fri., 12:00-6:00 pm) for information about available land.

Bulk seeds are plentiful and cheap at North Country; Dept. Store, 2002 Riverside Av., Minneapolis -- they also have tools and garden books.

Food For Thought

GARDENING

COMPOSTING

Garden compost is a mixture of various kinds of decomposed organic matter. There are probably as many ways to make compost as there are recipes for salad; everyone does it a little differently. The organic matter in a good compost can open up clay soils and fill in sandy soils. High organic content in our soil will retain moisture and make the soil more crumbly, make it open to air, water, and root movement. Also, remember that as plants grow they take nutrients out of the soil, but as you add organic matter you replace some of the elements that the future crops need.

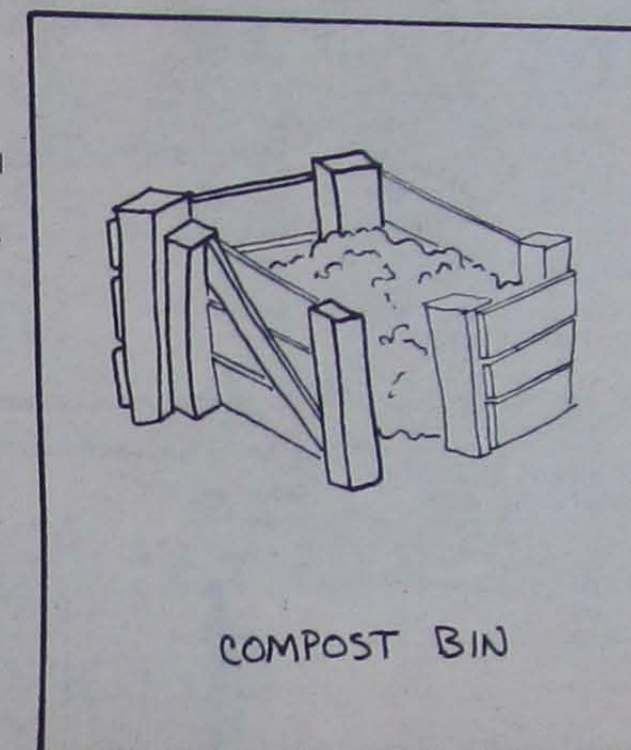
You can make compost in an open pile, but some kind of a container keeps it more workable. The simplest compost containers are wire cages or wood slat boxes. The main purpose of a compost pile is to mix moisture, air, and organic matter in equal amounts so that the organic matter will become humus as quickly as possible. It takes a long time for some things to break down. You will find that some ingredients will not be completely rotted but will still be good in your garden, especially under transplant. Partly decayed compost is good fertilizer because it releases nutrients to the plants gradually.

You can begin by collecting whatever organic material you have. Put a few leaves in your pile (or container), throw on some garbage, and sprinkle in a handful of activator. Any compost system needs to be activated. You need to get the helpful bacteria and fungi working for you in the pile. This can be done by adding some kind of protein-nitrogen substance such as manure, rich soil, alfalfa meal, soybean meal, blood and bone meal, or cotton seed. The higher the protein content in the activator, the more efficiently the pile will work and the richer your compost will be.

After the layer of activator, add a little of some different kind of material such as grass clippings; then add water, but don't oversaturate it. Next, add another 2 or 3 handfuls of activator and sprinkle on more water. Keep stacking layers, adding more organic matter as it is available -- old leaves, lawn clippings, stalks, weeds or discarded foliage from picked vegetables. The pile needs oxygen, so turning and mixing the materials every 2 weeks or so is important. If the pile begins to smell bad, it's a sure sign that it needs to be turned. Never put in anything that will not decompose, nonbiodegradable things like plastic, glass, aluminum and charcoal.

Finished compost may be spread out on newly harvested beds and turned in before re-planting. Finished compost may also be sifted or use in seed beds or flats. Unfinished (still not) compost may be spaded into the ground only if it has had at least a week of composting and if no planting in that spot is to follow immediately.

-- by Karen Phelps



COMPOST BIN

- To summarize:
- * select and prepare the composting area or container
 - * place about a 6-inch layer of coarse material such as leaves, hay, or weeds on the bottom
 - * sprinkle on a large handful of an activator thoroughly covering the coarse material
 - * continue by stacking alternating layers of coarse material and meal
 - * moisten pile thoroughly but don't oversaturate; many failures are due to the pile being too dry or too wet.

If the pile is made correctly, the temperature will reach 140-150 in several days. In about one week, mix the materials together. Fork the outside dry material into the center of the pile. The compost is ready to use when the pile stops heating in 2 to 3 weeks.

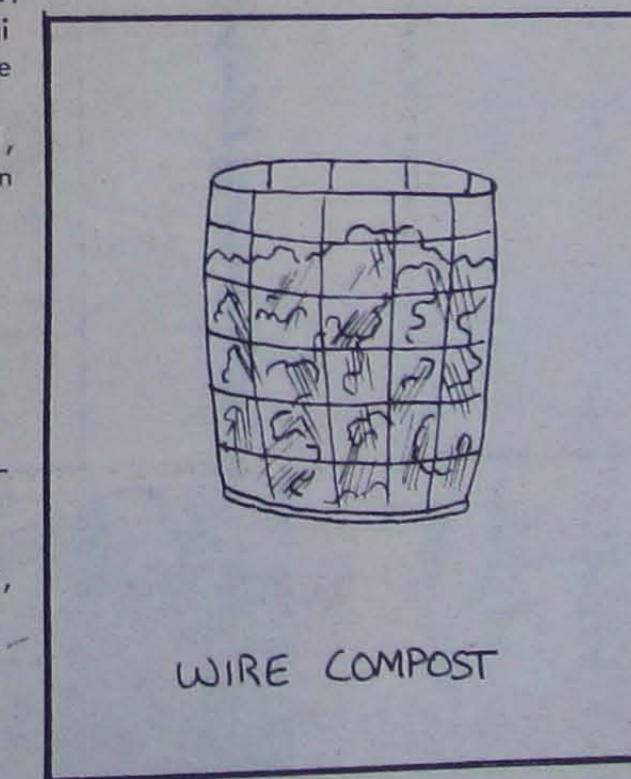
Compost may be used on top of beds around plants as a mulch.

MULCHING

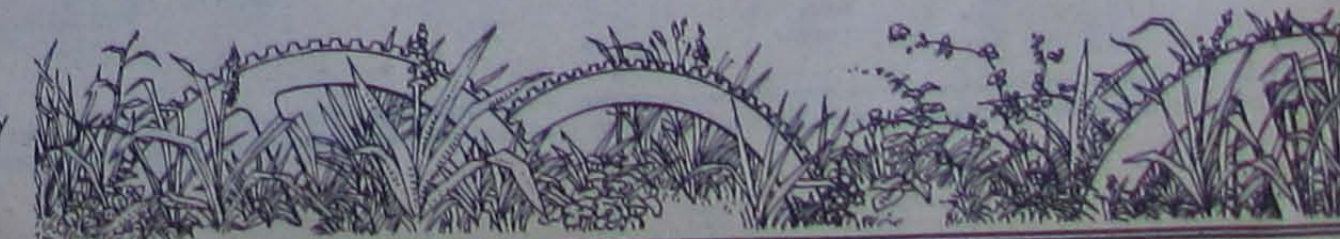
Mulch is a layer of material spread on the garden so that it shades the ground completely. It keeps the weeds down by depriving them of sunlight and retains soil moisture by reducing evaporation. Mulch keeps the soil cooler on hot days and warmer on cool night by acting as insulation.

There are many things that you can use for mulch, including paper or cardboard, sawdust, woodchips, dried grass clippings, hay, or black polyethylene plastic. Compost, of course, makes an excellent mulch. Sawdust, wood chips and bark fragments by themselves require nitrogen from the soil as they break down. If you don't supply it, they will extract it from the surface of the soil, which will deprive the plants of their supply.

Wait until the soil has warmed up in the late spring to mulch. The very best time is right after a heavy rain. If you don't have enough material to mulch between the rows, lay it only around the stems of your plants, covering the ground completely. This can very nearly eliminate weeding and cultivating. Earthworms and microorganisms will eventually devour organic mulches and turn them into humus. Come fall, just turn under the remaining mulch along with the crop remnants. Every year you will improve the soil.



WIRE COMPOST



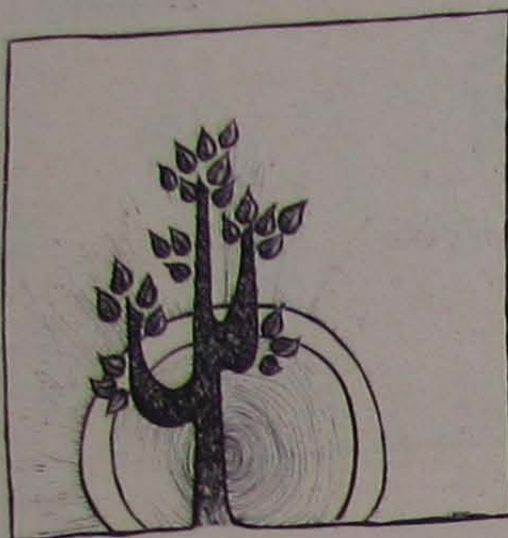
name	price	code
Agar-agar	9.70	.61 D
Alfalfa	3.25	.21 C
Alfalfa wh.	.94	.06 A
Allspice wh.	2.67	.18 A
gr.	2.73	.18 A
Anise seeds wh.	1.41	.10 A
gr.	2.80	.18 A
Alum	1.24	.12 C
Anise, star	1.82	.12 C
Arrowroot	1.16	.08 C

Baking Soda	.34	.02 A
Basil	3.90	.25 AC
Bay Leaves	1.76	.12 A
Bee Pollen	10.27	.78 D
Black Haw bark	1.13	.08 D
Bloodroot	4.00	.26 D
Boneset	1.82	.12 D
Broom	2.60	.17 D

Caraway seeds	1.00	.07 C
Cardamon wh.	6.45	.41 A
gr.	5.40	.35 A
Carob, rtd	.82	.06 B
Catnip	2.36	.16 C
Cayenne, gr.	1.89	.13 C
Celandine	1.63	.11 D
Celery seed	1.43	.10 A
flakes	3.90	.25 A
Chamomile	2.91	.19 B
Chia seeds	2.21	.15 D
Chickweed	1.16	.08 E
Chickory root, rtd	.99	.07 C
Chili peppers	2.08	.14 A
powder	2.21	.15 A
Cinnamon sticks	1.91	.13 C
ground	1.82	.12 B
Clavos wh.	5.41	.35 B
gr.	5.76	.37 A
Cohosh, blue	1.42	.10 E
Coltsfoot	1.55	.11 C
Comfrey leaves	1.52	.10 C
root	2.21	.15 C
Coriander wh.	.38	.03 C
gr.	1.17	.08 A
Coriell	.62	.05 E
Cream of Tartar	3.90	.25 A
Cumin wh.	1.76	.12 C
gr.	1.82	.12 A
Curry powder	1.76	.12 A
Damiana	1.40	.10 D
Dill seeds	1.04	.08 A
weed	4.68	.30 A
Dulse	3.26	.21 C

Elder flowers	2.72	.18 C
Ephedra sinica	.70	.05 C
Eucalyptus	.92	.07 B
Fennel seeds	1.17	.08 C
Fennugreek	1.24	.09 A
Garlic powder	1.56	.11 A
Garlic gran.	1.95	.13 A
Ginger root, wh.	1.89	.13 A
gr.	38.50	2.85 B
Ginseng root	10.56	.67 B
Goldenseal wh.	2.37	.16 C
Gota Kola		
Hibiscus	1.98	.13 C
Hops	4.32	.28 C
Horhound, white	2.26	.15 D
Horseradish	3.45	.22 A

Irish Moss	2.37	.16 D
Juniper Berries	3.80	.25 D
Kava-kava	5.42	.35 C
Kelp, gr.	.87	.06 C
Kola nuts	.81	.06 D
Kudzu	3.50	.23 E
Kombu	3.25	.21 C
Laborator tea	2.78	.18 C
Lavender	4.74	.31 D
Leathron gran.	3.45	.22 C
liq.	6.42	.41 D
Lemon grass	1.35	.09 C
Licorice root	1.13	.08 C
sticks	3.89	.25 D
Lobelia	3.07	.20 D



name	price	code
Mace	4.88	.31 A
Marjoram	1.89	.13 A
Marmos tea	1.47	.10 D
Mu Tea	22.39	.10 C
Mullein	2.96	.19 D
Mustard wh.	1.17	.08 A
gr.	.91	.07 A
Mugwort	3.05	.20 D
Myrrh gum	3.20	.21 D

Nettles	2.47	.16 D
Nutmeg wh.	3.25	.21 A
gr.	3.19	.21 A
Onion flakes	1.56	.11 C
Orange peel	.92	.07 C
Oregano	1.07	.08 C
Orris root, wh.	4.16	.27 D
pdr.	8.87	.70 D

Papaya leaves	1.10	.08 D
Paprika	1.63	.11 A
Parsley	2.93	.19 A
Passion flowers	1.97	.13 D
Pennyroyal	1.73	.12 D
Pepper, black, wh.	1.43	.10 C
gr.	2.15	.14 A
white, gr.	2.29	.15 A
Peppermint	3.02	.20 B
Prickling Spice	1.30	.09 AD
Pleurisy root	2.81	.18 D
Poppy seeds	1.38	.10 C
Poultry seasoning	2.29	.15 AD
Poke root	3.11	.20 D

Raspberry leaves	1.14	.10 D
Red clover tops	5.42	.35 D
Rosehips	.94	.07 B
Rosemary	1.43	.10 C
Rose petals	2.99	.20 D
Rue	4.06	.26 D
Sage	1.24	.09 C
Santaparilla	2.42	.16 C
Sassafras	2.67	.18 C
Savory	1.77	.12 A
Scaulcap	2.16	.14 E
Senna leaves	.88	.06 C
Slippery Elm bark	2.82	.19 C
pdr.	2.82	.19 C
Spearmint	1.85	.13 B
Sumac Berries	.33	.03 D
Safflower (Am.Saffron)	2.39	.16 D
Tansy	2.60	.17 D
Tapioca	.65	.05 A
Tarragon	3.84	.25 A
Thyme	1.76	.13 A
Tumeric	1.43	.10 A

Uva-Ursi	1.91	.13 C
Valerian	2.89	.19 C
Vervain	3.81	.25 D
Wild Cherry bark	1.04	.09 D
Willow bark	2.48	.16 D
Witch Hazel	1.97	.13 D
Wormwood	1.08	.08 D
Yarrow	1.63	.11 D
'Yerba Mate'	.82	.06 C
'Yohimbe'	2.86	.19 E

name	price	code
Golden Mint	2.75	.18 D
Lemon Mint	2.09	.14 C
Matte Orange Spice	1.45	.10 B
Mellow Mint	2.42	.16 D
Mo's 24	3.37	.22 C
Red Zinger	2.47	.16 *
Rostoroma	2.24	.15 C
Sleepytyme	3.03	.20 B
Winterberry	2.03	.14 C

*Red Zinger is temporarily out. The FDA won't allow hibiscus into the U.S., they say it's too dirty. Until the Sudan cleans up its act & hibiscus we'll be out of Red Zinger.

Black Teas (Thea sinensis) contain caffeine

name	price	code
Darjeeling	3.33	.22 A
English Breakfast	2.29	.15
Gunpowder	1.84	.12
Irish	2.39	.16
Japanese Green	1.71	.11
Jasmine	2.04	.14
Oolong	2.09	.14
Orange Pekoe	2.06	.14

Coffee Beans

name	price	code
Guatamalan	2.07	.14 A
Mocha	2.03	.14 A

Code Explanation

- A In town item. If we're out it'll be in within 7 days.
- B We always intend to have this, if we're out we're just as upset as you are.
- C This is a popular item. If we're out we'll reorder real soon.
- D A slow mover or seasonal item. We'll order when the demand is up.
- E An "endangered" item. Do you really want it? WE want it discontinued.

We have decided to call ourselves Red Star Herbs. This is subject to change if & when a name we all feel comfortable with materializes.

The herb market fluctuates constantly, so prices are approximate and subject to change.

Red Star Herbs
3406 S. Lyndale Ave.
Mpls., MN. 55408
(612) 824-8124

Hours: Wed.- Sat. 10 to 4
Sunday 12 to 4
Tuesday closed for retail, open for out-of-town co-ops only.



Believe it or not

Dear Friends at Scoop:

You've probably get a charge out of the reaction of us simple country folk to the recent doings in the big city, especially the more spectacular stuff -- something like "I don't believe it." Oh, I believe it, I just don't BELIEVE it!

Can it happen here?
Best wishes...
Jean
Oneota Community Co-op
Decorah, Iowa 52001

"Time passes slowly..."

Dear Scoop,

We would resubscribe to Scoop were it not for two things. One is that we just bought 40 acres and must build three buildings, put in a road and drill a well this year -- so we just can't afford to send you any money. The other thing is that we haven't been finding Scoop reading very relevant to our day to day life. It seems in the last year that Twin City co-ops have been mainly concerned with the distributive rhetoric and bad feelings. It's very difficult for us to figure out what's what, just reading things at a distance. Meaningful revolution must be "inner" and guided by love, and that doesn't seem to be the CO's idea. And yet when I went into DANCE, I really did meet a very snobby lady behind the desk.

So all this dissent may be important to all of you involved directly, but it does little to further the spirit of cooperation needed to face the pressing problems descending upon us. The potential for Scoop is great as is the need for communication between people who want to work together for a more rational future. There is bound to be disagreement and different opinions about that direction which can only be resolved with open discussion, but this rhetorical infighting and violence show there's no revolution (change) at all in most of these "cooperative" leaders' mental attitudes. So good luck Scoop: we hope you find meaning to a more general readership. When we get some \$ we'll try you out, hoping by then there will be something other than up to the minute coverage of groupie fights.

Peace to you all,
Dennis B. Crowe
Cumberland, Wisconsin

Dear Dennis,

We can understand your not finding Scoop very relevant to your day to day life in the country since our efforts have mainly gone into covering the Twin City co-op scene. But we are interested in expanding our coverage and would love more help from our readers in providing us with country concerns and viewpoints. Please submit articles and ideas if you would like.

We agree that only through open discussion can differences be resolved but it has not always been possible this last year, no matter how hard people in general are trying. We see Scoop as facilitating some of this discussion by reporting important events and providing analysis. We have been rhetorical at times but are trying not to be.

Scoop does write about things other than the political struggle here and if you re-examine our last two issues you will see that the majority of our space is devoted to other news. This is this issue. We are all trying to "further the spirit of cooperation."

Scoop



The Beany Co-op. Circa 1973 Marjorie and her kid. Photos: Mary



More on Green Grass:

Dear friends,

In the last Scoop #13 Craig Dahl accused me of being anti-worker control. He got his ammunition by interpreting parts of my report to Green Grass Grocery in St. Paul. (see Scoop #12) I'd like to respond to his comments.

First off, I do not understand Craig's sarcasm or his choice to define the two of us as adversaries. The tone of his remarks runs counter to his position emphasizing the personal, supportive aspects of the Twin City co-ops.

Secondly, my report was done to help Green Grass. It was not written as an analysis of all co-ops. I did not intend people to apply ideas presented in the report to other co-ops without recognizing important differences in circumstances. Craig's implication that I irresponsibly trashed worker control for other co-ops is unfounded.

Thirdly, my skepticism toward worker control for Green Grass is based on serious problems with the concept. In a neighborhood such as South St. Anthony Park you have people who have families, work full-time jobs, and aren't interested in the co-op cause. Since they choose not to devote lots of energy to the co-op they are either given second class status as non-working members of the co-op or shut out completely. In addition, worker control in a capitalist economy suffers from problems of raising capital (without resorting to subsidies) and paying union scale (or comparable) wages. The worker controlled co-ops in the Twin Cities have not solved these problems.

Lastly, in the short-run the Wedge model may serve immediate needs. And if you're interested in short-term goals, fine. But if you are committed to establishing a viable community/worker/consumer controlled food distribution center, the considerations which led me to recommend against a casual worker run store for Green Grass must be taken into consideration.

Yours in friendship and struggle,
Al Wroblewski

"... Oh, Rochester?!"

Dear Scoop:

Everytime I read an issue of Scoop I swear I'll write, so after finishing the Feb.-March issue tonight I decided to actually do it now!

First I want to thank you for the tremendous job you're doing to keep us informed about the co-op movement. In our downstate area rumors fly, and the information you transmit is vital. I've been a regular reader since last fall and anxiously look forward to each issue. Your articles help us see the hassles of our own little operation in a broader perspective. It is also reassuring to know that the struggle is not isolated but goes on from coast to coast.

Post issues have raised several important topics which I hope will be pursued in future articles. I'd like to mention a few and offer some comments....

From several articles I deduce that it's terribly important that we clarify who we are and what we are all about. I think the conflict between CO and DANCE reflects the identity confusion. Suppose the food co-op movement represents a revolution of sorts. What can make the "revolution" different from other revolutions in human history? I believe that for this "revolution" to be different it must be characterized by the following:

- A) Participation is voluntary. We must not replace one group of oppressors with another. If we can accomplish this it will be a most unique revolution. People must freely choose our alternative, which means we need to work to clarify the alternatives and the subsequent implications.
- B) Control is decentralist, decision making is participatory. It is simply not true that effective decision making must be centralist. Centralist Democracy is a contradiction of terms. But decentralist decision making is a skill that has to be learned. Thank you for your articles on this and on the work that the Plowshare community has been doing.
- C) The revolution must take place within the framework of law. We must come to understand the meaning of law and learn to work within the law. The law is not the cop, the judge, the FBI and the CIA. It is simply an attempt over centuries for persons to make explicit the guidelines for human behavior. And, because it is

...I'm going to try to build a display rack at our co-op for Scoop, and will constantly urge our members to read it and contribute to it.

Peace,
Vic Ormsby
Rochester, Minnesota