

CALL

Nº 4

Dept. for International
Relations and Communal
Research

FOR PEACE

C.A.L.L.

המדור
לקשרים בין לאומיים
ולחקר הקומוניזם



Dept. for International
Relations and Communal
Research

Editors of C.A.L.L.

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Feel free to copy - but don't forget to acknowledge source !

THE LESSON OF THE COMMUNES

When discussing the disintegration of communes, we have to consider the subject in its proper perspective. Communes did not only fall apart; many managed to survive and function for many decades.

At present, communes number well over a thousand small and large communities spread throughout the world. Most of them (close to 700) are located on the North-American continent, others may be found in Asia (269 of these - Kibbutzim in Israel), Europe, Australia, New Zealand and lately in Africa.

The category of "historic communes" in the last 200 years includes about 3,000, two thirds of whom were established by the flower children in the 1960s. These hippie communes were set up without any base for existence, most of them fell apart within their first year, and thus no relevant conclusions may be drawn from their experience.

Side by side with these transitory collectives existed many communities that lasted for several generations, but quite a few disintegrated in the end. The study of the breakdown of these communes of long duration may lead to significant conclusions.

The Process of Decline

It should be understood that the processes of disintegration were not uniform, nor were they immanent or decreed by fate from the start. Their symptoms were neither clear nor unequivocal. Certain phenomena that may have heralded decline in one commune served in others as a challenge, giving rise to vital forces that reinforced the group's ability to survive.

In many communes, the signs of disintegration manifested themselves with the death of a charismatic leader-founder, or the aging and disappearance of the founding generation. But quite a few groups persisted in their communal way of life even after the founders had passed away.

In many cases disintegration was accelerated by taking in new groups from the outside, whose differing motivations disrupted social homogeneity and gave rise to formation of internal factions and splits.

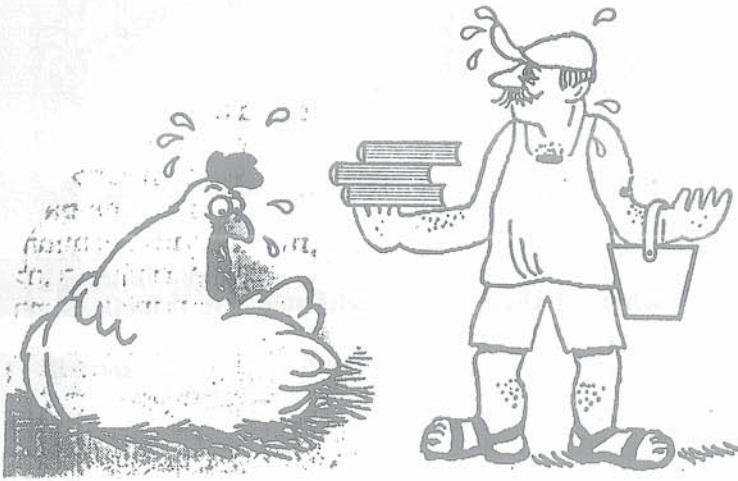
The Family

Withdrawal of multigenerational families harmed the social fabric in some communes, but in others the family was a source of socialization that reinforced the attachment and loyalty to the community and its way of life.

Problematic Industry

While many communes disintegrated as a result of economic failure, there were those whose existence was actually endangered





by economic success! Thus the transition to industry - and the introduction of hired labor - caused a gamut of problems in many communes, the main one being the unstable, often corroding, coexistence of a set of communal values with a dynamic industrial system. But the Bruderhof communities subsist to a large extent on industrial production while successfully and consistently serving their communal life.

The expansion of the orbit of contacts with the consumer market was accompanied by increased penetration of outside influences. On the other hand, ignoring the rapid changes on the outside gave rise to stagnation which ultimately

caused degeneration or disintegration of the framework. But accommodation or untempered openness can bring about assimilation and loss of the communal uniqueness.

Loss of Vision

One aspect common to all the disintegrative processes of long-lived communes is the loss of faith, of vision, and of the social ideals, on which they based their creation and the moral advantage of their life-style. With the fading of these values, all the phenomena described here, which could have been turned into unifying challenges, became disintegrating factors. Moreover, under these conditions, the various effects of crisis intermingled and in turn deepened the crisis.

*

The picture of contemporary communes is complex. On the one hand there is the bloc of the Hutterian and Bruderhof communities, which jealously preserve their communal framework. On the other hand - there are the secular communes, in which the latest developments are characterized by tendencies toward privatization, and of forms that would see communalism and private initiative exist side by side.

A recent issue of the directory bearing the symbolic name "Diggers and Dreamers" contained an article by William Metcalf, a scholar well-known for his research on communes in Australia. His message to the members of modern communes is:

"It is imperative that contemporary communards do not lose sight of their ideals... Please keep DREAMING as well as DIGGING!".

YAACOV OVED

(This is an extract from Yaakov Oved's article in "Kibbutz Trends". Y. Oved, a member of Kibbutz Palmachim, is a professor at Tel-Aviv University and head of communal research at Yad Tabenkin.)

Translated by Yehuda Riemer, Yad Tabenkin



YAMAGISHI



The ultimate goal of the Yamagishi movement is happiness for all. The Yamagishi proposal is that no person can be truly happy if others are suffering. At the same time, Yamagishi-ism postulates that happiness is the natural state of the human condition—the movement for happiness is thus a *return* to happiness. Here is where many people might say, "Life is both happiness and sadness. One cannot be happy all the time." Yamagishi-ism answers such opinions with, "If one looks at reality, and accepts it, one will realize that there is, in fact, nothing to be sad about. Sadness is not a natural state, but rather a conscious decision to be sad."

Others may say that the above philosophy is irrelevant to the immediate solution to problems that are happening now. But consider that if the above is true, it is possible for people to live their lives without sadness, regret, anger, or jealousy. Such people would certainly be able to form a happy, healthy society, and could easily see that helping others is, in fact, helping one's self. They could also take in the larger picture and willingly make long-term plans that would preserve the natural environment for the future, as well as avoid short-term solutions to problems that only take into consideration the needs of a few, and could possibly lead to conflicts and even war. Thus Yamagishi-ism sees its proposal as an essential issue, and not just as an interesting philosophical debate. Also—and this is very important—the change from an unhappy person to a happy person can take place instantly. This means that a new society is possible as soon as we ourselves change.

The three basic elements of the movement are: the Kensen School (for further study into one's self, and how to perceive reality as it is); the Yamagishi Association Activities (conducted in different ways all over the world); and the village (or "demonstration community", where residents can test the ideas of Yamagishi-ism, and show the results to those who wish to see).

As you mentioned in your letter, the village does, indeed, operate without any money. At present, there are 35 locations of the village in Japan, housing almost 4,000 adults. In Switzerland, there are now 3 locations, and about 40 members. In South Korea, there is one location, housing about 20 members. Other locations exist in Brazil, Thailand, East Germany, and Australia. One will also start in the U.S. (Los Angeles) this year. However, the villages in those 4 countries are not, at the moment, centers of concerted activity, and are mainly occupied with agricultural work at the present.

The village is referred to as "the happy, friendly village, where no money is needed." "Happy" in that all its residents can live a life of both material and spiritual satisfaction. "Friendly" in that all residents have healthy relationships with each other, and with nature as well. The meaning of "friendly" in this case may be better described as "having the right relationship."

The village has money, but it is in "one wallet", and not under the control of any one person. There is an accounting division that takes care of these issues. There are no chiefs in the village. Decisions are made through the process of "kensen", which is a way to think and discuss matters, usually including at least three people. During the course of any one day, a villager may go to two or three kensen meetings. The village is run by all its members.

The Aim of the Yamagishi Association

To harmonize the works of humanity with nature — to achieve harmony for heaven, earth, and man. To bring about for humanity a society of plenty, health, and love, that is stable and comfortable.

The Tenet of the Yamagishi Association

"I will prosper with all."

We hold this tenet when considering and acting in all things, in order to assure and verify correctness.

We study whether or not the thought or action is truly, in its final result, contributing to the perpetual happiness and prosperity of society, which includes ourselves, and mind not to be distracted by temporary (for one's own generation or one's own surroundings only) immediate results.

There are many other aspects to village life, such as marriage, education, healthcare, etc. For example, children live separately from the adults from a very young age (5). Even when they are babies they are taken care of by special caretakers during the day and sleep with their parents at night. Of course, even after moving into the children's dormitory at 5, the children do see their parents on a regular basis (once every 2 months), and they have the opportunity to learn from many other adults as well. They know who their mother and father are, but still address all adults as "mother", and "father". In turn, the adults of the village look upon all children as theirs. This method of organizing village life is based on the idea that the nuclear family (mother, father, and children alone) is not the best environment for the growth of children.

Very best regards,

E. S. Harriman

Shijimizuka 3-2-23

Hamamatsu, Shizuoka 432 Japan

Phone: 81-53-455-0419

Fax: 81-53-455-0484

SPRING TREE FARM COMMUNITY

Toots, the editor, sent us a copy of her paper "Springtree Community Newsletter", and added: "Dear Folks, So glad to see CALL and get the word on international communities from a different perspective! Here is what we are up to, feel free to excerpt!".

So here are a few short passages from letters that Springtree friends wrote "home" after an extended visit:



COMMUNES STUDIES CONFERENCE 1995

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION (I.C.S.A.)

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which provides a common framework for scholarly and other exchange regarding communes, intentional communities, collective settlements and Kibbutzim, will convene its 5th international conference in Israel, between May 30th and June 2nd 1995, at Yad Tabenkin (on the campus of the EFAL Seminar).

The main subject for discussion will be:

COMMUNALISM - CONTRIBUTION and SURVIVAL,

with the focus on theory and practice of communal life, its role in society at large as well as its ability to withstand eroding influences. In addition to the theoretical importance of these issues, they have an actual implication and are of major concern for most of the existing communes.

The participants will have the opportunity to visit Kibbutzim and meet their members in a post-conference tour. Commune members all over the world will be most welcome to participate. If interested - please write to C.A.L.L. , c/o Shlomo Shalmon, and we'll send you the relevant information. (More details will be published in the coming issue of C.A.L.L.)

Keep the date in mind when planning your 1995 vacation!

→

ERIK : The best thing about living in a community is the variety of jobs you can do. If I ever got tired with a particular task, I could do something else for a while. Apart from feeding the animals, scheduling of many jobs was fairly flexible.

Springtree might seem like a small group, but the constant flow of neighbors, friends, and visitors make for a dynamic social life. The lessons I learned there had little

to do with specific skills. What I experienced had more to do with adopting new attitudes, a new world view.

BRENT : This commune got started in the early 70's and has gone through some ups and downs. They had 6 people there full-time, plus visitors. Most of their food comes from the garden and orchard. I left with new friends, new ideas, new ways of life.

VIRGINIA

At the beginning of this year, the Russian Minister for Agriculture visited Israel. At a dinner in his honour in a Kibbutz dining hall, he made the following speech:

The thesis for my Ph.D. at Moscow University dealt with communes all over the world which had been founded during the second decade of this century. Naturally I had to read a great deal about the setting-up of Kibbutzim and Moshavim [partly collective settlements] and I was convinced that I knew all there was to know about them. Now I realize how mistaken I was.

During my tour of Israel I visited a number of Kibbutzim and to my great surprise I found that Kibbutz members are free to walk around as they wish and not required to march in single file to the dining room. Only then did I realize that whatever I had read about the Kibbutz I had been comparing to the Russian Kolkhoz.



THE HUMAN PENDULUM

I am now 48 years old. Until Gorbachov came to power, I couldn't understand how communism functioned although it had been explained to me again and again. But now, having spent three days in Israel, I think I have just begun to grasp how communism works. If there is any hope for humanity, it lies in the form of voluntary communism - Kibbutz style.

The human pendulum always oscillates between two positions: that of social justice and that of individual freedom. There are times when people prefer social justice, at the expense of some freedom for the individual; at other times the desire for personal freedom prevails, and the weaker members of society get trampled on.

After many years of "social justice", the Russian pendulum has naturally moved in the direction of total freedom for the individual. In the U.S.A., contrary to the Russian mood, Clinton was voted president on his policy of increasing public responsibility toward the weaker individuals in society - in contrast to the conservative ideology of supporting the capitalist principles at all costs.

During the short time I have spent here, I have learned of the social difficulties which the Kibbutz movement is experiencing and of the pressure which is driving the Kibbutz pendulum towards more freedom at the expense of social justice. You have to respond to the mood of the day, as benefits a voluntary, democratic society; but remember that the pendulum does not always move one way: the time will come when it will correct itself!

The most important thing is to keep the heart alive, beating healthily, as it is this which enables the Kibbutz to survive. You are a human experiment which cannot be allowed to fail!

Translated from the Hebrew press
Emma and Bob Gould
(Kibbutz Kfar Menachem)

20 years
of

- 8 -

Longo maï

It wasn't much more, to begin with, than a vague idea we had had after four years of reflection following the events of 1968. We didn't have the slightest trust in what seemed to be a totally dead-end future, but two things were clear. We were determined not to be diverted into "violent" action like so many impatient leftists scattered around Europe, but we also had no intention of giving up the essential demands made by the '68 movement: the right to expression and the right to seek alternative ways of life.

It wasn't yet called Longo maï. We wanted to create, far away from the industrial centres, some kind of "European pioneer villages" and we were convinced that many other former protesters would soon come and join us. In fact, we overestimated their determination to break out of a society based on individualism and competition. Young people came, but not in such large numbers as we expected.

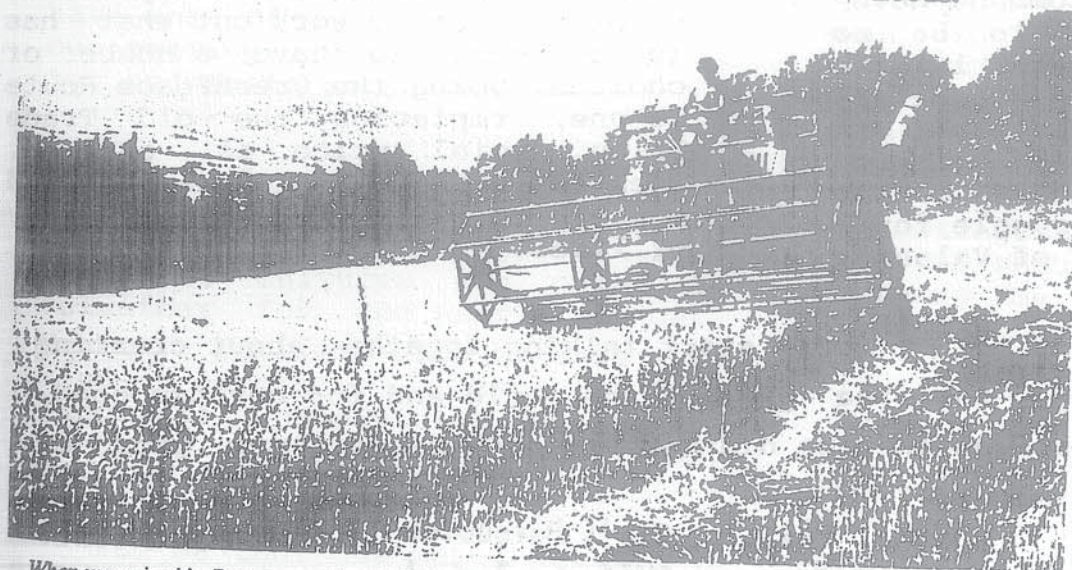
Armed with little more than ideas and a few phrases from the revolutionary folklore of a past age, we decided to become a bit more modest, at least for a while, and to get down to work. We began where it was easiest to obtain a broad training in many different skills - agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, etc. This makes you always useful somewhere, whatever happens.

So we set ourselves up in Limans, in Upper Provence, where a peasant friend, Pierre Pellegrin guided us in our first unsteady steps as farmers and shepherds. It was he who suggested the name of Longo maï - which is a Provençal greeting meaning "may it last a long time". We learned a whole lot of things, pretty quickly. First of all, that before making grand social or political theories, as so many waste their time doing in cafes and pubs, it was more honest to show that one knew how to build a roof over one's head, feed oneself reasonably well and cover one's most simple needs.

Rémi

B.P. 42, 04300 Forcalquier, France

We take advantage of the diverse growing conditions in the different cooperatives and exchange produce. For our personal needs there is a collective kitty. This is administered by a small group of cooperators who have the unenviable task of reconciling personal and collective requirements. There are no wage-earners at the cooperative,



When we arrived in Provence we found 300 hectares of abandoned land overgrown with bushes and with all its wells dried up - a year later we were harvesting our wheat, rebuilding the bread oven at St. Hypolite and eating our own bread.

THE CARNIVAL IS OVER

The Berlin Wall came tumbling down in 1991. The Soviet Empire collapsed - and the Western World celebrated the "Victory of Capitalism". Well. I have some good friends who are capitalists, but in my opinion the failure of a human experiment which had good intentions is not something to celebrate blindly. Not everything under Communism was bad and certainly not everything under Capitalist Regimes is automatically good.

Like the Communists, Western Business Development is responsible for the polluting of our oceans, the spoiling of our beaches, the contamination of our deserts with Atomic Waste, the littering of our atmosphere with space junk, and the gassing of our skies with industrial and motorized emissions.

Both sides of the former "Cold War" scene are now busy cutting down on education, on Health and Medicare, Public Transport and care for the elderly. The fragile modern conscience, which was minimal at the best of times, has no fear of criticism now from the other side of the Wall.

If you think about it, the only ones left who still struggle with Utopian Goals is the World Commune Movement. There seems to be no one else left who leads a life with a Social Conscience. We still believe in Equality, we still practice Mutual Aid, we look after each other and struggle for a life out of a set of Values.

Now, more than ever, we have to raise our voices together, we must come together to become a force in the world. Single communes can do a lot on their own, together they can become a lobby for Social Change.

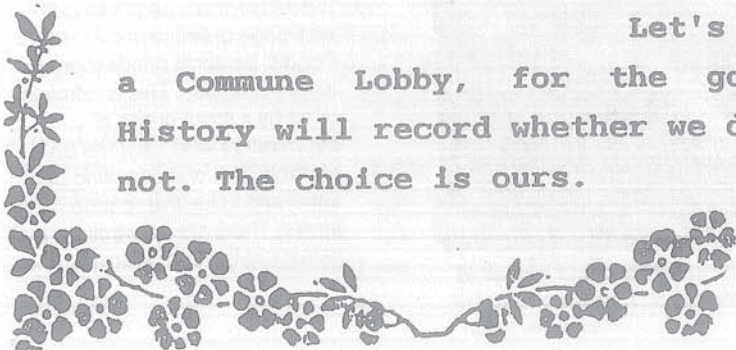
A Commune Movement the size of the Israeli Kibbutz Federation has more manpower and other resources than GreenPeace. The potential is there, waiting for someone to come forward to get things organized. The same goes for the rest of the Commune Federations and Groupings. Together we can become the voice of Common Sense and Sanity. This is no time to stick our heads in the sand and play "Ideological Ostriches"!

Let's start working together. This is the time to stand up and be counted - and to work out what has to be done! We have a number of choices. Going the GreenPeace Route is one, replacing the old Trade Union social voice is another. Speaking out against injustices and oppression also fits into our way of life.

Let's start talking together about creating a Commune Lobby, for the good of the world and for our own good. History will record whether we did our bit and played our part or not. The choice is ours.

Geoff Hercovich
Kibbutz Amiad

Hevel Keraizim
D.N. 12-335
Israel.



INNISFREE VILLAGE



After having lived here for one-and-a-half years, it's time to make up my mind: How do I feel about life here? Is it as gorgeous as I tend to think in my good moods or as horrible as I feel on my bad days? Is it close to a miracle or are we chasing phantoms in our idealism here?

First some facts about INNISFREE VILLAGE:

Some 24 years ago a group of people came together who either had a child or sibling with a mental disability or who had experienced living and working with mentally handicapped people. Their goal was clear: to find an alternative for mental institutions, group homes and sheltered workshops, to found a place where people with and people without a handicap would genuinely share their lives ' to their full potential, in mutual respect.

Innisfree Village was started in 1971 in an old farm-house in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia. Physically it is pretty isolated but incredibly beautifully situated. Over the years the community grew into a little village with some 50 inhabitants, most of them living in family style units in some 10 houses. We have a bakery, a wood-shop, a weavery, gardens for organic vegetables, meadows for our cattle, also a "Center" where we have most of our lunches, some of our meetings, our parties and theater and music performances.

We like to stress the word "Diversity", the fact that the Village managed for so many years to bring together people from different cultures who come to volunteer for one year or longer, Wealthy families side by side with kind-of-hippies, and most important: people with and without handicap together in one group, family, community.

For me that has meant getting to know some of the most wonderful people I've ever met; at the same time it can also mean sharing a

bathroom with a man who is pretty bad at aiming for the toilet.

This diversity can also be the weak part of Innisfree. It gives us a hard time whenever a common goal is needed, a common motivation to work on the continuous building of the community, when we have to talk and take decisions together, compromise.

Living at Innisfree has had quite an impact on my emotional household. I find myself in tears when my housemate S. has an extraordinarily long seizure; but when she gives me a dancing performance in her nightgown I can't stop laughing. I feel shattered when her parents blame me for neglecting her while I gave myself 100% (it should be 200% for them). M. makes my day when she finally manages to make her own cup of tea.

PAULINE KREIKEN

For me came the time to go back to Europe where I came from. Someone who might feel the urge to take over my place should write to:

INNISFREE VILLAGE
Route 2, box 506
Crozet, VA 22932 - U.S.A.

OUR "GREEN ROOM"

Environmental awareness is increasing in Israel. It may not be developing as fast as some of us would want, but there is no doubt that it is a subject which is much discussed. This year has been declared "The Year of Environment Improvement", involving many different kinds of educational programs in our schools.

The Kibbutz Movement's response to this rising awareness has been to open a small office which is to coordinate and stimulate environmental action. We have given this office the name "The Green Room". We are still in the process of formation, but have already begun to circulate a bimonthly newsletter and set up a series of one-day seminars, some of which have been very successful.

On the farming side, we have established contact with the Israeli Bio-Organic Agricultural Association, and found out that over 60 Kibbutzim grow some crops organically. We have arranged that any volunteer from abroad, who expresses the wish, can be sent to one of these Kibbutzim. Of course, this does not guarantee a green job: He-she may arrive at a time when there is just too much pressure in the dining hall and have to work there. Such are the dynamics of a small community! But there will be more of a chance with environmentally conscious people on a Kibbutz which has already committed at least some of its production to organic farming.

In addition, we are now registered with WOOF, an international organization coordinating voluntary activities on organic farming all over the world. Anyone interested in finding out more is encouraged to write directly (enclosing a reply coupon or a stamped addressed envelope) to :

WOOFF , 19 Bradford Rd.,
Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1RB England

We are interested in making contact with environmentalists throughout the world, especially those who live in community. And should anyone out there wish to visit organic and environment projects that are happening in our movement, please feel free to get in touch with us:

The Green Room , Kibbutz Seminar ,
Ramat Efal, 52960 ISRAEL

Looking forward to your interest
and cooperation - Yours

Jan Bang

Kibbutz Gezer



Camphill Milton Keynes

Camphill Milton Keynes Communities has worked the land under its care in this new town for over ten years, and now desperately needs bio-dynamic gardeners to lead a large group of companions on the work on the land. We have a field garden and orchard of one and a half acres, as well as some seven acres on our new estate at Willen, which supply us with all the vegetables and much of the fruit we need and is of interest to the organic growers in the area.

With our new houses at Willen nearing completion and many companions eagerly awaiting admission, we will need house parents. This is an exciting new initiative. Three new houses with the possibility of development into a mini city farm and horticultural complex to serve the wider community. We have had tentative enquiries from the local school for teenagers to work on the land on a regular basis. Our most urgent need is to enable our Anthroposophical Doctor (a rarity among us!) to concentrate on medical work. There is also a surgery accommodated in the new houses as well as a shop and café.

If you have skills that would fulfill our needs please write to:

Admissions, Camphill Milton Keynes Communities,
7 Sterling Close, Pennyland, Milton Keynes,
Buckinghamshire, MK15 8AN.

K A L E I D O S C O P E

From All Over and Under - compiled by Yoel Dorkam

You haven't heard from us for quite a while, and that implies we've collected heaps of wonderful, fascinating stuff. Now how on earth am I going to crowd all this into a few miserly pages, graciously allocated to me by the almighty Editor (whom I know to be squeezed into a shoestring budget). Well, I'll do my selecting best - and here we go. ((



Firstly, a few belated impressions from last summer's Intentional Communes Celebration: Diana Christian's very personal view in "Together" No.4, Fall 93, and also Howard-the-gong-lover's commentaries from "Windfall", Autumn 93 :

Snapshots from a Celebration of Community Diana Christian



Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington USA August 26-31, 1993. A small progressive college, set in a lush evergreen forest, hosting 800 people from all over North America...and Israel, Mexico, India, Denmark, Germany, Russia, the British Isles, Australia. Elders in their 60s and 70s, many middle-aged, young mothers, lots of youth and students, flocks of children. Rainbow colors, but mostly white folk. "Straight" clothes, and lots of batiks, tie dyes, native textiles. More men with long hair than I've seen in years.

Yoga and Tai Chi at dawn, music and comedy till midnight. Shabat Circles, Lesbian's Circles, Visual Artists' Circles, 60s Commune Veteran's Circles. Moonlight walks to the bay; acapella singing in the dome; drumming and chanting with Beaver Chief; Saturday night Afro-World-Beat "Bop Till You Drop."

The six-day Celebration of Community conference was sponsored by the Fellowship of Intentional Communities (FIC), a decentralized network of good-natured, seemingly tireless communitarian activists, who publish the *Directory of Intentional Communities* and *Communities* magazine.

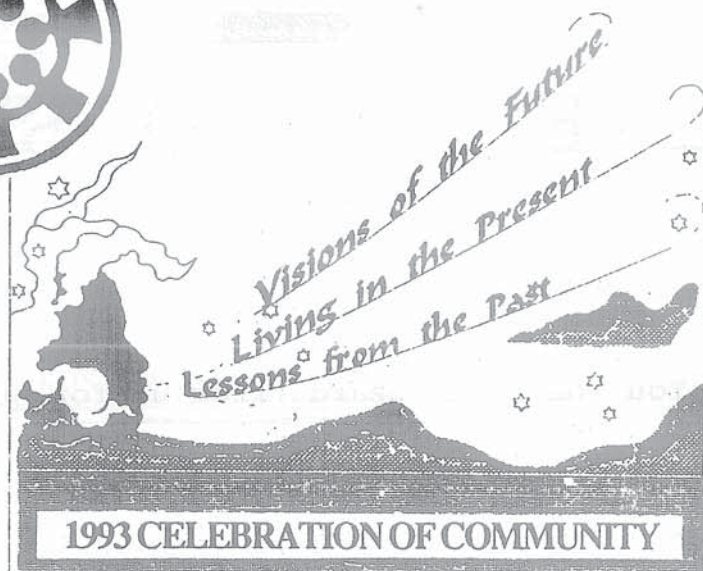


Celebration of Community

by Howard

What a splendid affair it was! The plenaries were not the usual succession of speeches. They were called to order with a gong. I love gongs- excellent judgment to think of a gong. The speeches were framed and punctuated with song, poetry, dance, pep rallies, with interpersonal encounter exercises and the balancing of peacock feathers on noses, the latter no doubt, a reminder that we would violate the spirit of the gathering if we took ourselves too seriously. This blend of information, performing art, ritual, emotional support, silliness and mirth spilled out into the workshops, the meal times, and numerous informal gatherings to share and to play. It was a rich goo-- half revival meeting without the hellfire and half-Woodstock without the amplifiers or the acid and, I thought, a healthy mix of ages.

Somehow, through all the partying and socializing, we found time to learn and to exchange information about creating and living in intentional communities. We were blessed with a host of accomplished presenters. We could have founded a University of Intentional Community right then and there. For five miraculous days we had assembled nearly all the information we would need for a new ecological/communitarian civilization. How exciting to know that we were participating in a very unique event. We were calling out to all the world to receive our gift- the how-tos of a more sustainable, just, peaceful, and healthful culture. How thrilling it was for the 800 celebrants-communitarian, allies and seekers, to be so enthused with the spirit of hope and promise!



KALEIDOSCOPE

What in heaven is a "ConFest"? Seems to be some kind of coming-together for task-allocating and preparation, once or twice a year, in Australia. Jane Bower tries to tell us about it in "Down to Earth News" No. 78 of Feb. 1994 :

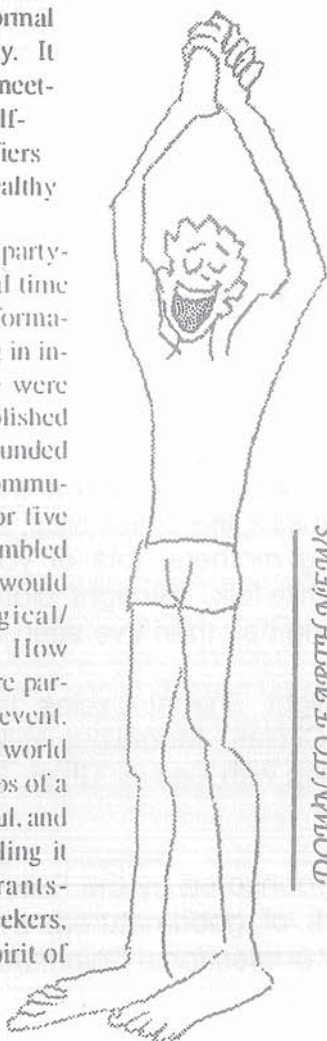
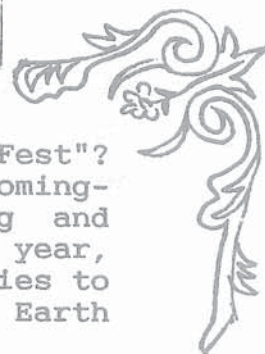
MY FIRST CONFEST

Most of the old guard 'ConFesters' would find it strange that someone could reach the age 40, before experiencing their first "ConFest". I'm happy to say that I survived, and feel that the first will not be the last.

If you listened to everybody's opinions, you probably wouldn't go at all, preferring the comforts of home, T.V., soft mattresses that don't go down in the night, dishwashers and a myriad of other things that "City People" take for granted. However, we did come, we probably didn't conquer, rather we were conquered by the spirit of the "ConFest" and the feeling of total freedom to be where you wanted to be and do what you wanted to do.

I went to the "ConFest" with the job of "Workshop Co-ordinator". I looked at the myriad of written applications, and where there were definite applications funnelled them to the other co-ordinators of the various villages. What I thought was an easy job of segmenting the others, was compounded by the extra villages and workshop areas that mushroomed on the first day of the ConFest. Everyone wanting to run a workshop seemed to know where and when they wanted to do it, which led me to think that they knew best. I let go of my possessive tendencies for that job, and set out to, and succeeded, in enjoying ConFest.

Regards and love to all, Jane Bower.



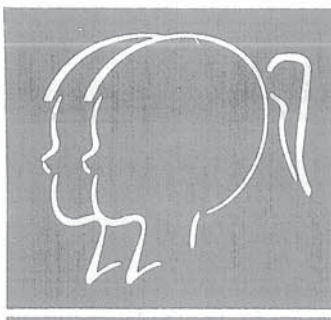
DOWN TO EARTH NEWS

And now a few words about a long, long summer at Aurora Community in Finland, based on Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophical ideas - as perceived by John Montgomery :

SUNRISE AT AURORA COMMUNITY

John Montgomery is an MTV in a community in Finland.

Aurora is a small community for mentally handicapped adults, situated 30 km outside Helsinki. Its leader and founder is Raili, an enthusiastic Finnish lady who enjoys having a laugh but who takes her work seriously. She has strong social ideals and this helps to motivate her. The community is at her house.



Aurora is in the forest 10 km away from the nearest train station, shop or any other feature of modern society. It is at the end of a quiet road which comes from a small quiet village. Aurora is a quiet place... in my opinion.

The community began in 1990 with two handicapped adults: its life and work is based on the ideas of Rudolf Steiner. At the moment there are five handicapped adults. Raili, an Estonian family and myself. In winter time they make handicraft such as table cloths, in a small workshop (the last SCI MTV helped to build this). In summer they mainly work outside in the garden and take care of the animals. They also go for walks in the forest and make visits to and receive visitors from other Steiner schools nearby.



Hark, Hark Ye All - from Camphill's "Long Term News" No 14 of Jan.-Feb. 94 we extract this precious little pearl by Celia Durham :

Botton goes to the "moo"-vies!

Anyone who read Botton's "Comings and Goings" list recently may have noticed that Paul, one of our farmers, was going to Tyne Tees Television, Newcastle. This may not seem strange as the list is usually long, occasionally interesting, but always informative—and the only way of knowing who is arriving or leaving Botton.

However, my eyebrows raised when I read who Paul was going with: Maisie, Lorna, Sally, Bittern, Swift and Raspberry. Rather odd. Sally I know to be his wife; Swift as one of our villagers; Lorna and Maisie as parents. So who was Raspberry? And why all these ladies? A little enquiry revealed all. They are his cows, all shorthorns. And the breed gives the clue. Their horns are majestically long and curling;

indeed, much sought after if you are a film producer trying to capture the rustic background for a Catherine Cookson film.

So, off they all went for their two day stint on the film set, with "heavenly" cover provided by the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company.

The cows took centre stage whilst Paul had to settle for a bit part which required him to have his hair cut and the further indignity of being sprayed with brown gunge so as to look the part! This earned him all of £94.

Now, the dilemma has to be faced: we in Camphill work without wages. But what about our beasts which were able to pull in £500 each — per day!

Celia Durham



"Centrepoin^t" No. 9 (of Jan. 1994) brings this thoughtful, moving summing-up by the outgoing chairman, Murray Faulkner :

CCGT Trust Update

by Murray Faulkner, Chairman

My term as chairman ends on December 31st so this is my last opportunity to write in that capacity. I had only two years in mind when I took the position and, in fact, it has been almost three.

In that time we have survived two major police raids (May 1991 and April 1992), seen many of our loved ones convicted of criminal offences and imprisoned, spent a king's ransom on lawyers and seen our membership reduced by half to the hundred and forty current residents. Undoubtedly this was the most stressful time in our history, both emotionally and financially. Losing members to prison has greatly affected the small and large family units and long term members going has left big gaps and much grief. There has been continual shifting and adjustment throughout the community in allowing these changes to take place at minimum cost or loss of intimacy. Looking back I am amazed by the flexibility, acceptance and willingness with which many people have responded to the extra responsibilities of leadership and work.

At times I feel we have attracted more than our fair share of criticism and that there is a powerful element that would like to see our experiment in living terminated. It has been easy sometimes to feel paranoid and persecuted when we are giving away power, forgetting to simply feel the ground firmly below our feet.

However, despite the difficulties of the past few years we have managed in 1993 to record a significant business profit and there is a strongly positive attitude amongst members about the future.

As I move on, the following stand out as crucial, in my opinion, to the ongoing health and well-being of Centrepoin^t:

- **Vision**

Despite how slow the process has been, if we keep at it the articulated vision will almost certainly be extremely simple. It is important to articulate the essence we stand for in order to focus our energy and give meaning to membership.

- **Membership**

To me true membership of Centrepoin^t has been a very special commitment about giving all my energy and resources to continuing a real-life experiment, about being open and honest, about sharing a vision of intimacy and

loving. The feeling does not necessarily come with acceptance by the Trust as a member, it may grow over time. However I don't believe the place can flourish without a strong balance in favour of people with that depth of commitment. At present I feel there are too large a number who are in halfway place where it can be a shelter from rather than a challenge to responsibility and commitment.

- **Meetings**

What can I say? Members, your presence at and participation in the Family meetings on Mondays and the business meetings is essential to our well-being. There is a huge loss to the community when people allow personal difficulties to keep them away from meetings rather than taking responsibility for making them the exciting, informative place they should be. On the other hand there is the potential for enormous strength if everyone was to attend again.

- **Consensus**

I am very glad that after much debate we have retained this historical method of decision-making and placed added emphasis on giving clear, adequate information and enough discussion time to controversial issues. I believe it to be essential to the survival of the community. I appreciate the increased effort people have made to keep personal difficulties out of business discussions. I see consensus as about being honest with our view rather than holding out against the rest of the meeting. Of course there's no perfect way. As soon as there is a feeling of 'we've got the answer' we are likely to have another couple of horrendous meetings and have to get back to the drawing board.

Personally this term of office has been an exciting, strenuous learning curve. My knowledge of trees and goats has been rapidly expanded to include the judiciary system, public relations, the media, police, Social Welfare, television documentaries, lawyers' fees, prisons etc. I've thoroughly enjoyed most of it. I've learnt a lot about communication, about standing back and allowing some problems to sort themselves out, about my own strengths and weaknesses. I didn't like being categorised by some as 'The Authority'.

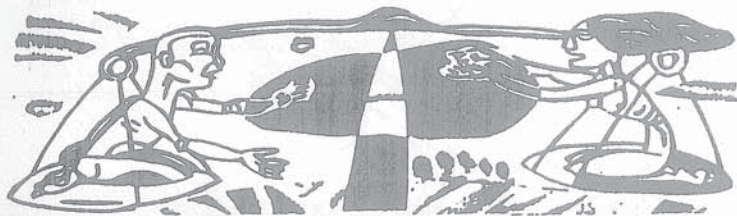
Overall, however, thank you members, for giving me a term as your chairman. It will be one of the many highlights for me of living at Centrepoin^t.



Linley Wistrand presents us with a different angle, expressed in "Centrepoin^t" No. 9 of Jan. 94, and yet another view comes (earlier) from Neil Farmiloe (No. 8 of Oct. 93) :

Linley's story

For about 18 months now I have been wanting to move out of Centrepont. Or at least that's how it started. As Murray hasn't wanted to I have put off making the move, as being with him has been more important. That has been a long and at times a very painful process; being at Centrepont when you are no longer happy here is not an easy thing to do. It is very easy to get negative about the life style, like having to eat at set meal times, having to queue for the washing machine, not trusting that if you get someone else to do your washing that you will get all your pairs of socks back (yes some of us now have pairs of socks), having to share my bed room, etc... As for the people, even at the best of times it's hard to understand why some people do the things they do and when you don't really want to live with them they're just a crazy bunch of half wits.



As a result of not moving out straight away, I have been through quite a lot about what it is that I want from leaving. It started off with feeling uncomfortable about the court cases and all the publicity. I just wanted to be out and as far removed from Centrepont as I possibly could. Then it was missing all my friends who had moved out, and envying what they had and what I didn't, like their own bedrooms and all the above things that I've grizzled about over the months. Then it was Duncan saying he'd like to live in a home with just Murray and I and have a 'normal' family life, and so the list of things went on. I started to realise that what was most important was having my own home, kitchen, laundry and private area, that I was really hanging out for personal space, to be on my own or with Murray or Duncan, without someone coming along and interrupting a private conversation, or some child screaming, without having to go to bed, which seemed to be the only space I could call my own. For us to be in charge of our own finances as a smaller family unit. I began to realise that because these things were important to me I didn't have to totally reject Centrepont and its ideals, because I still believe that the basis of all human relating is loving.

... I have lived at Centrepont for over 15 years now, almost as long as the home where I was born and raised. I have a lot of me (time and energy) connected to Centrepont.

I hope in the future we can have people leave in a different way to how it's been in the past, which has involved a lot of anguish and grief for everyone involved, those who go and those who stay. Fifteen years ago when people wanted to go they snuck out in the middle of the night; we've already come a long way from that, who knows where we go in the future. I hope that the boundaries of Centrepont continue to change.

• Linley Wistrand

Neil's story

This is the second time I have lived at Centrepont. I have been here ten months this time and I became a member about two months ago.

I have found it easy to settle back into the place. The number of people has dropped considerably since my last visit, which was just prior to 'the big exodus', and personally I much prefer it at the present level.

I have had an interest in living in an intentional community since staying on a kibbutz in Israel when I was nineteen. Since then I've stayed at or visited a number of communities in New Zealand including Riverside and Renaissance in Motueka, Rainbow Valley and Tui in Golden Bay and Wilderlands on the Coromandel. They all operate successfully on a variety of philosophies and principles but, apart from Riverside, I don't believe any of them would survive in their present forms without the substantial support they receive from Social Welfare agencies.

Here at Centrepont we have a number of different businesses, mostly operating at a profit, plus a strong commitment from members to ensure our expenditure does not exceed our income. This makes me happy as I like to believe that small independent communities such as ours should be able not only to survive in the 'real' world, but in fact to be far more efficient economically than the larger New Zealand community as a whole.

For me any disadvantages of living here are far outweighed by the advantages. I'm not very possession oriented, so I don't miss having my very own home, car, mortgage, hp payments and repair bills. Instead I have the complete use of a 90 acre property with tennis courts, swimming pool, hot tub, native bush, gym, restaurant and service workers to ensure I only have to wash the dishes one week in seven and *never* have to mow the lawns. In return I have to put up with living intimately with about 130 adults and children, all different and all interesting as individuals. I don't find this difficult at all.

The community as a whole is a living entity which has been changing and growing since its inception. For me this is a particularly interesting time to be here. I'm not drawn to having a personal guru so, in that sense, I am quite happy he is not personally living here. In his absence the community is having to find ways, using consensus, committees and meetings, to formulate its own direction and for every individual member to be responsible for major decisions made. It is a slow and demanding process but I believe we have the necessary skills, capabilities and commitment to succeed.

• Neil Farniloe



New member Neil Farniloe

Palmgrove, the Bruderhof's Nigeria community, looks to be a success story: Blacks and Whites living and building together in harmony (a few even intermarried). However, they seem to be experiencing a few obstacles on the path to complete integration. Don and Eve Alexander, delegated to Africa, report in "The Plough" No. 38 Of Spring 1994 :

Nigeria Update

Don and Eve Alexander and their children have returned to the US after a year at Palmgrove, our newest Bruderhof. Don reports below:

When we moved to Palmgrove in January 1993, there was no structured community: no communal meals, no communal work, and no communal schedule. We were lucky if we got the young men to the farm between 9:00 and 10:00 in the morning, and if it was hot, the work petered out by 11:30. Afternoons there was no question of work; they weren't used to that. We had our meetings in the evening, but it might be an hour later than planned by the time people actually gathered, because the African concept of time is so different from ours. So we had to be flexible and very, very patient.

But we also had to remind ourselves that we had not come to Nigeria to install western time concepts and to maneuver people into a kind of schedule; nor even to build houses.

Our task is this: to represent wherever we go the love of Jesus and the love of the gospel, and to proclaim God's future. The houses, the buildings, the work schedule are only excuses for us to be there; they are only a means of relating to one another.

We had to remind ourselves of this many, many times, especially when we were building four houses and the dining room and the offices all at the same time. Once I went and counted the people at the work site. There were 140 souls: some sleeping on benches, some playing, some walking around, some drinking palm wine, some selling palm wine, and some selling other things—and only some working.



DON ALEXANDER

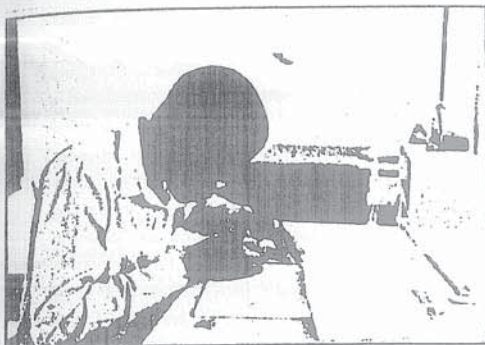
In the end, we decided to meet every morning after breakfast with our whole work force to see who was there and why they were there. We called it our morning devotions. There were often questions, problems, and differences to solve. One young man would work in the morning, for instance, have a good lunch, and then feel he was due for a good rest in the afternoon, and he would only reappear at suppertime. We explained to him that this was not right: there was an all-day work schedule, and if he couldn't meet it he had better not come at all.

We also had about forty children running in and out of the houses, children of neighbors and friends and people who wanted to be part of Palmgrove. All of them were very willing to help with the paint brushes, and the results were what you might expect. So we decided that they should meet every morning with one of the brothers. He would meet with them and have a little prayer with them and sing a song, and then he would decide which children—maybe a dozen—should have the privilege of working with us that day.

THE WHOLE QUESTION of black and white struggle, which we are so conscious of in America, is quite foreign to our Nigerian brothers and sisters. I don't like to use the words black and white, because one actually forgets who is black and who is white. You don't see the color anymore; you are simply all souls together. But it is a totally new experience for our black members to be with whites—to sit on the same bench, eat at the same table, have meetings together, stand in the stream and scrub clothes together, and pour cement together. It is absolutely unheard of.

Yet in Palmgrove whites not only eat with blacks, but they eat the same food. Much more importantly, we have the opportunity to experience redemption together with them. Our redemption does not lie in building houses and organizing and setting up a communal system. It lies in experiencing something that has to come from above; something that comes through prayer.

The "Integrierte Gemeinde" (integrated community) of Germany have a somewhat similar project running at Morogoro in Tanzania. George John conveys some of his enthusiasm after joining the community :



George John, age 21 years, native of Kimamba near Melela. With us he became a brick-layer apprentice. After some time he asked whether he might join the Community. After a visit to the Integration Houses in Morogoro he wrote this letter

"This day was a day of joy for me, when I got the opportunity to visit the Community in the town of Morogoro. After we had cooled our throats, all the rooms and their inhabitants were shown to us. I was a bit shocked to visit everybody's room without paying any attention to whether the inhabitant was there or not, whether these were the rooms of parents or of children. This was something special for me. But in spite of this I was not afraid to look and I tried to observe each detail.

In all these houses, although they are very different, the way they are arranged gives to each one their character.

The things are beautiful and masterly arranged. All objects have their place without disturbing or squeezing each other.

When looking closer I noticed that in the Community not only the people are free, but also the things. I tried to look at everyone and I saw in their faces that they are human beings of joy, of love, of peace and freedom. And it is not the joy of one day, but the daily joy of life.

I have found the answer. With my small ability and my average strength I will build up this Community the same way the others do."



An unexpected Reader's Letter by Andrew Bolton also from "Plough" No. 38 (and the editor's reply) - on a very delicate subject concerning the Bruderhof's attitude - caught my attention :

Women at the Bruderhof: A Visitor's Perspective

Andrew Bolton, his wife Jewel, and their children lived at Darvell, our English Bruderhof, from September 1992 to September 1993.

DEAR EDITORS:

Darvell, June 1993

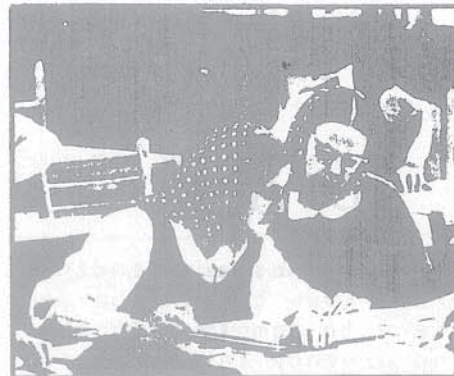
The Plough magazine states that it is "dedicated to all who work for a personal transformation in Christ and a radical turn from the materialism, racism, and impurity of this world, looking toward the coming of God's kingdom."

However, what is left out of the list is a radical turning away from sexism. Is this accidental?

The oppression of women by men is a big global issue. There is a quote that summarizes the situation of women as follows: "Women are half the world's population, do two thirds of the world's work, earn one tenth of the world's income, and own one hundredth of the world's property."

Women and children in both the Third World and in the First World are the poorest of the poor. Should not *The Plough* be committed to turning away from sexism, an issue that is bigger than racism? Especially so when in many ways women are very much equal to men in the community.

In important ways sisters are equal to brothers in the Bruderhof, and the community can witness quite dramatically that the situation of women here is very different from that of women in the world. I think here men work just about as hard as women. Here men and women are paid the same: nothing! Here men and women equally own no property.



Here in the community mothers do not have to choose between working at home, looking after children, and working in a job. Here women can do all these things and are perhaps the envy of mothers in the world who find this a cruel dilemma.

Here bringing up children is not something just left to the mother. Virtually every family has a father since divorce is just about unknown and there are support structures for helping husbands and wives work through their conflict. Furthermore, responsibility for the children is something shared by the whole community.

Here women speak their minds! Sisters are not shy and retiring and put upon. If a sister sees something is not right or is upset about something, then she is obligated like any baptized member to speak up.

Sexual harassment, an issue for many women at work, does not happen here. And if it did it would be dealt with and taken very seriously. Violence against women is also something that would not be tolerated in the community. In fact men here are far more accountable than in most situations outside the community.

Women make exactly the same vows to enter the novitiate and to be baptized as do men. In the members' meeting a sister can speak and be heard and can hold up a decision or influence the direction of decision-making just as much as a brother.

Why Not Sexism? A Response from Plough

DEAR ANDREW,

We are emphatically opposed to the oppression or exploitation of women—or of anyone else, for that matter. It is merely a matter of justice that a woman who does the same job as a man should get the same pay. It is only right that a woman who is qualified for a certain position should have the same chance to fill it as a man. A woman should be treated with the respect owed to any person, and she is owed that respect in her own right, not as a mere appendage to her husband. And of course any verbal, psychological, or physical abuse of women is simply wrong.

We cannot, however, merely proclaim ourselves to be "against sexism"—at least not without providing several paragraphs of explanation. In several senses, the word *sexism* has become the intellectual property of the radical feminist movement, and it has acquired certain connotations which preclude the possibility of our using it. For many feminists, it would be a contradiction in terms to be both anti-sexist and anti-abortion, anti-sexist and pro-marriage, anti-sexist and anti-chastity.

The most radical and vocal feminists demand even a statistical equality of men and women. It is not enough that a woman has an equal opportunity to become a doctor, business executive, or senator. There

must be equal numbers of men and women doctors, business executives, and senators, or society is proved to be sexist to the core. Bowing to this logic, the National Cathedral displayed the image of a crucified woman a few years ago. After all, if there is a Christ, there must be a "Christa"—and if there is a God there must be a Goddess.

Many feminists also reject as "sexist" any implication that there could be intrinsic differences between men and women. Obviously, the visible physical differences cannot be ignored, and feminist attitudes towards these range from grudging acceptance to the view that these differences are proof that women are superior to men (which is not considered a sexist opinion, by the way). But to go beyond the statement that women are biologically adapted to be child-bearers to the proposal that women, at least on the average, are more suited to be "child-carers" is to invite the accusation of sexism. Feminist orthodoxy requires that any observed differences in male and female behavior must be ascribed to "cultural conditioning."

For these reasons we cannot unconditionally proclaim ourselves to be "anti-sexist." Nevertheless, we stand with all the oppressed of this world, including its oppressed women. And we believe that the answer to the oppression of women, as with the issues of materialism, militarism, racism, and impurity, lies in the personal transformation in Christ of every woman and man. Our striving to live as sisters and brothers under God is our main answer to the question of "sexism."

The Editors

Now here comes some really bad news from Ilyean of the CN, on a topic that may sound pretty familiar to quite a few communards:

B A D N E W S

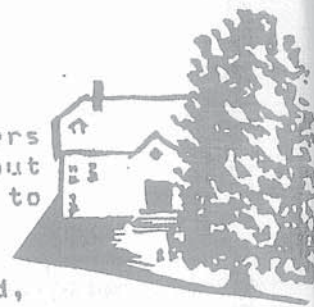
Some CN Communes are tending to become the private fiefs of a few members. Even though the membership has fallen below that number necessary to comply with their legal status, the few remaining members show no urgency in recruiting. As long as the mortgage can be met out of income support, the hassle of finding new members, and adjusting to their presence is avoided.

Others even go so far as to take tenants to meet the mortgage demand, but resist their tenant's applications to become part of the Commune.

Has CN lost its way. The idea of using technical change as a basis for restructuring society put forward in the old Undercurrents is abandoned for the spirituality served up after UC was taken over by Resurgence.. Instead of organising things, the network tends towards organising people into idea conformists.

Commune living should enable economies of scale, and economy of resources, but the real benefit is strength gained through the collective diversity of skills and attitudes. A Community containing a diversity of types should be able to respond to a variety of unexpected challenges much more adequately than one with a focussed conformist ideology.

? N Ilyan



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On the other hand, East Wind's "Windfall" of Autumn 1993 raises some intriguing questions about interpersonal relationships in communal life :

Not That You Asked

by Dow Romeo

At East Wind we seem to have created a structure which includes the formation of groups who oppose, even object to one another's ways of simply existing. These groups may have began harmlessly enough, but given an adequate dosage of intolerance for each other, and put in place an indecently skilled agent provocateur, they can become quite a menace to the community and members who do not consistently side with them.

East Wind is a challenging place to live. Complicated as well.

So we look to the established community. I, myself, began to

question the worth of breaking the system to put in place a more healthy one. Clearly, good could come out of more direct communication, less polarization of people, views held by people being more pure and true to the issue. I have come to see that something is very broken when people go into a meeting more attached to the outcome than to hearing one another's views. A lot of East Winders don't seem to trust, not only each other, but the ability or willingness of the community as a whole to do what is right and fair.

We came to East Wind with something special in mind. Maybe it was different for each of us. But would you live in a place if you thought you'd be happier somewhere else? I wouldn't and believe most people wouldn't. So, we have

at least in common that we came to East Wind (and stayed) because we believed that we could be happy here. But many of us are falling short of our potential. I've wondered over the reasons many times and haven't gotten far. In part, of course, it's our own reasons; we brought them with us. But I feel to some degree the process I've outlined has a lot to do with it.

The questions I ask myself are paramount to any others I've asked myself in direct meaning, and in relation to how absolutely they affect my life.

But my spirit is far from broken. I am encouraged daily in this endeavor; East Wind is without a doubt an exceptional place, and if we can manage not to lose any more members to this problem, I think enough of us have it in us to declare these questions answerable.

Jennis Gamlin spent a wonderful year at Emmaus in the Netherlands and tries to share with us a few of her experiences (sorry, source missing!) :

CRAZY DAYS AT EMMAUS

Perhaps it's the coming together of so many different people, with completely different reasons for being there that makes Emmaus communities so "Emmaus". I can't think of any other way to describe the group dynamics and relationships I had with people there.

I too had a feeling in the beginning that these people were accepting me to live with them for a year, knowing almost nothing about me, asking almost nothing of my motivations, my expectations, fears, life !! I also felt like walking away from it all when trying to get things changed was like banging my head up against a brick wall.



I still had reservations when I arrived, unpacked my rucksack and prepared myself for a year in a foreign country, where the native language sounded like an out of tune radio, and breakfast was three mugs of coffee and as many cigarettes as could be smoked in the same space of time.

Heavy discussions with a couple of folks at Emmaus, support and explanations from my contact person and I was feeling pretty happy there.

BUT, most definitely the hardest thing about living at Emmaus, is leaving.

Jennie Gamlin

And let us close this Kaleidoscope with an ungodly song from the Prague ICA meeting, by Allan Atkisson - from the Winter 93 issue of "Newsletter" :

DEAD PLANET BLUES SUNG AT PRAGUE ICA MEET

DEAD PLANET BLUES

Words c 1990 by Alan Atkisson

Well hey there! Haven't seen you in a while! Let me buy you a drink. Uh, what did you say your name was again? Oh, right. My name? Well, my friends used to call me . . . God.

Pull up a star and hear my tale of woe
I built a planet just a few billion years ago
It was a lovely little blue-green ball . . .
One of my life-forms became self-aware
They started messing with my recipe for air
And now that planet's got no life at all!
Yeah, it's a . . .

Dead Planet
Yeah, I'm just gettin' back from the funeral . . .
Dead Planet
Don'tcha hate it when they leave the casket open?
I got them old Dead Planet Blues

Them little life-forms were a hungry bunch
They'd eat top-soil for breakfast
They'd eat rain forests for lunch
And they drank up all my fossil fuels
(Let out one heck of a burp . . .)
You've never seen a more destructive race
Yeah, they rigged up these nuclear suicide buttons all over the place
And they kept pourin' out that CO2 (well, it wasn't in my recipe . . .)
Now it's a . . .

Dead Planet
Hey, anybody seen Jupiter lately?
Dead Planet
Tell 'em I got a great deal on a used moon . . .
I got them old Dead Planet Blues

Here comes the sad part . . .

All their refrigerators
Ate up the ozone layer
And flushed my food chain down the tubes!

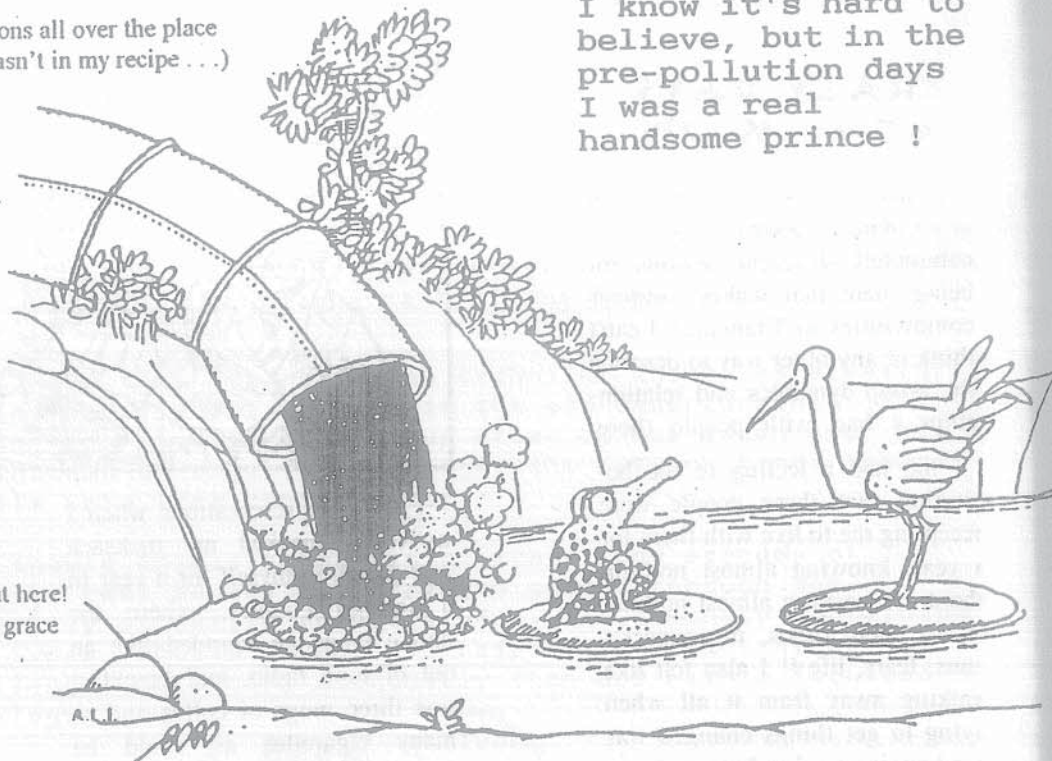
I tried to warn them of the risks they took
I sent droughts, plagues, famines
Did the whole thing straight by the book
But they just kept watchin' re-runs on TV
Hey, I've never seen the starship Enterprise out here!
When things got bad they asked for mercy and grace
Said I'd made them in My image
They insulted Me to My face!
So I revoked the lifetime guarantee
Now what do I do with a . . .

Dead Planet
Use it as a cosmic doorstep?
Dead Planet
Hey, we can go bowling in the Pleiades!
I got them old Dead Planet -
It ain't nothin' but a lifeless hunk of granite -
I got them old Dead Planet Blues

*Making the Great Transition: Our One World, ICA,
1504-25th Avenue, Seattle WA 98122*

TOAD :

I know it's hard to believe, but in the pre-pollution days I was a real handsome prince !



BOOKS

Unique social experiment

THE KIBBUTZ MOVEMENT: A History (Volume 1: Origins and Growth, 1909-1939) by Henry Near. Oxford University Press, Liffman Library of Jewish Civilization. 420 pp. £55.

Leon Sheleff

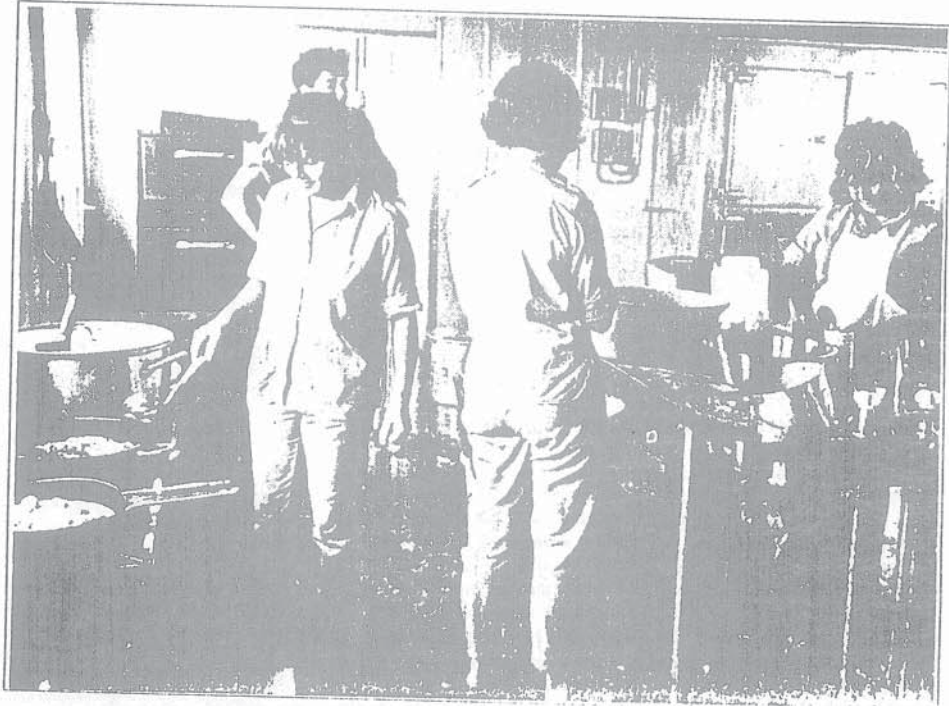
THE kibbutz as a pioneering movement, seeking both a better, meaningful life for its members, and an influence on the surrounding society, is in constant crisis and constant flux.

It is considered by its supporters the acme of the Jewish rejuvenation that the Zionist movement was designated to achieve, and by its detractors to be in a state of imminent collapse, and irrelevant to Israel's real needs.

The kibbutz movement inevitably arouses controversial responses, but the fact cannot be gainsaid of its continuous growth, of its fascination and attraction to many, of its capacity to allow for change, where necessary, and often to initiate it, where desirable.

From its agricultural beginnings it now has extensive industrial undertakings and tourist projects; from its unique child-rearing system, it increasingly moves to more nuclear-family orientation; from its early spartan struggles, it now has many manifestations of affluent living; from its emphasis on physical labor as ennobling, its members are now involved in a myriad of activities.

The literature on kibbutzim is voluminous, much of it in English, testimony to the intense interest the movement has aroused as a unique social experiment. But there has been no systematic survey of its historical development, until Henry Near's fascinating and detailed account, a two-volume work covering 80 years of struggle, progress, frustration, achievement, doubts and success.



Kitchen-Work in a Young Kibbutz

The first volume, just published, covers the first 30 years - from the small group of about a dozen young people who settled at Um Juni, to turn it into Deganya, the first kibbutz, to the 24,000 people living on 80 kibbutzim at the outbreak of the World War in 1939, constituting then a significant 5 percent of the total Jewish population in Mandatory Palestine.

On the one hand, the reader is given many glimpses of daily life in the attempt of members to set up a voluntary communal society, linked in production and consumption, seeking to give the individual his full expression within the warmth, intimacy, vitality and spirituality of a close-knit commune; on the other hand the reader is constantly connected with larger happenings from developments in the Zionist movement to events on the world stage.

THE KIBBUTZ movement is not the only communal movement of modern times, but it is almost certainly the most successful and best known. Henry Near, himself a kibbutz member and a lecturer in one of its colleges, suggests that, deep down, there may be a reason for this embedded both in the Zionist movement as such, and in Jewish history.

For Near, then, the kibbutz is an integral part of Labor Zionism, which in turn "is the continuation of Jewish social traditions." It goes without saying that Near's examination and explanation of how these factors survived, and are expressed in the State of Israel, will be eagerly awaited in his forthcoming second volume.

The Jerusalem Post

T I D B I T S

from assorted pots, pans and dishes

Browsing through various publications like "Eurotopia", "Community Alive", "Ökodorf Information" and others, I stumble upon troves of valuable, inspiring information - triggering new ideas and highlighting surprising similarities as well as significant variations between different communes and communities. I would like to share with our readers a few of the innumerable TIDBITS that I collected from scores of newsletters and bulletins from all around our intriguing universe, mostly in English, some in their original language, to maintain a bit of the original flavour.

YOEL DORKAM

East Wind News Update

Snow. It snowed on Halloween.
How radical of Mama Nature.

Erica planned an amazing Halloween party. Down in the field by Long Bottom, she and her hench witches, Laura and Naga, built a bon fire and spent the night swooping around the fire-baunting and cackling--things that witches like to do best. Folks gathered around the fire, some in costume, and drummed, shrieked and ate chocolate chip cookies. The Moon was full and the field white, the sky clear.

In Mid-October East Wind hosted 4 Twin Oakers for labor Exchange, July, Sophie, Val and her daughter Maia. Mika, also from T.O. came later when East Winders returned from The Joint Hammocks talks. While the Twin Oakers were here, 8 of us, Cathy, Dahvid, Musi, Patricia and Willow, Spring, Tom and Sequoia went to Sandhill to help put the finishing touches on the Sor-

ghum Harvest.

Our new Nutbutter Cold Storage Warehouse is underway. The concrete slab was poured the first week in October and on the 8th, Musi and Patricia were married on the fresh white platform by our very own mail-order minister, Hoyt. It was a colorful celebration complete with tears, dancing, The East Wind Band, and Joe, in full polyester regalia, on roller skates.

The new Exercise Room is looking spiffy with its half paneled walls, pine cabinets, and cinnamon-spice carpet. Spring and crew are working hard to finish and get that Soloflex a home.

Internal Affairs remain exciting, as usual. There is a new Sunday Morning group that meets for 2 hours each week to discuss communication methods, inter-relating and other more personal than political issues.



SHENOA - ALTERNATIVE WAYS TO HOLD LAND

Shenoa's Land Stewardship Program offers an alternative to how individuals own, develop, and maintain property. Shenoa's land stewards have blended capitalism, modern urban planning ideas, and an approach to community to plan a mixed-use village on 160 acres of land in a Mendocino County, California valley. Stephan Brown, the coordinator and founder of Shenoa, will present how Shenoa operates, how the program preserves the land, and how it offers individuals ownership and education.



PRAG HOUSE: 10 EASY STEPS FOR KEEPING A COMMUNE GOING WITH NO GURU OR BIBLE

Talk about the history of Seattle's oldest collective household (over 20 years), Prag House, and the lessons it holds out to others trying to form and sustain urban and rural communities. The history of ELT (which consists of five communities - two urban and three rural) will also be touched on. Elements to be covered: land use problems, role of trusts and 501(c)3 status, neighborhood relations, internal dynamics involving division of labor, raising children in collectives, food politics, building a larger community through using available resources, admitting members and when it's time to say goodbye.

Kommune Niederkaufungen

D-34260 Kaufungen, Kirchweg 1; Tel: 05605/3015

Aktualität: 1993

Projekttyp: Gemeinschaft Bildung

Orientierung: Ökologie, Politik, Garten/Landwirtschaft, Handwerk, Beginn: 1986

zur Zeit sind 45 Erwachsene beteiligt und 12 Kinder/Jugendliche

Wir verstehen uns als linke undogmatische Gruppe, als Gesamtgruppe orientieren wir uns weder an einer spezifischen Kommunitradition noch an Spiritualität. Grundlagen unseres Zusammenlebens sind: Linkes Politikverständnis, gemeinsame Ökonomie, Konsensentscheidungen auf allen Ebenen, Abbau kleinfamiliärer Strukturen, Abbau geschlechtsspezifischer Machtstrukturen. Bestehende Betriebe / Arbeitsbereiche: Tagungshaus (27 Betten), integrative altersgemischte Kindertagesstätte, Näh- und Lederwerkstatt, Landwirtschaft, Baubetrieb, Schreinerei, Schlosserei, Bauplanung, Küche. Einige von uns arbeiten außerhalb. Verschiedene Infos (das Grundsatzpapier u. ein Ergänzungspapier, das die derzeitige Praxis beschreibt, ein Seminarprogramm und ein Rundbrief können bestellt werden. Wir haben noch Platz und suchen noch Menschen, die mit uns zusammen hier leben und arbeiten wollen; alle zwei Monate findet daher ein Kennenlern-Wochenende für mögliche EinsteigerInnen statt.

Japanese Colleagues Visit Kibbutzim

It was interesting for us to learn that the first Japanese commune was founded a few years before Degania, and that the movement now comprises about thirty communes, the largest of which consists of 700 people. Heiwa Kibbutz is dedicated to health and education, under the slogan *A Healthy Person in a Healthy Society*. They also call themselves an Educational Village, and cultivate their own vegetables organically.

Jan Bang



Springtree Community

Route 2, Box 89 536
Scottsville, VA 24590

(804) 266-3466

We are a group of five adults and one child living together as an extended family. Our home (est. '71) is on 120 acres in central Virginia. We live together in two houses, eat all meals together, share all income. The children have been raised collectively, but parents retain primary responsibility for them.

Living frugally is important to us, and we try to live as ecologically as possible. We grow most of our own food, maintaining an organic garden and orchard, dairy, chickens, bees, and sheep. We support ourselves by managing a thriving market garden, and by pooling income from outside jobs. We also provide internships in organic gardening and communal living for college students and others.

We intend to remain a small group, considering 10 adults a maximum. We are interested in frugality, commitment, compatibility. We meet weekly to plan and to discuss problems.

We advise a two-week initial visit for those interested in membership, and we are also open to those who want to live with us for several months to learn country-living skills. To arrange a visit or for more information write or call Tom. 5/10/90

WINSLOW COHOUSING, BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, WASHINGTON

Diane invites you for a walk through the Winslow Cohousing Community, the first group-developed cohousing in the USA. Thirty-eight months in the development from the first meeting until move-in, this remarkable community of 30 families offers a bridge from the lonely suburban life to a community that cares about its members and the environment.

Aquarian Research Foundation

5620 Morton St
Philadelphia, Pa 19144

TIDBITS

TO CHANGE YOURSELF AND THE WORLD:

*Always, and in everything,
visualize - then expect - the
very best. But be prepared
to take what you get. The
best might come afterwards.*



Freie Lernwerkstatt für neue Lebens- und Arbeitsformen - Ökologische Akademie für Eine Welt

D-54570 Niederstadtfeld, Brunnenstr.1,
Tel: 06596/551, Fax 1282

Aktualität: 1993

Projektyp: Gemeinschaft, Erwachsenenbildung,
Orientierung: Ökologie, Politik, Feminismus, Therapie, Kreativität
Beginn: 1983

zur Zeit sind 11 Erwachsene beteiligt und 3 Kinder/Jugendliche

Die Lernwerkstatt versteht sich als Forum für verschiedene emanzipatorische, spirituelle und politische Ansätze und verzichtet bewusst auf eine Fixierung auf eine einzige Idee/Theorie. Wir führen -neben dem uns sehr wichtigen Gemeinschaftsleben- Wochenendseminare und Gemeinschaftsveranstaltungen durch, welche mit ihren Themen beitragen können zur Orientierung an einer ökologischen, herrschaftsfreien und nichtpatriarchalen Kultur. Hierbei verstehen wir uns nicht als fertiges Modell eines alternativen Lebens, sondern als "Spielwiese" und Experimentierfeld. Gäste und neue Mitglieder sind nach vorheriger Absprache willkommen - Details bitte schriftlich oder telefonisch erfragen..

TOWARD SUSTAINABLE JUSTICE - LOCAL TO GLOBAL

2001

We need a sustainable environment, but one equitably shared. We need a sustainable economy, but it must be humane and equitable. And the only kind of development worth sustaining is "just" development. Therefore, all other sustainability must bow to "sustainable justice - local to global." To be sustainable, commitment to justice must be incorporated in economic and political structures. This workshop will explore what these must be like and how they can be achieved. One thing seems clear, they must be based on the federation of communities which are based on commitment to sustainable justice above all else.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSA): A NEEDED MODEL FOR SMALL SCALE FARMING

CSA is an innovative economic and social model for agricultural production, in which a farm or garden's annual budget is secured in advance by a community. CSA has taken root and grown considerably in the U.S. over the past seven years because it offers folks a practical way of sustaining small-scale agriculture. The workshop will include dialog about the current state of agriculture, the theory and practice of CSA, a definition of sustainable agriculture in the context of community, some very practical steps people might take in starting one, and the advantages and disadvantages of CSAs. Throughout the discussion, theory will be grounded with examples from the work we are doing at the Homeless Garden Project in Santa Cruz.



Books, Magazines, Videos

Diggers & Dreamers: an up-to-date *Communes Network Directory* which lists nearly 60 communities in Britain and 20 international communities. History of the movement, practical advice, comprehensive reading list, and more. £6.75 (\$11 USA) surface mail. c/o Lifespan Community; Townhead, Dunford Bridge; Sheffield S30 6TG ENGLAND. Also available for \$11 in the U.S. through Community Bookshelf, Route 1, Box 155, Rutledge, MO 63563.

Climate in Crisis: The Greenhouse Effect & What We Can Do compiles information from 3,000 reference works and offers a thorough and well-written look at this major environmental crisis. Written by Albert Bates (a long-term member of The Farm in Tennessee) and published by the Farm's publishing company. 240 pp, \$13.50 (post-paid) available from the Natural Rights Center, P.O. Box 90, Summertown, TN 38483-0090.

Anyone who has lived communally or who would like to taste the flavor of Hutterite life will find this book either nostalgic or highly educational — and everyone will find it entertaining.

The Hutterite Cookbook, by Samuel Hofer; Hofer Publishing, 1992, 174 pages, line drawings by Bernice Friesen, \$11.95.

Yum! Mouth-watering soup made with garden vegetables and beef or pork stock. Three different borschts! Many main dishes call for dumplings, and there are two *kroffeln* (perogie) recipes with cottage cheese or meat fillings that I would like to try (see next column). Actually I think these are similar to the Russian *pilmenyi* or 'wonton' ravioli (every culture seems to have their own version).

Of course where the Hutterite cuisine really shines is with their cakes and pastries, and the opening chapters are devoted to such delights as Apple Rhubarb Stritzel, Saskatoon Berry Cheesecake, and cinnamon rolls (which I learned to make in Woodcrest). Cookies and pies galore are included. It makes me wonder if there ever is such a person as a THIN Hutterite??

May be ordered from:
Hofer Publishing (On The Prairie); Box 9874,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 7G5 CANADA
telephone: 306 242-8162

TIDBITS

Communes are not vacation homes or health spas for people who want to get away from it all. The belief that communes are an escape or a retreat from reality is a myth based on an absolute ignorance of what they are all about. Communes are not for the weak and the sick nor for those who desire to escape life; they are for people who seek to become healthy, mature human beings, willing to confront themselves and others and able to experience the subsequent pain and pleasure that such a challenge inevitably brings with it.



RAPHA COMMUNITY

Rapha Community (from the Hebrew word for healing) began as a small ecumenical house church in Syracuse, NY in the late '60s. 25 years later, unlike many such ventures, it still exists as a viable faith community of 29 adults and 13 children, non-residential, with non-hierarchical shared leadership - no guru, minister, or priest. Come to this workshop, led by one of its founders, with your longing for community, or your story - happy or hurtful - of life in community. See where Rapha's journey might bless your own, speak to your longing, or call you into deeper individuation and communion.

SIRIUS COMMUNITY: TOWARD AN ECOLOGICAL VILLAGE

Founded in 1978 as a spiritual and educational community honoring the sacredness of all life, Sirius has been developing into a widely respected demonstration center for an ecologically sustainable lifestyle. A solar conference center is nearing completion, and the community includes organic gardens and greenhouse, energy-efficient buildings, and composting toilets.

7. 2934



"Grasses"

Inga Podolinskyte, 13, Vilnius Secondary School, Lithuania

Skipping Stones

A Multicultural Children's Magazine

Greetings! We are pleased to introduce *Skipping Stones* to you.

Skipping Stones is a non-profit, children's magazine that encourages cooperation, creativity and a celebration of cultural and environmental richness. It is a unique multicultural publication wading the waters that separate people and nature, cultures and generations. Gentle and positive in its outlook, *Skipping Stones* does not shy away from addressing difficult issues facing our youth.

Skipping Stones features original art and writing in *all* languages. We especially encourage youth from under-represented populations. Non-English material is accompanied by an English translation to encourage learning of other languages.

Skipping Stones
P.O. Box 3939
Eugene, OR 97403 - 0939

A Threefold Challenge

*Working with severely, multiple
handicapped, young adults*

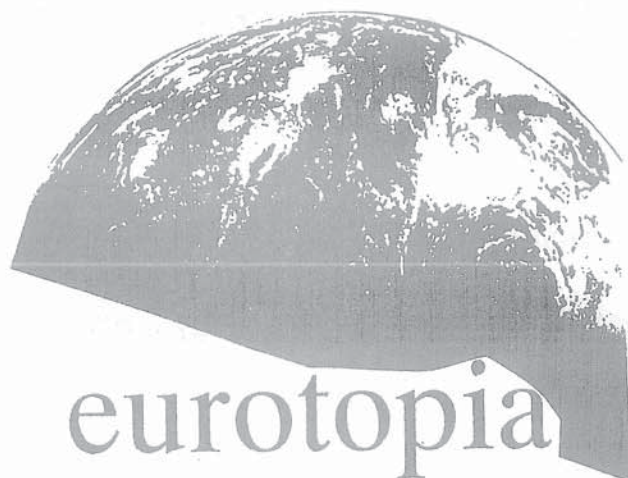
For fourteen years, Templehill Community has been 'pioneering' life and work with severely disadvantaged young people. More recently, Cairnlee House in Aberdeen has concentrated on this area of work and many other centres will have some experience in this direction. It was also one of the focus points of the third Youth Guidance Seminar, which has just been completed. With more and more of the more capable youngsters being 'integrated' into the community this seems to be an increasing area of need and a fruitful exchange of thoughts and ideas would be needed as well as new impulses to carry the work at Templehill into a new phase of development.

Finding the right attitude in balance between the approaches of Curative Education and of an Adult Life Community is the challenge of working with severely handicapped students.

When the students are less able to carry the life of the community, the co-workers need to carry more and with the necessary help and concentration from all co-workers, Sunday services, festivals and performances become very moving occasions, 'moments of equality' where all can feel united on an equal level.

Templehill will be twenty-one years old at the end of this year and as we approach 'adulthood,' we feel an obligation to turn again to Anke's original impulse of a 'community for mutual help' which was alive during the first seven years at Templehill.

Michael Bruhn,
Templehill Community, Scotland



We aim for putting up positive perspectives for the future, despite overall resignation. We want to spread word on pilote projects and experiments, and to facilitate exchange and contact.

eurotopia - this means ecovillages and eco-cities. It means sustainable, therapeutic, spiritual, intentional communities. It means the variety in soft technologies, and contacts, and it means harmony with our natural environment, and with ourselves.

NEW COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

A new German-language directory containing up-to-date addresses and descriptions of over 100 German, 140 European and 13 South-American and Pacific alternative communities has been issued and can be obtained for the local equivalent of DM 20.- through:

EUROTOPIA
Rieterstr. 5, D-8500,
NUERNBERG 90, Germany .

For many communalists, community brought some sort of needed stability to their lives. They were able to share life with others who were pursuing similar life goals and objectives within an atmosphere of comparable norms and values. The structuredness of communal living, especially for those communities who operated communal businesses, such as Jesus People USA, further strengthened members' commitment and connectedness to the group. The process of trying to walk with the Lord or to attain a spiritual regeneration or to alleviate suffering, hunger, etc., provided the necessary activities for these communal members and ordered their everyday life...

FROM OUR LETTERBOX

Dear People,

Thanks so much for C.A.L.L. - it's a wonderful forum for exchanging information and ideas. I'm enclosing a copy of our last magazine.

We on Zendik Farm are becoming more and more political, more and more radicalized in the face of the horrible disintegration in our country and the world environmentally and socially; even planning to form a political party to become active through the year 2000 when we intend to run someone for president. We've got a chance in a zillion, but we figure we'll make for debate and controversy.

The Farm itself keeps growing and improving, it is considered the most beautiful farm in our country and we are very happy about that.

I love keeping in touch with you and will send more soon.
Love - in survival -

AROL

Zendik Farm Ecolibrium Foundation
Star Route 16C-3
Bastrop TX 78602 U.S.A.

Dear Friends,

I have enjoyed reading the last issues of your magazine and have been able to draw a lot of encouragement from the idea that there are people in the communal movement in Israel, who feel that networking is an important element in our continual development... I wish you the best of luck and if I can help in any way, please let me know!

Yours -

ALON FELLERMAN
Kibbutz Lotan

Dear Friends at Yad Tabenkin,

I read with great interest the Kibbutz-Bruderhof reports. Our community, The Peter Maurin Catholic Worker Farm is geographically very close to the Rifton N.Y. Bruderhof, but we have had very little contact and I cannot explain why. Your articles have inspired me to build a closer friendship with both the Bruderhof and the Kibbutz.

The founders of the Catholic Worker Movement in 1933 believed farm communes were vital to creating a new social order based on the truths of the unique mystery of each individual person. Our Farm Communes have not been strong because the need for helping homeless people in this country has been so great that we had to spend more time at this than at farming.

I lived in Israel for five years, most of the time in the Beit Jamal monastery. We were attempting to build a Christian Kibbutz. The community still exists in Israel but has been through many changes because it is on Church property. Part of my time I lived on Kibbutz Erez where I learned about raising honey bees, at which I still work here on our Farm.

What I would like to see happen is ongoing communication with the Kibbutz-movement so as to explore the educational and practical possibilities of a deeper friendship. I am looking forward to hearing from Yad Tabenkin! Shalom!

RALPH E. DOWDY
P. Maurin Catholic Worker Farm
RR# 1, Box 80 Lattintown Road
Malboro, N.Y. 12542
(914)-236-4774



Dec. 8th, 1993

Dear Friends Shlomo and Naomi,

Greetings of Shalom for the festival of light, Hannukah. It coincides with our Advent time, one of intense expectation of the breaking in of light into the darkness of our human confusion and conflicts, the longing for redemption. So as we light our candles, we think of you, our very dear friends, set into the present time of struggle both of your movement and your country.

It moved us very much that you refer to the Kibbutzim as a "movement". This is significant as movement means life. May both of our movements have the strength to move into the right direction - towards wholeness, life, Shalom in its full sense.

We are experiencing both joys and struggles these past months. Struggles - in overcoming our selfish, separatist natures and in seeking the way to meet traditionalism but not let it bind the free spirit of brotherhood. Joys - in the beginning of Palmgrove (our new community in Nigeria) with its inner and outer challenge. We are glad to feel our children's good will with us not to expect gifts for Christmas, so that we can support Palmgrove... And we had some joyful weddings at home!

Wishing you all the best, we greet you warmly. Your friends

ANDREAS + FIDA
Woodcrest - Bruderhof, U.S.A.

Dear Fida and Andreas,

...I was pleased to meet you on your visit to Israel, always surprised anew how easily we establish rapport of hearts and minds, both personally and as people living in community.

You remarked that our movements are in a crisis. It seems to me that this is not a momentary or passing phenomenon: the very make-up of our value systems constitutes a challenge to surrounding society and demands constant struggle, not only with "the outside" but even more so with ourselves. This permanent contest on two fronts is an exhausting business, demanding frequent reappraisal and "recharging of batteries". It is there where I find our most serious problem, especially as far as our young leadership is concerned.

In a world changing at a previously unimagined speed, we must be capable of deciding where to adjust and where to resist change, and this demands a continuous spiritual and mental effort. Here again dialogue between us can contribute towards a deeper grasp of how to cope with the problems facing us.

All the best to you and all the Bruderhofers -

YEHUDA RIEMER
Kibbutz Urim



To
Prof. Yaakov Oved
Yad Tabenkin

Dear Sir,

I am a South African tourist residing at the moment at Kibbutz Yad Hanna. My initial interest in the Kibbutz System is the main reason for my being here, as we - a religious group known as Israel Evangelical Group Ecclesia are about to go into the first steps of establishing a Kibbutz-type commune, on a small scale, in South Africa.

We would very much appreciate lectures and studies on religious as well as socialist communes, on Kibbutz movement dilemmas and functioning...

Our piece of land is still virgin soil, two houses are being built to start with. We hope to grow vegetables and become self-sufficient for at least ten families. Hoping to hear from you and from others -

Joachim Nel
POB 732, Rayton 1001 R.S.A.



Dear Shlomo,

Just had a chance to read all of your latest CALL. Great! Please send more issues. I was amazed by your piece on growing vegetables in the desert with saline water!

Thanks for your note about Hans Meier. He was my first contact with the Bruderhof in 1947 and my friend and advisor for many years... I learned a good deal on the Bruderhof and owe much of my present (spiritual) success to them - but there were some problems.

I believe that their excessive control of members stems from the change that took place in the first ten years, after which only members were allowed to take part at their meetings. In a community that shares all goods, folks who are not in unity with the leadership, can be afraid to express an unpopular view for fear of being sent away, and if they have a family, that can be very difficult...

Unfortunately Bruderhof leaders don't wish to hear that. Perhaps raising this issue in your journal in a loving way might help.

AQUARIAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

5620 MORTON STREET
PHILADELPHIA, PA. 19144



Dear Friend Shlomo,

Some time ago I received a letter from you in which you remarked that you would appreciate some comments about the Newsletter CALL that you sent to us. We were interested in the various articles about life on the Kibbutz and about international activities in other places. I personally enjoyed CALL immensely and read it from cover to cover. We hope you continue to send it to us here to our religious group EskDale.

You live in a wonderful land, Shlomo. I have visited Israel a number of times and still hope to see you again. My best to you and to all those who contribute to the success of the work of the international communal society.

Most sincerely -

Robert J. Conrad
EskDale, 550 Circle Drive
Utah, 84728-9702 U.S.A.

REFLECTIONS & RUMINATIONS

Communism Is Dead; Long Live the Commune

Kat Kinkade

Like everybody else, I read with avid interest about the failure of Communism in the Soviet Union. It is not often one gets to see the full development and fall of a great idea, played out on a grand scale. But for me the fascination went beyond that, because I had adopted communism as an ideal back in the seventh grade, and devoted a big chunk of my adult life to making it practical on a small scale for Americans, but was, through my own experience, beginning to have doubts about it as a working principle.

I wish the Russians, while they were about it, had given true communism a decent trial, and not got it all mixed up with totalitarianism, imperialism, and the suppression of dissent. I wish their government had served its people instead of building up that frightening arsenal. I'd love to know if they could have tried communism out on that big scale and modified it enough to work, to give the West some ideological competition. But they didn't, so I'll never know how it would have come out.

There is plenty of evidence that there is, within communism itself, apart from abuses, a fundamental law that might have been fatal anyway. (I mean the lack of reward for personal effort.) But on the other hand, I can name the fatal flaws of capitalism just as easily. Some of free enterprise's built-in problems might turn out to be terminal not only to the system but to the human race.

As a young woman I saw the faults of capitalism and refused to see that communism had some too. All I wanted to look at was my dream of justice and equality. I put my energy into that dream, and took part in founding and developing a small American commune called Twin Oaks. The one thing I was sure of at the time was that every human on earth had a right to an equal share of the world's goods and advantages. In my corner of the world, I meant to be very sure they got them. I saw free enterprise and the desire for advancement and material goods as the Enemy, one that could be defeated by raising the next generation to have better motives, while asking the current generation to control

itself and dedicate itself to higher ideals.

I wasn't a complete fool, so I understood that there had to be interim satisfactions to take the place of the old grab-what-you-can-get philosophy. The Virginia commune had plenty of those to offer: lovely land, a lot of personal freedom, the pleasures of friendship and love in a group of compatible people, the fun of building a new society from scratch. Those advantages, welded to the theoretical ideal of a just society, paid off well enough so that the commune survived and eventually thrived.

I meant Twin Oaks to be Utopia, but after 26 years of trying, I can see that we're not going to make it. Part of the reason is that human beings are ornery. They make problems no system can get rid of. But another part of it, I now see, is in the communist theory itself. Some of our most persistent difficulties are directly related to inadequate handling of the desire for personal gain and peoples unwillingness to give their full energy without it. I see this clearly, and yet I like Twin Oaks' life pretty much the way it is. I am not charging to go out and make money and have lots

of things. I have no interest whatever in accepting the trade-offs that the capitalist world requires. I like my freedom too well, my flexible schedule, the different kinds of work that are open to me any time I want to make a change. I like the easy, non-competitive atmosphere, the friendliness, the support. I like keeping our door open so that other people can come and share this life with us. I like not being in debt and not worrying about the bills. I like having put down roots and knowing that I belong here.

With all its faults, the communist theory is also directly responsible for some of these benefits. We at Twin Oaks applied those theories in

our own way, in a system that is seriously of, by, and for the people. We don't try to "get ahead." We try to give and get satisfaction. We have done a minimum of power-struggling and have put our pooled resources into what we democratically choose. Sometimes it's material goods, and sometimes it's leisure, and sometimes it's helping out people poorer than we are. In short, as a communist society, we are a modest success.

It's easy to say that we don't count for much, because we are so small, and because we aren't put to the test of making an entire society run. If you ask me how we could handle major manufacturing or national transport on the labor credit system, I'll answer that I don't know, but I'd be interested in giving it a try.

At this point, seeing what happened to the Soviets and what has happened at Twin Oaks, I think that communism is a flawed but moderately good idea that needs to be modified for it to work very well and certainly needs to be kept out of the hands of a greedy central government. I think that the American commune is another good idea that needs more development and bigger experiments. I don't think either idea will work in any pure form, any more than capitalism does. Though my ideas are different from what they were 26 years ago (less simplistic, more cautious), I don't feel disillusioned. I'm not sure Marx would recognize it, and I know Lenin wouldn't, but it has a fair amount of social justice and a lot of personal happiness. ♪

*I wish the Russians
had given true
communism a decent
trial, and not got it
all mixed up with
totalitarianism,
imperialism, and the
suppression of
dissent.*

Kat Kinkade is one of the founders of Twin Oaks in Virginia and East Wind in Missouri. She wrote the Twin Oaks histories, A Walden Two Experiment (1973), and Is It Utopia Yet? (to be released in 1994). Kat lives at Twin Oaks where she is active in various administrative and clerical functions, as well as choral singing, barbershop quartets and community musical productions.

A NEW BEGINNING

In the face of the ongoing changes in Kibbutz society - from the former spirit of collectivism and communal solidarity towards more individualism, more privatization, SHULTI (himself a Kibbutz member) proposes a new project of reviving and revitalizing Kibbutz:

We want to make a new beginning in our communal life-experience. The primary motive for our initiative of putting up one or more new bio-agricultural settlements is a personal spiritual need arising from our opposition to the direction in which most Kibbutzim are turning nowadays. However, we don't want to focus on a pointless debate of these trends: we want our actions to speak louder than a thousand words!

We intend to build a new model of togetherness within the communal scene in Israel, in realization of the way of love, peace and human happiness - without compromise! Not as an experiment, not trying to prove anything or find evidence. We believe in our endeavor, but we are not fanatics nor naive: we are fully aware of the difficulties ahead, especially our own weaknesses. But we see in these weaknesses a source of learning and growing and will not let them lead us to despair or surrender.

We intend to realize our faith, drawing from the experience of a hundred years of Kibbutz togetherness. We carry with us, as useful provisions, many lessons about a way of life which is by no means an easy one.

What are the starting points for our new enterprise:

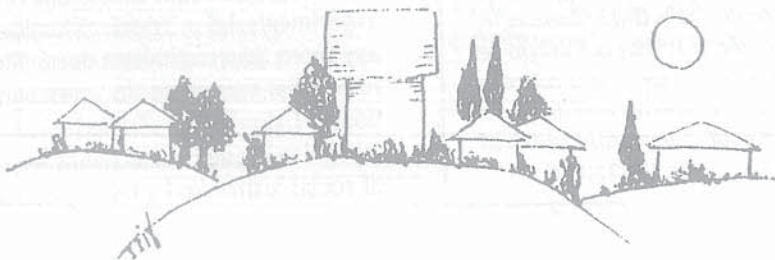
1. The relation of man to man, based on the old saying "And Thou shalt love your neighbor as yourself". Therefore we want to start with one circle of personal closeness, readiness to give, and caring, which will grow slowly and naturally as long as the original bond is preserved. As we grow, we will establish more circles, that shall be bound to one another in a deep social, economic and spiritual way, but not cutting ourselves off from surrounding society.

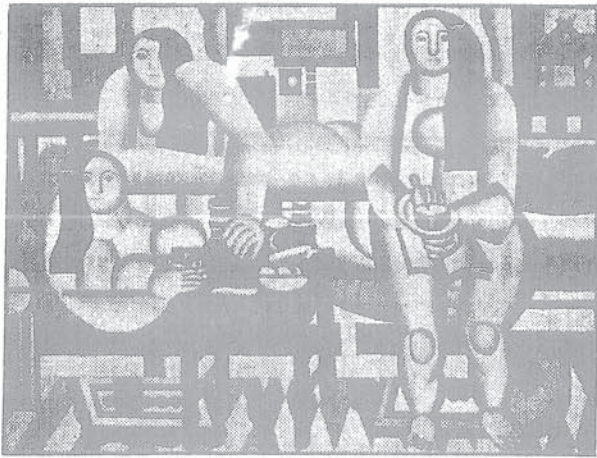
All members, including our own children, will fully join only when they are ready for a life-long commitment to the community.

Interpersonal questions, such as confrontations, disappointments, rumors, expectations, misgivings and surprises - will be cleared face to face without delay, without gossip, smears, bitterness.

2. We will preserve our original spirit by examining the substance of every issue in the light of the fundamental question: "Why do we live together, sharing spiritually and materially?"

3. Our decisions will be taken in full unanimity, and so we shall avoid any power struggles that result from majority ruling.





4. The life in our intimate commune will be based on the desire to give to each other, support and accept one another - and not a set of rules and precedents. It will be built on readiness to ever examine oneself, openness to receive feedback, mutual respect and full trust, and with the will and capability to wrestle with the shortcomings within each one of us.

5. Through a holistic understanding we shall keep balance between the different areas of life. One of the dangers we want to avoid is that income, profits and other economic considerations dominate the greater part of community life.

Our circle is open to everyone who believes in these principles and wants to live in this way. Faith in the way of togetherness and commitment to it are the necessary conditions for fully joining us. Guests who show interest and participate, will be received with Middle-East hospitality, with the goal of coming closer and deepening our acquaintance.

This is a new beginning. It will by no means be an easy one.

6. Everyone contributes to society to the best of his/her ability and receives according to his/her needs. No fixed budgets!

7. We want to offer an alternative to the values of western society: more community self-sufficiency and less consumerism; more meaning to life and less materialism; sharing instead of capitalism and competition. Sharing - not striving for more efficient organization, not judging things by their utility. We must not let the pressures of the outside, "the compelling factors of society", direct us.

8. Positions of leadership and guidance are to be understood as service to the whole community and not as platforms for power struggles. The co-ordinators will serve the community as long as they enjoy complete trust.

9. We shall be involved in our outward surroundings in "a different spirit": education towards peace and non-violence (seminars for youth and adults) as well as for life, for a "green" environment, for rational consumption, for organic growth. But we must not put our heads into party politics!

Shulti Regev

Kibbutz Kfar Hachosh
Israel

Translated by Yosef Ben Eliezer and Paul Fuchs

Spring Valley Bruderhof

Competition vs. Co-operation

Jars Balan

When we look at the results of unbridled competition in the United States, it is easy to see the end results of the neo-conservative agenda. Essentially, it has brought about an incredible concentration of power and wealth in the hands of an elite few. It has brought impoverishment to the middle class and the alarming growth of an under-class. This is a direct result of neo-conservative economic rationalism.

Part of the assault has been on government and the welfare state, which has been portrayed as inefficient, bureaucratic and too expensive. The main cost is social programs, which the large corporations want eliminated. The major goal of Big Business is the elimination of state enterprises so as to create new money-making opportunities for itself. The strategy is called privatization.

Meanwhile there is silence over the questions of inefficiency and bureaucratization in the capitalist concerns that sprawl hydra-like across continents and are impervious to public pressure. The "New World Order" and the carving up of the globe into vast trading blocs is not the product of a democratic consensus but the initiative of conservative ideologues and the giant multinationals.

One of the great ironies of this ideological scam is that competition is being touted as the solution to problems capitalism has created--widespread ecological degradation and overproduction. And behind all the mayhem and madness is the vulgar distortion of Darwinism, embraced by Carnegie and his friends at the turn of the century. Society must be organized competitively in its own best interests.

As the realization dawns on us that our future as a species is in jeopardy, the question of what is our guiding principle in saving ourselves from our economic, social and ecological quagmire is more important than ever. Modern-day capitalism's solution is endless warfare and constant struggle--a wasteful and destructive approach to the problem. It is my growing conviction that only through co-operation do we stand a chance of overcoming the major traumas that lie ahead.

Jars Balan is an Edmonton author and poet.

FROM "TOGETHER" JOURNAL OF CO-OPERATION AND COMMUNITY

Communes and The Green Vision

Counterculture, Lifestyle and the New Age

David Pepper (Green Print, London, 1991)

Communes and the Green Vision provides a dramatic insight into the ideas of the members of twelve communes in England, Scotland and Wales. In a series of in-depth interviews with over eighty members of communes set up in the wake of the environmental concerns of the seventies, David Pepper has tested one of the principal beliefs of the green movement

today — that communal lifestyles and small-scale organisation will be central to the socially just and environmentally sustainable society of the future.

Commune members from widely differing backgrounds talk about their hopes and fears for the future, the obstacles they face in living a greener lifestyle, and the impact of the ecological crisis. The issues they face reflect the problems confronting society at large, and the author assesses the potential of communes as forerunners of a green society in the light of a number of key questions that all of us must

answer, including those of us committed to environmental reform.

Such questions include whether it is a higher priority to change society's values or to change the economic system, and whether individual reform of one's own lifestyle is more important than collective action.

FROM
THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNAL STUDIES
ASSOCIATION (ICSA)
BULLETIN NO.10



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LABOUR, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATIVE STUDIES
(AFRO-ASIAN INSTITUTE) HISTADRUT, ISRAEL

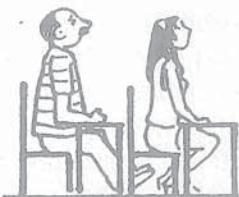
INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL D'ETUDES DU TRAVAIL, DU DEVELOPPEMENT ET DE LA COOPERATION
(INSTITUT AFRO-ASIATIQUE) HISTADROUT, ISRAËL

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Founded by the Histadrut in 1958, the Institute trains leadership for labour and cooperative movements; community organisations; women's and youth groups; educational and development institutions and related bodies in African, Asian, Caribbean, Pacific and Mediterranean countries. At present, participants from more than 85 countries in these regions take part in Institute programmes in the English and French languages. The breakdown of countries by continents is as follows: Africa - 36 (18 Anglophone and 18 Francophone); Asia - 16; Caribbean - 19; Pacific - 13; Mediterranean - 2.

Each year the Institute holds some 15 courses and seminars at its facility in Israel and, in addition, conducts seminars in 10 or 12 third world countries at the invitation of and in cooperation with counterpart bodies. A major regional seminar is also held each year.



Graduates now total over 20,000 and contact is maintained with a majority of them. Among the graduates are 45 who have been or who are secretaries-general (or presidents) of national trade union federations as well as over 450 heads of national unions and over 500 leaders of major cooperatives. Some 300 members of parliament, 80 ministers (including 5 prime-ministers), many senior government officials and over 150 staff members at universities are also past participants.

The Institute is an independent, non-government institution (NGO) established by and affiliated to the Histadrut, the General Federation of Labour in Israel. Programmes of study include : development, underdevelopment and strategies of development; trade union, cooperative and community group organisation and management; the role of peoples' organisations and NGO's in community and nation building; the contribution of women and youth to development; the role of labour and cooperation in national development and in the promotion of human welfare and related themes.



Scholarships at the Institute

Scholarships are available for most courses. They cover all in-country costs, including full tuition, room and board, field visits and excursions, social and cultural activities, laundry, medical and accident insurance, transport to and from the airport, pocket-money (the equivalent in Israeli currency of US \$ 100 per month).

These scholarships do not cover travel costs between the participant's home and the Institute and these must be added to the above figures. Air fares range from about \$850 for those closest to us geographically to about \$3,000 for those most distant.



George Melnyk on BRUDERHOF-KIBBUTZ

DISTANT BROTHERS: History of the Relations Between the Bruderhof and the Kibbutz by Yaacov Oved (Plough Publishing House, RD2 Box 446, Farmington PA 15437-9506 \$8.50 US postpaid, 95 pages, 1993).

Yaacov Oved is a kibbutz member, a professor of history at Tel Aviv University and the author of Two Hundred Years of American Communes (1988). He begins by pointing out that the Bruderhof and the kibbutz were established early in the 20th century and so are part of the same generation. The Bruderhof's spiritual leader and founder was Dr. Eberhard Arnold. He was influenced by people such as the philosopher Martin Buber and the socialist, Gustav Landauer. In 1930-31 Arnold travelled among the North American Hutterite colonies with whom he aligned his tiny community by sharing their religious beliefs.

Because of Nazis persecution the Bruderhof membership in Germany moved to a new home in England. During this period it took in 30 young Jewish men and women who received farm training prior to going to Palestine to join a kibbutz. A bit later, because of fear of detention, the Bruderhof moved to Paraguay and after the Second World War to the United States, where there are currently six communities.

In the mid-fifties one of the founders of the first kibbutz (1910) visited the Hutterian Brethren in the United States and visits and correspondence continued. The Hutterians are pacifists and Anabaptists and they had difficulty with the secularism and military-nature of kibbutz life, though they liked its communalism.

In the 1980s Bruderhof representatives visited the kibbutzim and links have continued to this day with a variety of ups and downs. The book provides a valuable document of how two similar yet different movements search out grounds for commonality, working to communicate with and learn from each other. It is a moving account.

I was particularly pleased to see a letter quoted from the Bruderhof to the religious kibbutz movement which stated in part "Dear friends of the kibbutzim! We feel near to you because you and we in the Hutterian Bruderhofs have lived in a community of goods, life and work for so many years..." This statement reminded me of the "Three Togethers" of the social co-op idea--work together, live together, own together. This book occupies a special place on my bookshelf.

George Melnyk



