

## BOOKS

## PBC alternatives to corporate capitalism

*Global corporations are dismantling their industrial base here and shipping off their plants to points all over the globe. This mass exodus has helped to throw America into an economic crisis.*

### OWN YOUR OWN JOB

By Jeremy Rifkin  
Bantam Books, 1977

The latest book by Jeremy Rifkin and the People's Business Commission (formerly the People's Bicentennial Commission) is a short, easy-to-read indictment of corporate-capitalism, a call to replace its control over our economy by democratic control and ownership.

*Own Your Own Job* is divided into three sections, the first of which is a vivid expose of the contradiction between corporate-capitalism's expansionary profit-maximizing requirements and people's right to democracy, both political and economic. Corporate control of the political and economic systems; runaway shops, increased unemployment are some of the charges in Rifkin's indictment. "In the process they (global corporations) are systematically dismantling their domestic industrial base here and shipping off their plants, facilities and other capital assets to points all across the globe. This mass exodus has helped throw America into a profound economic crisis."

Part Two points out the weaknesses of both the "apologists" and the "reformers." The former "continue to deceive us with false hope that our salvation depends on the grace and good will of the giant corporations."

"Breaking up the giants [the reformer's approach]... will further weaken our already frail state and render us less able to resist the next time around. In the end we will have to fight a few giants once again."

So far, so good. But Rifkin continues: "Aside from the apol-

ogists and reformers, there are those who preach the gospel of socialism as the answer. If the word 'socialism' doesn't exactly set your heart pounding, it's understandable because it's often been misapplied in countries like the Soviet Union, and none of us are thrilled at the idea of replacing unresponsive, greedy businessmen with unresponsive, self-serving bureaucrats."

This vulgar interpretation does little to enlighten people on the democratic potential of socialism or its application in Cuba and elsewhere. This is particularly disturbing as it precedes the presentation of the decentralized and democratic characteristics of Rifkin's own plan for Economic Democracy. For example, Rifkin's projection of firms controlled and managed by the people who work in them and held accountable to the communities in which they operate, of public banks, public ownership of natural resources, with broad policy determined by the national government—all this has many similarities to the organization of socialist Yugoslavia. But Rifkin does not make this observation and leaves the reader with the impression that socialism is inherently undemocratic.

Part Three is a stimulating look at how activists can challenge corporate rule on several levels, followed by the findings of the Hart Poll—done on behalf of PBC two years ago—on what Americans are thinking about the present political/economic system.

*Own Your Own Job* presents a challenge to socialists to develop and articulate alternatives both to corporate-capitalism and to bureaucratic socialism. French Marxist Roger Garaudy has written: "The crucial problem in a socialist democracy is to bring decision-making, both political and economic, closer to the worker who might otherwise be subordinated to extraneous political forces, personified by a remote, anonymous state." Although it mucks up the terminology, *Own Your Own Job* does address this problem.

—Daniel Neal Graham

Daniel Neal Graham was formerly a PBC organizer, is now a distributor for *In These Times* and a teacher/organizer in the Syracuse Free University.



Morton Halperin

## The Lawless State exposed in carefully documented study

### THE LAWLESS STATE: The Crimes of the U.S. Intelligence Agencies

By Morton Halperin, Jerry J. Berman, Robert L. Borosage, and Christine M. Marwick

Penguin Books, 1976, paperback, \$2.95

With careful and thorough concern for the evidence and forceful commitment to democratic principles, the authors have described and analyzed the secret crimes of "the lawless state"; the CIA's campaign against Salvador Allende; the FBI's vendetta against Martin Luther King Jr.; the IRS files on more than 11,000 individuals and groups.

These presidential and bureaucratic abuses have undermined constitutional principles and exacerbated the crisis of confidence in American government. Furthermore, clandestine illegalities in both foreign and domestic spheres continued long after Watergate and throughout the Ford

administration. Indeed, Ford publicly justified the CIA's destabilization program in Chile: "I'm not going to pass judgment on whether it's permitted under international law. It's a recognized fact that historically as well as presently, such actions are taken in the best interest of the countries involved."

Predictably and tragically, these operations have broken down the distinction between domestic and foreign policy. Lawlessness justified abroad in defense of "national security" becomes justified at home in order to control "subversive" groups: e.g., the FBI initiated a program, COMINFIL, which penetrated such "un-American" groups as SANE and the American Friends Service Committee; and as is well known, Nixon justified the break-in at Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist on national security grounds.

The distressing thrust of the facts in this book is that constitutional principles and democratic processes are pure rhetoric to vast armies of anonymous bureaucrats working for the imperial presidency.

President Carter campaigned against government lawlessness. One wonders whether he can control the agglomeration of vested interests and factions or will he too become mesmerized by the trappings of power and the "imperatives" of national security? To protect against this garrison-state mentality, a firm grasp on past abuses and their consequences will provide concerned citizens with valuable ammunition.

*The Lawless State* should be required reading in the library of this cause.

—Jonathan F. Galloway

Jonathan F. Galloway teaches political science at Lake Forest College.

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## Halperin suing Nixon for damages

The first thing most people connect with the name of Morton Halperin is the lawsuit brought by him (and his wife and three sons) against Richard M. Nixon, H.R. Haldeman and John Mitchell for maintaining a secret wire-tap on the family's telephone during the years (1969-71) when Halperin was a senior staff member of the National Security Council under his friend and colleague, Henry Kissinger.

The suit, which may turn out to be a precedent-setter, passed its first hurdle when a Federal District judge in

Washington ruled that the wire tap did indeed violate the Halperins' Fourth Amendment rights and ordered Nixon, Haldeman and Mitchell to pay damages. The question being argued at present is how much.

The Halperins' attorneys are asking punitive damages under both the Fourth and First Amendments. Attorneys for the defense, supplied by the Carter Justice department, maintain that there was no real damage since the wire-tap didn't cost Halperin his job. After an amount has been settled on, the case can be ap-

pealed, so there is little likelihood of an immediate settlement, either of the principle or the "debt."

In the meantime, Halperin is serving as chairperson of the steering committee of the Campaign to End Government Spying and is an associate of the Center for National Security Studies. (The director of the Center, Robert Borosage, and two other associates, Jerry Berman and Christine Marwick, are co-authors with Halperin of *The Lawless State*, reviewed in this issue.)



## FILM



Paul Newman being wired for sound

## Players scores *Slap Shot* low

## SLAP SHOT

Written by Nancy Dowd; directed by George Roy Hill  
Starring Paul Newman

*Slap Shot* is a terribly uneven film about hockey, violence, class and failed or failing marriages.

At its best it offers sharp, sad—or funny—vignettes of youthful and aging hockey players and the women who suffer them, and throws light on the subtle relations between social class and hockey styles. At its worst, the film distorts the game, descends to comic opera treatment of its violence, and portrays working class fans as bloodthirsty and brutalized.

The story is that of player-coach Reggie Dunlap (played by Paul Newman) and his effort to save the Charlestown Chiefs from financial collapse by media hypes, calculated violence and crass, psychological manipulation of his players. Dunlap's effort takes place against the background of the closing of the steel mill in a small Pennsylvania town. The connection between the team and the town is well handled, the players responding sympathetically to the plight of the workers, knowing that they themselves are only an uncertain step from factory jobs.

The players and assorted hang-ons are portrayed with a mixture of deftness and stereotype. The best are the sensitive French-Canadian goaltender (like most goalies, emotional and slightly crazy); the pliable "Killer" Carson, who lionizes the coach, practices "oneness with the universe," and urges the laid-off workers to adopt positive thinking; and the three Hansons, violent brawlers who carry their toy cars on road trips.

Less satisfactory are the characterizations of such stock characters as the locker-room lecher, the insipid sportscaster, and the conniving general manager.

Critical to the film, but sloppily developed, are the Princetonian Braden (a hockey purist and the league's leading scorer) and his wife Lily. Both are from upper-middle class backgrounds and play alienated outsiders, distant from the working-class life around them. Braden, however, provides us with the film's finest moment. Affected in some mysterious way by Lily's appearance at the Chiefs' final game, he per-

**Violence in hockey is like 19th century dueling—a highly ritualized game rarely resulting in serious injury.**

forms a hilariously graceful striptease (no small feat, considering the complexity of hockey equipment)—a delightful counterpoint to the violence, machismo and hints of repressed homosexuality running through the film.

Although the contrast between Braden and his teammates is overdrawn, it reflects some measure of reality. There is a particular style of hockey, once rooted in New England prep schools, which features precision passing, sharp stick-handling, coordinated efforts to set up offensive threats close to the opposing goal and a minimum of rough, aggressive play in the corners. (Ironically, this style has been brought to perfection recently by the Soviet players.)

The same style was practiced in the National Hockey League 20 years ago though always combined with pervasive intimidation and calculated violence. But while the "preppies" remained purist, the style of the NHL, Canadian junior hockey and the old American Hockey League (towns like Springfield, Providence, Hershey, and Buffalo) changed. The emphasis switched to throwing the puck into the other team's corner and either outskating or out-muscling the opposing defensemen.

This game, which relied increasingly on the long slap shot and stressed physical contact in the corners and in front of the net, gradually came to dominate in working-class centers of the Northeast. What it lacked in finesse, it made up for in spirited aggressive play. Fights may have become more frequent, but they did not—until very recently—dominate the professional game or the media's reporting of it.

Violence is associated with expansion, commercialization and TV exposure rather than with an increase in blood-just among working class fans. In fact, the rise in hockey violence is concurrent with increased middle class interest, indicated by the new crowds in Boston and New York.

*Slap Shot* makes no distinction between aggressive but clean play and maniacal violence. The Chiefs are depicted as a spiritless team, constantly backing in on their goaltender, suddenly transformed by the Hansons, whose parodied violence would be acceptable on no rink in North America. They are allowed to trip slash, high-stick, board and charge at will, to pummel the officials, start fights before the game and tape bits of metal under their gloves. Blood flows freely in every one of their fights.

But one of the reasons fighting is so institutionalized in hockey is that it is similar to 19th century dueling—a highly ritualized phenomenon that rarely results in serious injury. The unwritten code demands that sticks be dropped (they are much too dangerous as weapons) that gloves be thrown off (they would prevent that secure grip on the opposing player's jersey that speedily transforms a fist fight into an awkward wrestling match) that a respectable number of off-balance ineffective punches may be delivered before the officials step in.

This is not to say that injuries never occur or that the code is never violated. But the vast majority of fights result in no serious damage. It is, after all, very difficult to land a solid punch while on skates.

Screenwriter Nancy Dowd distorted not only the game, but also its history. She has Reggie Dunlap invoke the name of Eddie Shore in connection with the purity of old-time hockey to which Dunlap yearns to return. Natives of Springfield, Mass., (like me) remember Eddie Shore, in overcoat and fedora, stalking the dank and littered corridors of the West Springfield Coliseum. But Shore's reputation as owner of the Springfield Indians was that of a manipulative and tyrannical taskmaster. As a player he was master of all the forms of covert viciousness outside the code of hockey ethics.

*Slap Shot* is a badly flawed film despite interesting moments and promising themes. It fails to develop any women characters. Its comedy is inconsistent; its ending is pure silliness. A goods film on hockey remains to be made.

—Gary Kulik

Gary Kulik is a former hockey player, and presently a graduate student at Brown University.

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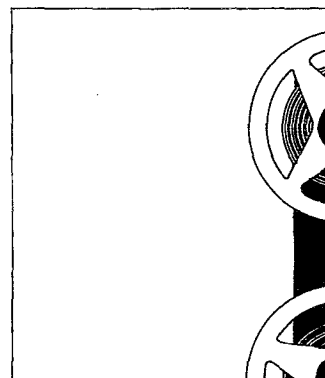
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