

Pete Karman

The Karman Turn

The joy of sects: a handy guide

The following is a consumer's guide to America's best known radical groups. It is for those who want to improve their sect lives, or for sneak reading at meetings where even the agents provocateurs have dozed off. It was inspired by retired communist Jessica Mitford's remark that "I fear we were tiresomely self-righteous (or should it be leftuous?)."

Many of you may find this guide infantile, reactionary or, worst of all, incomplete. My only defense is that my heart is in the left place. Comments should be addressed to: Abbie Hoffman, Social Director, FBI, J. Edgar Hoover Building, Washington, D.C. 20001.

Communist Party U.S.A.

Known simply as The Party. The "true church" of American leftism. For more than a half century the CP has inspired, recruited, disciplined, expelled, flirted with, exiled, charmed, appalled, impoverished, or been persecuted by nearly everyone in American public life. Dick Nixon made his name by hounding it and Grandpa Walton was once blacklisted for having been associated with it. At its peak during WWII, The Party had influence that far surpassed its modest goals. Realizing this, it attempted suicide in 1945 in emulation of its Comintern parent. Revived by popular (front) demand, The Party almost died again in the 1950s as a result of the McCarthyite suppression of communists at home and the Stalinist oppression of communists elsewhere. Today the CP is enjoying a mini resurgence. Pro-Soviet as ever, Party leaders are now willing to admit—if pressed—that old Joe might have made a "few errors in the area of socialist legality." The strongest plank in its new platform calls for militant mass struggle against those imperialist monopolies unwilling to extend favorable trade terms to Moscow.

The twin stars of the New Old Left are Gus Hall, the Lawrence Welk of American Marxism, and Angela Davis, the Farrah Fawcett-Majors of the Soviet poster industry.

The Party's paper is the prolix Daily World. It has lots of photos of hydroelectric stations in Bratsk. It's put out by elves who use pen names that can be written backwards or forwards (e.g., Charles James/James Charles). They think it fools

the Feds. As ever, the CP is financed by U.S. government subsidies in the form of dues and donations from the FBI agents in its ranks.

Ex-CPers tend to be our parents. Current members are more interesting. Oldtimers can be identified by their Murray Space Shoes; younger ones dress like Leo Gorcey or Lily Tomlin. To attract Third World youth, they play salsa, reggae and rock at Party socials. The kids dance, and the commissars try to smile.

Ideological discipline is tight, but many older members are said secretly to support Israel, to think Fidel is too flashy, and to admire Mo Udall and Bella Abzug. If they get caught, they get "Brought Up On Charges." BUOC is the CP's sacred secret rite. Initiates have to face a panel of Party leaders, who accuse them of arcane things that can only be understood by one who has deciphered Lenin's "Empirio-Criticism." Being BUOC is not too scary because local laws prevent the CP from having anyone taken out and shot.

The best thing that can happen to a CPer is to get invited on a free trip (off-season) to the USSR. If you bring ten pairs of Levi's and a dozen Marvin Gaye albums you can make enough money on the black market to quit The Party and join the exploiting class.

The Chinese Contract.

An arrangement rather than a movement. Every few years, China grants a franchise to a deserving group of Americans. The recipients get semi-exclusive rights to the sale of tours to China, place mats, literature, color calendars, and hand-painted porcelain teapots. Top salespeople are feted at gala state dinners in the Forbidden City. In exchange, the franchisees agree to alert American public opinion to the danger of Soviet aggression. It's a cinch, considering that the groundwork has been laid by 30 years of official American propaganda.

Since 1961, the Chinese Contract has been successively held by Progressive Labor, the *Guardian*, R.M. Nixon & Associates, Shirley MacLaine Boutiques, and American Express. In a surprise move earlier this year it was awarded to U.S. Communist Party (M.L.), formerly trading as the October League. USCP(ML) won it on the basis of a polemic claiming that Sov-

iet social-imperialism and Irwin Silber, editor of the *Guardian*, were the main enemies of progressive humanity.

The CC has cachet with well-heeled suburban liberals, for whom China trips are the equivalent of two Volvo station-wagons as status symbols. CCers greet each other by saying, "We're having some people over Friday night to see our slides of The Great Wall."

Weather Underground?

An unresolved question.

Carnaval Cubana.

A Caribbean work'n'fun project for out-of-shape radicals. Cane cutting, fly swatting and dance lessons under tropic skies. One of the best vacation deals on the left. Friendly, politically hip people and fabulous beaches. Each visit includes a performance of an existential play with audience participation called *Waiting for Fidel*. Sometimes he shows up.

Socialist Workers Party.

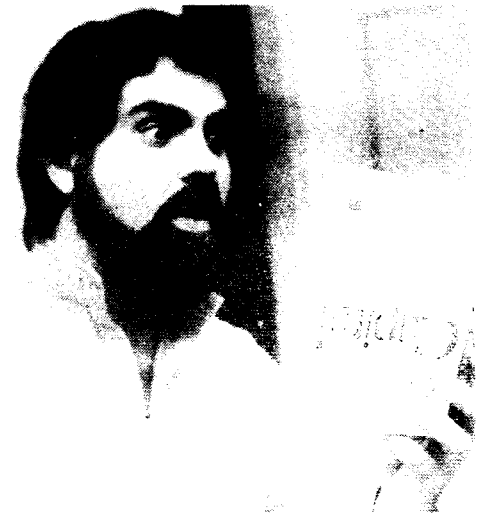
CPers call them "wreckers and splitters," the FBI calls them a menace, but the world affectionately knows them as "The Trots." (A point on usage: "Trotskyist" is okay, "Trotskyite" is perjorative.) The Trots are interpreters and upholders of the will of Leon Trotsky, the Russian revolutionary who was given the axe by Stalin. Several SWP seniors actually knew Trotsky. Two things are invariably said about the SWP: Trotsky didn't deserve them, and they are in favor of revolutions everywhere except where they have happened. Sharp polemicists and tireless organizers, SWPers spend most of their time recruiting new members who then split to form opposition Trotskyist sects. I'll let you in on one of their secrets: you know those funny white hats they wear with a big SWP and a half-crimson globe on them? Well, they get them from the Sherman-Williams Paint Company.

Socialist Labor Party.

Some nice oldtimers. Write them and they will send you a diagram (suitable for framing) of exactly how the new society should be organized.

Socialist Party.

A pleasant fellow in Milwaukee.



Black Panthers.

Classified ad in Oakland Tribune: "Moving to new neighborhood. Must sell autographed copies of *Soul on Ice*, fine examples of heavy rhetoric (circa 1969), like-new shotguns, and six tons USDA Choice frozen honky pork bellies. Cash or straight swap for votes."

Guardian Clubs.

Weapons for canine abuse. Useful for beating lap dogs, running dogs, and dogs already in water.

Campaign for Economic Democracy.

Soon to be a major motion picture.

New American Movement (NAM).

Half an Asian country, or a folksong and campfire society. NAMers believe in the essential laid back mellowness of almost anything and the viability of providing an American definition for an abhorrent foreign ideology. Rumor has it that NAM has been infiltrated by a leftist newspaper based in Chicago.

Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC).

The right wing of the left wing or the left wing of the right wing. DSOC consists of Michael Harrington and a group of labor leaders and academicians who sell NYC municipal bonds as a sideline. Prone as a posture, DSOC rises to its knees in election years to beg radicals to vote Democratic. The organization officially admires dead socialists (Gene Debs, Jean Juarez and Mario Soares) on the principle the deader the better. Activists are rewarded with trips to Portuguese latifundia recently cleared of peasants who didn't realize that starvation is no excuse for extremism. Write and they'll send you a photo of Helmut Schmidt having a scotch with James Callaghan.

Pete Karman is a free-lance writer in Middletown, Conn. His column appears regularly.

Frances Moore Lappe/ Joe Collins

Food and Development

Aiding the "small" farmers

Question: How does the World Bank put into practice its announced policy of giving aid to small farmers in underdeveloped countries?

Answer: By changing the commonly accepted definition of "small farmer," at least in Guatemala.

The World Bank and the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have recently drafted a proposal for funding agricultural credit in Guatemala. The three-volume draft proposes that over the next six years the two agencies channel loan funds through the Guatemalan government to increase production "mainly on small and medium farms."

This appears to be right in line with proclamations by Robert McNamara and other World Bank officials that priority will be given to the credit needs of the rural poor. The figures in this report, however, belie such statements.

First, the proposal itself discloses that over half of all the credit would not go to small farmers but to what the Bank calls "medium" and "larger" farms. Of

the 1,100 farms benefitting from the credit program, 200 would receive over half of all the money.

The other half supposedly goes to small farmers. Who gets the credit will hinge, of course, on how these agencies define "small" in Guatemala. In their report, a small farm is defined as one of less than 112 acres (45 ha.). But anyone familiar with land tenure in Guatemala can tell you that 112 acres is hardly the cut-off point for separating out the small farmers. In fact, only the top three percent of all Guatemalan farms have more than 112 acres. (This top three percent, we have already noted, would receive half of all the credit allocated.)

So the 112-acre cut-off point leaves the project free to steer half its credit funds to a full 97 percent of all farms while calling them all "small," and while crediting itself with helping the needy. What then is to prevent the bank from picking its "small farmers" from the second layer rural elite—that 10 percent of all Guatemalan farmers who own over

18 acres but still less than 112?

The size of the individual loans gives substance to doubts about any of the credit reaching below these elites. In the "small farm" category, the maximum loan would be \$10,000. That figure alone suggests that this project would not be dealing with the real rural poor in Guatemala, those farmers who own less than an acre apiece—one-fifth of all Guatemalan farmers—and, of course, the many rural people with no land at all. In Guatemala, the vast majority of farm families in a good year might each earn \$500. What kind of collateral could such a farmer provide to qualify for loans on the scale discussed by the Bank? The answer is none at all. Only the better-off can participate in the project.

Moreover, if the major obstacle in the way of self-reliance for the rural poor is the tight grip on the land by the rural elite, how can the World Bank claim to be helping the poor while it capitalizes the landed elite? Yet the Bank report tells us that "At the request...of the government,

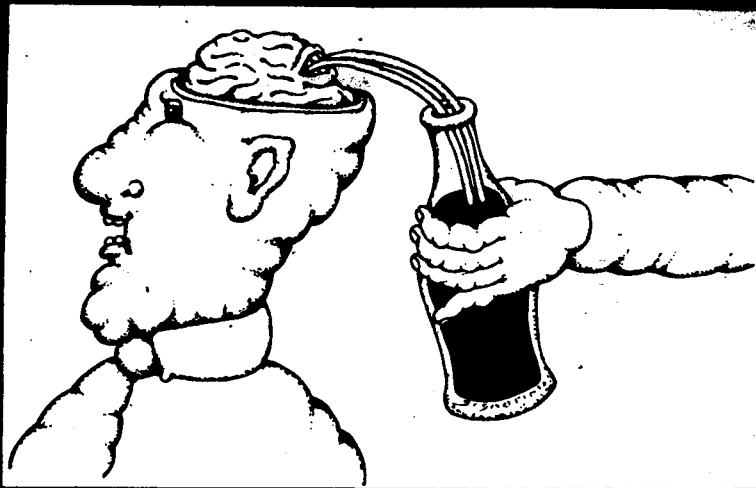
some of the large farms have been included in the project, mainly because of their potential for export earning and utilization of the established access of the beef export industry in the U.S. market."

The World Bank's lending funds derive from the sale of bonds to member governments. Voting power is in accord with the proportion of capital subscribed by member governments. The United States now holds 23 percent of the voting power for loan approval or disapproval. Currently, President Carter is attempting to significantly increase the U.S. subscription to the World Bank's capital fund.

*Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins co-direct the Institute for Food and Development Policy, 2588 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94110. Lappe is the author of *Diet for a Small Planet*. In July 1977, Houghton Mifflin published their new book, *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity*. Their column appears regularly in IN THESE TIMES.*



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Employment conference

Continued from page 3.

nated it since the McGovern procedural reforms to substantive discussion of issues and the airing of grievances concerning the Carter administration.

They also are considering regional Democratic Agenda meetings around the country, possibly on a single date next spring. In the process DSOC hopes to train its membership to be spokespeople on the full employment issue. In early December, a regional conference will be held in Dallas, which has won the support of local labor councils, American Indian organizations, Hispanics and blacks, along with some funding from the Uni-

versity of Texas.

"The next step from here," Harrington told IN THESE TIMES, "is to get together with the leadership of various organizations and try to agree on two or three demands related to full employment for 1978."

"Part of the problem is that we're doing this on a shoestring. But we're coming along better than we thought and there's a good spirit. The people who did help us with the financing, primarily the unions, are quite happy at what they see here. They feel the potential of this kind of coalition."

Philadelphia story

Continued from page 24.

It was not surprising then to find that in the *Inquirer's* newsroom Foreman was known as a favorite of her editors, who "was not to be messed with," as one reporter put it.

While none of the editors would own up to it, such favoritism goes a long way toward accounting for why none of them did anything about reports of Foreman's affair with a man she was covering until many months after it was common—and rankling—knowledge in both their own newsroom and Philadelphia political circles.

The excuses offered by the editors are unconvincing: "I'm just kind of accustomed to hearing when women reporters start getting breaks on stories on their beats, a high degree of the times these are accompanied by rumors of sex," said executive editor Roberts. Associate managing editor Steve Lovelady blamed the hostility of the City Hall bureau for the rumors, as part of their continuing "criticism of whoever was the political writer." Metropolitan editor John Carroll said simply, "It fell through the cracks."

Foreman's affair with Cianfrani was almost a year old and in full bloom in June 1976 when a strange and convoluted episode developed. It was in connection with an *Inquirer* series of articles exposing inhuman and illegal conditions at the Farview State Hospital for the criminally insane.

Almost as soon as the series of articles appeared, Cianfrani got the state senate to establish a special committee to investigate the charges, with himself as chairman. Foreman told several people that it was she who had persuaded Cianfrani to form the committee. Certainly the move was out of character: Cianfrani had never, in 20 years as an elected state official, conducted an investigation of a state agency; in fact, he had frequently and vigorously opposed such investigations. The *Inquirer*, for its part, had frequently criticized him editorially for such opposition.

But now, as the series appeared, Cianfrani ran his committee as if he were Ralph Nader's right-hand-man, holding hearings, touring the hospital, questioning witnesses relentlessly and finally calling for the facility to be closed. And all of his proceedings were faithfully and copiously reported in the *Inquirer*.

This odd coalition did not sit well with many *Inquirer* staff members. "It was almost starting to look like a setup," one of them said. "I felt... we were being used by Cianfrani and that we were using him as well."

And the payoff for such an informal arrangement, which Laura Foreman claimed to have catalyzed? For the *Inquirer* it helped the paper close in on a Pulitzer Prize for the hospital series. And for Cianfrani, it provided a steady stream of favorable press reports when, as it turned out, he was beginning to need them. For while the *Inquirer* was faithfully chronicling his indignant investigation of Farview hospital, the *Philadelphia Bulletin* was reporting on Cianfrani's alleged involvement in several illegal schemes, which were also attracting the attention of federal agents. One scheme involved big payoffs to Cianfrani by parents of applicants to Pennsylvania medical

schools, in return for which the senator allegedly guaranteed admission. But when the applicants did not get into the schools their parents did not get their money back.

The *Inquirer* got its Pulitzer; Foreman, after covering the national political conventions for the *Inquirer* in the summer of 1976, moved on and up to the Washington bureau of the *New York Times* in early 1977. Federal investigators kept after Henry Cianfrani, and by last summer they were closing in. FBI agents interviewed Laura Foreman about him, and the gifts she had accepted from him, in July. Word of the interviews later reached the *Inquirer* newsroom.

It was only then that the indulgent editors realized they and their paper's cherished credibility were shortly to be muddled. When one of their reporters confirmed on Aug. 25 that the gifts and cash had been accepted while Foreman was on the political beat, they rushed to publish the story before being scooped. It ran, two days later, on page one under the headline *Inquirer Conflict in Cianfrani Case*.

At several points in the *Inquirer* article there are lengthy discussions about some of the professional and ethical questions raised by the Foreman case: should reporters accept gifts from their subjects? Should they socialize with people they report on? Should their private lives be as open to scrutiny as a politician's?

These are real enough issues, and while trying to clean up its own act, the *Inquirer* has managed to nail Laura Foreman's professional scalp to the newsroom wall.

But there is another question, never addressed by the *Inquirer* but implicit in their investigation, that echoes loudest in the mind of a working reporter: If Foreman got what she deserved in this affair—and I think she did—what of the *Inquirer* editors who for more than a year favored her, promoted her and covered for her? Foreman's career is in tatters, but what about theirs?

There has been no hint of rolling editorial heads, large or small, in the wake of the *Inquirer's* exposure of its handling of the case. A check with Donald Barlett, one of the two reporters who wrote the piece, confirmed that there had been no action against any editor and none contemplated.

Seen from this angle, the *Inquirer's* "self-investigation" takes on a distinctly less noble aspect.

The article makes abundantly clear that much responsibility for the perpetuation of the conflict lies further up the editorial ladder than Laura Foreman's now empty desk, but she is the only one who has had to pay any price beyond a red face for what happened.

There is also something particularly unsavory about the spectacle of male editors sacrificing the career of a wayward woman reporter—the first woman political reporter, the article carefully points out, in the *Inquirer's* 145-year history. They were also too careful, while detailing Foreman's numerous love affairs, including names, to omit the identities of the two married men on their staff to whom she had been "romantically linked."

Chuck Fager is a free-lance writer in the Washington area.

LIFE IN THE U.S.

MEDIA

Village Voice workers unionize

The most significant aspect of the contract is that freelance writers are included.

By Barbara Garson

NEW YORK—In the wake of a strike ultimatum, round the clock bargaining and plans for an alternate strike paper, newly organized employees of the *Village Voice* voted to accept their first union contract.

The 200 hundred member unit, organized as part of District 65, includes all categories of *Voice* workers from messengers to editors, from photographers to ad salesmen. Most significantly, for the first time in the U.S., free-lance writers are represented.

Though the National Labor Relations Board explicitly excluded free-lance writers from the bargaining unit, the rest of the employees firmly refused to sit down without the free-lancers.

It was this issue that brought the *Village Voice* Organizing Committee to District 65, a 28,000-member, left-leaning, catch-all union, outside of the AFL-CIO. The regular newspaper unions would not accept the free-lancers as members of the unit.

The *Village Voice* is the most profitable newspaper in New York City. (It is owned by the Australian newspaper magnate Rupert Murdoch, who also owns the *New York Post* and *New York Magazine*.) Its pay-scale, however, is a throwback to its primal origins as an underground paper. The new contract doesn't go very far to change this.

It accepts minimums like \$87.50 a week for messengers, \$135 for clericals, \$180 for copy editors. However, there are some extraordinary clauses.

The contract not only sets minimums for free-lance articles but also guarantees, to even one-time contributors, kill fees, access to the medical plan, immediate payment of agreed expenses and payment on acceptance. (Former *Voice* policy—payment on publication—often meant payment in six months, a year, or never, if

the article was held till it became outdated.)

An unprecedented contract clause states that no changes will be made in copy without consultation, unless the contributor can't be reached. (It's yet to be seen what this means in practice.)

The contract assures many standard union benefits including well-defined job security, substantial severance pay, \$10 and \$20 raises, and small improvements in vacation and overtime pay.

In addition, there were peculiarly *Voice*-oriented benefits, like three paid mourning days for the death of a person with whom the employee had a "family-type" relationship or equality of meals. This stems from resentment by the clerical staff over the kind of food that's ordered in for them compared to what editors get when they all stay late to put out the paper.

The contract was presented with a minimum of fan-fare by the haggard negotiating committee. They said it was the best that could be gotten without a strike.

A straw vote showed only two members in favor of a strike. However there were many abstentions. A great deal of the floor discussion took the general

form of "Of course I don't want to strike but this really isn't so good for me."

After the straw vote the president of District 65, David Livingston, addressed the body. "We don't want any half-hearted lovers here," he said. "We don't want you to say about this union, 'She's weak, she's funny looking, she's a wreck, but she's mine!'"

He urged the members to accept the contract if they thought it was a good beginning, if they could feel proud of it. "But if you can't hold your head up when you walk down the street with her, then don't be afraid to strike."

By secret ballot, the contract was accepted overwhelmingly.

Note: Since many ITT readers are also free-lance writers, they may want to contact Kitty Krupat, District 65, 13 Astor Place, New York, NY, to familiarize themselves with the rights, benefits, and minimums of Village Voice contributors. Barbara Garson is the author of MacBird and All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and Demeaning of Routine Work. (Penguin). As a free-lance writer she is a member of District 65's Village Voice unit.

ALBUM



Photograph by Ed Kweskin.