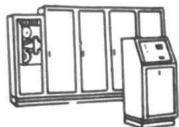


INTERRUPT

13

newsletter of
computer people for peace

december , 1970 .



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COMPUTER WORKERS ORGANIZING

The Committee to Plan a Computer Union held its first meeting in New York City on Dec. 3. The meeting was attended by over 60 computer people--keypunch operators, console operators, programmers, analysts; old and young; male and female; black and white. They were angry and the tone of the meeting was militant. There was no argument over whether a union was necessary, but rather how soon they could get it started.

"The computer field is in trouble... the whole economy is in trouble," said Ed Mosca, a placement manager and one of the three speakers.

"Last year we had 200 to 300 jobs open every month. Now we have 6 to 8 openings," Ed continued. He expressed guarded optimism that January would see a reversal in the unemployment trend, but later confided that he too might soon be out of work.

Stan Robinson, from Boston, who spoke at the ACM'70 conference, again related his experiences at Codon, a small software house. Several employees protested the attempt of the company to gain "defense" contracts.

"Management got a swelled head, fired

one employee and then canned five others for showing solidarity with the first," said Stan.

At that point, the fired employees discovered that employees are protected from firings due to organizing and formulating grievances; the Codon 6 were in effect a union. They instituted a law suit and after eight months the company was found in violation of the National Labor Relations Act. Codon had to reinstate the Codon 6 and pay 80% back wages.

Stan expressed satisfaction in the victory and urged others to take part in the struggle for workers' rights.

Next, Larry Fabian, a lawyer, ran down some of the legal aspects in forming a union--what protection can be expected from the NLRB, the definition of a bargaining unit and the position of management--"They'll do whatever they can to break it".

Larry urged workers to "form a central organizing committee that can't be broken up by management".

During the open discussion, several women keypunch operators clearly expressed an understanding of their exploitation by the corporation. Working in a low pay, surplus labor field the women were perhaps the

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MORE FROM BIG BROTHER

GOVERNMENTS have always established systems that affect the lives of their citizens. With the coming of the electronic age, many of these systems are now computerized. Some of these systems could have a beneficial effect for the people, others are in several aspects harmful, while a third group are harmful in all respects. CPP's Data Bank group has been looking into some of these systems, specializing in those that are either partially or totally harmful to PEOPLE, and which are useful only to those who would control us.

An example is NYSIIS, the New York State Identification and Intelligence System. NYSIIS, created in 1965, is a computerized data bank containing arrest, acquittal, conviction and other related information on individuals arrested within the state. It was set up to serve agencies within the state concerned with the detection, apprehension, prosecution, sentencing, confinement, and rehabilitation of criminal offenders, according to a NYSIIS brochure.

At the moment we are involved in a critical evaluation of NYSIIS. We are trying to compile all the information we can get on the system, especially the procedure to be followed to get a name off the file if the person wasn't convicted of a serious crime. If you have tried to get your own name off the file, whether you succeeded or not, or if you would like to make the attempt, please contact us.

The data bank committee also would like to evaluate medical data banks. We would like to find out how the new medical technology deals with the problems of people's medical care. We can easily see how it solves some problems for corporations which are looking for new customers because of the temporary cutback in war work.

We are also looking into Project Search System for the Electronic Analysis and Retrieval of Criminal History (and at times, the history of those who exercise their political rights), the FBI's NCIC

(National Crime Information system), the Army's political activist data bank, credit data banks, and other harmful and potentially harmful data banks and would appreciate receiving information on any of the above.

Send all responses to:

Data Bank Committee
Computer People for Peace
c/o Dolphin Center
137A West 14th Street
New York, New York 10011

Been fucked over by a data bank? If so send us your story. We are compiling these stories for a booklet. Send all info to: CPP Data Bank Committee

A COURSE ON OFFING BIG BROTHER

Humanites 480 at Syracuse University, believe it or not, is a course in non-violent sabotage of computer installations. The workshop course was begun as a result of last Spring's strike. It is based on the assumption that some computer systems are working against the best interests of the people and should therefore be disrupted.

The workshop is exploring the ramifications of sabotage actions such as getting people to change their punched billing cards for the phone company. Hamilton Armstrong Jr. is coordinating the workshop.

Honeywell doesn't seem to be too worried about the downturn in the computer business. Recently awarded contracts include 15 million dollars from the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Organization; 11 million for Minuteman guidance systems; and 3 million for production of Minuteman components.

MID EAST FORUM

On November 11, CPP held a forum on the Middle East attended by 75 - 100 people. After each of the 3 panelists had spoken for 20 minutes, members of the audience asked questions and made comments for the remainder of a pretty heated evening.

Robert Cohen, the executive secretary of the NYC Fellowship of Reconciliation and a member of the Jewish Peace Fellowship, spoke from a position of "equal disagreement with and hostility to the Left's vitriolic anti-Israel stand" and the "chauvinistic and militaristic forms of Zionism." He stressed that a solution could only be arrived at by the Palestinians and the Israelis recognizing each other's right to national self-determination, and would have to include compensation or resettlement for the Palestinian refugees and also for Oriental Jews, who left their countries out of the same fears. Israel lives in constant fear of annihilation while the Arabs fear Israel's unlimited expansionist territorial ambitions, so each side must make clear its renunciation of these intentions. The only solution he saw was a Mid-Eastern Federation of a Palestinian and a Jewish state, which he claimed many Arabs, particularly those in the occupied territories, would welcome.

Irving Beinen, business manager of the "Guardian", assumed that everyone there had a commitment to a socialist solution to the world's problems, to an anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist approach, and to the right of all groups to self-determination. (This seemed to be an unreasonable assumption, to judge by many of the questions asked later!) He cited as significant facts the development of Palestinian nationalism since the 1967 war, and a steady move to the right by the Israeli Government which had become a tool of imperialism - British and French in the 1956 Suez attack, and latterly US imperialism. The recent hijackings were evidence of the Palestinians' refusal any longer to rely on the Arab governments or armies (who were quite willing to end hostilities with Israel in their own interest), and to fight for their own liberation.

Yitzchak Epstein, an Israeli member of the Jewish Liberation Project, introduced

himself as a "socialist Zionist." He claimed there is a growing Left in Israel which recognizes that Israel must deal directly with the Palestinian people. He claimed that Al Fateh is a "bourgeois nationalist" movement, and that the Arab "liberation" movement seeks to create a state where "everyone is equally Arab" - Jew, Christian or Moslem. He was opposed to the creation of Arab "Bantustans" within Israel. The Arabs should negotiate with Israel, but currently they regard Jews as non-entities, although they supposedly allow for individual religious rights in the future. (He wondered why the New Left ignored the plight of the Copts, Kurds, Berbers and Southern Sudanese, whom the Arab states are oppressing and whose right to self-determination is denied.)

The rights and legitimacy of both sides must be recognized and Jewish and Arab radicals could then join in the struggle for a socialist revolution against all oppressive states - Emirates, juntas and "bourgeois democracies."

There were pro- and anti-Zionist positions presented by the audience. It was stated that Israel was more democratic than any Arab state and that there had been anti-Jewish pogroms carried out by Arabs under the British mandate. The position of the Palestine Liberation Organization was cited as being in favor of the creation of a secular socialist Palestinian state with rights for all, including Israeli Jews, and of the overthrow of reactionary Arab regimes. Many speakers blamed the current situation on the interference of imperialist powers, particularly the US.

It was agreed the greatest shortcoming of the meeting was the lack of a Palestinian speaker. Also, there was very little substantiation provided for the opposite interpretations of history presented as "facts." At an introductory meeting on this complex situation, I don't know how much could be hoped for, but it seems clear that much more time and a lot of educational material will be needed before CPP is able to get together a position paper of any kind. If anyone is interested in working on this, please contact CPP at the Dolphin Center.

SQUIRE COMMITTEE CHRISTMAS LIST

OR, NO C.P.P., THERE REALLY ISN'T A SANTA CLAUS

Clark Squire is alive and well and STILL in JAIL. We are delighted at the response we have been getting from those of you reading Interrupt, but his \$50,000 bail is still unreached. Now is the time for New Year's resolutions, and we would like to suggest a few items to add.

At their Nov 20th Meeting, the Council of the ACM turned down CPP's request for funds, because it felt that the issue was "outside of its constitutional purposes". ACM has spent many long years interpreting its constitution in an arbitrary manner. Although the Association urged its members "as individuals to familiarize themselves with the facts in this case and to take whatever action they regard as appropriate" this is clearly not enough to undo the 20-odd-months Clark has spent in prison. The Chairman of the ACM Squire committee, Dr. Kenneth King, prepared a 40-page in-depth document on the facts of the case.

► The document is available at ACM offices:
1133 6th Ave.

New York, N.Y. 10036

Please write for it.

► We have printed up some fist posters (with a little help from the computer). They are available from us for \$1.00 apiece, and some coins for postage, please. Try a dozen for Christmas gifts.

► Probably one of the most significant things you can do is to attend the trial if you are in New York. Many of us have found the inter action between Judge Murtagh and the defense lawyers to be most unusual. It is important that the spectator seats be filled each day to let the judge know that he can not continue as Judge Hoffman did in the Chicago 7 trial. If you did not see Hoffman in Chicago we recommend Murtagh in New York. The trial continues Mon-thurs. 10 AM to 4:30 at 100 Centre St. (Criminal Court Bldg--13th Floor).

NATIONAL REPORT

"Our main thrust is to work within the aerospace and defense industries and with employees of those industries," says Ken Zeidman, CPP contact in Los Angeles. He feels that one important consequence of defense industry layoffs is that "many engineers and scientists are really fed up with DOD directed work and would very much like to find other kinds of work." To this end, CPP/LA emphasizes working collectives of technical persons, i.e. groups with a social/political orientation who want to work together and control how their work is used. They publish a newsletter, Aerospaced, in an effort to reach workers in the industry. Meetings of the group are held on the first Wednesday of each month (8 PM) at the Westdale Savings and Loan, 2920 S. Sepulveda (near Sepulveda and National). For additional information contact:

Ken Zeidman
2342 Penmar
Venice, Calif. 90291
Phone: 213-397-5002

NATIONAL CONTACTS

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Silver Springs, Md. 20910

Poughkeepsie: Don Zitz
18 Hudson View Drive
Beacon, N.Y. 12508

Organize in your area! Let us know if you can be a contact, distribute INTERRUPTS or arrange meetings. To be effective, we must be together.

ACM - LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT

On November 12th CPP staged an action at the N.Y. office of ACM to protest the failure of Communications of the ACM, in its October issue, to mention our active participation in ACM'70 and to address itself to the crucial issues discussed at that conference.

The Communications article was a rewriting of pre-convention publicity in the past tense. It did not reflect the mood expressed by those present who had been 'fucked over' by management's computers, or the lack of faith expressed in computer managers. The formation of an ACM committee to look into the case of Clark Squire, former programmer, Black Panther, and political prisoner, after CPP had raised this issue at the conference, was completely omitted from mention.

On Thursday the Steering Committee of CPP entered ACM's office demanding a meeting with Gordon Smith, Executive Director of ACM. Our major demand was that ACM admit to publishing deliberate distortions, and that it rectify this by reporting fully and accurately those censored items in its next publication. The censored items included a) Clark Squire, b) The 'User' question, c) Union organizing, d) Data Banks discussion, e) The openness of the Conference, f) Women's rights in the computer field and g) CPP's participation in the conference. We also demanded that 1) All subsequent ACM conferences be open to all workers in the computer industry by lowering fees and holding sessions during non-working hours; 2) Future Communications publish a CPP monthly article in accordance with their 'open forum' policy, report on the internal activities of ACM such as subcommittee findings and recommendations and replace the editorial board with people sensitive to social issues; and 3) ACM arrange a meeting between CPP and the ACM Council to discuss ACM's relationship with all workers in the computer field and the degree of ACM's commitment to the socially relevant issues related to computer usage.

After three hours of negotiations on Thursday and another session on Friday evening, ACM made no concessions. They maintained that any inaccuracies or omissions were due to insufficient staff, and that they were only a 'cut and paste operation.' They refused to apologize to CPP or publicly admit to our charges. Gordon Smith did say that ACM was trying to lower fees by asking large corporations for financial support. A CPP negotiator interrupted and asked, 'What does industry expect of ACM for its support?' Smith replied, 'I ought to punch you in the mouth for saying that!'

Although ACM refused to meet any of our demands, the action did accomplish several things. It stripped away the liberal mask that ACM has hidden behind, and proved that ACM is not a socially relevant organization. It showed that CPP reacts appropriately and forcefully to incidents of this type.

It is apparent that CPP should now re-evaluate its participation in 'professional' conferences to determine if they are effective theaters in which to accomplish our goals..

Since ACM has failed in the past to cover its own news events, we invited the press to attend the Nov 12th negotiating session. Many newspapers called the ACM for information about the action, and one publication, Computer Decisions, sent two reporters to cover the story. Computer Decisions expressed a great deal of interest in the action (particularly to CPP's viewpoint) and promised to print the story. The story was not printed.

The following week we contacted a senior editor of the magazine and he stated that Gordon Smith had called him and asked them not to print anything "derogatory" to the ACM. The official reason for not printing the article was that "it was not news". We wonder how many other publications Mr. Smith contacted.

ACM BOSS CARLSON SAYS:

"Yes, an ACM can bring us all together; but another computer society would needlessly divide us. Your impatience for an aggressive voice that lobbies in Washington, campaigns on TV, and negotiates on behalf of its members with employers, suggests a trade association rather than a professional society."

THE CORPORATE

COMPUTER WORKERS ORGANIZING

from page 1

most articulate voices for an industry-wide, all-inclusive union. "The situation is bad; last year we got \$3.75 an hour, now we're lucky to make \$2.75". Referring to new data input devices, one person spoke of the "tremendous trend toward eliminating keypunching" which of course would lay off thousands of people in the industry.

Many old-timers in the field expressed resentment at an industry (particularly the consultant business) which dumps its senior people. "Everyone's dispensable" said an older man, "Management is there to make a profit so when business gets slow they clean house and get rid of senior and more expensive people".

One computer operator expressed a strong desire in moving upward to programming. Another operator said privately after the meeting he had been talking about a union in his shop, "Now they've got me marked as a trouble maker, so I'll have to play it cool. But we're going to do it".

The Committee to Plan a Computer Union stated as its goals "to reach out to people in the computer field, make them aware of the need to unionize and provide legal assistance, possible financial aid and the organized support of other computer workers". The demands they intend to raise fall into three major categories: job security; job mobility; and democracy in the workplace.

The meeting of Dec. 3 provided a chance for many computer people to get together. Interest in forming a union is there. In their press release the Committee quoted one member as saying that "if computer people got together we could shut down every bank, every payroll and billing department, every department store; in fact we could shut down every business in this country." There's a long way to go, but it appears that the first step has been taken.

The Committee to Plan a Computer Union can be contacted by writing:
240 W. 98th St., Apt. 2E
New York, N.Y. 10025

LAYOFFS!

*In New York State the number of professional and managerial claimants for unemployment benefits rose from 9,610 to 17,785 between Sept., 1969, and Sept., 1970, an increase of 105.9%.

*Mr. Diamond, manager of the Professional Placement Center of the New York State Employment Service, says computer programming is one of many professional and managerial fields in which the recession has changed a labor shortage to a labor surplus.

*Service Bureau Corp. nationally has shut its doors to further contract programming work. Workers are to be reassigned to IBM locations, but type and location of assignments are up in the air.

*The Burroughs Corporation stated that by the end of 1970 it will have cut its worldwide employment by 10 percent to 48,000 workers.

*Computer Applications has gone out of business, putting 2000 computer workers out of a job.

*Control Data Corp. recently cut wages and salaries for all its workers by 10%.

*"By 1969, nearly 50,000 professional engineers and scientists worked in the Cambridge-128 area. In the past year and a half, at least 10,000 of them have been laid off." N.Y.Times 11/1/70

*Viatron Corp., a computer firm, has laid off more than 700 workers.

*Reliable sources inform us that IBM is beginning to put pressure on some of its female employees in an effort to get them to quit.

ON

AND YOU

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

CPP'S STATEMENT

The national unemployment rate is now up to 5.8% with no end in sight; some reports predict a rate of 9.2% by 1972. The reasons are many - from the billions wasted on the South East Asian war and the military to the "normal" boom/bust cycle of the capitalist economy. Nixon, of course, tries to place the blame on GM and construction workers. The computer industry has been heavily affected - many smaller companies have gone out of business and larger ones have cut back on salaries. Some companies work their staff longer hours rather than hire additional people.

The result of the current recession has been massive industry-wide layoffs. A union can protect our jobs and press for full employment.

But a union can and must do a lot more. Next to the Military, the Corporation is the most undemocratic institution in our country. Controlled by a powerful elite, it is a highly structured top-down run organization, interested in sustaining itself and maximizing profits. Workers have no voice in determining the work they or the company do. This must change.

In its brochure, the Committee to Plan a Computer Union states: "We seek to spread the decision-making process so that employees can have more of a say in determining the type of work we want to do and the skills we wish to develop." This is necessary but not sufficient. It's necessary for a worker to have a say about his job. It's not sufficient. People must have control over the institutions that affect their daily lives; workers must control their workplaces. The class structure that allows a powerful elite to control thousands of workers must be changed to a structure that is democratic, where the workers have control.

Another shortcoming of the Committee's brochure is the omission of any mention of racism and sexism. Our industry has done next to nothing in training the "overexploited" and seeing to it that they get decent jobs. Black and Puerto Rican women work in sweat shop conditions as keypunch operators with no chance of advancement. Edit control positions are filled by "unpromotable" women. Computer schools rob young men and women of thousands of dollars daily by training them for non-existent jobs on inferior equipment while racist ACM leaders talk of their 75,000 member goal and the Spring Joint Computer Conference uses "responsibility" as its theme. A union must expose and vigorously oppose these practices.

The Committee does, however, show sensitivity to the problem by insisting that "anyone involved in computer processing, from data coding to output delivery, should have the opportunity to join. Only if the union is open to all computer workers such as keypunch operators, machine operators, programmers and analysts can we hope to compete with management." This is extremely important in breaking down the existing class barriers. While most companies and the ACM try to classify programmers and analysts as "professionals", they are in fact workers whose needs are similar to key and console operators and often in direct conflict with corporate management.

In today's scarce job market, programmers and analysts are no longer in a position of privilege. They must choose between competing for those few "good" jobs or organizing to provide socially useful work for all. An industry-wide all-inclusive union is one way to begin the latter.

CPP supports this attempt at unionizing and urges you to begin organizing within your workplace. Talk about a union - contact those in other departments. Keep it cool - you may be the boss's best friend until he finds out what's going down.

Class, Capitalism, and Computers

This article is the introduction to a series of opinions on workers that will appear in future issues of Interrupt. As an introduction, it is an attempt to raise, not to answer questions. The list of questions at the end of this article are the topics to be covered by the later articles.

The national head of our EDP department (who is my supreme boss) recently stopped me in the hall to congratulate me on the installation of a new system. He was aware, he said, of how I had completely redesigned the system from its original conception. I seized the opportunity to talk about the potential advantages of democracy in the workplace, of the unnecessary obstacles I had to overcome to change the specifications of the system, as I was not, at the time, supposed to be engaged in systems design. His final decision on democracy in the workplace was: "You can't allow a corporation to be democratic; that would be anarchy"!

We don't have democracy in our workplaces. Rather, we are part of an alienating class structure, that we, by working, support and enforce. Quitting work is not the way to remove the structure. We must understand the nature of our work in order to change it.

We don't have democracy because we are part of a labor force that is told what to produce and how to produce it by a capitalist class. What's wrong with capitalism? Take a look at the increasing abundance of consumer goods that give decreasing satisfaction and fulfill less and less human aspirations, emotions and needs. Look at the unsolved contradictions between the wasteful standard of living in the rich countries and the impoverished conditions in the rest of the world. Look at the international monetary problems, the current trend toward economic recession in the whole capitalist world, the repression of the working class (like the restrictions on free wage bargaining when Congress passes laws telling railway workers when they can strike and what they can earn). Look finally at the tremendous gap between what we could make of this world with the power that science and technology have given us and the destructive horrors of war to which automation is being applied.

Then look at your workplace. Companies are laying off workers because of the recession. One of my bosses told me last week that, "a company that is losing money has a right to fire employees." Who is the company, and, more basically, why does the company exist? The company exists, my same boss says, "to make a profit for the owners." Yes, that's why companies exist in this society, but even under capitalism, most companies exist to serve a societal need.

My company exists to distribute goods to consumers. And who is the company, again? The company is the people who physically handle and sell the commodities, the clerks and the data processing staffs who provide necessary services. We sell our labor power to a hierarchy that tells us what to do and how to do it. The hierarchy itself produces nothing; it lives off of the surplus value that we produce.

We are the company. Therefor we should be the ones to decide what to do when the company is losing money. We should be the ones who decide how the production machinery and the channels of distribution are to be used, what investments should be made, and the type of work we are doing.

Workers' unions in Belgium, France, and other European countries are slowly coming to the realization that demands for better wages and shorter working hours, while important, are not enough to solve the labor alienation. That alienation must be clearly defined as a conflict between the working class against the capitalist class for the means of production.

Nor is it enough to control one factory or one industry. Experiments in workers owning and running factories have failed because of effective boycotts by monopoly capital. No single company or industry can exist independently of the rest of the economy. Workers alienation cannot be permanently relieved unless we all have an equal voice in the workings of the economy as a whole.

A first step toward putting ourselves into a classless society is to remove the artificial lower-middle-upper class barriers. I've been placing myself on office party

continued from page 10

organizing committees and have made a point of inviting keypunchers, operators, and edit clerks, besides the usual group of programmers and analysts. Sure, everyone doesn't have the same education, or cultural background, or pay, but we're all being used by our bosses. If we're going to be an effective opposition against the managers and owners, we cannot allow race or life style to keep us divided.

The second step is to formalize our unity. Form a union that has two initial goals. First, through working together we must educate ourselves to consider each other as equals. Up to now we have been effectively divided by preconceptions about the relative importance of our jobs. All tasks that contribute to the final product are equally important. All workers deserve equal pay for equal time on the job.

Second, our immediate demands to our bosses must be to equalize the distribution of income. Not only for ourselves, but for our bosses as well, we must constantly press for increases in our pay and reductions in the bosses' pay. Income discrepancy is one of the tools used to create and maintain disunity in the working class.



Self education and the elimination of pay differences are vital to making us into a positive force. But remember, that's not enough. The union must grow to cover all of our industry and the union has to get into coalitions with other groups of workers. Many unions today fail to respond to the needs of the workers because the rank and file is inactive. A union or coalition of unions whose goal is control of the machines and service systems must have a highly active membership. In order to grow all of us must become leaders. Equal control means that nobody is just a follower.

Practically speaking, a socialist classless structure cannot poll all the people on all the decisions. In the union and eventually

in the society, we will have to elect bodies of representatives to make most of the day-to-day decisions. These representatives will serve short terms, will be unable to succeed themselves, and will be instantly recallable by their constituents in the event of misrepresentation. Following their terms as representatives, these people will rejoin the industrial labor force from which they were elected. Until it becomes second nature to us, we must all work to prevent power from falling into the hands of one person or group of persons. The way to do that is for all of us to be equally active and at times to become representatives ourselves.

Labor Department statistics show no change in the relative number of bosses and workers over the past several decades. Capitalism, even with increased automation, must live off of the workers. Capitalism, despite scientific and technological advances, continues to maintain a decaying and irrational worldwide social order.

Labor movements that only strive for increased wages and more benefits have not changed the worldwide destruction or our alienated lives. (Incidentally, anti-war and anti-imperialist peace movements, that have not looked to labor as a base, have also failed to change our lives.) Alienation will persist as long as some people dictate to others and profit from it. Fulfillment will exist in a society where we all equally command all aspects of our lives.

This article covers a lot of ground. It poses several unanswered questions. What is Capitalism? Socialism? How does the capitalist class control the working class? What's the line of differentiation between capitalists and workers? Aren't workers better off now than ever before? How would they govern themselves, once in control? What about most unions today; aren't they corrupt? Aren't the so called socialist countries today moving toward capitalism? And what's so artificial about the lower-middle-upper class definition of our society today? What causes alienation? What is surplus value? What are the effects of imperialism? What could we really do if science and technology were applied in the interests of the people? These questions will be tackled in forthcoming issues of Interrupt.

Joseph Scott

CPP vs SJCC: ROUND 2

In our letter dated October 2 (reprinted in INTERRUPT12) to Dr. Moshman, General Chairman of this year's SJCC, CPP raised several points. Dr. Moshman's two-page reply, dated November 12, is a very routine and businesslike rejection of our suggestions and offer to cooperate. Excerpts of his letter appear below (underlining ours). Stay tuned for round 3.

SJCC Planning Committee

I and the other members of the Steering Committee for the 1971 SJCC have given careful consideration to the points raised in your letter of October 7.

I am sure you must realize that the organization of a meeting of the size and complexity of the Joint Computer Conference requires a certain adherence to schedules and timetables as well as to the policies laid down by the sponsoring organization which in this case is the American Federation of Information Processing Societies....

If you desire to participate in or organize a session outside the technical program, then I suggest that you use an existing, recognized medium for such a meeting. Such media include the ACM Special Interest Committee on Computers and Society (SICCAS) of the ACM. We will attempt to provide facilities at the Convention Hall for any affiliated group within AFIPS to hold its own meeting and include a notice of such meeting within the program booklet.

Naturally all members of affiliated societies are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the Conference. A table for the distribution of acceptable literature will be available in the Convention Hall at a spot yet to be determined. If you wish to take advantage of this facility, I suggest you write directly to Col. H. F. Woodbury regarding this matter.

I trust these remarks are responsive to the points raised in your letter and provide a basis for the presentation of all ranges of opinion on topics that may be deemed controversial.

I would be pleased to be informed of the reaction of the Computer People for Peace.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

Dear Interrupt:

A year ago I went to work for a small firm in Hauppauge, L. I. - Videographic Systems, Inc. It did computerized typesetting. It was a really good job but about last May it became apparent that the company was in financial difficulties. At that time they layed off a bunch of people including one programmer. Their programming department was only about a dozen people to begin with. Then at the end of August they layed off a lot more people including 4 programmers - including myself.

For the past two months I've been looking for a job. My search included L. I., N.J., Westchester and even a few other places across the country. All I can say is that

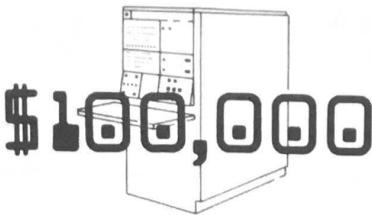
there aren't many good openings at the present and for each one that there is - there are about 200-300 applicants; which means that there must be a lot of fellow programmers unemployed. I was lucky and got a really great job last week.

My case is not unusual - a lot of my friends took even longer to get employed.

I was lucky - my wife teaches - so we were at least able to keep afloat - though I've got a lot of overdue bills.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. Heath
Port Jefferson, N. Y.
November 1, 1970



Many of you probably read in the trade publications about the occupation of the Courant Institute Computer Center at New York University last May. We found that the press coverage of this incident failed to clarify several facts. These are:

- There was much discussion of the potential damage done to the computer, but little mention of the political reasons behind the event;
- Although the Courant Collective included several hundred people, (and the center was held for 3 days by an estimated 2,000 people) only two professors were singled out for indictment;
- The indictment against the two, Nick Unger and Bob Wolfe, is for conspiracy, attempted grand larceny through extortion, and attempted coercion. They are being charged with no overt acts, and no mention of computer destruction is made in the charges.

On May 7, 1970, hundreds of people occupying the Courant Computer Center (under Atomic Energy Commission funding) left the building. The 3-day action had been initiated to raise \$100,000 bail for one of the Panther 21. It was begun with the understanding that NYU must open itself up to the needs of the community. The Courant Collective believed, as did most of the striking students at that time, that the University had gone too far in usurping community property and in failing to consider the requirements of students, residents and workers in the area. That Spring, cafeteria and library employees as well as computer operators at the university, most of whom are black or Puerto Rican, were organizing into unions to protect their rights.

We spoke with several people involved in the Courant action, and they said they found it strange that the Administration had singled out only 2 individuals to "blame". The feeling among many of the participants is that the University is trying to build a case against Nick and Bob as being charismatic leaders of a group of mindless students. It is difficult to retaliate

against this type of assault, for the indictment mentions "others unnamed" in the charge. This last clause acts to keep everyone else quiet, for they can be added to the indictment if they offer information in defense. Nick Unger and Bob Wolfe are facing possible sentences of 15 years apiece.

An interesting point to add here is that Nick was released on \$1,000 cash bail, while Bob was released on his own recognizance. Recently Interrupt discussed the case of Clark Squire who is facing similar charges and is in jail on \$50,000 bail. We can not help but find a distinct difference in bail procedures between black defendants and white.

It is distressing to find the computer journals much too eager to jump to the tune of "computer destruction" stories without relating background information. Perhaps part of the problem is our uneasiness about our own computer centers.

What if a community group found reason to take over the computer center where you or I work? Although we all say that we value human life above property, when the decision involves our work place we may not be quite so sure. The NYU action attempted to make the political connections between the computer and how it affects our lives. We hope to continue fact-finding in this case. The trial is expected to open in mid-February at 100 Centre St. (Criminal Court Bldg) in New York.

Joan Dublin

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK vs.
STUART DAVIS AND KENNETH THOMAS

Way back last April 11 we were passing out leaflets protesting GE's and Honeywell's war profiteering. We were summoned for "littering". The trial came up on Dec 11. After admonishing us at length about the illegality of letting people throw our leaflets on the "floor" and letting the wind blow leaflets off of our table, the judge dismissed the charges against us. Police know they can't get convictions, but they will continue to harrass political leafletters with arrests and summonses. Don't be intimidated. Harrass back.

on the lack of humanitarianism: by Dietrich Fischer

We all know of the terrible tragedy happening in East Pakistan. More than a million people are slowly dying from starvation and epidemics, while the world watches, doing virtually nothing to help.

A frequently used excuse is: "Natural disasters happen all the time and there is not much we can do about it." It is true that nothing could be done about the cyclone itself and the people who were killed (except perhaps a better warning). But since then weeks have passed and many of the areas hit by the storm and tidal wave still have not been reached by relief groups. It is an outrage that more is not being done to save the survivors.

There are some who say: "Millions of people die from hunger each year and charity is not a lasting solution." It is true that people must learn to help themselves wherever they can. But in this case they obviously cannot. The relief effort in East Pakistan is not a question of charity, but of worldwide solidarity among all people in case of a disaster. Enormous efforts are being made (like a raid on a prisoner of war camp in North Vietnam) to "save American lives". But nobody takes meaningful action to save the lives of Oriental human beings.

A plan to divert two U.S. ships with food for India to East Pakistan was dropped. The reason given was that there was insufficient transportation to bring this food to the disaster area. Would not the logical (or at least a more humane) conclusion be to send enough helicopters also? There are many hundreds of helicopters in Vietnam being used to machinegun people from the air, in order to "help the people of South Vietnam to defend their freedom". Would not an equally urgent use for these helicopters be to save a million people from starvation and disease?

Pakistanis need food, medical care, clothing and shelter. The U.S. government and every other government, including the government of Pakistan itself, has indicated an unwillingness to supply these basic needs with anything greater than a token

effort. The U.S. government has granted \$10 million for the relief effort. According to the NY Times, the U.S. spends \$41 million a day on the war in Vietnam.

Compared with what governments could do, each individual can do very little. Yet everybody's help counts. A dollar spent in the relief action in East Pakistan can save lives. We must act to show that we are concerned with saving lives, despite the selfish attitude of governments all over the world. For a long time to come, help will be needed for the reconstruction of the devastated area.

The CPP steering committee has voted to support the victims of the cyclone in East Pakistan. On Thanksgiving day, some CPP members attended the Macy's parade in NYC, distributing informational leaflets and attempting to collect money for the Pakistanis. If you would like to make a contribution, please sent it to:

Pakistan Relief Fund
c/o Computer People for Peace
Dolphin Center
137 West 14th Street
New York, N.Y. 10011



What did all those men die for?
Through all those perilous hells of war
Doesn't Nixon give a damn?
To hell with Uncle sam.
Will Nixon have an execution?
Or will we have a revolution?
Will Agnew call us snobs
And have Reagan do his dirty jobs?

Yes

Unless

Unless there is peace in Vietnam
We will be wiped out by the cobolt bomb.
Now it's the Chicago Seven
Next it will be the N.Y. 111.
When people tell Nixon where to go
They always have to blow
So they tell us that we're free
How can we be
If we've just begun to see.

Right on
and on

by Bill Eis, age 14

Women, Like Computers, Are Here To Stay

Anyone who thinks modern technology takes a 1970's approach to human needs need only look at trade journal ads, geared toward managerial money. The stratification is overtly pictured. If you are a white female you can use your body to sell merchandise, also to perpetuate the status quo of women as low-paid keypunch operators, etc. UNITE...

Write "Computer Decisions", this month's worst offender. Revolt against NORTEC'S model, posed french-kiss style, applying mascara, headed "Imagine me running a line printer"; MOSLER'S bikini model reading "As far as your computer is concerned Brenda McGuire is just another figure" with a small repeat in a picture of a dressed male tuning her in on his system. Both cater to the most prurient of an all male audience.

Protest DATA ACTION, GE, SINGER SYSTEMS, TEN, etc. who exhibit female models at keypunch boards or posed suggestively with a 3M pack. Check ADVANCED SYSTEMS INC., addressing their ad to "Dear Data Processing Director" with a male seated behind a desk suited for the corporate image!

Demand updated presentations and elimination of this propaganda to change all aspects of our present unjust reality.

We must abort today's unfair conditions-it's legal now.

Ann Rosenberg

P.S. AT&T pushing the good guy cop and data banks to "help enforce law and protect the public" or "How We're Winning the Mini Computer War" by Data General are ads of this type (in case you still haven't recognized that all oppression, including sexism, stems from the same mentality).

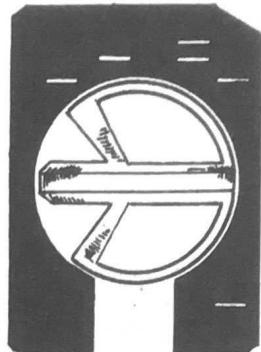
POLITICAL THEORY WORKSHOP

The Political Theory workshop set for itself the ambitious goal of figuring out what kind of world we want to live in and then what steps are necessary in order for us to create such a world. The first part, that of picturing the good world was deceptively easy. We were surprised to find that there was really no argument. The other part, that of how to get to that world, seems to be the whole problem, and that's what we are working on now. Here follows our vision of the world we hope to see.

We want...

1. A substantially raised minimum standard of living guaranteed for all--this includes guaranteed adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education.
2. Government should be as decentralized as possible--decisions should be made by those individuals or groups that are effected by them.
3. People, through education and civic activity, must learn to govern themselves without the help of ruling elites.
4. Education:
 - should inform people so that they are aware of the choices and possibilities affecting their lives,
 - should allow children to develop their abilities rather than forcing on them certain knowledge and skills,
 - should include the free dissemination of technological, economic, and political information--and all knowledge that does not infringe on the privacy of individuals.
5. We must not disturb the earth's ecology--eg. its ability to sustain life at least as good as we know it, and we must find an effective way of preventing the world from overpopulating itself.
6. People have to stop killing each other--hopefully through the peaceful resolution of conflict and the elimination of the causes of conflict.

How would you like to receive bulk copies of Interrupt in your office to distribute to the people you work with? We feel the best way to convince people of our views (and hopefully yours) is through Interrupt and some rapping. Send us your name and office address and we'll put you on a special bulk mailing list. We can also send copies of our leaflets. A contribution to cover mailing costs would be beautiful.



Computer People for Peace
The Dolphin Center
137 West 14th Street
New York, N.Y. 10011

DO YOU REALLY SUPPORT CPP?

You can see from this issue of INTERRUPT, as well as from past issues, the wide spectrum of CPP activities, ranging from important matters within the computer industry to the most vital issues facing the nation. CPP reflects the belief that there is a "human side" in all things, great and small, and that we want to be on that side.

As varied as are CPP activities they do have one thing in common.

They require MONEY!

Money to pay for mailings, leaflets, stamps, rent, meetings, donations - and more. Without money our good intentions will remain just that.

So if you support the "human side", please support CPP with your 1971 membership dues (\$10), and/or a generous contribution.

I'd like to join. Here's my \$10

Please put me on the mailing list

Enclosed is \$ _____ contribution

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____

WORK PHONE _____

Mail to: Computer People for Peace,
Dolphin Center, 137 W. 14th St, NYC 10011

