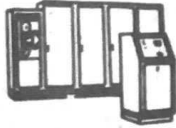


# INTERRUPT



newsletter of  
computer people for peace

NOV , 1971



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## A TALE OF TWO CONFERENCES

### SJCC/May'71/Atlantic City, NJ

It wasn't the best of times -- that's certain. Convention Hall wasn't as busy as the year before. Business was bad -- IBM and Honeywell didn't exhibit. Nonetheless, the Spring Joint Computer Conference carried on its tradition. Lots of backslapping management and sales people. Academics reading boring technical papers to well mannered sleeping audiences. Show bunnies working for a living. Atlantic City's board walk filled with the same old faces, the same old nametags.

CPP was there -- we talked, leafletted, hustled, heckled, held our own sessions ("Computers and the Military" drew about 200 people, one of the better attended sessions at the Spring Joint), and even tried to arrest Jerome Daunt of the FBI, who never showed.

CPP was there -- but our politics created an enormous barrier between us and the other conference attendees. And for good reason. The Joint is an expense account conference. Computer workers can't get the time off nor the money to attend -- only their bosses get to go! And most of those who were there have committed themselves to the Computer Establishment. They have reason to be hostile. They are part of the problem.

### THE OTHER COMPUTER CONFERENCE/Sept'71

The SANERSJCCITW (Second Annual North East Regional Summer Joint Computer Conference In The Woods) was also held in New Jersey. That's where the similarity ends. SANER was for the workers; it was held on the weekend, was cheap and took the position that computer people are people first and technical workers second. Hence, families, friends and children were all welcome.

SANER drew a contingent of about 75, mostly from N.Y. and N.J., although some came from as far away as Detroit. The activities were diverse, including volleyball games, a guerilla theater workshop, a showing of the new Peter Watkin's film, The Gladiators (Our Film Review: Catch the first reel, skip the next two.), and many rap sessions.

At the rap sessions we spent a great deal of time discussing Project IBM (see article elsewhere in this issue), Fall anti-war actions and what CPP could do to organize and aid the unemployed.

**The people at SANER were very together. A certain warmth and unity of purpose was felt. The weekend worked -- we were able to integrate our politics, jobs and life styles.**

**The contrast between the two conferences is obvious. There were no children at Atlantic City, and no Ladies Hospitality suites at SANER. It was a far, far better thing we did...**

## INTERRUPT

NEWSLETTER OF COMPUTER  
PEOPLE FOR PEACE

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Computer People for Peace was started four years ago around the issue of the War in Vietnam. Now, as are many other groups, we are focusing attention on the related problems here at home, particularly the misuse of technology.

The Interrupt Collective is a constantly changing group of people who are responsible to the Steering Committee. We try to put out an issue every two months and welcome articles, clippings, artwork, letters, etc. from all interested people. The collective reviews all submitted material, then reaches a consensus on what is to be included. Signed articles reflect the views of the author, and may not necessarily be in agreement with the collective.

## ☺ PEACE NOTES ☺

### THE PEOPLE'S PEACE TREATY - AGAIN

We have an educational job to do. For while the public has been convinced that the war should end, there is confusion both on what constitutes an end to the war and how it could really end. Bringing combat troops home is not ending the war for the Vietnamese, who continue to suffer under increased levels of bombing and close air and artillery support of U.S. forces, or for us who are paying for it in many ways (15 billion in cash this year is one). Trips to Peking and Moscow cannot usher in an era of Peace, and the Vietnamese, who have been fighting for freedom and independence for more than 30 years, cannot be

bombed into submission short of nuclear warfare. It comes down to a simple proposition: the war will not end unless Nixon negotiates an end to it in Paris.

We must talk to people about this reality. We must make known the Provisional Revolutionary Government's Seven Point Program which meets the Governments two publicly stated objections to complete withdrawal: the POW's and the safety of departing U.S. troops. And we must emphasize that Nixon has yet to respond in any fashion to the Seven Point Program. We have an excellent vehicle for talking to people about a negotiated settlement to the war: the People's Peace Treaty. It can be used to increase people's understanding of the conditions necessary to end the war and to elicit a commitment to work actively for its end.

Why should people listen to us? Because the cost of the war is high: the monetary cost, the economic disasters of inflation and unemployment caused by paying for the war with deficit spending and wasting our resources in Indochina, and more recently, the wage freeze and heroin addiction among G.I.'s. Most of all, because of the destruction we are visiting on a people who are not even a threat to us.

Why isn't the task hopeless? Because we are not pitifully weak and Nixon is vulnerable. The fact of troop withdrawals is a concession to public opinion as the Pentagon Papers show, and not a strategy of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The reduction of U.S. casualties to nearly zero is a reflection of the fact that G.I.'s are refusing to risk their lives for a cause they know to be worthless and even criminal. Nixon is vulnerable because he can't have the POW's back without negotiating at Paris, he **can't batter the Vietnamese into suing for peace**, and he can't end inflation and reduce unemployment while squandering money and resources in Indochina. Most of all, Nixon is vulnerable because he must stand for re-election facing a populace that is overwhelmingly against the war. But his vulnerability depends on our ability to carry these issues to the American people. We must do this or face the spectre outlined in 1984 of permanent war carried out by remote control against people we don't know and can't see.

**Andy Schoene**

# PROJECT IBM

Computer People for Peace announces a long-range project of epic proportions and indefinite duration: PROJECT IBM. This project, which grew out of discussion at SANERSJCCITW and which is now in the planning stage, will have two major aspects: theory and action. On the theoretical side, we expect to have a task force of people working on a systems analysis of the computer industry (i.e. IBM and a few minor companies), especially in the context of the American business system. This alone will take a concentrated effort, involving library research, interviews, newspaper clippings (we have already started a file), and serious reviewing of the economic literature, such as Fortune.

The action program, which will be intimately tied to the more theoretical aspects, will take whatever forms are appropriate: demonstrations, letter writing, organizing, public lectures, newsletters, etc. We must make ourselves felt not only by people, but by the company as well. Our actions, of course, must be tied to the workers at IBM. One main goal will be to increase the workers' awareness of what their company is doing, and of their own roles. We must also attack the current trade talk about "professionalism", which is nothing more than a corporate paternalistic alternative to real unionism, and is aimed at alienating the more highly skilled technocrats from the less trained ones.

Why IBM? The International Business Machines Corporation is the supreme symbol of corporate usurpation of human values. It is the world's largest non-unionized company. While projecting the nominal liberal image by funding "pure" research in universities, it is one of the best examples of monopolistic enterprise in the country, hogging over 80% of the field. As a multinational corporation (over 50% of its business is now out of the U.S.), it has an intimate stake in setting U.S. foreign policy, and its executives have long been active in diplomatic circles.

Here are some points of attack which will form the core of the project:

1. An attack on racism and sexism, which IBM practices in exemplary fashion. For instance, IBM is doing the systems for the South African photo-identification system, which will result in even further control of the oppressed black population. At home,

IBM's employment practice is geared to a profile of the white-middle-class businessman.

2. Suppression of dissent within and without the company is well-known but requires documentation and exposure. A speaker at one of our SJCC sessions told of harassment and arrest when he tried to leaflet one IBM plant.

3. Remember the war? IBM does, to the tune of untold millions of dollars in war profits, at the expense of the lives of American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians. The electronic battle field is only one facet of their war operation. Others need to be explored.

4. RCA has recently folded its computer division, laying off ten thousand workers. This, above all, is the prototype of the IBM business technique, and derives directly from the senior Watson's passion for undercutting rivals and driving competitors out of business (nothing like good old free enterprise, eh Nixon?).

Needless to say, this undertaking will not be entirely objective. By placing IBM in the context of the present economic system, we expect to show how big business, industry and government, through their current combined political power structure, are incompatible with human needs, and in particular are destructive to our minds, bodies and environments. By studying how the giant corporations have usurped the rights and privileges which formerly belonged to people, we hope to awaken in ourselves and others the consciousness and desire to band together to recapture the forces that control our lives.

Those interested in contributing case histories, anecdotes, clippings, or in participating in other phases of the project are invited to contact CPP.



# UNEMPLOYMENT: PHASE 2

NEW YORK. While the rate of unemployment in the nation climbed almost one percent for professional and technical workers, from 2.5% in July 1970 to 3.4% July 1971, its effects seem to be even more devastating here. "We should have seen it coming" said one currently unemployed CPP member, "when engineers and technicians began to get it in Boston. But somehow we thought we were different, you know, computers were untouchable; now it's too late to do anything."

An employment agent, who asked to have her name withheld,\* stated that she thought the situation worsened about November of last year, "but you tend not to realize it when it is happening." She went on to say that there were still jobs on the market, but the openings were very specific - usually big OS houses such as banks, insurance companies, and brokerage. "It used to be they would hire anyone with potential who seemed bright, but now they can afford to demand exact skills like 3 years OS Cobol and BAL in cage and margin operation" she said. Another area employment agent when asked what type of person could get hired in this market, responded that "a very stable person, short hair certainly, who had a degree and looked like they'd be promotable". He went on to add that the situation allowed companies to straighten out their image and hire only the standard "corporate type".

\* Interrupt, more so than straight news reporting, has a problem in revealing the names of its sources. One of the employment agents interviewed for this story told us that "...the FBI has a policy of sending unsolicited letters to employers informing them when a CPP person has been added to the staff. I know this for a fact," she added, "although, to my knowledge, no one has been fired so far because of it." For this reason, as well as harassment of CPP L.A. people mentioned elsewhere in this issue, we have chosen to exclude the names of people except where it is absolutely necessary.

As for who the situation effected the most, all employment agents interviewed agreed that minorities were hardest hit. One agent stated that "women, particularly in promotable positions like Project Leaders, did not have a chance on the market". This fits in with the overall image of hiring the corporate type who by definition has always been a man. The U.S. Dept. of Labor statistics show that while the professional and technical unemployment rate was 3.4% last July, it was 4.1% for women. Another group which is finding it hard to successfully pound the pavements is the "older" programmers, who as one agent put it "in the computer field 'older' means people in their forties."

PROGRAMMER-ANALYSTS  
A man's job should look the way a man should.  
**STRONG & HEALTHY**  
If you're alling with your present job-may we suggest a cure?  
Meet with us. We can offer a sound position to the Programmer Analyst with a min. of 2 yrs exp. COBOL &/or BAL, OS.

PROGRAMMER/ANALYSTS  
When Is A Progrmr Not A Programmer?  
When he wastes his time

PROGRAMMERS PROG ANALYST  
**STOP!**

PROGRAMMER  
#2 MAN  
S.I.L.S.I.K.  
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB, CHANCES ARE, YOU'RE WASTING A LOT OF TIME

The combination of a downturn in business and the availability of talented "cheap" people on the employment market has led many companies to do housecleaning. "I've known banks where supervisors have been told to get rid of 15% of their people" one agent stated. "Sometimes this is done on the basis of seniority, sometimes talent, and sometimes whether or not the people fit in". It was felt that there aren't any "new" jobs on the market, but only those openings created by housecleaning. Thus the handful of IBM OS people with commercial experience, who already have jobs are able to hop from one vacated position to another, only at the expense of the unemployed.



No company admits that they are house-cleaning, but "letting go" has become a professional euphemism for "fired". "There are GE people still walking around New York" stated one employment agent, "as a result of the merger with Honeywell. They were certainly laid off, but few care to think about it. In addition, IBM's version of laying off consists of asking people to transfer to Oshkosh, but it's all the same thing." Another agent added that "I have one company which started making people work 6 days a week, with no overtime, of course. This really hits the women so they leave and join the crowded job market".

Another problem which is expected to affect the situation, although not for a while yet, is the dearth of current trainees. The vice president of a consulting company recently complained that "it used to be that IBM would train several thousand people a year, now they haven't hired any trainees in almost two years -- we're going to have one hell of a gap in junior to middle level programmers soon."

Four employment agents in the area, representing varying size firms, were asked to discuss the prospects of an upturn in hiring. The picture they painted was grim. The consensus expressed was that most companies were now learning to get along with fewer people, so they doubted that the boom days would ever return. "Instead of hiring a programmer and a systems analyst" said one, "they have found that they can get along with one jack-of-all-trades; in fact they'll hire this person for \$1,000 less than they were making last year".

The saga of RCA is a story in itself. No one knows for sure what will happen, but it's a pretty good guess that New York alone has several hundred ex-RCA people on the market, and companies don't even want to see them because they have more than they can handle of IBM OS experts", a frustrated employment agent offered.

Unemployment among "professionals" until recently has been a "not to be discussed" topic. Many unemployed people interviewed were reluctant to talk about it, and still fewer seemed to be collecting unemployment benefits. Although U.S. Dept. of Labor statistics for July showed a 3.4% rate, this figure reflects the number of people collecting unemployment benefits. The actual number may be quite a bit higher. A CPP member who has been unemployed for nine months summed it all up when she said "Unfortunately, computer people still want to think of themselves as professionals even when it means not collecting unemployment".

Joan Dublin

## WARFARE ANALYSIS DIRECTOR

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Located at the Naval Underwater Systems Center, Newport, Rhode Island, the Head, Warfare Analysis Department will direct and conduct in-depth studies and analyses of current and future warfare situations. Studies and analyses considering such factors as potential threats, strategic objectives, political, social, economic and technological forecasts, and expected weapons systems capabilities will provide the basis for establishment of meaningful systems requirements for the fleet and thus provide guidance for the research and development program of the Center.

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# WHA... WHAT'S HAPPENING

PROFESSIONALS or WORKERS? In March, 1971, a U.S. Court of Appeals, deciding in favor of the National Labor Relations Board and against Westinghouse, judged programmers, systems and procedures analysts to be "technical" rather than "professional" employees.

The court defined professional employees as those whose work is predominantly intellectual in character. The computer staff, the court found, did not have or need a professional "measure of skill, knowledge, and independent exercise of judgement".  
\*\*\*\*Law Journal, March 31, 1971

★ ★ ★

FOR POLICE WATCHERS: At the SJCC, May, 1971, one of the panelists was a Lt. Cawley of the NYPD. He talked glowingly of Project SPRINT, which as head of NYPD systems he was responsible for developing. SPRINT is currently used only to dispatch patrol cars, but plans for the system include extensive population and riot control capabilities. (See NARMIC's Bringing It All Back Home, and Sol Yurick's novel, The Bag.)

Several months later Cawley was promoted to be head of the Harlem Division. A computer specialist in Harlem!?! And most recently, Cawley was advanced, over more than 70 senior officers, to the number 2 uniformed job on the force. His rapid rise seems to us to indicate that the New York Police Department will be relying a lot on computerization. Big Brother is watching.

★ ★ ★

REMOTE SURVEILLANCE of city streets is recommended by a panel of the National Academy of Engineering. The study suggests that for a cost of \$2.1 million the 71st police precinct in New York could be monitored. In addition they urge that Connecticut set up a pilot project to actually begin long range surveillance.

\*\*\*\*Datamation Aug.1, 1971

George, how many years to 1984 did you say it was?????

★ ★ ★

BOSS IS SUED: The New York City Police Intelligence Division--formerly the Bureau of Special Services (BOSS)--is being sued to open its files to the public.

Members of CPP and others involved in the suit hope that the case will restrain the secret police activities of the NYPD. The complaint maintains that the infiltration, provocation, and surveillance of radical groups by the Intelligence Division inhibits political dissent and is therefore a curtailment of freedom of speech.

★ ★ ★

SOUTH AFRICA has a new business called Computicket. Computer Sciences South Africa, using IBM equipment is setting up a network of ticket selling services. "The firm is 51% owned by Anglo-American, a holding organization and also the largest company in SA."

\*\*\*\*Computerworld Oct.13, 1971

Is there no honor among thieves?????

★ ★ ★

FOREIGN MARKETS for EDP are growing twice as fast as the US market, the US Dept. of Commerce reported recently. "Sales and leases of EDP equipment to countries of the free world are expected to reach \$6 billion in 1973." To aid American companies in exploiting this market the Commerce Dept's Bureau of International Commerce (BIC) offers assistance.

\*\*\*\*Computerworld Oct.13, 1971

Who said Imperialism is dead?????

★ ★ ★

HOSPITAL computer systems are expected to grow 80% over the next 5 years. The value of these systems should be about \$160 million by 1975, "the growth is expected in the areas of laboratory data systems, electrocardiograph analysis, automated patient history systems, and hospital communications systems...."

\*\*\*\*Computerworld Aug 25, 1971

So where does the patient fit in?????

# LAYOFF OR LAYETTE ?

I was a division manager for International Systems Associates in NYC. I took maternity leave for 10 weeks and returned to my job in November. At first the officers of the company expressed surprise at seeing me. Even though I had called my boss to say I was returning as scheduled they really did not expect me. They tried the soft tack: "We don't have work now, you understand. We're really like a family here and you can see our position. The company is really in trouble; we're laying everyone off. Go home and take care of your baby and we'll give you a call soon". As I stayed stubborn, they turned harder. And finally they told me I no longer had a job I went directly to see a lawyer. He wrote a firm, polite letter to them. No reply. My lawyer directed me to the State Division of Human Rights; he said I did not need his help.

The Division of Human Rights was a surprise. No red tape, no long wait; just pleasant, competent people. A lawyer would have been a hindrance. A worker listened to my case and helped me phrase a formal complaint. It was typed as I waited; I signed it and they mailed it out - all in the space of a couple of hours. The hearing took place within a couple of weeks and the decision was sent out shortly after that.

Unfortunately, the company was failing and the best I could expect was just layoff pay equal to what others received and pay for the 'black Monday'. This I got. The whole episode cost me subway fare and a few hours. If I felt the hearing did not treat me fairly, I could have gone to court to appeal or I could have sued the company.

The law states that women must not be discriminated against. This is at least interpreted to mean that an employer must give maternity leave. Here's how to protect yourself - at least in NY, though other states have similar laws.

1. Inform your employer (in writing) relatively early in your pregnancy that you intend to take leave; when and how long.
2. Get your doctor's permission to work during your pregnancy and to return to work.

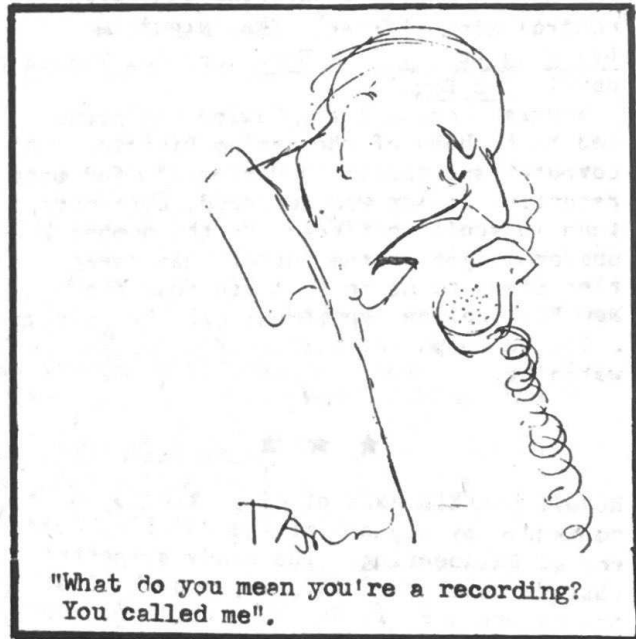
3. Do not take too long a leave, probably six months maximum.

4. Confirm your return to work before you show up.

5. Be ready to prove you did your job satisfactorily (a promotion, a raise, a back-patting memo, or witnesses).

Of course, these are just guidelines. You can always file a complaint. What can you expect to gain? If your company is in good shape and did discriminate, you can expect to receive your job back and pay for the weeks you lost after you tried to return to work. In practice, a company will try to 'buy you off' rather than take you back.

What did I accomplish? Well, I felt better. And by talking to people maybe I woke a few of them up. But the company I worked for will be less likely to hire a woman for a responsible job. And I cut myself off from rehire if they survive hard times



# USES, ABUSES OR

We have been debating in Interrupt and in CPP meetings for some time on the question: "Are there any good uses of the computer?" The following is a discussion with several CPP members on this question. While we do not feel that this discussion resolves any issues, we feel that it is valuable in defining the problem.

Bob: Are there any good uses of the computer today?

Nancy: Whether there are currently good uses of computers depends on your politics, not on the computer and its applications. For those of you who KNOW there are no good uses, there aren't - stop reading here. But if you hate your job at the insurance company and aren't turned on by "exciting" job offers, you probably will find some good, or even GOOD, uses of the computer in categories like medicine, environment and data processing "for the people", for good organizations and groups.

Bob: Do you see any good uses, Joan?

Joan: Basically I think it comes down to three categories of uses: Research -- statistical kinds of uses. We need to gather some kinds of data, the question is what kind and for what. There is model building, and here again it is a question of what you are building a model of. Optimizing mass transit flow is one possibility. A third use is mailing lists. CPP has information that we want to get out and a computer is beautiful for generating mailing lists cheaply and easily.

Bob: What specific uses do you think are good?

Nancy: Uses like a kidney registry to match available kidneys and recipients; a program to provide a nutritional analysis of a patient's diet as part of the tests normally performed at a checkup, and many other similar types of systems which are still, unfortunately, the exception rather than the rule. Or, a use of computers to study the natural ecological patterns of the environment in order to determine a control for the later study of the impact of radiation on the environment. Or managing a food co-op.

Bob: Well, what would you have against computer technology since it is being used for some good things?

Paul: Well, yes it is being used for some good things, I wouldn't argue with that, but in a report I remember back in 1968 on government uses, 90% of all government computers were in the areas of defense, atomic energy and space, whereas the remaining 10% or less were spread out over health, education, and welfare. It's quite evident from this that the government feels that the major uses it can make of its computers are to aid the very institutions we're opposed to.

Bob: What about non-governmental uses?

Paul: Every corporation uses computers to further its own needs. I think it is very clear that in society as it is constructed now, the majority of uses will be for making profit. And I think that this is directly opposed to the service of the public. This is a primary issue.

Bob: Why do you feel that making profits is directly opposed to the service of the  
8 people?



# EXCUSES

## AN INTERVIEW

Paul: The primary thing we're interested in is humane and beneficial uses. Therefore to us profit has to be secondary. But if you look at how business functions, what business considers most important, it's got to be making money, and they're going to make it any way they can - thereby keeping the interests of the people secondary. In very rare instances it does happen that making profit also serves the people, but in the majority of cases we can see that this is clearly not the case.

Joan: I think that there are two basic reasons why profits conflict with the needs of the people. The first is availability. There are a few reasonably good medical diagnostic systems being developed now, but if one company develops it they don't make it available to others without selling it. If you're going to develop a good diagnostic system, you have to make it available to people, you can't sell it.

The second reason is that profits guide what investors think is important, not necessarily what people need. Again the health system could serve as an example. Kidney data banks are being developed, this is fine. But it aids only a few people. What we need is medical care which reaches everyone. We all recognize this, but the big money - the banks, insurance companies - aren't ready to invest in this. Their decisions are based on risk factors, not health factors. It adds another layer to society; there are the needs of the people, and then there are the needs of the people who make money.

Bob: Would it be good to keep track of a person from the time they are born, and keep their health records on computer files so that any doctor would have access to it in an instant?

Joan: I don't agree at all. Given the society that we have now, I don't know what it would be used for. It could, for example, keep a person from getting a job.

Bob: Getting off health, there are some people who say that you couldn't have our present day structure of air transportation without computers guiding the planes. What do you think about that?

Paul: That's true. There are many areas where the computer is necessary, but basically if we look at it in terms of the society as a whole the computer can be used in much more effective ways for the good of the majority of the people. After all, I don't think that computers are inherently wrong.

Nancy: In a socialist society, what do you think would be the most beneficial use of computers?

Paul: I'm glad you asked that question. If we let our minds wander, we could have a very good free national health system, we could have a computer in every home for voting purposes. But most important, I think, is the use of the computer to help eliminate human drudgery. Why not get rid of unnecessary work? We now have the economic capacity to achieve this. But in order to do so we have to eliminate the work ethic, the whole Conscientiousness I thing. It is no longer needed. Don't forget that in all societies up until now, including socialist ones, the society had to place a very high value on working in order to eat. We are in a position now to feed, clothe and house ourselves, with very little effort. Why not use automation to accomplish this?

Bob: Why couldn't we eliminate drudgery under capitalism?

cont'd next page 9

Paul: There is a basic contradiction in the computer industry now, and it is simply that workers throughout the economy must be opposed to automation because their jobs and livelihood are at stake. It is to management's advantage to replace workers with computers. It is the workers who are opposed, and rightfully so, to the machinery which could eliminate drudgery. Obviously this contradiction can't be resolved until we have a method which guarantees everyone a basic living.

Laird: It is not just the workers. Profits require the work ethic. Profits require consumption; whether private or military. Consumption requires production which requires work, mostly drudgery, which in turn supplies the income for the consumption that creates profits. This vicious cycle can only be broken under socialism.

Nancy: How about those who say that they don't want computers even in a socialist society?

Joan: I agree with that. I think that regardless of the society, whether it is capitalist or socialist, computers aid centralization, they aid bigness and they aid bureaucracy. They'll always be controlled in the hands of a few because not everyone is going to understand the technology, and there is no way to keep the technology from running away from us. And because they will be controlled by a few, there will always be that sense of mystification.

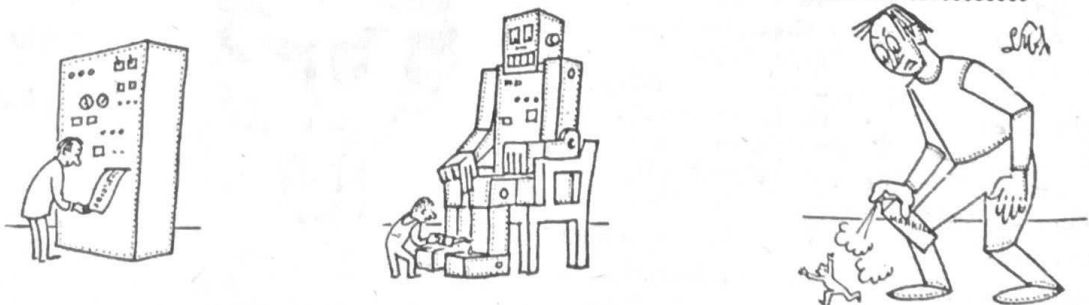
Laird: I disagree. I think that in a people's state, with priorities controlled by the people, there would be uses for the computer. There would be fewer uses than we have today because that state would emphasize decentralization, but I believe that technology can be controlled by the people. Without it, we would be thrown back to a pre-industrial existence and lose the opportunity to eliminate drudgery and the struggle for existence.

Bob: Can't you see a different society in which these problems could be minimized and the good emphasized?

Joan: No, because I think that computers basically help us do things faster, and in doing so they make for a more centralized and less humane society. Let's face it, they are impersonal. They process large volumes of information very fast, and that's got to be impersonal.

They also require a large capital investment, and no matter what type of society you have you will always have the trade-off as to whether that investment is necessary, or is it better to use that money more directly for other purposes. An investment in a piece of capital equipment, to me, is never as valuable as giving the money directly to the people.

Paul: Also, this puts us in the position of relying on a small group of technologists for understanding what is going on. Computers will never be demystified for the masses because of their complexity. But that doesn't mean I think we can throw them all out - they're obviously here to stay and it's our job to make them serve us all.



# BAD MARX AT THE OFFICE

Opinion by JOSEPH SCOTT

After nearly eight years as a systems analyst and programmer, I feel that time is running out. I stepped off the career ladder a couple of years ago and gave up trying to find an answer to being alienated by meaningless work in corporate bureaucracies. Instead I attempted to reorganize my time spent in the workplace around my values instead of those of the System (my employer). Workplace organizing, around the war, social issues, worker's consciousness, became the purpose for working and not just an activity to be carried on while at work. After over a year of trying to talk to computer workers about these issues, move them to action, to a leftist analysis of society, I feel that it is largely a failure, partly mine, partly a hopeless task at this time.

A major reason for the failure is that I have not been able to relate to my co-workers in terms of their values, their roles and their consciousness. They accept the hegemony of the Corporate State over their lives; they accept the philosophy of profit motivation, bureaucratic authority and organization, induced consumerism and careerism. My rejection of these values as well as the role of computer "professional" removes most of the grounds of possible communication.

My role has been different than that of, for example, a radical teacher who believes in the social value of education but who sees that the organization of the educational system and the society it serves subverts those values. The teacher can talk to other teachers about working conditions, educational policies, while still relating to them in identifying with the shared goal of educating people and while relating to the students in a human way. It is hard for most people to relate to computers in a human way. It is hard for a radical to relate as a peer to workers who accept the values of the Corporate State and think of themselves as "professionals" working in it.

A second, more objective reason for the failure of my efforts is that there is not now a potential for developing a worker's consciousness, a worker's unity, among computer workers. Until recently, working conditions for programmers and systems people have been excellent. In good days, computer people could afford occasional risks; there was always a higher

paying job around the corner. With the coming of hard times in the computer field, these conditions have changed. People are too insecure to respond to anything except keeping their jobs. As a result, there is less opportunity now for organizing in the field than there was during the boom.

Union organizing has failed because the individualism of the boom days has carried over as a climate of competition rather than cooperation. People that survive a mass layoff breathe a sigh of relief instead of organizing to protect their jobs. Professionalism, a consciousness that goes with individualism, high pay and which helps compensate for meaningless work, is still very common. In addition, what few "good" jobs (socially useful) there were during the boom were in marginal areas of the economy and have now been cut back. To attempt to talk to people in the computer field about the issue of doing socially useful work, therefore, really amounts to telling them to leave the jobs that they do have at a time when there are no other jobs, in or out of the computer field.

Radicals organizing in other fields have found ways to respond to their environments. Teachers, lawyers, medical people, share commitments to the work they do, to the people they are supposed to be serving, with the co-workers they are trying to relate to. They can relate to their co-workers around issues like the failure of their "professions" to serve people in the way they could while still sharing a commitment to that service. This identification provides a base for analyzing the social causes of the contradictions in their fields.

Continued on page 13



JOIN CPP  
NOW  
OR ELSE!

# letters . . . . . letters . . . . . letters

Dear friends,

I am writing in regards to a problem in our local research efforts that you might be able to help with. As you know, Hawaii's central location makes it a primary control center for both the military and corporate expansions in Southeast Asia and the Pacific area. However, politically and socially the state is still a colony. The movement here is small, and thus far plagued with a lack of research on corporate activities here

Control Data is one of a number of corporations with major offices here. Some of the others are Computer Sciences Corp., System Development Corp., G.E.-TEMCO, and Avco-Everett Research Laboratories. Because the primary testing site for the ABM is on Kwajalein, much of their local work is related to the missile program. Also, CDC is deeply involved in the application and development of software to the pacification of Vietnam, Thailand and Laos.

I am enclosing \$3 for your booklets The Technological Warlords, Data Banks, and Health. I would also be very interested in any other material relevant to these companies that did not get included in your booklets, especially anything on Honeywell's activities that might get administered through their local office.

Thanks for your help.

Peace,

Ian Y. Lind, Hawaii

(Please send replies through CPP)

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Sirs:

Your organization interests me. I have my Masters Degree in Computer Science and am working for a computer-related organization that has labeled your group as undesirable. Please send me your side of the story.

Sincerely,

S.N.

(CPP is not a "Sir". We hope readers will observe this and use non-sexist salutations. Name withheld for protection. We would like to know what your organization is. For our side, read within these pages.)

\*\*\*\*\*

If you are a KEYPUNCH OPERATOR or a COBOL PROGRAMMER, the farm workers need your help.

We are struggling to build a union -- and a movement. Because we are poor, we cannot afford to hire highly-paid staff people to help relieve us of the staggering paperwork that a growing union processes. Some data processing professionals have already volunteered and have designed a system for us. We are now attempting to implement it. To do so, we need experienced keypunch operators who would be willing to donate some of their time and skills either in the area where they live or in Delano, and COBOL programmers who would be willing to see this project through to completion for a subsistence wage.

If you can help us, please contact me at P.O. Box 130, Delano, Cal. 93215.

VIVA LA CAUSA!!!

Dave Smith

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi Computer People!

I'm not a computer person, not yet anyway. Anything that can be used for fucked up things like police, military, industrialization, can also be used for good things like knowledge at your finger tips, independent scientific research, a damn good stereo system - you name it and it could be done with computers. Computers are coming to be a very basic part of this world. The only thing that can hurt you is the unknown. (??) For most people, me, computers are a shadowy image of giant machines. I want to learn how to work them, fix them and build them. Is there anything going on towards instructing people on uses and abuses of computers? Can you help me out on the above? Schools that have such knowledge are too much of a drag for me and besides I like learning on my own. Old textbooks, blueprints, information toward repair and design would be appreciated. Also I would like to get involved with forming a new technology with aware people. Perhaps forming a co-op corp. with its goals being raising people up out of the dark ages we're in now. A new world is coming and it's up to everyone to make it what they want. What do you want?

Write please.

David Wessel

# BIG BROTHER

This information on the FBI data bank, the NCIC, comes directly from Hoover's testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, March 17, 1971.

●The critical data files are Wanted Persons- 85,000 people - and Criminal History, NCHS, planned for mid '72 to grow at 750,000 records/month to 8-19 megapersons.

●The NCIC now serves over 4,000 local law agencies. This grows steadily. Since the testimony, Indiana and No. Carolina joined the NCIC network.

●Concerning accuracy, updating controls, uniform procedures...each local agency is responsible for 'its' data. The FBI does not impose centralized controls. By relying on local control the system is subject to variations in local law and law practice.

●People get on the Wanted file for 'extraditable' offences. They get on the NCHS if arrested for 'serious' crimes. There is no uniform meaning of 'serious'. From the testimony: "The computerized data should show complete arrest and conviction information, including arrests without disposition shown". Thus, not only will acquitted people be on file, but also those arrested by error or whose cases were thrown out. Testimony indicates that the FBI has no intention of voluntarily changing this.

●The FBI states: "No statute or court decision requires the purging of a criminal's record based solely on the passage of time". Thus, no purging.

●Access to the data bank is incredibly broad. It includes "law enforcement and other governmental agencies, railroad police, national banks, member banks of the Federal Reserve system and banking institutions which are federally insured". The September Civil Liberties reports on two cases pertaining to current manual records. Yes - it exists; just not yet automated. Banks were ruled out in D.C., in in California.

●Finally, the FBI has "no objection" to a law to give "a person, upon proving his identification by fingerprints ..the right to view his record on a challenge of accuracy". Of course, no such law exists.

●For more on this, send 50¢ for CPP's booklet Data Banks, Privacy and Repression.



BAD MARX continued from page 11

In addition, within all these fields there is growing success with the development of alternate careers; free schools, law communes, neighborhood medical centers. The growth of alternate professions gives a radical someplace to bring people after reaching them, something to do short of leaving the field entirely. There are no possibilities today for alternate careers in the computer field because computers serve corporations and bureaucracies, not people. The immense capital commitment involved in data processing and the institutional size required to utilize computers lead to the fact that even the few computer uses that could directly benefit people are developed by corporate and state bureaucracies and run for profits, not service to the people.

So, it does not work to try to relate to programmers who have fought their way into a decent salary by night school and rising out of clerical jobs, and who have to fight technological change and new graduates who are cheaper for companies to hire, by talking to them about the meaninglessness of the work they are doing. It does not work to try to organize a union when they see the corporation as beneficent and their co-workers as competitors. They laugh in your face, and with good reason. Under these conditions, it seems to me that radical organizing in the computer field is simply impractical at this time. And it is therefore very painful to have a job in the field.

# NATIONAL REPORT

Recently we received a letter from a CPP member in Los Angeles who told us about security clearance problems he was having. Although he protested that he had the right to free association of membership (including CPP), he was called in for a new security clearance hearing, the result of which is still up in the air. Like many members across the country, he felt it necessary to have security clearance in order to hold a job.

He writes that "two more people have recently been contacted by investigators --- seems that anyone with any contact with CPP is suspect. Apparently people working on the Neclac project in St. Louis had similar troubles."



During the course of his security hearing he was asked several questions about CPP, including attempts to name names.

"The government is apparently harassing anyone who has a clearance and contact with CPP. It seems that CPP is under investigation and we are being used by the government as informers".

A group of people in LA are now trying to fight this government harassment in the hope of exposing the security system. They have contacted the ACLU and have prepared a pamphlet on the system. If you have been hit by the attempt to classify CPP as a "subversive" organization, or can help the group in any way, write to:

LA Scientists and Engineers for Social and Political Action (SESPA)  
P.O. Box 1263  
Venice, California 90291

A CPP chapter is being formed in the Detroit area. For time and place of meetings call Andy Schoene at 831-5700 (rm 608) or Jose Santiago at 291-7681.

To find out what's happening with local CPP groups or to help establish one, get in touch with our local contact.

**Boston:** Terry Winograd  
119 Harvard Street  
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

**Chicago:** Andrew Friedland  
1132 Drummond Place  
Chicago, Ill. 60614

**Detroit:** Andy Schoene  
5440 Cass Avenue, #608  
Detroit, Mich. 48202

**Houston:** Ken Thomson  
3320-A Norfolk  
Houston, Texas 77006

**Los Angeles:** Ken Zeidman  
2342 Fenmar  
Venice, Ca. 90291

**Philadelphia:** Don Stone  
1125 Rodman St.  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19147

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

**San Francisco:** Sheldon Elish  
11 Ridgewood Avenue  
San Francisco, Ca. 94112

**Wash., D.C.:** Sidney Kulick  
1316 Fenwick Lane  
Silver Springs, Md. 20910

**Northern N.J.:** Michael L. Kuras  
M-13, 100 Vail Road  
Parsippany, N.J. 07054

**Southern Fla.:** John Delaney  
c/o Chapbook  
P.O. Box 319  
Coconut Grove, Fla. 33133

# SALE!

WANT INFORMATIVE READING ABOUT  
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CPP has researched and published 3 booklets  
on the military, health care, and data banks,  
offering a wealth of fact and opinion. Order  
your set now for only \$2. New members join-  
ing for 1972 will receive the set free!

TO ORDER: USE COUPON ON BACK PAGE.



## ATTICA MEMORIAL FUND

Last Year, C.P.P.'s Squire Committee raised bail for Clark Squire, a programmer and Black Panther. Squire was found innocent and the bail was never used. The majority of Squire's supporters indicated that they did not want their money returned, but felt there was a need for a permanent fund to be used on behalf of other political prisoners.

In response to this need an independent organization, the Attica Memorial Fund, has been formed. The fund will administer unused monies from the now disbanded Squire Committee and will seek additional funds. The money will be used in various areas including bail, legal defense, aid to ex-prisoners, aid to prisoner organizations and aid to prisoners' families.

For further information contact:

Robert Weisburd  
291 Sterling Place  
Brooklyn N.Y. 11238  
212-783-7915

## Current Contracts--DMS Market Intelligence Reports

IBM, Owego, N. Y.:

-hardware for "airborne ASW computers, ballistic missile hardened guidance computer systems; on-board data adapter for V/STOL applications".

RCA, Burlington, Mass:

-hardware for "SAC airborne data automation system; variable instruction computer."  
Will RCA honor its military commitment?

Computer Sciences Corp., Silver Springs, Md:

-software for "design of pre-NAPALM system".

Systems Development Corp., Santa Monica, Ca:

-software for "construction and maintenance of database files;...studies to support Commander ASW forces for Atlantic Fleet;...use of computers for advanced system human factors task data..."

# CPP NEEDS YOU

CPP, now in existence for almost four years, is the only organization in the computer field that stands for peace, equality and civil liberties for all people--and for the use of computers and technology to help achieve these goals. WHERE THE MONEY GOES:

To publish INTERRUPT. Every issue costs over \$400 to print and to mail to our members and friends in the U.S. and abroad.

To hold "SANER" conferences for members and friends.

To publicize and hold public meetings on computer uses and misuses.

To rent office/meeting space--\$60 monthly.

To research and print, at considerable expense, in-depth booklets on computer technology in war, data banks, and health.

To aid and cooperate with the nationwide movements against the war in Vietnam, and for equal rights for all people.

In order to be active, CPP needs you! Won't you pay your 1972 dues now? Dues are still only \$10! If you can, send more to help cover mailing, rent and other expenses. This year we are asking those of you who can afford it to pledge a monthly contribution to help put CPP on a sound financial basis.

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

Please put me on the mailing list.

Please send me the booklets:

\_\_\_ copies of Data Banks @ 50¢

\_\_\_ copies of Health @ 50¢

\_\_\_ copies of Technological Warlords @ \$1.

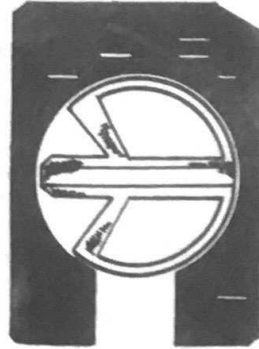
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