

# The Democratic Communique

COMPLIMENTARY

A Publication of the Union for Democratic Communications

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## Information blackout

### Wall Street firm Yellow Dogs labor

Dun & Bradstreet, a major Wall Street credit-rating firm, may have violated several labor laws and civil rights statutes when it imposed the computer-age equivalent of a yellow-dog contract on a middleman company that sells financial data to several labor unions.

The AFL-CIO and several affiliates had been obtaining data on corporations that are not publicly owned by accessing Dun & Bradstreet's Financial Records through Dialogue Information Services, a data base supplier.

Unions pay for access to financial reports, which often are useful in preparing for collective bargaining, but Dun & Bradstreet apparently has decided that employers do not want that information going to unions. The upshot is that Dun & Bradstreet now asserts it has a right to be "selective" in choosing its customers.

This type of information lockout is comparable yellow-dog contract, illegal since 1932, requires employees to promise that will not engage in union activities or will join a union, according to the AFL-CIO.

But now Dun & Bradstreet insists that Dialogue Information Services black list the unions by not allowing them access to financial information.

#### Unauthorized Notices Received

The first to find out about the new restriction was William Wilkinson, librarian for the State, County and Municipal Employees Union. Wilkinson tried to access the Dun & Bradstreet's Financial Records file through Dialogue Information Services, but received an "unauthorized file" response on his computer.

Wilkinson then called Ellen Newton, librarian for the Union of Food & Commercial Workers, who tried to access the same financial data base and received the same denial message.

They then called Dialogue and received a bureaucratic run-around until finally an official reported that the company was acting on instructions from Dun & Bradstreet to deny access to 240 users, including all trade unions.

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THE BIG CHILL. Frosty joins the Movement and not only is in the vanguard politically speaking, but also is setting new fashion trends with his UDC t-shirt and his Inspector Clouseau hat. Frosty's activism is having a snowball effect and the Peace Movement seems to be growing in numbers and sophistication. For related stories on the Peace Movement, see p. 3.

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# Conferences

## UDC to participate in IAMCR meeting in Barcelona

The 16th Conference and General Assembly of the International Association for Mass Communication Research's in Barcelona, Spain, July 24-29, will attract the largest attendance ever, according to President James Hallaron.

Federico Mayor, the new Director General of UNESCO, is expected to attend the conference's opening ceremony. The UDC is organizing a working session and a reception for the conference.

Registration information has already been sent to IAMCR members; anyone wishing information should write to the address below.

Registration fees (including conference registration, single-room accommodations and all meals) are: 38,4000 pesetas (approx \$300) for members, and 44,450 pesetas (approx 350) for non-members or single room. Fees must be paid in pesetas – by Feb. 28 (to avoid late charges).

For information, write: Peggy Gray, Centre for Mass Comm Research, Univ. of Leicester, 104 Regent Rd., Leicester, LE1 7LT, England.

There is a movement toward the UDC becoming an organizational member of the IAMCR. This issue will be discussed at the Ottawa conference during the General Membership meeting, but any thoughts on the proposal will be appreciated before Ottawa. Send to Eileen Meehan, University of Iowa, or Janet Wasko, University of Oregon. ∞

## BFI Plans Third International TV Conference

The Third International Television Studies Conference, sponsored by the British Film Institute, will be at the University of London Institute of Education, July 10-11. The conference is a forum for interdisciplinary research, first organized in 1984.

The 1988 conference will again adopt a broad-based approach. Conference organizers are interested in exploring a wide range of themes in the field of television studies, although the emphasis will be on changing European television markets, media management and organization, ethnicity and identity, and the audiovisual generation.

If you are interested in presenting a paper, an Abstract Proposal Form is requested by Jan. 11. Authors of papers selected will be notified by mid-February.

For more information, or to request an Abstract Proposal Form, write: ITSC 1988, British Film Institute, Television Unit, 21 Stephen St., London W1P 1PL, England. Phone: 01-255-1444. Telex: 27624. ∞

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## UDC in Ottawa

Over 35 panels and working sessions have been proposed for the UDC conference at Carleton University, April 28-May 1. The Organizing Committee reports that a wide range of topics have been submitted under the general theme, Communication, Culture & Socialism.

Conference posters and information requests have been sent to members. After receiving responses from the mailing, a final program and registration information will be circulated.

The Committee has obtained publicity funds and co-sponsorships for the conference, including the CKCU (Ottawa's alternative radio station), Carleton's School of Journalism, Mass Comm Program, Mass Communications Students Society and Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology.

If you haven't received a poster packet, want to propose a panel/paper, or need more information, write to: Peter Bruck, Centre for Communications, Culture & Society, Carleton Univ., Ottawa, Canada K1S 5B6. ∞

## South African Seeks Lectures

South African media critic and teacher, Keyan Tomaselli, is arranging lectures in the U.S. and Canada to help cover the costs of attending the UDC/Ottawa conference in May.

Tomaselli's paper for the conference is on the progressive and alternative press in South Africa. He can speak on a number of other topics, including broadcast and cinema in South Africa, and the history and politics of South Africa.

His tentative itinerary is as follows: April 5: New York, April 11: Chicago, April 18: Iowa City, April 23: Univ. of Minnesota, April 28: Ottawa (departing May 3).

Tomaselli has been a regular contributor for *The Democratic Communiqué*, and an active supporter of the UDC. If any members can help arrange lectures, contact Tomaselli as soon as possible at: Contemporary Cultural Studies Unit, University of Natal, Durban 4001, So. Africa. Telephone: 031-816-2505. Telex 6-21231∞

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## Omni magazine features Nukes & PeaceNet

Citing the proliferation of nuclear stockpiles and the chance for accidental nuclear war, writer A.J.S. Rayl contributed an article reviewing the "Peace Movement" and its "Peacenet" to the January issue of *Omni* magazine.

The article's appearance was rather unusual since *Omni* is a publication which usually features more hard-science, "high tech" articles, and some science fiction. In general, it is a positive sign since the "Movement" gains more credence when it is highlighted by such a popular publication.

However, several technical and factual errors indicate the author is not totally acquainted with the issues discussed. What makes the article even more annoying is that it has the style of a dilettante writer who has viewed the peace movement from afar, never getting her hands dirty.

### Peace Movement as Light in Darkness

According to Rayl, there are 51,500 nuclear warheads in the world today, with the United States and the Soviet Union holding 25,000 warheads each and the remaining 1,500 nuclear weapons spread among France, England and China.

"In 1979 the American Early Warning System somehow read a military computer war game as a live missile launch, putting the defense chain on low-level alert and sending Air Force jets aloft. It took six minutes to discover the error," Rayl said in the article.

"And in 1984 some 256 'serious errors' occurred, with the number allegedly increasing every year.

"In the light of this darkness stands the peace movement. If the word *peace* sparks memories of flowers, love beads and Vietnam for dinner, tune in. Peace in the Eighties has become a global issue."

### Peace Among the Stars

The article then includes a brief history of the Movement and follows with interviews of various peace activists ranging from Joan Baez and Kris Kristoferson to Henry Kendall, chairman of the Union of Concerned Scientists.

A sidebar features quotes from a number of "peace stars," including singer Bonnie Raitt, who says:

"Peace will require that scientists and other experts take a more active role in exposing the facts to counter government disinformation and corporate propaganda. Armed with information, people would probably not support the U.S. government's role in Nicaragua and elsewhere."

### PeaceNet as Solution to Disorganization

But then the article loses its glitter when it stoops to quasi-omniscient smugness:

"The American peace movement's highly decentralized status, however, is often self-defeating. Such prob-

(continued on page 9)

## Rockumentary for Peace

Quick, what do Peter Gabriel, Jackson Browne, Lou Reed, Nona Hendryx, Little Steven, David Linley, and Howard Jones have in common?

Answer, they're all rock artists who performed in a benefit rock concert in Tokyo for the University for Peace in Costa Rica and which premiered Christmas day on Super Station WTBS. The program was both a rock concert and a documentary about computer networks for peace.

The two-day concert drew 32,000 people and was entitled "Hurricane Irene," after the Greek goddess of peace. Proceeds from the benefit, which actually took place in December 1986, went to fund the University's Global Computer Network, now hooked up with existing networks -- PeaceNet/EcoNet and Green-Net based in the United States and England.

The program also featured two of the most famous Latin American diplomats, the President of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias, and United Nations General Secretary, Javier Perez de Cuellar. Arias was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for his diplomatic initiatives to bring peace to strife-torn Central America.

Other performers included a Soviet rock band and several Japanese groups who showcased songs with lyrics dedicated to peace during the concert.

The Christmas show also featured a seven-city global TV peace-network hookup between New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, Costa Rica, London, Tokyo and Moscow.

Secretary Cuellar praised the project as consistent with the work of the United Nations and its International Year for Peace (1986).

The University of Peace was created December 1980 by a unanimous resolution by the United Nations. Former UDC member Tapio Varis, a native of Finland, was named the University's first rector. ♡



## UDC on PeaceNet

*The Democratic Communique* is now linked to PeaceNet, enabling members to quickly send information for the newsletter.

A members-only conference on the network has provided several UDC members the opportunity to share ideas and send information over the past few weeks. Plans are being made to open a "public" conference to discuss issues relating to communications and peace with other groups.

Members with access to personal computers and modems are encouraged to subscribe to PeaceNet, a low-cost, non-profit computer network, operated by the Institute for Global Communications, 3228 Sacramento St., San Francisco, CA 94115. (415) 923-0900. ♡



## Propaganda Review

Propaganda.

A slippery concept, difficult to define. But one that very often hits a nerve.

"Propaganda is more than an inflated claim, more than a set of ideas that some cabal is trying to shove down the throats of an innocent population -- though such ideas and such cabals exist. As we understand propaganda, it pervades culture and consciousness. It's a subtle yet frighteningly powerful means of social coercion."

So begins the premiere issue of *Propaganda Review*, a publication which seeks to "name propaganda as a political issue, to make it visible and recognizable so that it can be resisted."

The project is sponsored by Media Alliance, a San Francisco-based non-profit organization of 2500 writers, journalists, and other media professionals. The new magazine-format has replaced its tabloid predecessor, *Propaganda Analysis Review*, which was produced by a group within Media Alliance. (See *The Democratic Communiqué*, May-June 1987.)

### Advertising to Politics

*Propaganda Review* promises to cover a wide range of issues, "both government disinformation campaigns and commercial advertising campaigns, both intelligence agencies and public relations agencies," explains editor Marcy Darnovsky, who is also a UDC member. "Our range will include the Cold War and soap operas, the techniques of the propagandists and the character structures of the propagandized."

And the premiere issue lives up to the promise, with articles on politics and public relations ("Marketing Reagan" by Johan Carlisle), the entertainment industry ("That's Entertainment" by Jay Rosen), and a column on advertising ("Ad Watch" by Marina Hirsch).

### Chomsky on Propaganda

Other articles include "The Propaganda System: Orwell's and Ours" by Noam Chomsky and "Vox Populi" by Nina Eliasoph (another UDC member). "Photography and Propaganda" by David Levi Strauss, features the work of Richard Cross and John Hoagland, both photojournalists killed in Central America.

Book reviews also are regular features ("What Reagan Reads"), as well as a resource section listing groups and publications dealing with propaganda issues. (The UDC is listed in the first issue.)

Subscriptions to *Propaganda Review* are \$20 for four issues. Submissions of letters, manuscripts, drawings and photographs also are invited. Write: *Propaganda Review*, Media Alliance, Fort Mason, Building D, San Francisco, CA 94123. ☐



## Jumpcut: A Review of Contemporary Media

*Jump Cut* began in 1974 as an alternative film publication. But these days, the magazine features material on film, television, and video, as well as related media and cultural analysis.

The publication's circulation has grown to over 5,000 world-wide, reaching "...a wide range of readers including students, academics, media professionals, political activists, radicals interested in culture, film and video makers, and others interested in the radical analysis of mass culture and oppositional media."

*Jump Cut* is published irregularly, about twice a year, and is not affiliated with or supported by any institution. It is operated on a non-profit basis by its staff, which includes co-editors John Hess, Julia Lesage and Chuck Kleinhans (all UDC members).

The editorial policies include an explicit political stand: a "nonsectarian left, feminist, and anti-imperialist publication, committed to representing and developing media criticism, which recognizes media in a social and political context, the political and social needs and perspectives of people struggling for liberation..., the inter-relationship of class, race and gender oppression, and new theoretical and analytic perspectives."

The editors stress contemporary media, but are open to publishing material on older films, tapes and programs. The range is all types and forms of media, from Hollywood's commercial dramatic narrative to independent documentary and experimental work. There is special interest in neglected areas such as educational media, children's programs, animation, intermedia and mixed media, new technologies, consumer formats, etc., and related areas of radical cultural analysis such as photography and popular music.

To receive a copy of contributor's guidelines, or to subscribe -- write *JumpCut*, PO Box 865, Berkeley, CA 94701. ☐



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# Media about Media/ Film & Video

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Are you an educator in search of audio-video stimulation for your media courses? You might check out the following films and videos on journalism and mass communication from the Cinema Guild.

**IF IT BLEEDS, IT LEADS** (color, 14 min, 16mm & all video formats) is an award-winning documentary that critically examines local television "spot" news-- the term stations give to filmed coverage of house fires, car accidents, shootings, and other local events involving violence or death, frequently used as the lead story.

The documentary features interviews with news reporters discussing reasons for the prominent coverage given such stories. It also focuses on an award-winning story of a death by drowning which shocked many viewers, but of which the reporters are very proud.

The film not only examines the effects of ratings on the content of news programs, but also raises important questions about ethical and professional considerations of broadcast journalists, including the individual's right of privacy vs. the public's right to know.

**MAKING THE NEWS FIT** (color, 28 min, all formats) is a video documentary which takes a critical look at the U.S. media coverage of the war in El Salvador. Media critics and journalists are interviewed, including Raymond Bonner, former El Salvador correspondent for *The New York Times*, the foreign editors of NBC & CBS News and *The New York Times*, Michael Massing of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, former CIA analyst David MacMichael, and Aryeh Neier of *Americas Watch*.

The video also features archival footage from El Salvador and newsclips from the major TV networks. It provides viewers with basic background information about the conflict, and then analyzes media treatment of major issues, such as the 1982 elections and the alleged arms flow from Nicaragua to El Salvador. In the process, the program examines the role of the US government in defining the news, the extent to which non-governmental viewpoints are reported, and the professional and political pressures journalists encounter when their reports contradict U.S. government accounts.

**SIX O'CLOCK AND ALL'S WELL** (color, 60 min, 16mm and all video formats) probes behind the scenes at the top-rated local news program in New York City, examining the processes and values of broadcast journalism, raising provocative questions about the social, political and human impact of the news.

Through interviews with station staff, scenes of studio/newsroom activity and dissection of story coverage, a candid portrait emerges of America's primary news source, the "Six O'Clock News" program.

The production of two typical news stories reveal the superficiality of the medium, distorted priorities of

the newsgathers, and the manipulation of story content in order to provide entertainment value.

**JOHN HOAGLAND: FRONTLINE PHOTOGRAPHER** (color, 29 min, all video formats) examines the life and work of John Hoagland (1947-1984) a leading photojournalist for AP, UPI, and *Newsweek*, and one of this generation's best war photographers.

In 1979 Hoagland went to Nicaragua to photograph the Sandinista revolution for Associated Press. Over the next five years, he recorded the growing conflict in Central America, though during this period he also traveled to Lebanon and other trouble spots.

In March 1984, while on photographic assignment for *Newsweek*, Hoagland was killed by a U.S.-made bullet in a firefight on a road outside Suchitoto in El Salvador. At the time of his death, Hoagland had logged more time and shot more film in more parts of Central America than any other American journalist. He is widely reputed to have been the model for the Nick Nolte character in the feature film, *Under Fire*.

The video includes recollections from friends and family interviews with Hoagland about his work, footage of the conflicts in which he was involved, excerpts from *Under Fire*, as well as many of Hoagland's best photographs.

**YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE** (color, 45 min, all video formats) is an imaginatively conceived, thought-provoking video about urban crime in America, and in a larger sense, about how the atmosphere of pervasive fear that envelops cities throughout the country encourages racial antagonism. It concentrates on the role played by the mass media in producing and managing that fear, thereby perpetuating racial stereotypes and racial inequality.

An alternative viewpoint is offered by a black mugger/philosopher/economist, who "raps" his story of permanent unemployment, powerlessness, ambition and cynicism, in the process revealing that the ethos of the mugger is not dissimilar to the ethos of the American economic system.

"Mugging is the bastard child of Mr. and Mrs. Free Enterprise," he says, a sort of underground capitalism. He further explains his unorthodox notions of mugging as a means for the redistribution of wealth.

The video employs an imaginative mix of "rapping," song and dance, narrative, documentary, parody, a TV game show, and other popular culture forms.

The Cinema Guild offers these films & videos (plus others) for rental, purchase or preview for purchase consideration. To order, or to receive a copy of their catalog, write or phone: The Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019. (212) 246-5522. ♦♦



# Viewpoints

*Editor's Note:* The following commentary is a position paper Peter Franck prepared in response to the recent National Lawyers Guild's resolution on communications and media. The statement was adopted after a workshop on UNESCO, the New World Information order and the US media. Bill Schapp (Institute for Media Analysis) and Franck are the co-chairs of the committee on "Media Monopoly, Disinformation and the First Amendment" set up by the resolution.

Franck is a UDC member, former President of the Pacifica Foundation, board member of the San Francisco Community Television Corporation, and an attorney practicing copyright and entertainment law in San Francisco. We welcome comments and will feature more viewpoints in future issues.

## Some Thoughts on the Mass Media, Social Change and the First Amendment

by Peter Franck

### I. THE MEDIA AND SOCIAL CHANGE

In his essay, "Dialectical Materialism and Psychoanalysis," Wilhelm Reich criticized the left for asking the question "how do we organize people to throw off their oppression," he argues that the real question is (to paraphrase) "why is it that a people who are systematically ripped off of the fruits of their labor, oppressed and repressed, all by a tiny minority of their number, don't instantly rise up and overthrow the few who are doing this terrible thing to them?"

Reich analyzes the question in terms of his concept of "internalized oppression," the internalization of false values of powerlessness, self doubt, individualism, racism, sexism and nationalism. He points out that a people in touch with their humanity, who feel their power, understand their self-worth, know and trust those in their societies who are superficially different, and understand the power of an overwhelming numerical majority, would instantly overthrow a tiny exploitative minority.

When people believe in their powerlessness, when they have accepted the values of individualism, racism, sexism and nationalism, a population becomes docile, and attempts at organization for social change tend to be difficult and not effective.

In our mass society the media play a crucial role as the transmitter of such values. The question of the role of media and mass communications in impeding or bringing about conditions in which social change can take place is one of the most important and most neglected issues for progressives in this country.

We all know how badly the mass media screens and distorts the information we receive. We know how sexist, violent, nationalistic, and distorted the mass media is. In a study carried out by the Machinist Union a few years ago, 98% of the people populating television-land are upper middle class, all the workers are either unemployed, criminals or both, Blacks are funny, servants or sidekicks, women are rarely powerful and to be taken

seriously, and so it goes. The trouble is that we know all this the way a fish knows the water it swims in. We rarely get out of the tank and look at the water. The media is so all pervasive that, complain about its specific sins as we do, we rarely get far enough out of it to think about it as a serious social and political problem; one that should be on our agenda.

### II. THE FIRST AMENDMENT USED AGAINST THE PEOPLE

What does this have to do with the National Lawyer's Guild and the First Amendment? A personal story may illustrate the point. When Pacifica Foundation (the licensee of the five oldest and largest listener sponsored FM radio stations in the country) was before the Supreme Court, appealing the action of the FCC against WBAI in the Carlin case (in which the FCC was attempting to establish its right to ban "indecent" from the air waves), Pacifica was very pleased to get amicus briefs from the major networks, the *New York Times*, and the National Association of Broadcasters, among others. The broadcasting world seemed to be coming through for Pacifica's right to broadcast material it found to have merit, and against the FCC's attempt to set itself up as the arbiter of "indecenty".

What was really going on? Ralph Engelman was the Chair of the Board of WBAI (Pacifica's New York station, which had broadcast the offending George Carlin monologue) at the time. When he arrived at the Supreme Court chambers for the hearing on the case, Ralph

## NATIONAL L. COMMUNICATIONS A

WHEREAS, the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) is devoted to the principles of national and cultural self-determination; and WHEREAS, the NLG counts among its basic principles the right to receive and exchange ideas and information; and WHEREAS, the NLG applauds the efforts of UNESCO to advance these principles on the world stage; and WHEREAS, the NLG deplores the United States' withdrawal from UNESCO; and WHEREAS, the NLG recognizes the fact that the ownership and control of much of the media of this country and the rest of the First World is concentrated very narrowly; and WHEREAS, the NLG recognizes the fact that the Genocide Convention, and the Charter of the United Nations require that media organizations which are more wealthy and more powerful than most of the world's States must be responsible and accountable for their impact on the risks of war, racism genocide and for the world-wide threat to cultural self determination; WHEREAS, the NLG deplores the use of First Amendment rhetoric against peoples' drive for informational and cultural self determination.



# Viewpoints

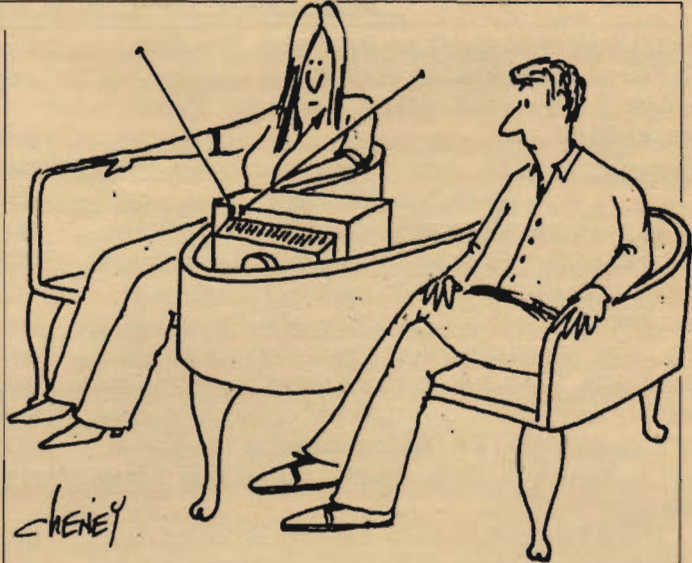
found that the whole room was taken up with the dignitaries of the broadcasting establishment, and he, representing the principal party (he thought) was ushered in a side door, shown to a small seat in the press section of the Chamber, and generally ignored by press and counsel. He told me afterward that he felt as if he was Miranda, that is, an incidental party around whom a struggle with other stakes was being waged.

And of course, his implication was correct; Pacifica was a stalking horse for the use of the First Amendment against organizations trying to do something about the impact of media on people in our society, against groups such as Action for Children's Television (ACT), and the Carter Administration's Federal Trade Commission (which was trying to put some limits on the worst advertising).

Thus one of the functions the First Amendment serves in the U.S. today is to shield the mass media from any attempt to hold it accountable for its impact on society.

### III. IS THE NATION MAGAZINE CBS? DOES THE FIRST AMENDMENT MEAN THE SAME TO BOTH?

The Nation recently ran a symposium on whether tobacco advertising should be banned from or carried in its pages. Michael Perchik (the liberal Chair of the FTC under Carter) convincingly argued the dangers of tobacco advertising, pointing out the way in which the glamour of it hooks teenagers early in life to a destructive chemical addiction. Ira Glasser, the Executive Director



of the ACLU, sets forth their position: that the First Amendment bars any attempt, by *The Nation* or others, to ban such advertising. He is equally convincing. The debate does not meet; the arguments go past each other.

### IV. "FREEDOM OF SPEECH" ON THE WORLD STAGE: DECOLONIZATION, SPEECH, THE NEW WORLD INFORMATION ORDER AND UNESCO.

On the world stage, UNESCO has been the forum for the Third World's struggle for informational and cultural independence. The rhetoric of the First Amendment has been the argument for unlimited western colonization of the minds and cultures of the developing world.

Just as Action for Children's Television is concerned about the impact of television on children, much of the Third World is concerned and alarmed by the impact of western media on their societies and by the distortion of information flowing in and out of their countries. Both conditions arise in good part from the fact that virtually the whole world is dependent for its news on two or three western news companies.

In response to this problem, they have proposed a "New World Communications and Information Order" (NWICO). Their proposal focusses on the development of an independent communications and media infrastructure and on the responsibility of journalistic and media organizations for their impact on the peoples of the world. This proposal has been vigorously opposed by the First World Countries and the western media as an attack on the concept of freedom of speech.

The debate in UNESCO over the Third World's demand for a new world communication order has shown the first amendment used in the same way internationally as domestically, with no less at stake. Thus the domestic issue is no less important to us than the issue of international cultural and informational hegemony which lies at the heart of the UNESCO fight.

(continued on p.10)

## WYERS GUILD AND MEDIA RESOLUTION

- NOW THEREFORE: 1. THE NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD (NLG) RESOLVES to work toward a world-wide information order based on the principles outlined by the 1980 information resolution of the General Assembly of UNESCO; and
2. THE NLG FURTHER RESOLVES to study the impact on our society and world society of increased centralization of ownership and control of mass media, and further to study the implications of such concentration on the principles of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and
3. THE NLG FURTHER RESOLVES to endorse and support the efforts of those developing and operating independent media publications, outlets and networks, in the U.S. and abroad; and
4. THE NLG FURTHER RESOLVES to rename the International Committee Subcommittee on Disinformation as the "Subcommittee on Media Monopoly, Disinformation and the First Amendment," and to mandate it to implement this resolution and to link the efforts of the Guild in this area to those of other organizations, domestic and international, in this field.
5. THE NLG FURTHER urges all chapters of the Guild to devote at least one membership meeting or other major event during the coming year to study of the problem of the media, the New World Information and Communications Order and disinformation. ♦♦



Edward S. Herman and Frank Brodhead. **The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection.** NY: Sheridan Square, 1986. 247 pp., with index. Paperback, \$9.95 list.

**by Robert Jacobson**

As someone who works in government, I'm not as cynical as some of "conspiracy theories." These theories attempt to explain complex events as the result of collaboration among political actors, who, for various reasons, cooperate to commit infamous crimes and other political acts. Such collaborations occur all the time, and whether they're called "conspiracies" or simply "gentlemen's agreements," they often escape the attention of a lazy or prejudiced press, unwilling or unable to "get to the bottom" of affairs.

This is the normal course of events in politics. But what happens when the press itself instigates a conspiracy -- a conspiracy of disinformation?

This book is about such a press conspiracy. In 1981, the Turkish terrorist, Mehmet Ali Agca, took a shot at Pope John Paul II, wounding him. Agca was long known as a fascist of unconventional (if not downright crazy) persuasions and the assassination attempt was just one more fanatic act committed by him and his comrades in the Gray Wolves. However, in no time, the Western press was touting a different story. According to journalists at leading publications -- the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Newsweek* among them -- Agca was really a Bulgarian agent carrying out a nefarious KGB plot.

These reports sparked a rancorous trial in Italy. Several Turks and Bulgarians were indicted in 1984. They went to trial in 1985 and were acquitted in the following year. Agca's bizarre statements to the court convinced everyone present that charges by the press that a KGB conspiracy was involved were nonsense.

Why did the press try to paint a conspiracy where none occurred. Because, according to Herman and Brodhead, the press was conducting its own conspiracy to misinform the American public and to provoke Western allies who were getting uncomfortably complacent (from the CIA's point of view) regarding the "Eastern bloc." To sustain this charge, Herman and Brodhead have accumulated a remarkable amount of historical evidence that press leadership looked the other way when implausible stories were published, and may even have abetted the disinformation campaign by putting CIA plans or agents in positions of some authority.

More important than the particulars of this process, however, are the lessons that Herman and Brodhead draw regarding the role of the monopoly press in the American political system. For better or worse, the press is the way most Americans learn about themselves and their society. If the press lies, the whole system of liberal democracy is utterly corrupted. Clearly, if Herman and Brodhead are correct -- and no one has yet proven oth-

erwise -- then the corruption of our social order is complete.

One is at a loss, however, to know how to respond to their charges. Minions of the press have attacked Herman and Brodhead as paranoid and scurilous. This is ridiculous, at least to one (like me) for whom the deceit of contemporary political journalism is common fare. The press has its own agenda and has collaborated with security agencies in the past, as it will in the future. This is the problem facing social critics: the press WILL do again what it has done in the past, and there is no easy way to prevent it. The First Amendment (in America, at least) is a shield for both honest speech and lies. Short of libel, the press can do as it pleases. Eternal vigilance is all that Herman and Brodhead can recommend.

**The Rise and Fall of the Bulgarian Connection**, far from being a flight of fancy, is more cognizant of the "real world" than the reviewers who have trashed it (while in the pay of the monopoly press, it must be noted). It is an upbeat and exciting treatment of a situation that is, when all is told, utterly depressing -- except for the fact that there are Herman's and Brodhead's among us, speaking the truth. ∞

Rita Atwood and Emile McAnany, eds. **Communication and Latin American Society: Trends in Critical Research, 1960-1985.** Madison, Wisc.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986. (This is the first volume in the Studies in Communications & Society Series, eds. Vinny Mosco & Janet Wasko.)

**by Federico A. Subervi-Velez**

University of California-Santa Barbara

I was both amused and gratified to note that this collection is published by The University of Wisconsin Press. It was at that university where many years ago, as a graduate student, I tried to convey to some of my professors and classmates the richness of the developing communications research in Latin America. (My studies in Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, and Ecuador had already introduced me to the perspectives of the Spanish-speaking world.)

However, at that time, two factors inhibited my efforts. First, few Spanish and Portuguese works had been translated. And, second, what was known about Latin American research and writings was not highly valued by most U.S. communication researchers.

Today, the second limitation has faded (somewhat) with the more widespread acceptance of the "critical" paradigm or perspective, as at least another approach for the analysis of media and society. With this book, the first limitation also should be less of an impediment. It is a superb collection of the diverse and challenging writings representative of the state of the art of critical communication research from and about Latin America.

The volume begins with an overview by Janet Wasko that presents the essence of each author's contribu-





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tion. The rest is divided into four parts: An Introduction to Latin American Critical Communication Research; Critical Theory, Transnational Communication and Culture; The Effects of Transnationals on Culture; and Alternatives for Latin American Cultures.

The first three chapters (by Rita Atwood, Emile McAnany, and Cristina Schwarz & Oscar Jaramillo) are outstanding summaries and assessments of the literature and problems faced by critical communication researchers in Latin American and the U.S. The chapters also help clarify key terminology used in the field and provide a historical context. This helps explain the development of alternative approaches in Latin America, where communications research is characterized by linkages between theory and practice.

In the trio of chapters in the second part, Rafael Roncagliolo, Carlos Eduardo Lins da Silva, and Javier Estinou discuss critical theory as a basis for analyzing capitalism, transnational and national communication. They focus particular attention on news and culture, and the wider problematic of ideology and hegemony.

Two chapters in the third section (by Noreene Janus, and Alberto Montoya & Maria Antonietta Rebeil) focus on political and economic effects of transnationals as manifested via advertising emanating in the U.S. and commercial television in Mexico.

The final section features articles by Maximo Simpson Grinberg and Fernando Reyes Matta, who discuss in great detail the alternative communication research and practice with numerous examples from the struggles of both small and large groups.

Altogether, this book provides those who don't read Spanish or have limited access to Latin American publications, an open door from which to begin or expand their awareness of the rich and growing communication field south of the border.

One of the most valuable aspects of the collection is the extensive list of references in each chapter. Unfortunately, many of the citations are generally unavailable, unpublished monographs collected by the authors at communications meetings or seminar. One remedy for this problem would be to solicit copies of the most important unpublished writings from the authors, and store them at some library at the Univ. of Texas-Austin, where they would be available via interlibrary loan to interested readers. Other unpublished works could also be archived.

In sum, I enthusiastically recommend this book to readers or teachers of mass communication in Latin America, international communications, or critical communication research. And, since it's still a long road before mainstream editors and journals recognize and integrate more of this type of "third world" communication work in their publications, I, for one, would appreciate a prompt follow-up (e.g., trends, 1986-1990) with an even wider collection of writings representative of the research, theory and praxis of my Latin American colleagues. ♦♦



## Changes in Scenery

UDC Steering Committee member **Tim Haight** recently made the leap from academe into the working press. Haight now holds down the West Coast Bureau of *Communications Week*. He and his wife Dara Thornton and their new baby Karen Heather will soon be moving to Santa Cruz, Calif.

**Federico Subervi-Velez** (Univ. of Calif, Santa Barbara) has been awarded a Fulbright grant to conduct research on the ethnic-oriented mass media of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He will spend six months in Brazil, beginning in January, studying the political and culture roles that ethnic newspapers, radio and television stations play in the lives of minority groups, including blacks, Japanese, Germans and Italians. ♦♦

## Omni features PeaceNet

(continued from page 2)

lems as accountability, structure, management, and control—not to mention ego and politics—make it almost impossible to unite most of the grass-roots peace roots into a few major, more powerful coalitions. Technology, however in the form of PeaceNet, is aiding greater communication and cooperation."

In case you don't want to buy this issue of *Omni*, but still want to know what Rayl says about PeaceNet, read on:

"The first global database and computer network for peace initiatives, PeaceNet went online in August 1986 and is now the largest progressive computer network in the world, with more than 2,000 users.

"Based in San Francisco, PeaceNet features hundreds of electronic bulletin boards, computer conferences and a comprehensive database for congressional and legislative action.

"Individual and group subscribers can obtain current information on worldwide activities in a matter of seconds. 'The capacity to tap into this information pool and participate in the evergrowing peace community is incredibly empowering,' PeaceNet director Mark Graham says. Greenpeace, SpaceWatch, the Institute for Security and Cooperation in Outer Space (SCOS), and other peace-oriented groups provide weekly updates on their activities." ♦♦



# Viewpoints

(continued from page 7)

## V. THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

A number of major U.S. scholars, including former California Supreme Court Justice Frank Newman, are actively advancing the principle that the international law of speech and press, including the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nation's Charter, and the Genocide Convention are far more powerful and far reaching in their protection of human rights than the U.S. Bill of Rights.

With its consistent linking of human rights to the responsibility of society and social institutions, the Declaration supports and is consistent with the principles of the New World Information Order. A discussion along these lines can make an important contribution to support for NWICO and UNESCO, and advance us to a more sophisticated, class and power based analysis of the principles of the First Amendment.

## VI. A NEW DIALOGUE

There are two important problems which come together here. First, little has come out of the Third World which is going to be satisfying on this issue to any but the most sophisticated American radical, let alone to liberals or civil libertarians. (Here we are victims, I think, of the left's reliance during the McCarthy period on the legalisms of the First and Fifth Amendments.)

Second, people in this country are very concerned over the UNESCO situation, and are inherently suspicious of the Reagan administration's motives in the matter. This opens up the chance to do some serious examination of the issue of cultural hegemony, the premises behind the NWICO and related issues.

The left in this country seems to be paralyzed when it comes to dealing with either problem by current formulations of the ideology of the First Amendment.

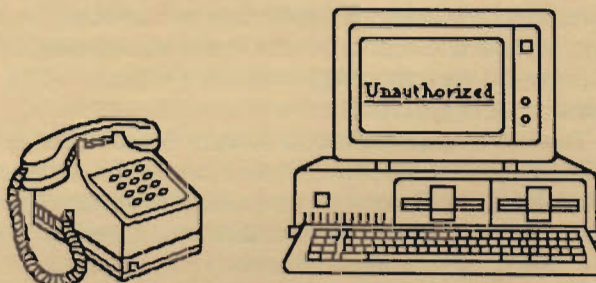
The importance of discussing the New World Information Order is that it focusses attention on the rights of the receivers of information (as against the prevalent U.S. focus on the rights of the senders of information); that it forces an examination of the impact of the media on a society; that it forces an examination of the class nature of the ownership and control of the media; and that these together require American radicals, with their commitment to the ideology of the First Amendment, to analyze the question of the media from the point of view of power and social impact.

The Lawyer's Guild has a particular responsibility to come up with an analysis which says that the mandate of the First Amendment is quite different when the question is what *The Nation* does in its pages than when the question is what the three television networks do in prime time. Such an analysis must recognize that in the latter case, we are talking about the social responsibility of enormous organizations which may well be stronger and more powerful than the government, and that the same principle which placed the First Amendment in

the Constitution to place a limit on the power of the government to control and shape public debate and consciousness, requires a limit on the ability of the equally (and probably more) powerful major corporate structure to control and shape public debate and consciousness.

At its 50th Anniversary convention, the Guild established a special subcommittee of the International Committee, which is mandated to organize a study on the UNESCO/NWICO/First Amendment issues. One would hope this ultimately will lead to an analysis of the principles of the First Amendment which takes into account issues of social power, and to a program which could be the basis for using First Amendment concepts to develop a rational and a strategy for an aggressive program of action on the problem of the media.

Such an analysis would at the same time remove the First Amendment as a shield against the media's accountability for its impact on society and the world. A part of this program should be a campaign of real support for the NWICO and the US's re-entry into UNESCO. We should be striving to put the media issue squarely on the agenda of the U.S. left and the nation. ♡



## Computer-Age Yellow Dog

(continued from page 1)

The issue still has not been settled and Dun & Bradstreet's actions may be in violation of the National Labor Relations Act and of Civil Rights Statutes in both California and Washington, D.C., according to UFCW attorney Marvin Hrubec.

"The National Labor Relations Act makes it an unfair labor practice for any person to interfere with union members in the exercise of their rights to organize and engage in collective bargaining," Hrubec said in a letter to Dialogue Information Services.

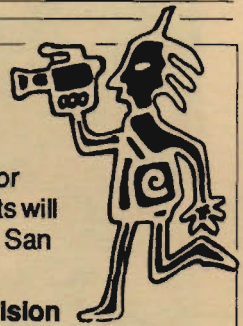
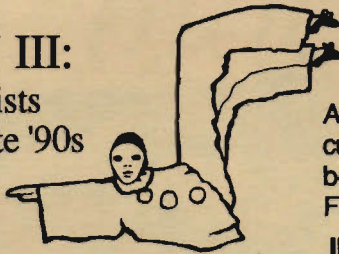
"A crucial aspect of both activities is the collection of economic data concerning employers in particular markets. Dun & Bradstreet is unlawfully interfering with that right by instructing and coercing Dialogue to deny access to this file to any organizations that represent union members.

"The Unruh Civil Rights Act and District of Columbia Human Rights Act prohibit businesses from refusing services to any person or association of persons for arbitrary reasons. These laws prohibit businesses from refusing to supply their products to organizations simply because those organizations represent union members. ♡



# Announcements

## IMAGINATION III: Cultural Workers & Artists Celebrate '80s, Anticipate '90s



### Job Announcements

Anticipated tenure track, Asst/Assoc Prof. Comm., Film & Video Dept. seeks journalist with both professional and academic experience to teach undergrad journalism courses. Primary teaching in reporting and writing at intro and advanced levels, with particular emphasis on broadcasting (both radio and tv). Expertise in tv production, journalistic studies, intro to mass comm, and minorities and mass media also desired.

Grad degree in journalism or comm preferred. Equivalent professional experience, with significant publication/production record, considered. Undergrad teaching experience highly desirable. 5+ years industry work experience necessary.

Send letter of application, names/address of three references, and vitae to: Michael Keating, Chair, Journalism Search Comm, Dept. of Comm, Film & Video, Shepard Hall Rm. 16, City College of New York, 138th & Convent Ave., NY, NY 10031. Closing date: Feb. 15.

Anticipated tenure track, Asst/Assoc Prof. Comm., Film & Video Dept. seeks filmmaker/videographer with both professional and academic experience to teach undergrad production and other courses (including planned grad coursework). Candidates must have broad experience in both film and video production including major level of responsibility with at least two major productions in either medium. Significant teaching experience expected in camera, lighting, and editing from both narrative and documentary perspectives.

Dept. offers a wide range of course in history and theory as well as production, and all courses are taught with reference to this historical and theoretical framework. Candidates should feel comfortable within this framework and able to make strong contribution to an expanding curriculum. Grad degree (MFA or equivalent) in film, video or closely-related field. Equivalent professional experience considered.

Send letter of application citing unique qualifications for position and theoretical background in film history and aesthetics; names and addresses of five references (including one from a student who knows work and teaching); and vitae to: Dennis DeNitto, Chair, Film/Video Search Committee, Dept. of Comm, Film & Video, Shepard Hall Rm. 16, City College of New York, 138th & Convent Ave., NY, NY 10031. Closing date: Feb. 15. ♦♦

A three-day conference by and for cultural workers and activist artists will be held at the Women's Building, San Francisco, Feb. 19-21.

**IMAGINATION III: Cultural Vision and Struggle in the 80s** also is the 11th annual conference of Alliance for Cultural Democracy (ACD), an organization for community-based arts programs and activist artists.

Five other Bay Area organizations will co-sponsor the event, which aims to look back at struggles as the 80s draw to a close and look forward to new opportunities in the 90s. Organizers point out, "If we are to re-establish a viable political dialogue in the 90s, integration of creativity, culture and social change must flourish.

"Culture can provide meaning for people's lives, but Reganomics makes it harder and harder for community-based workers to find financial support. The survival of cultural groups and adequate support of artists themselves is critical as we pass from the 80s to the 90s."

The conference will give artists and cultural workers an opportunity to talk with each other, and share survival skills. Network building workshops will be arranged, plus participatory workshops on a wide range of current issues, including multi-cultural art programs, cultural policy, working with labor, rural culture, alternative cultural institutions, oral history, indigenous culture, community radio, etc.

Visual art exhibits, film and video screenings and live performances by musicians, dancers and theater people from across the country will be featured. Tours of local murals, galleries and cultural centers also are planned.

Registration fees cover all conference events, lunches and cabaret performances. ACD members: \$55; non-members, \$65; membership & registration \$80. Low income \$35. One-day fee, \$35. Limited community lodging is available for early registrants.

Write to: ACD Conference, PO Box 9570, Berkeley, CA 94709. (415) 845-7111, 658-9523. ♦♦

### African Studies Meeting

The African Studies Program at Northwestern University will host the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Oct. 28-31, 1988 in Chicago. The conference theme is "Continuity and Change in Africa."

UDC Steering Committee member Manji Pendakur, who is on the Program Committee for the event, is particularly interested in getting media analysts and activists involved in the conference.

UDC members are urged to send proposals for papers/panels and film/video screenings to: Prof. Karen Hansen, Prog. of African Studies, Northwestern Univ., Evanston, IL 60208. Deadline is April 15. ♦♦





PROTESTING THE COLD WAR. These flakey demonstrators are trying to freeze the arms race while putting a thaw in the Cold War. Public debate has heated up on the issue while the protesters say they will weather any change on the political front. For stories on Communicating Peace, see page 3.

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