## THE FIRST NORTH AMERICAN ANARCHIST INSTITUTE

On June 4 and 5, in Montreal, the Anarchos Institute convened its first meeting. There were over 150 participants, and about half were founding members of the Institute. The meeting brought together members from as far away as Vancouver, San Francisco, Houston, and New Orleans, in addition to visitors from Paris and Milan. The events were well-organized and tightly scheduled yet the atmosphere was easy-going, warm, and relaxed. People left with great good feelings and the knowledge that they had participated in a historic moment in anarchist history.

The Institute scheduled the first day for presented papers and workshops with the meetings held at the radical French Universite' de Québec. The sessions were diverse. Almost all the participants thought the quality of the discussion was stimulating and comradely. While the format was similar to professional society meetings, there was none of the competitiveness and gamesmanship that characterize gatherings of academics. Political differences and personal antagonisms were set aside. It was clear—people wanted the meeting to succeed.

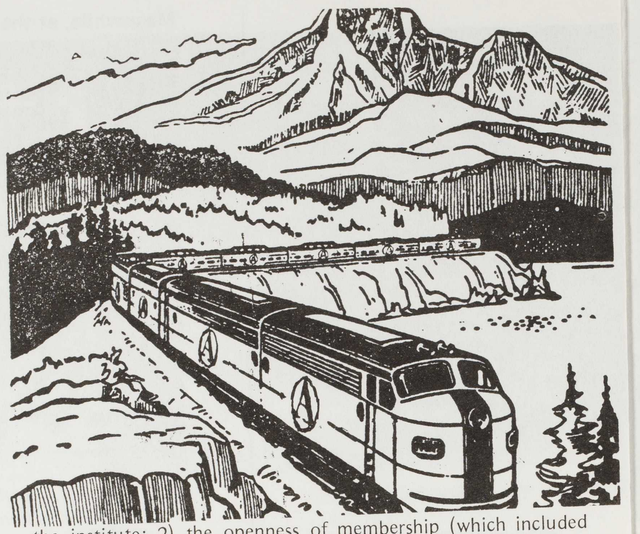
In the first morning session, Pietro Ferrua talked of the connections between anarchism and surrealism. Charles Shively presented a paper on Josiah Warren; and Len Krimmerman and Allan Ritter discussed the issues of the anarchist concern with the consistency of means and ends. Across the hall, Elaine Leeder spoke on anarchist feminism, while upstairs a session on economics and anarchism featured formal presentations by Richard Edgar, John Clark, Peter Dorman, and Walter Heiss.

There were three afternoon sessions. In one, Len Krimmerman and Howard Ehrlich led a workshop on anarchist education. Following the workshop, Robert Roth read his short story, "In the Audience." Another session dealt with the control of knowledge by the state and the mass media. In the third session, Martha Ackelsberg and Myrna Breitbart spoke on their continuing research on the Spanish revolution focusing on organizing. George Benello talked about his present work organizing a worker-owned, self-managed automobile factory; and Peter Kardas addressed the politics of workplace organizing.

Summaries of the papers will be published in the Institute's planned newsletter, and some of the papers are being reviewed for *Our Generation*, *Black Rose*, and *Social Anarchism*. Reports and photographs from the conference will also appear in *Open Road* and *Strike*. Editors and representatives of all major anarchist publications (including French and Italian journals) were present. Many of us had a chance to exchange notes.

In the evening, Nicolle Laurin-Frenette and Noam Chomsky spoke to a public gathering of 500 people. Laurin-Frenette talked of the counter-revolutionary role of social scientists and Chomsky presented his now familiar indictment of American intellectuals. His talk was a massive documenting of the withholding of news and the distortion of history by mainstream media and academic professions. The presentations were well-received by the audience, and they held the speakers with questions for an hour. Many Institute members were privately critical of Chomsky's failure to place his materials in an anarchist framework.

On the following morning and afternoon the Institute members met. Three topics dominated the meeting: 1) the goals of



the institute; 2) the openness of membership (which included the matters of the wording of the Institute's statement of purpose and its dues); and 3) where and how to organize the next meeting.

The members agreed that the purpose of the Institute was to provide a means of building an anarchist intellectual community. The Institute was defined as being open to all writers, researchers, and teachers concerned with advancing the knowledge of anarchism in North America. The Institute statement was left unchanged though most agreed it was stuffy and overblown. (In all likelihood it will be revised next year.) Dues were set annually at $50 for employed persons who could afford it, and $20 for those with low incomes. It was agreed that no person would be denied membership if s/he could not afford it.

As part of the discussion on goals and dues, many people commented on the causes of past and unsuccessful organizing efforts. It was a common feeling that anarchist organizations, initiatives, and events have been so rare that when one occurs everyone flocks in the hope that it will satisfy their particular needs. The result has been a conflicting set of agendas and personal concerns, and organizing efforts have failed.

Institute members were quite open in expressing their felt need for a gathering of anarchist intellectuals. The emphasis in the discussion was on "intellectuals" and not on "academics." At least two-fifths of the membership had no academic ties. The members declared that anyone concerned with writing, studying, and teaching about anarchist ideas and practices is a welcome member. Anarchists with other interests were asked to organize themselves in whatever ways were appropriate.

Montreal was accepted as the central location of the Institute. The Institute members in Montreal would publish a newsletter and begin the development of an anarchist library and archive.

The next conference was set for June 1983. There was much discussion about whether to have a single or multiple issue focus for papers and workshops. A small majority favored multiple issues. The public part of the meeting will probably focus on sexual politics and the military and disarmament. Most likely the meeting will be held in Boston.

Howard J. Ehrlich



## 10% Pie

*Republicans baked (well, no, we should say "had baked for them") a 17 foot in diameter, 3 inch deep, 4,400 pound apple pie to try to celebrate on July 1st their new "welfare for the rich" tax cut scam. The phony symbol they wanted to project was that now, at last, all Americans were going to get a "bigger slice of the pie." But, as fat-cat puppet Senator Roth of Delaware was speaking to the assembled multitudes, five folk (dressed in stuffed clothes to represent Reagan's buddies Annenberg, Coors, Dart, Salvatore, & D. Rockefeller) jumped in the pie to dance, stomp, roll, & yell "All mine! All mine! This is my share!" while a woman dressed as Marie Antoinette Reagan passed out crumbs of a tiny little pie to the people, "The People's Share." The Republicans' carefully baked symbol, picked up by all the "major media," had been somewhat altered; and George Bush, arriving (one presumes with watering mouth) in his limousine to see that anarchy was in the ascendancy, was quickly whisked back from whence he had come. The following letter was written to Emancipation (during a brief stay in D.C.'s Central Cell-block) by a member of the Emancipation collective who had joined the Community for Creative Non-Violence in this bit of political mischief.*

We must respond to the crimes of a society that continues to build nuclear weapons while pretending that the starving will get a "piece of pie."

To the charge of "destruction of private property" we are, I feel, not guilty; we have rearranged certain property to show that Reagan's so-called tax cuts are merely another way of stealing food & shelter from the poor.

As for the charge of "disorderly conduct" (formerly, "disturbing the peace") . . . the rich are making war on the poor. When has a just order existed on this continent? There has been no peace here since my ancestors began stealing this land from the red women and men who lived here, and since my ancestors began enslaving the people of Africa in order to have the hardest work done free.

We are engaged in a non-violent, creative, anarchist revolution that aims to bring true peace and justice to this land for the first time in at least 500 years. We ask you to join us.

## Falklands?

of self-determination as an abstraction, depriving the individual or group of the right to govern and make decisions for themselves.

For a community to achieve and maintain the right of self-determination within the national-international arena demands an alternative structure of these interacting levels. Gar Alperovitz in "Towards a Decentralist Commonwealth" in *Reinventing Anarchy* deals with the complexities and difficulties that we should consider when we seriously argue for the reality of self-determination. There is no simple solution to such a complex undertaking, but in working from Wierck's principle (quoted above), it is possible to see more clearly the contradictions in our present structure.

# WOOF

the Notion of "responsible" opposing viewpoynts? It wouldnt be allowed. Hit wouldnt bee Responsibble.

*"Woof woof! Woof woof!" I barked.*
*"Woof! Woof, woof, woof!"*

Henry Miller, *Sexus*

This Sort Of Ideological Controule Reaches Very Very Deep Into The Way We Express Ourselves And Even The Waie Wee Thinkk. Even when offering a radical crit(EEK!) of this ideological cessdom, I must, in ordure to be took serially even buy raddiccles, not only stict to the poynt in a conventional way and refraine from introducing nasty inherently pleasing subjects like asslicking, but also confourm to the conventional Rools of spelling, punct!uation, and glamour. One cant for eggs ample rite this way. Woof!

*A despot doesn't fear eloquent writers preaching freedom—he fears a drunken poet who may crack a joke that will take hold.*

E.B. White

In presenting and arguing our Anarchist Philosophie—systematically, rigourously, even *scientifically* (and we must do this mind you)—we dont really constitute no threat to no one and at least I think we probably all know it, but we Are capable—by traducing, transcending, and making a reasonless, foul, obscene mockery of everything decent people cherishes, by reducing the Highest Principles of Reason, Form, and Intellectual Beauty to a sick joke, by tempering our language to our wicked purpose, by tearing down without bilding up—we are capable not perhaps of destroying the last shred of decency honor and respectabilitee much as we might like to but at least of doing some significant Damage, rendering decency a bit less decent, honor less honorable, respectabilitie a bit more depraved, grotesque, and perverted. Gosh.

*In the rich man's house there is nowhere to spit but in his face.*

Diogenes

Gertrude Stein perhaps the most consistently revolutionary 20th century figger viciously and vituperatively attacked the comma. Dear Gertrude Stein. The comma she said is *servile*. And it is. And so are we when we use it without really wanting to.

*Toasted susie is my ice-cream.*

Gertrude Stein, "Preciosilla"

Woof! Woof woof woof!

Kyd Wake