

[NOTE: In this article, and the rest of the series to follow it, my basic assumption is that my revolutionary readers already know what to do, and that my principle task is to show them how to do it. That is to say, these articles are not so much political as technical. Besides considering the rest of the material in this newspaper, if any reader doesn't know what to do without my telling him, that can only mean that he can't read, which makes the whole question academic.]

[One more thing: there's a whole class of true & worthy revolutionaries who'll reflexively object to my use of the word 'fun,' and to my idea that *The Revolution is the highest kind of fun*. I understand their feelings. This is a serious business, and we must approach it seriously. I couldn't agree more, but I insist that proper Revolutionary seriousness and my concept of revolutionary fun not only do not contradict each other, they are the same idea expressed in different ways. Let me define fun: anything a Free Man does because he wants to is Fun. The higher, the more profound, the more serious the undertaking, the greater the fun. Even though he'll most likely be killed doing it, even though it involves all & any manner of painful or frightening or unpleasant activities, if a Free Man does it because that's what he wants to do, it's fun, and if he also does it with true revolutionary Joy, it's not only fun, it's religion.]

[This is one difference between a Free Man & a slave. A slave does not act, he is acted upon. He does

Traditional organization theory, as followed by even the most radical organizations, is based on a framework of hierarchical structure, chains of command, positional power & control that's totally irrelevant to most of our revolutionaries & to all of our revolution. Structure in terms of linear sequence is more than obsolete in the present technological environment — a thing of synchronicity & circuits — it's virulent, a group pathology, neither functional nor fun: another stomping dinosaur. Who needs it?

The original five Diggers at their prime (and also before & ever since) were completely free of formal structure & quite infallible. They were no kind of organization, however informal, just a handful of good friends doing what they liked. Not until the Digger 'movement' acquired some accidental status & a donated office, not until the '2nd generation' arrived from L.A. & got things organized, not until then did the Digger Thing bog down, and the free food in the park stop, and the Haight Street scene begin to shade off towards ugly, and people on the street grow desperate & hard. This wasn't what brought the Flower Children down, but it helped.

The communication company likewise remained untainted by any leanings toward linear organization that I could sense. Our plans were devised by *The Book of Changes* & revised by anything that could. That we all lived together in the same pad was the extent of our formal structure. Otherwise we came as near to anarchy as

purest & most incandescent motives to begin from, and all devolve into monotonies of policy, authority, organization for the sheer sake of organization, and/or become beset with infiltration & informers. Neither the Peace & Freedom Party nor the UPS has proved to be immune to these blights, wherefore both have lately grown a bit irrelevant to what's happening. The Underground Press is, most of it, just another business now, and even the Panthers have been infiltrated right unto death.

Instead of any sort of American Revolutionary Party, I propose a casual association of revolutionary gangs, not bothering to coordinate or otherwise inhibit them, in no wise limiting their joyous independence, but caring only to maintain clear communications amongst them. A national urban-guerrilla league, fun-oriented & irresistible.

In our new world borning, we need to redefine 'revolution.' The determining factor should be the social change produced, not the manner of its production. Fuck leaders & uniformity, fuck all orthodoxy & sacred causes more important than people. A gang that playfully corrupts the mayor's teenage son produces more important & enduring changes than the strictly disciplined, grim & earnest assassination squad that gets his father does.

(Let some organized body lay plans to blow the power lines & Slam! you've got a bunch of busts & no lines down. But let a revolutionary gang, on the spur of any moment, decide it's time & would be fun to do those

THE REVOLUTIONARY GANG

Copyright 1970 by Chester Anderson

not have fun, he has entertainment. And whoever told you, oh my brothers, that fun must be comfortable?]

[EDITOR'S NOTE: How 'bout them sisters too?]

In the course of evolution normal for explosion-type processes, everything about the game has changed except the goal. Maybe 500 years' worth of history has happened in the 56 years since the first Modern Revolution was won, and all the rules have changed & changed again. In fact, it isn't even the same game anymore.

One of the things we've learned from Haight/Ashbury, the East Village Community, the holy Diggers, the communication company, the dear old Underground Press Syndicate, ol' P&F, and now the besieged Black Panthers and the Chicago 8, is that old-fashioned political parties & similar meeting-prone entertainments not only no longer work but are a collective stone drag as well.

It would appear that in our new society, organization flourishes at the expense of effectiveness, and that organization *per se* tends always to perpetuate itself & increase in size & scope like a galloping cancer until the original purpose of any organization withers like the State away to a scrap of sentiment & a rag of tradition wholly without meaning or importance — stealing the other school's mascot (a stuffed & mounted long-haired goat) and dying it green.

The CP/USA & other such liberal organizations are conspicuous examples of this. All organizations share this tendency toward atrophy.

And those organizations that manage for a while to avoid that trap are prone to an even worse ailment: infiltration. Any group so large that each member doesn't know every other member, any group large enough that members can be strangers to each other, is as subject to infiltration as spoiled beef is to flies. Any group that large is already infiltrated!

The nastiest testimony against the Chicago 8 came from a professional police spy who'd been Jerry Rubin's bodyguard. Most of the recent anti-Panther action has been 'justified' by undercover reports. Likewise, most dealers get busted for selling dope to The Man.

Remember the old joke about the Communist Party's being supported by dues-paying FBI agents? It's only funny because it's true.

Especially from our point of view, all orthodox modes of organization have been invalidated by America's conspiracy laws.

social animals can — not especially close — and had more fun than we knew what to do about.

We weren't even organized enough to feed ourselves. Partially because bookkeeping's such a hemorrhoidal bore, partially for experimental/ideological reasons, and a lot because prime Diggers B & G were monsters of hard-rapping charisma, we mostly worked for nothing, printing anything for anyone on the first free press to function in the country in this century. Naturally, then, the community supported us after its odd fashion, bringing us groceries & stolen paper, paying our rent & some of our bills, keeping us extravagantly high, and letting us in on everything that happened in that busy time & place. This is the tao of community, the good part of our prehuman socialization. We apes got to stick together, you know.

In contrast, all the out-of-town com/cos in our image that I visited were far better organized than we, far more efficient, infinitely more professional, and all protracted failures. They contracted serious cases of Leadership or developed crippling profit motives & went down. Purity of heart seems to spring from simplicity of motive: do it for anything but fun & it won't happen. This is good to know.

Both com/co & the Diggers were examples of what Marvin Garson of the lovely S.F. *Express* (now *Good Times*) called 'the revolutionary gang' — in the prevailing masscult climate, any bunch of people who are together because they like each other, doing in concert just about anything they please.

As a functioning social unit, the revolutionary gang has much to recommend it. It's a good machine to live in. Structurally, it's built more like an electronic device than anything else, connections being more important than sequences, pretty much along the lines of any working kidgang; which makes it more pertinent to here & now, and more likely to flourish unmolested by the Heat, than any group more formally structured could ever be. It's the loosest form of tribal organization known, the highest evolution so far of the revolutionary cell, the most relaxed form of commune imaginable, and exactly what, it seems, the time demands & Marshall McLuhan & the Hopi predict, wherein almost every social & emotional hangup raised by the clever 20th century is either resolved or neutralized. And it *does* things!

Political organizations as a class, on the other hand, no longer do much worth the doing. Even with the

same lines in and you've got you a darkened city & a freaked Establishment.)

We can't begin to match the Establishment's present firepower & other resources. They've got a monopoly on the technology of violence, and they invented the organization game & wrote all the rules. We can't beat them at their own things.

But there's been no Mace deployed yet to the future, and the kids give us unrestricted access to the middle of next week, and we have a monopoly on fun. The future is ours right now to make of what we will, and to turn on, ball or otherwise recruit & indoctrinate any kid at all, or to play almost any kind of outrageous joke on the dinosaurs around us, is, still, an act more politically significant even than Oswald's one-shot statement. And more fun, too...

Point is, we can't conduct the present, any part of it, with the techniques of the 19th century. The past belongs to The Man. The Industrial Revolution is over, and we lost.

The *I Ching* says, "Revolution means removal of that which is antiquated." Sweeping up after the dinosaurs. We know it won't remove itself, we're learning that we can't use its own methods against it. The antiquated plays its own games better than we can, it holds all the cards: it would further us to develop some new games. Make it all new!

The revolutionary gang is one such new thing.

If we really need the advantages of organization — and I suppose we do — we have to find new ways to get them, develop new forms & concepts of organization, avoid all old & established patterns like the Heat. The Establishment's ways are all Establishment traps & awkward to get out of. Look at any rich liberal. We're inventing, willy-nilly, our own future; why not invent our Revolution?

Instead of any sort of revolutionary Party/target, or any armed band of ethnic Maoist guerrillas, or any other such mass produced stereotype, something altogether different is necessary — anything altogether different — and if the opposition fails at first to recognize the revolutionary nature of our new toys, that's the opposition's problem.

Innovate now!

(Next issue: how to form your own revolutionary gang at home in your spare time without getting busted. Stay tuned.)