

Detroit Seen

Fifth Estate Collective

1980

Just when everything starts to look gloomy on a cold Detroit winter's day, along comes one of those rays of hope that helps keep up everyone's morale—a bank closing! This time it's those sleazes at the Feminist Federal Credit Union.

Writing in their newsletter, Financing Feminism, these bankers expressed a sense of loss over having to withdraw their Detroit offices from the balance sheet because of waning interest. They've decided to throw all their capital behind an Ann Arbor office. Too bad, bankers, but as they say in the world of high finance: "your loss is our gain." We only hope that your brothers in the money business will soon cash in their chips...

It's a toss-up as to which was worse, the government's prosecution of the stalinist Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) and its puffed-up chairman Bob Avakian or the small cult's graffiti which has been spraypainted on nearly every expressway bridge in Detroit calling for their release. Unfortunately for the spraypaint manufacturers, the government has dropped all charges against the 17 defendants, citing government "vindictiveness" for bringing felony charges against the accused following a brawl at an RCP demonstration in Washington D.C. a year ago.

It's also unfortunate for the RCP, we're sure. Now that all the press coverage the group received during the trial has gone the way of their guru Mao Zedong, the RCP's recruitment of muddle-headed middle-class graduate students must have fallen drastically. Don't be alarmed if you see the RCP call for a "JAIL BOB NOW" demo in hopes of reviving the good 'ol days...

One graffiti along the I-94 seemed to sum up the response of Detroit workers to the RCP campaign: "who the fuck is Bob Avakian?" And who cares, we might add...

It seems that the "Same Old Bunch of Malcontents" is at it again. This time, they've started a somewhat libertarian social club in what used to be the old Hoe Hoe Inn (an infamously terrible Chinese eatery). In a leaflet that the original collective put out to announce the Grinning Duck Club, the ten or so people who started the project said they were doing so "to do the things we want to do as free as possible from the constraints of proprietors or the necessity of merchandising in order to support those activities. Those of us who make up this initial group can be described variously, but what unites us at root is a desire to take back control of our lives—in particular over our creative activity from a society that wants only to package them and sell them back to us. We...subscribe to the notion that, rather than consume our 'entertainment,' we prefer to make it ourselves—whether it be dance, theater, art, films, radical publications or whatever."

The club has been open for one month now and in some respects it's been successful and not so in others. If you'd like to find out more about what the club is all about and what it takes to be a club member (there are 85 members so far), drop them a line at 4445 Second, Detroit, MI 48201 or stop in one Wed., Fri. or Sat. night...

While we have the good news of the Grinning Duck Club, we have the bad news of some local players suffering from a bad case of freezer burn. One late night in January, someone set fire to the old Freezer Theater (so named because it was located in an old meat locker). The building was totally gutted and since then the Freezer people have been performing their "beyond the fringe" theater at the "Duck" and Wayne State Univ. in attempts to raise money for a new place. Word has it that they will open up again, so keep your eyes and ears open...



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