

Detroit Seen

Fifth Estate Collective

2000

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2000 *Fifth Estate* which follows our Spring 2000 edition. This issue marks the 35th anniversary of this paper, now the longest running English language anarchist publication in U.S. history.

It's quite a legacy, one we continue to build on, but only with your ongoing support. Thanks to everyone who subscribed, renewed, sent donations (especially our Sustainers), bought books, came by, wrote articles and letters, sent graphics and photos, and a hundred other things that make issues happen.

Apologies are in order to a number of people who submitted articles and graphics which didn't appear in this issue, but never received a response from us. We are backed way up on our correspondence and will get letters out shortly to everyone who is expecting one. Thanks for your patience and support.

Our center four pages this issue are a special about the Democratic and Republican party conventions produced by our friends at Active Transformation.

For years we've placed mailing labels on subscriber issues and bookstore orders ourselves, but as of last issue, we turned the process over to the people who print our paper. Although, in the past, the mailing sessions turned into a combination social gathering, political discussion, and celebration, increasingly complex Post Office regulations and form preparation have convinced us that the task is best left to professionals.

It actually turns out to be a cost effective decision since we never could figure out the labyrinth of Post Office regulations and wound up mailing at the highest rates. The money we are spending on the mailing service is made up by what we save on lower postal costs.

One drawback was that as in any transition, a lot of addresses got screwed up. The mailing house program only "saw" two groups on the name line, so if you are James A. Jones, your label said only, James A. This was particularly unfortunate for prisoner subscribers who had their inmate number dropped, and the kind people who run American dungeons refuse to take any mail without them. They were all returned.

Also, the program only read three lines which meant numerous people with four line addresses including almost all of the foreign subscribers were returned.

So, if you missed last issue (the one with the Seattle cover), drop us a line and we'll send you a replacement.

During the June anti-OAS demos the Fifth Estate printed a joint special edition (see below) with Active Transformation, many of whose activists were at the core of the organizing for the event.

It was a two-sided broadsheet that described the Free Trade Area of the Americas scam, a "Welcome to Detroit," article describing for visitors what to expect in the Motor City, and a blast against capitalism. A few copies remain, and are available for 55 cents postage or with book orders.

Ann Arbor's Labadie Collection is featuring a new exhibit entitled "A Legacy for the Masses: Jo Labadie (1850-1933) and His Gift to Michigan."

It will be on display through November 22 as the archive, a noted repository of numerous anarchist papers, mounts its first exhibit on the life of this influential labor activist and Detroit anarchist. Included in the exhibit will be portions of Labadie's original 1912 gift of his papers to the library.

An October 18 symposium was held in conjunction with the exhibit exploring Labadie's life and contributions to the early labor and radical movements. Speakers included Carlotta Anderson, author of *All-American Anarchist: Joseph A. Labadie and the Labor Movement* (available through our book page; see review, Summer 1999 FE); Paul Avrich, the American scholar of anarchist history, and Philip P. Mason, archivist, labor historian, editor and author of numerous books on Michigan history.

The exhibit is open to the public. For information about the exhibit, contact the Labadie Collection at 734—764—9377. Additional information about the archive and the events are available at <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/SpecColl.lib/LabExh.html>.

There has been an air of seeming political ecumenicism present in the Detroit resistance movement recently, particularly since Seattle.

Uncharacteristically, members of usually squabbling leftoid sectlets peacefully plan demonstrations together. Even local anarchists sit quietly in meetings with them, sort of in a state of denial about the authoritarian nature of marxist groups, or, perhaps, given the collapse of police state socialism, hoping they have changed their spots.

In fact, most of the Left seems little more than liberal reformers, barely mentioning their discredited ideology, and only timidly bringing out their boring papers, a thankful change from their previous Jehovah Witness-like persistence.

But alas, little has changed. The left's promotion of the remaining rotten communist dictatorships seems no different from the days when they touted Stalin, Mao, or even Albania's Enver Hoxha as the embodiment of the proletarians' longing for a socialist society. In the case of Cuba, perhaps it's because the little island is the perennial target of the U.S. government and right-wing whacko exiles, and it's easier for them to ignore the Castro regime's anti-democratic and repressive features.

So, local leftists were positively delighted when a visiting delegation of Cuban trade union bureaucrats stopped in Detroit, August 13 and 14, to address a meeting on Cuban/American relations. Do they really not know that labor organizations in socialist countries function solely to police the workers and to assure state production norms are met and that the Cuban variety are no different?

Are they really oblivious to the fact that any attempt to form independent unions in Cuba is quickly squelched as "counterrevolutionary," and those with the temerity to do so are dispatched to prison? Can they really ignore that no strikes are permitted—a boss's dream?

The leftists constituting the US/Cuba Labor Exchange in Detroit, who invited the officials from the Cuban Workers Federation (CTC), give workers in this country an insight into the plans they have for labor in this country.

All big cities have their share of psycho cops, but Detroit has recently gained the unfortunate title of Killer Kop Kapital of the U.S. where officers kill more citizens than in any other town.

One cop, Ernest Brown, shot nine people in six years, three fatally, all with multiple shots, and all ruled "justifiable." Another, David Krupinski, shot a deaf man with a rake twice. Because of citizen pressure the latter was charged with manslaughter and Brown's shootings have been reopened.

Attention Prisoners

Even if you requested a free subscription, if this is the first issue of the paper you've received, you will not automatically be put on our subscribers' list unless you fill out the blank further back in this issue and indicate you are a prisoner.

Also, due to a departure of a Fifth Estate staff member, we can no longer fill book requests for imprisoned subscribers. Another source is Books To Prisoners, 92 Pike St., Box A, Seattle WA 98101.

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/355-fall-winter-2000/detroit-seen>
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