The daily battle

by Freddie Baer

The war begins early in the morning. Your body stiffens to attention as it's wrenched from slumber. You goosestep as you sleepwalk through your routines, awake but not aware. Preparing for the daily battle, you arm yourself psychologically: you layer on your character armor and sharpen your wits so you can claw your way to the top.

You join the forced march to work, blending into the battalion of the battered. Your eyes look neither to the left nor right, but stare straight ahead unseeing as you match the cadence of the crowd. The hostilities have begun.

I makes no difference whether you type letters for the Bank of America, make pizza dough for Blondies, cashier for Safeway, pump gas for Chevron, or somehow sell your labor in a thousand different ways in a thousand different places, you are still a front line soldier for the corporate state. You may have been drafted, you may have volunteered, but you have taken your place in the strategies of capital.

Survey the battleground: the workplace is strewn with psychic corpses, their backbones yanked out and their souls bled out of them. Squads of mercenary automatons patrol, issuing senseless orders. Under continual bombardment from above, you hold your position, constantly on the offensive.

You can find moments of camaraderie in the trenches, as a human esprit de corps infiltrates through enemy lines, but the captains of industry fire away, and the monotonous siege resumes.

Finally, you serve your time for the day. Shellshocked from another skirmish of labor, you shuffle off to leisure time where the battle begins again. This is a more insidious battle than work because you may think you're gone AWOL from the corporate army. In reality, you've just been transferred to another front.

You double-time it to the stores where your senses are assaulted by platoons of useless consumer goods. You are convinced that your uniform is hopelessly outdated, that you can only survive another day dressed in brand new fatigues, which will, of course, become outdated the next day. You give your pay to the soldier still on duty behind the cash register, unable to see the treadmill you are marching on.

On to the next theater of operations: there remains popular culture to be consumed. You have fun getting brainwashed that you're having fun, and the M.P.'s are there to make sure that you don't have too much fun.

Finally, suffering battle fatigue, you collapse into bed, con-

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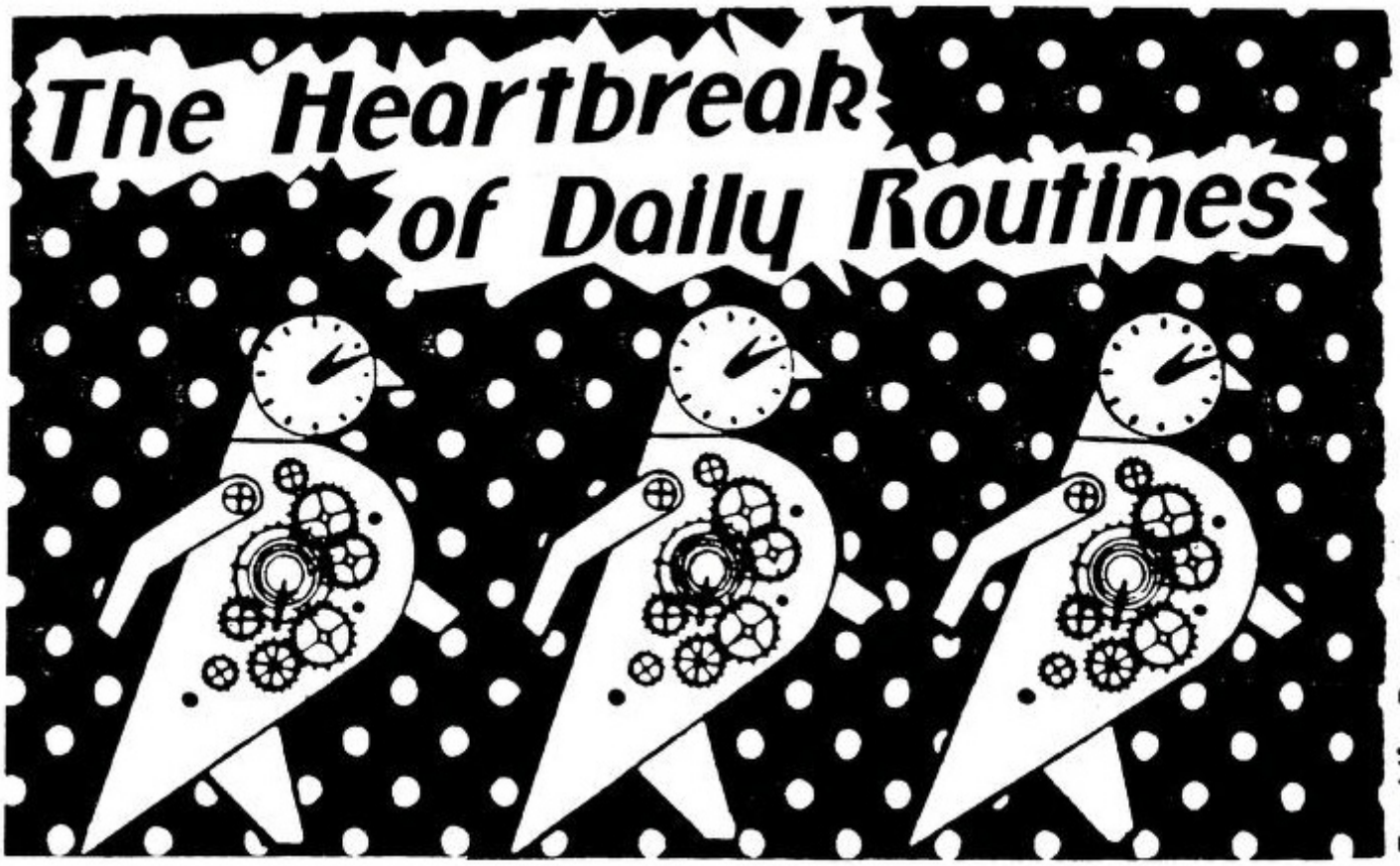

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fined to barracks yet another night. The War against your humanity continues.

This war must end, and its ending begins with you. You need to become a conscientious objector and reject the militarization of your life. You must learn to say no and to realize why you say no and how you say no.

Desert the foxhole of your isolated alienation and reach out in quiet, honest words to your fellow draftees, touching in them chords of resistance. Form an underground of sensuousness, discover new tactile tactics, strategies in being human. There is pleasure to be found in small acts of defiance. Sabotage can be subtle and continuous, short and sweet.

Because if you don't resist the advance of corporate capital, if you surrender your sanity and self to the marching minions of madness, we will all end up prisoners of war in a runaway cattle car hurtling to the concentration camp of their bleak future.