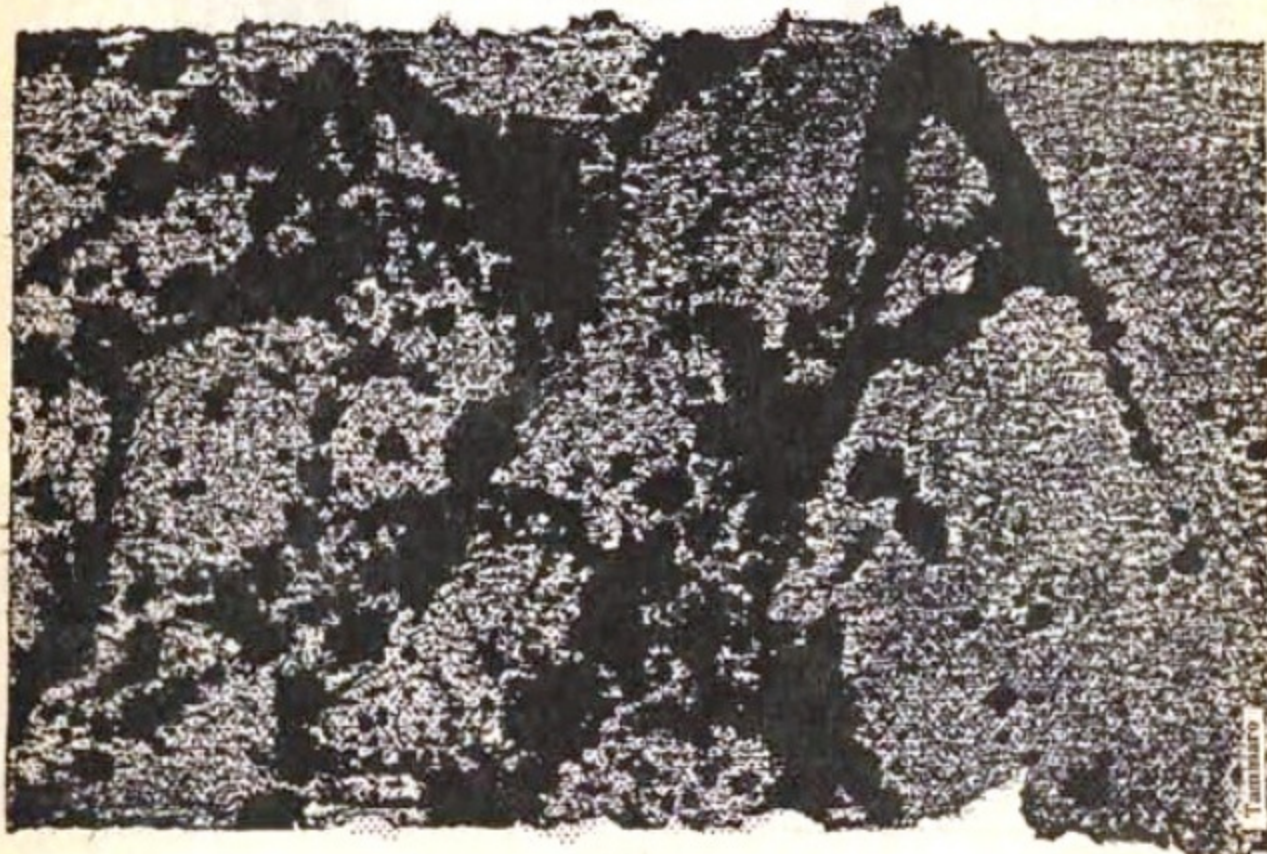


KICK IT OVER

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NO. 17 VISIONING THE FUTURE WINTER '86/'87

ART AND COMMUNITY RED AND GREEN: GORZ AND BAHRO KIRKPATRICK SALE INTERVIEW
ANARCHY IN TORONTO: AN ORAL HISTORY ANARCHY DOWN ON THE FARM ECO-FEMINISM



Tamburini

Guardian of the Dream

A Oral History with Art Berthelot



Art Berthelot was born in Italy in 1903 and resided there until his late teens. During his youth he experienced the rising political turmoil in Europe that would lead to WWI and later contribute to the rise of fascism. Although political as a demagogue, the imperialist nature of WWI convinced him that he would not submit to conscription. Thus, having decided he would not participate in a "rich kings" war, Art emigrated to Canada.

From there on, his political education proceeded by leaps and bounds. He began to meet socialists and anarchists, to participate in political groups and to disseminate propaganda amongst workers.

Art was deeply committed to the fight against fascism, both in Canada and in Europe, and was directly involved in supporting the struggles of the anarchists in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. Art was a close companion of Emma Goldman during the last few years of her life.

In May 1986 Ron Hayley and Alexandra Devon interviewed Art; his testimony provides us with a rich oral history of the development of anarchist activities in early- to mid-twentieth century Ontario and Michigan. The story picks up from the point of his arrival in Windsor, Ontario in 1920....

...Before the year (1919) was over, I wrote a letter to a brother of mine who was in Windsor, Ontario to ask that he send me the immigration papers. I had already made up my mind to get away, that I wouldn't be a soldier for anybody, and I wanted to come to Canada. So my brother sent me the papers...We had to wait until 1920 before we left. Without knowing anything about political parties, or anything like that, I had made up my mind not to become a soldier. I told my mother, "Mama, I'll see you in twenty years", because there was a law that you had to stay twenty years out of Italy or else you would have to serve a jail term plus a term in the army if you returned before that.

So I came, I arrived in Windsor, and

started to work as a blacksmith. After a little while I met older people, but I didn't know anything about ideals. I knew that some were calling themselves socialists, some anarchists, but I didn't know what the hell they were. I started to go to school to learn the language. Then one day I read a leaflet about Sacco and Vanzetti and I got interested. Besides that, somebody I knew was receiving newspapers from Italy, and they were reading and finding out that the fascists were already killing all their adversaries. So I began to ask questions of a couple of anarchists that were in Windsor, and I became interested. I didn't call myself an anarchist right away, but in 1922, one Saturday evening I said, "I am an anarchist, I feel that I am an anarchist now."

From there on I stayed in Windsor, and began to fight the Fascists. They hated me and I hated them. Then I got sick and the doctor told me that I should get a job outside. My brother was a mason contractor, he was building houses and buildings, and he had gone to Detroit in 1925. So he says, "If you want to come you can, but you have to start at the bottom. You've got to be a labourer for at least six months because I got two other young fellows that want to become bricklayers, and I don't want to make an injustice by giving you priority." And I thanked him, and said OK, and I started to carry the hod full of bricks and mortar up the ladder -- it was a hell of a job! But anyway, I felt fairly good, and I liked it in a way. But the second winter I couldn't stand the cold. I used to put one trowel full of mortar on the bricks and it would freeze right away. So I said, to hell with this. I went and changed my name and applied for a job at Ford. I got a job right away as a lathe hand tool maker. There I worked until I was arrested for distributing political leaflets on August 22, 1929.

Before -- in Detroit, with all the affairs we had against the fascists -- I always dodged arrest. But when I was arrested I got so goddamned mad, and the injustice that was done to Sacco and Vanzetti was so bad...Anyway, I got over

that and moved to Toronto.

When I got to Toronto I didn't know anybody. The year after I was here a young anarchist came to see his sister in the city. Before leaving Pennsylvania he had written to New York to get my address. He knew that I was in Toronto because he saw my contributions to a paper I was working on. They sent my address and he came over. It was around the end of July at the time. So we got together and one night he says, "We should do something to remember Sacco and Vanzetti." "But what are we going to write, I'm not a writer?" "I'm not a writer either," he said, "but between us let's try and do something." So we concocted this leaflet, and then I took it to a comrade to have it printed -- and we printed 1,000 copies. So now I said, "What the hell are we going to do with them, I don't know anybody?" That was in 1931.

I have been here all the time with Jews," I said. I met all the Jews and then a few Russians, but there weren't any Italians. "Anyway," he says, "let's go." "I know somebody at two or three places, we'll start there." "We'll ask, where are all the Italians?"

Then we found an Italian who called himself a socialist. He said, "Oh yes, I remember Sacco and Vanzetti." We asked, "Do you know of any anarchists in Toronto?" He said, "There is one guy that calls himself an anarchist. He's a very nervous guy but still very friendly." So we went, we met him, and he's still alive in St. Catharines. He phoned the other day -- 89 years old -- Ben Venuti. So anyway, after a while we got together, and we started to go around and there were some anti fascists. So we started to work with them, and then we found out that there was a socialist led anti-fascist organization that were meeting at the Labour Lyceum at Spadina and Dundas. So we started to go there, and the two of us became members, just to try it, to see if we could get someone on our side. One Sunday, after three months, they challenged me to a debate. After the debate, six came out, shook hands and said, "Let us start a libertarian group, an

anarchist group." And that's what we did.

We did a lot of propaganda during 1932-1934. In 1934 we started to print *Libertarian*. We had an old duplicator -- hell what a job! Four pages, six pages maximum. We tried our best but we had no one who was a writer. But what the hell! We were all workers and semi-illiterate as we were, or less, because many were totally illiterate at the time, the old Italians you know.

Then we used to go from here to Windsor, back and forth, and there we got a group going and we used to have picnics. Emma Goldman came in 1934 and I met her. She stayed in Toronto for a while, and she delivered three lectures which were a masterpiece at the Hygeia Hall. She stayed at Langbords on Clinton Street. The title of the first lecture was "Hitler and His Cohorts". There were about 2,000 people there. Of course, the Jews felt that they wanted to hear what Hitler was doing, although he had just begun to persecute the Jews then.

Then Emma got a permit to go to the States. She asked for six months and they gave her three months, warning her not to speak on anarchism. She accepted it, and discussed it with me one evening, and I said, "You're prostituting yourself Emma." She looked at me -- you should have seen it -- this fiery, deadly look. She resented it very much. But when she came back, she said, "Art you were right." We became really close friends after that.

Then Dorothy Rogers got involved. She was a CCFer. She was born in England and came to Canada. She was married to a Dutchman and was living in Scarborough Bluffs. She was a very intelligent, very nice woman. She came to hear Emma give two lectures on anarchism after returning from the States. She had heard about anarchism but hadn't read much. In the following interval of a few months she had read, and then one day she said to Emma, "I'm glad to call you a comrade." At that time we had organized the international group who were Jews, Italians, Swedes, Bulgarians. There were about fifteen to eighteen in the group and Dorothy became a member.

We kept up the activities against the fascists and then the Spanish revolution came. That brought great enthusiasm to everybody. We were invited several times to make a united front with the socialists and communists and we always refused. They used to call us "You goddamned anarchists, you are worse than the fascists." But when the time came in 1937 the communists tried to conquer Barcelona, and by doing that they destroyed the lives of thousands of anarchists, including Camillo Berneri who was the best mind of the Italian international movement. That gave me force to fight, and I fought during that time the communists more than the fascists, after the tragedy in Barcelona and throughout Catalonia.

Then in 1938 the Italian fascist ghoul came into sight. We knew a militant republican, whom we got along well with, who was a very strong anti-fascist. One day was the city communal election and he asked the mayor, "Why do you allow a fascist school in Windsor?" And the mayor says, "I don't know anything about it, can you give me some proof?" "I may not be able to do it right away but in a few weeks I'll bring it to you." So the next day the leader of the fascists said, "I'll give \$500 dollars to any charity in Windsor if anyone of these lousy anti-fascists can prove that our school is a fascist school paid by the Italian government." So the republican called me there, we discussed the matter and I came back. He went to Detroit to collect all the necessary proof and I did the same in Toronto. Finally he shoved the responsibility of telling the public on my shoulders. I said, "Goddamn it, I can't do it." "Well," he said, "I can't do it, my English is worse than yours." So when I saw that nobody else would accept it, I accepted. I presented the proof in the hall of Patterson Collegiate, where I went to School in 1920, where I got the first lessons in the English language. I did my best. I presented it and it was successful. Then I came back three days later and I started to get phone calls from the fascists. "Prepare yourself, it won't be long before you'll be dead," and all that. I said to myself, "Alright, aim straight because the second will be you." For the first time in my life I carried a revolver. Then of course the fascists always tried to go where I was working, tried to get me fired, etc.

Soon after, war was declared. Canada declared war on September 4, 1939. We discussed the pros and cons and said, "What are we going to do? Are we going to go with France and England against Italy? We're not going to make Kropotkin's mistake. One is equal to the other, so we better keep our position unaltered."³

On October 4th, just one month after war was declared, in the early morning, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the "Red Squad" came and arrested us. They put all kinds of charges against us -- charges of revolvers. We had two broken revolvers that we used when we gave plays to raise money to send to the anti-fascist cause in Europe; and literature, propaganda against the war, which was considered a great offense.

After a month we were tried and found innocent of the charges. The lawyer Cohen came and said, "Hello Art, and we put an arm around me and we were walking down the hall and at the door I was told, "Art Bethelot, you're under arrest, we're from the immigration department." So the lawyer says, "What's the charge?" "Entering Canada without our permission." That went back ten years before, when I re-entered Canada from Detroit. So they brought me in and I stayed in the Don Jail in Toronto until

January 14th, 1940. For over a week I was sick in bed and they just gave me aspirins and one glass of milk, in the name of democracy. Then they got me out on bail. When they opened the door I walked out and there I saw Emma. Shawls over her face -- it was a cold day!

Anyway Emma took me home and she said, "Stay here until you are well." I stayed there for about five or six days then I went back to Ben Venuti's where I was boarding. Emma would come there every afternoon around noon to one o'clock just to take my blood pressure and pulse and see whether I had fever and to give me an alcohol rub. She would come alone because she wrote letters that Dorothy Rogers would type while she was at my place. Ben Venuti's place was on Brandon Avenue, near Gladstone.

As soon as I got well I decided to go and look for a job because money was scarce. We spent a lot of money. Of course some came from the States, but here things weren't so good. I went and I couldn't get a job. They had ads galore in the paper -- tool makers wanted, machinists wanted, and I couldn't get one. Some recognized my face because my picture was in the paper. And some --

Then when he found out that I was Italian he said, "You know I thought you were Dutch." Anyway I stayed there for over a year and a half.

As soon as I got the job, naturally I was happy because I had already promised Emma to rent a house and go together, the three of us -- Dorothy Rogers, Emma and myself. I would pay the rent, and pay the bills. The rent was nothing. Because for \$30 to \$35 dollars you could rent a six to eight room house at the time.

But the stamps! See Emma used more money for stamps than we needed for rent. She wrote between 100,000 and 200,000 letters in her lifetime. Nobody knows for sure exactly how many.

Then one Friday or Saturday night I was out picking up sympathizers and comrades in my car to have a little chat. It was the seventeenth of February, the anniversary of the burning at the stake of Giordano Bruno, a monk who had taken the task of propagating Copernicus' ideas on the universe, which were tabooed, naturally, during the time of the Spanish Inquisition.⁴ Anyway I picked up Jack and Sylvia Fitzgerald at the corner of Bathurst and Dundas. As they got in, Jack says, "Come fast, Emma got a stroke and

Then she came home and she seemed to be improving but her speech had gone, all she could do is grunt.

The last thing was the fourth man that was arrested during the War Measures Act, Joachim, had come out. He was given so many days to get out of Canada to Mexico because the lawyer had succeeded in getting a permit to enter Mexico. I brought him there that afternoon because in the evening I had to be near Niagara Falls to hand him over to the smugglers because there was no way to go to Mexico from Canada other than crossing the States, and the great democracy wouldn't allow that. So I said to the lawyer Cohen, "What the hell are we going to do?" I said, "I know, I can find a way." "I know how to get him to Mexico, to get him from Canada through the States." "How?" "I know some smugglers," I said. "You're telling me that," he shouted. And he became violent for a moment. I said, "Hey, come on Cohen, you're not that stupid." "What other ways are there?" "Find me another way." He says, "Don't mention it to me again."

So I brought Joachim to say goodbye to Emma. Dorothy bent over her and she said, "Look, Joachim is going to Mexico; they finally gave him consent to go." You could see she almost had a smile. Then she got excited, and she started to point with one finger towards her study. At that moment we didn't know what the hell. I was on one side of the bed and Dorothy the other. Joachim was beside there too. We didn't know what the hell to see. Finally I said, "Could it be that she wants something from the study?" So Dorothy said, "Could it be a file?" So she came out with her letters file, she had A, B, C, D. She brought it near to Emma. Emma looked and looked, -- no, no, no... So Dorothy gave it to me, I brought it back and picked the other one. The fourth or fifth file she said yes. Dorothy opened it up and there was a letter. The last letter she had from a Jewish anarchist that had killed the president of Argentina. This comrade had gone from Spain where he was fighting, and was liberated to Mexico via North Africa, Casablanca or another port on the Atlantic. He had changed his address. She was so excited because she wanted us to give the new address to Joachim so that he could have somebody to go and see in Mexico. That brought tears from my eyes, the emotion was so high.

On May the fourteenth 1940 Emma died. And the great American republic opened its doors to her corpse because she wanted to be buried beside the Chicago martyrs who were her inspiration. She became an anarchist through them, just like I did through Sacco and Vanzetti. So, that's life....

FOOTNOTES

1. Sacco and Vanzetti were two Italian anarchist immigrants to the United States who were framed and executed in 1927 for the murder of a paymaster during a robbery in 1921.

2. The *Cooperative Commonwealth Federation* (CCF), was the more radical forerunner of the New Democratic Party (NDP) of Canada. The CCF had its heyday in the early- to mid-twentieth century.

3. Kropotkin, a late nineteenth-early twentieth century Russian anarchist and author of *Mutual Aid*, supported the Allies during World War I.

4. Copernicus proposed that the earth rotated around the sun, which was contrary to theological convention which asserted that the sun revolved around the earth. □



Bethelot, you know -- with an Italian name I was an enemy. Even though Italy was not at war with Canada and Britain at the time. So one day I went into six shops and they all refused me. Then, I had one more which was not far from us in the west end. So I changed my name to sound more Anglo-Saxon. So I went, and the guy that interviewed me was a Dutchman. I wasn't bald then, I was dark blond. He took me for a Dutchman! He said, "OK, we'll let you know tomorrow." They called me back and they gave me a job.

she was wild." From there I took Bathurst and I went up, I didn't stop at any red lights or anything. I got to Vaughan, and there she was trying to pull her skirt down over her knees. Just imagine Emma, she didn't give a damn about whether she showed the face or other sexual organs. But naturally part of her mind of her youth was commanding her, with the arm that wasn't affected by the stroke, to pull down the skirt so as not to show her knees. Poor Emma. Emma stayed about three weeks to a month in the hospital.



VISIONING THE FUTURE - AN EDITORIAL

by Alexandra Devon

In some native languages, the term for "elder" means "guardian of the dream". In our visioning the future issue we want to acknowledge that the vision or dream we are carrying into the future is part of a gift from our elders. Because as anarchists or anti-authoritarians, we don't belong to an organic community, finding our elders and knowing our history is not always easy. We face geographical and generational barriers which keep us from having the sense of continuity and solidarity with people who share our values.

A native elder watching a stomp dance in Oklahoma described how the dance represents their connectedness: "That line of dancers, that's the way we're made. You hear the leader call and the dancers echo him. That call is related to the last dancer in the line... You hear the dancers echo the call, so you know [the leader] must have called something, and you echo that call, thinking you're the last. But you hear the call going on back behind you... and you turn around, and see your son and his son behind, going clear back beyond the horizon, dancing behind."

For many of us the first "echo" we hear comes from a book, a song or a magazine. Friends of mine who first "discovered" anarchism through the writings of Emma Goldman were quite certain that there were no anarchists alive today, until a subversive clerk at the World's Biggest Bookstore sold them a tacky little fanzine (K.I.O. #1 in 1981) under the counter, when they asked where they could find literature on anarchism.

As anarchists we are often isolated from our contemporaries, thinly spread as we are all over the world. We are also often ignorant of our own history and of those people who have kept alive an anarchist vision. Yet this doesn't need to be the case. Our teachers and comrades are there for the finding. Although not always self-identified anarchists, there are many people sympathetic to and practicing an anarchist vision. Many tribal people were anarchists long before the term meant anything to the Europeans who tried to destroy their way of life. Feminists who believe that power, not sex, lies beneath our most profound oppression (although sexual oppression may have been the first manifestation of it) and bioregional-oriented people who want to decentralize society into egalitarian, ecological communities are among our fellow dancers whether we or they realize it or not.

We at Kick It Over have been lucky that so many important teachers have seen a commonality between our vision and theirs and have helped us to understand these connections and our history. Mildred Loomis (of the School of Living), Art Solomon (Native spiritual leader), Jake Swamp (Chief of the Wolf clan), Murray Bookchin (of the Social Ecology Institute), Roberta Blackgoat (elder from Big Mountain) and Gary Moffat are just a few of the teachers who have shared their wisdom with us and in the process have helped us to understand that the aspirations and dreams we have are not ours alone and that they are not something we will outgrow, a "phase" to be passed through on the road to the mature cynicism of adulthood.

In this issue we have part of a longer interview with Art Berthelot, an anarchist who was born in Italy just after the turn of the century and is as passionately committed to his ideals as ever. In telling us about his life and activism in Canada and the United States, Art teaches us about our own history as well. It is a reminder that anarchist history is made up of more than the obvious luminaries of the movement.

I have often introduced Art to people who have heard that he was a friend of Emma Goldman's. Their first question is often (predictably), "What was she like?" Art, whose principled hatred of the Catholic church would not allow him to exchange one type of hagiography [writing of the lives of saints -ed.] for another, would answer quite frankly that Emma was quite "irascible". I think he would say this to impress upon people that she was human like the rest of us. He would then go on to talk about her in all her complexity and contradictions. By the end of the conversation, you could not mistake his love and appreciation for her but it was her human qualities that you understood most deeply.

Art's relationship with Emma was a special one. She worked with determination on his behalf to keep him from being deported to Mussolini's Italy, after he had been arrested (on some flimsy charges) following the declaration of the War Measures Act in Canada in 1939. In the letters which she wrote to elicit support on his behalf, she describes him as being among the finest comrades. Due in large part to her efforts, he was finally

released and allowed to remain in Toronto.

Art described his release on a bitterly cold snowy January day. As he walked out of the doors of the jail, Emma waiting for him. He was quite sick as a result of his stay in prison and Emma insisted on travelling across town every day to nurse him (one of Emma's talents). Art was determined that once he was well he would take care of Emma and eliminate her constant worrying about money. In May of that same year, Emma died so that Art was never able to accomplish this dream.

Art has remained committed to anarchist ideals and in touch with each new generation of anarchists. He's lent us at this magazine strong moral support and through his appreciation of our work given us a sense of being connected to a rich tradition through more than just the printed word.

This connection through our elders (such as Art, Murray Bookchin, Mildred Loomis and others) is invaluable; it grounds us in a long tradition of people seeking to transform society in accordance with a vision of how things ought to be. Although each generation finds itself confronted with changed conditions and must ultimately choose its own path, they echo part of the call of the dancers ahead.

As important as our elders are to us, we are to them. We create a human chain from the past into the future of people trying to create a realm of freedom and a new age of caring. So this issue, concerned as it is with visioning the future, is dedicated to all guardians of the dream - past, present and future. □

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We finish this issue with about a \$1500 debt. All contributions cheerfully accepted. People who would like to distribute the magazine are encouraged to contact us. Readers and writers, please note: we are swamped with mail. So if you don't receive a response right away, or you're not receiving your issues, be persistent. Because of mailing costs, if you are requesting any back issues or a sample of a current issue, we will be holding these until our next mass mailing, unless you ask us to send immediately. Also, please let us know if you are going to be moving (or are getting paroled). Getting issues sent back is extremely costly (we have to pay the return postage).

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From the age of of Caring

by Judith Plant

It is no accident that the concept of eco-feminism has emerged from the many tendencies within the movement for social change. Women and nature have had a long association throughout history and it is only now that the deepest meanings of this association are being understood. Just as environmentalists have paid critical attention to the attitudes, social structures and rationalizations that have allowed the rape of the earth, so have feminists dug deeply to understand why society has rendered them second-class citizens, at best.

Both schools of thought are converging with similar analyses. The interesting and extremely important difference is that ecologists are scientists, basing their views on the intellect, whereas feminists cannot help but come from the school of experience. This is not to say that ecologists don't have feelings, or that feminists aren't capable of intellectual thought. Ecologists are often passionate when they speak for the earth. Their passion, however, is most often based on an intellectual understanding of the importance of the interconnectedness of all things. Feminists, on the other hand, have sought intellectual frameworks in order to try to make sense of their experience of subjugation. The coming together of the two gives us hope for an understanding of the world that has the potential to be rooted in "thinking feelingly".

Ecology and Women

Ecology is the study of the interdependence and interconnectedness of all living systems. As ecologists look at the consequences of changes in the environment, they are often compelled to be critical of society. Because the natural world has been thought of as a resource, and as raw material for human refinement, it has been exploited without regard for the life that it supports. We are becoming aware that human beings are amongst the life that it supports, and that if we continue to abuse nature, we do so at our own peril. Social ecologists seek ways to harmonize human and non-human nature and it is, therefore, a reconstructive science. It explores questions of how humans can meet their requirements for life and still live in harmony with their environments. To realize that we are part of an ecosystem means to recognize and be sensitive to the transactional relations within it.

Ecology teaches us that life is in a constant state of change, as species seek ways to fit in particular environments which are, in turn, being shaped by the diversity of life within and around them. The soil beneath our feet is always in motion, the seasons change, life is constantly moving. Adaptation is a process. Ecology helps develop an awareness of the need to incorporate these organic facts into our most general views of the world - those views that shape the way humans will be

in the world.

Within human society, the idea of hierarchy has been used to justify social domination, and has been projected onto nature, thereby establishing an attitude of controlling the natural world. The convergence of feminism with ecology is occurring because of an increasing awareness that there are, in fact, no hierarchies in nature. A belief in the virtues of diversity and non-hierarchical organization is shared by both views.

Women have long been associated with nature: metaphorically, as in "Mother Earth", as well as with the naming of hurricanes and other natural disasters! Our language says it all: a "virgin" forest is one awaiting exploitation, as yet untouched by man. In society, too, women have been associated with the physical side of life. Our role has been "closer to nature", our "natural" work centered around human physical requirements: eating, sex, cleaning, the care of children and sick people. We have taken care of day-to-day life so that men have been able to go "out in the world", to create and enact methods of exploiting nature, including other human beings. Then to return to a home-life which waits in readiness. (A man's home is his castle.)

Historically, women have had no real power in the outside world, no place in the decision-making. Intellectual life, the work of the mind, has traditionally not been accessible to women, due in part to society's either/or mentality, coupled with a valuing of the ethereal over the natural. Today, however, ecology speaks for the earth, for the "other" in human/environmental relationships; and feminism speaks for the "other" in female/male relations. And eco-feminism, by speaking for the original others, seeks to understand the interconnected roots of all domination, and ways to resist and change.

The "Other"

The view of the "other" held by feminists and ecologists is non-hierarchical, and as such does not objectify the other. Rather, the other is regarded as one whom we, as subjects, are dependent on and interconnected with. The eco-feminist's task is one of developing the ability to take the place of the other when considering the consequences of possible actions. In relation to nature, humans, with their capacity to consider the future, will carefully reflect on disturbances in the environment that their actions will cause; we learn to think and act with the environment. The same is true in our relations with each other. Learning to consider our actions in terms of the "other" -- as equal subjects in decision making -- is quite different from the paternalistic, self-interested attitude of our present world. Here, the "other" is essentially different from, and subordinate to, the dominant subject. The whole notion of the "other" is part of the process of objectification which sets



power, to the age

an eco-feminist perspective

up a situation allowing for the subjugation of the object. When people objectify something, they are, by separating themselves from it, obscuring the reality of their connectedness with that "other". Simply put, it becomes a way of forgetting that we are all part of one another. In the case of nature, forgetting that it is the source of all life; and, with respect to women, forgetting that we and our attitudes and experience and ways of being in the world are fundamental to society.

Why does patriarchal society want to forget its biological connections with nature? And why does it seek to gain control over life in the form of women, other peoples, or nature? And what, on earth, can we do about dismantling this process of domination? What kind of society could live in harmony with its environment? These questions form the basis of the eco-feminist perspective.

First some historical notes about the long-standing association of women and nature.

WOMEN AND NATURE: The Power of an Image

Societies have always had stories which explained who the people were, where they came from, and how they should act. Anthropologists have called them myths and legends, which from our scientific modern society seems to somehow trivialize them. Science, however, is only our story, and it is no more a complete story than are Hopi legends. All stories guide action; they are the product of reflection and as such, tell us much about the material and social conditions of the society of the storyteller. In trying to understand the association of women with nature, we can look to the stories that pre-date our modern view of the world.

Before the world was mechanized and industrialized, the metaphor that explained self, society and the cosmos was the image of organism. This is not surprising, since most people were connected with the earth in their daily lives, being peasants and living a subsistence existence. The earth was seen as female. And with two faces; one, the passive, nurturing mother; the other, wild and uncontrollable. Thus the earth, giver and supporter of life, was symbolized by woman, as was the image of nature as disorder, with her storms, droughts and other natural disasters.

These images served as cultural constraints. The earth was seen to be alive, sensitive; it was considered unethical to do violence toward her. Who could conceive of killing a mother, or of digging into her body for gold, or of mutilating her? In relation to mining, people believed that minerals and metals ripened in the uterus of the earth; they compared mines to Mother Earth's vagina, and metallurgy itself was an abortion of the metal's natural growth cycle. So, rituals were carried out by miners, offerings to the gods of the soil and subterranean

world; ceremonial sacrifices, sexual abstinence, and fasting were conducted and observed before violating what was considered to be sacred earth.

Anthropologists claim that changes in stories usually lag slightly behind what is actually going on. Myths, as with scientific explanations, are formulated on the basis of what "is", or rather, by that time, what "has been". As society began to shift from a subsistence economy to a market economy, more and more resources were required to meet the needs of the market, an institution which would gradually replace what were once relations of mutual aid within peasant society. As European cities grew and forested areas shrunk; as irrigation systems channeled the fields, and powerful new technologies began to dominate the landscape; and as the people moved away from the immediate, daily organic relationships which had once been their basis for survival, peoples' cultural values -- and thus their stories -- had to change. The image of earth as passive and gentle receded. The "wrath and fury" of nature, as woman, was the quality that now justified the new idea of "power over nature". With the new technology, man (sic) would be able to subdue her.

The organic metaphor that once explained everything was replaced by mechanical images. By the mid-seventeenth century, assumptions about the natural world were being criticized in the light of cultural, commercial and technological changes. The new science of mechanics put forth the theory that knowledge of the world could be certain and fixed, and that natural law was god-given. Matter and the material world were seen as separate from the spiritual world, rather than intrinsically connected; the body was seen as a machine, separate from the mind. Thus society rationalized the separation of itself from nature, objectifying what was once seen to be the source of all life. With nature "dead" in this view, exploitation was purely a mechanical function and it proceeded apace. By the end of the century, however, an "organicism of the Renaissance" was emerging which attempted to synthesize the new mechanical philosophy with an organic view of the world. The tensions between the two views remain with us today.

The new images were of controlling and dominating: having power over nature. Where the nurturing image had once been a cultural restraint, the new image of mastery allowed the clearing of forests and the damming of rivers. Nature as unlimited resource is epitomized today by scarred hillsides, uranium mine tailings poisoning river systems, toxic waste, and human junk floating in space.

One theory bases this propensity for domination over nature on the human fear that nature is more powerful than human beings. By subduing and controlling nature, society thus can assume power over life. Women, with their biological connection to life-giving, are a

constant reminder of the reality of human mortality. Thus patriarchal society, based on a view that subjugated nature to the spirit of man (sic), also subjugated woman.

Increasingly, the serious contradictions of this social system are making themselves apparent. The extent of our poisoned environment and its effects on all life are beginning to be realized and understood. And human culture which, in organic terms should reflect the wide diversity in nature, has now been reduced to mono-culture, a simplification solely for the benefit of marketing, for the benefit of exploitation.

ECO-FEMINISM: its values and dimensions

It is useful to see that this subjugation of women and nature is a social construction, not a biologically determined fact. This means that our position of inferiority can be changed. Coupled with the current feminist thought and action around the idea of repossessing our own bodies, we can begin to articulate what it might mean to be a human female. At the same time we're creating the female as an independent individual, we can be healing the mind/body split.

Life struggles in nature, such as the Stein Valley, Meares Island, and the many less publicized ones, become feminist issues within the eco-feminist perspective. Once we understand the historical connections between women and nature and their subsequent oppression, we cannot help but take a stand on the war against nature. By participating in these environmental standoffs against those who are assuming the right to control the natural world, we are helping to create an awareness of domination at all levels. As eco-feminists we can speak to the process with which we take on these issues. From this perspective, consensus decision-making, and non-hierarchical organization become accepted facts of life.

Eco-feminism gives women and men common ground. While women may have been associated with nature, this does not mean that somehow they have been socialized in a different world from men. Women have learned to think in the same dualities as men have and we feel just as alienated as do our brothers. The social system isn't good for either - or both - of us. Yet, we are the social system. We need some common ground from which to be critically self-conscious, to enable us to recognize and effect the deep structure of our relations, with each other and with our environment.

In addition to participating in forms of resistance, such as non-violent civil disobedience in support of environmental issues, we can also encourage, support and develop, within our communities, cultural life which celebrates the many differences in nature, and encourages thought on the consequences of our actions, in all our relations.

Bioregionalism, with its emphasis on distinct regional cultures and identities strongly attached to their natural environments, may well be the kind of framework within which the philosophy of eco-feminism could realize its full potential as part of a practical social movement.

BIOREGIONALISM: an integrating idea

Emerging from the counter-culture, or from those who are seeking social change, is a way of living and thinking about life which, for lack of a better name, is referred to as *bioregionalism*. Simply put, it means learning to become native to place, fitting ourselves to a particular place, not fitting a place to our pre-determined tastes. It is living within the limits and the gifts provided by a place, creating a way of life that can be passed on to future generations. As Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmin have so eloquently stated it "...means learning to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation. It involves becoming native to a place through becoming aware of the particular ecological relationships that operate within and around it. It means understanding activities and evolving social behavior that will enrich the life of that place, restore its life-supporting systems, and establish an ecologically and socially sustainable pattern of existence within it. Simply stated it involves becoming fully alive in and with a place. It involves applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter."

The bioregional movement is in part based on the disillusionment people have experienced as a result of trying to change the world by means of revolution. Understanding the limitations of political change, bioregionalists are taking a broader view, considering change in evolutionary terms. Rather than winning or losing, or taking sides as being the ultimate objective, *process* has come to be seen as key to our survival. How we go about making decisions and how we act them out are regarded to be as important as -- some say even more important than -- what we are trying to decide or do.

In ecological terms, adaptation is a process; it is with this process that bioregionalism is centrally concerned. In evolutionary terms, a species' adaptation must be sustainable if the species is to survive. How can humans meet their requirements and live healthy lives? What would an ecologically sustainable human culture be like? It is in dealing with these questions that the bioregional movement and the philosophy of eco-feminism are very much interconnected.

To refer to particular places as bioregions is to recognize the diversity of regions that exist on the planet. Each is shaped by specific geological and climatic activities, as well as by the activities of plants and animals which are native



REMEMBERING A FRIEND

Mildred Jensen Loomis was born in 1900, and died this year on September 18th. She has been termed the "Grandmother of the Counter-Culture". Co-founder of *The School of Living* and the publication, *Green Revolution*, with decentralist theoretician, Ralph Borsodi, Mildred Loomis worked all her life for "Green" and decentralist values, remaining active until two years ago, when she was immobilized by a stroke. The following is an excerpt from a letter she wrote to *Kick It Over* shortly before her illness: "I've read with appreciation your No. 9 December 1983 issue. Your orientation, point of view, and some speech patterns are similar to ours in *Green Revolution*, so I trust we can continue toward common goals. We have a 50 year history; and a 'round the circle' of universal human problems..." Now is

the time for a "green and anarchist" revolution. We'd welcome visits from any of your readers -- including Rudolph Bahro of Germany, or others whom you could direct to us. We have 9 workshops scheduled for 1984. A new book on 'Emma's Daughters' (Goldman) plans to include a chapter on Mildred Loomis, which is close to, if not actually anarchist. It's 50 years non-cooperation with 'the establishment'. All good wishes, Mildred Loomis."

Some of us had planned to visit Mildred at *The School of Living* farm in Pennsylvania. That will not come to pass. The farm has been sold, but *The School of Living* carries on. To find out more about their work or to obtain a copy of *Green Revolution*, write to: *School of Living*, R.D. 1, Spring Grove, Pa. 17362 USA.

to that place. Life, in a bioregional community, is constantly being "worked out" -- some species adapt, others do not. Some creatures eat all of their potential food and are thus forced to leave, while others get eaten themselves. All are co-evolving. Humans are no exception.

Our adaptation has to do with culture. What has happened with the rise of civilization and most recently with the notion of mass culture, is that what could be called bioregionally adapted human groups, no longer can exist. It's difficult to imagine how society could be structured other than through centralized institutions that service the many. In our culture almost every city exists beyond its carrying capacity; diverse regions are being exhausted, and ecologically devastated. This is the non-sustainability that which bioregionalism is responding.

Becoming native to a place -- learning to live in it on a sustainable basis over time -- is not just a matter of appropriate technology, home grown food, or even "rehabilitating" the city. It has very much to do with a shift in morality, in the attitudes and behaviors of human beings. With the help of feminism, women especially have learned an intimate lesson about the way power works. We have painfully seen that it is the same attitude which allows violence toward us that justifies the rape of the earth. Literally, the images are the same. We also know that we are just as capable, generally speaking, of enacting the same kind of behavior. So, not only do we have a personal stake in changing society but, because of our experience at the hands of domination, we have the potential for understanding its consequences. We know what it's like to be the "other".

The ideas of bioregionalism are being practiced all over the world -- just rarely referred to as such. It's useful, though, to have a name, even if it is yet another "ism". The name gives us common ground, like eco-feminism. But bioregionalism gives us something to practice -- together they could be seen to offer a praxis, that is, a way of living what we're thinking. Here we can begin to develop an effective method of sharing with our male friends the lessons we have learned about power, as well as our hopes and aspirations for an egalitarian society. One which would be based on the full participation and involvement of women and men in the process of adaptation and thus in the maintenance of healthy ecosystems.

HOMING IN ON A NEW IMAGE

One of the key ideas of bioregionalism is the decentralization of power: moving further and further toward self-governing forms of social organization. The further we move in this direction, the closer we get to what has traditionally been thought of as "woman's sphere", that is, home and its close surroundings. Ideally, the bioregional view values home above all else, because it is here where new values and behaviors are actually created. Here, alternatives can root and flourish and become deeply embedded in our way of being. This is not the same notion of home as the bungalow in the suburbs of western industrialized society! Rather, it is the place where we can learn the values of caring for and nurturing each other and our environments, and of paying attention to immediate human needs and feelings. It is a much broader term, reflecting the reality of human cultural requirements and our need to be sustainably adaptive within our non-human environments. Even the word ecology, in its very name, points us toward home; *oikos*, the Greek root of "eco" means home.

The catch is that, in practice, home, with all its attendant roles, will not be anything different from what it has been throughout recent history without the enlightened perspective offered by feminism. Women's values, centered around life-giving, must be revalued, elevated from their once subordinate role. What women know from experience needs recognition and respect. We have had generations of experience in conciliation, dealing with interpersonal conflicts in daily domestic life. We know how to feel for others because we have practiced it. This is not because we're special but because we have been socialized that way.

At the same time, our work -- tending to human physical requirements -- has been undervalued. As discussed earlier, what has been considered material and physical has been thought to be "less than" the intellectual, the "outside" (of home) work. Women have been very much affected by this devaluation and it is reflected in our images of ourselves and our attitudes toward our work. Men, too, have been alienated from childcare and all the rest of daily domestic life which has a very nurturing effect on all who participate. Our society has devalued the source of its humanness.

Home is the theater of our human ecology, and it is where we can effectively think feelingly. Bioregionalism, essentially, is attempting to rebuild human and natural community. We know that it is non-adaptive to repeat the social organization which left women and children alone, at home, and men out in the world doing the "important" work. The real work is at home. It is not simply a question of fairness or equality, it is because, as a species, we have to actually work things out -- just as it is in the so-called natural world -- with all our relations. As part of this process, woman and nature, indeed humans and nature, need a new image of ourselves, as we mend our relations with each other and with the earth. Such an image will surely reflect what we are learning through the study of ecology, what we are coming to understand through feminism and, what we are experiencing by participating in the bioregional project. Much depends on us and our determination to make things different, to take a stand.

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WOMEN'S SPEAK:

A Gala Celebration of Canadian Women Poets: Le gala de la poésie des femmes canadiennes on the occasion of the launch of *SPILLERS: Poetry by Canadian Women/Poésie de femmes canadiennes* ed. Judith Fitzgerald. Black Moss Press. Saturday, November 8, 1986. 8:30pm. 183 Bathurst Street at Queen Second Floor. 363-5227. 7:00 PM.

Gay Allison
Agneta Black
Nikole Howard
Louise Cooke
Louise Dupper
Marianne Gask
Dorothea Lanning
Daphne Marfat
Lesley McMillan
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MEAT IS MURDER

and Other Arguments for Vegetarianism

Glen R. Harrington of the
ARK-II Vegetarian Information Service

Are you concerned about your health, the environment, or animal life? Have you considered vegetarianism?

Vegetarianism has been divided into categories, based on abstinence from meat (including fish and poultry) and on which animal foods a person eats. *Veganism* is a lifestyle which is as free as possible from dependence on exploitation of other animal species, and includes the most strict form of vegetarianism.

Many people refuse to eat meat because they believe meat is murder. A process of deconditioning is the first step in converting to either vegetarianism or veganism. It is important to see animal foods for what they really are, and this article should help you do so.

It has been argued that if meat is murder, then the same applies to other foods, but it takes about 16 kg of feed to produce 1 kg of beef, and the protein

consumption has also been directly linked to high blood pressure, various cancers, cardiovascular disorders, and numerous other afflictions.

Despite these links, as well as constant warnings from the medical and scientific communities to reduce cholesterol and fats and increase fiber in the diet, some people still insist that the human anatomy is made for eating meat. This is not true. Humans do not have claws for killing, nor do we have the strong jaws, dental structure, or short digestive tract of true carnivorous species. We have neutral saliva, a large stomach, long small intestine, a prevalence of crushing teeth, and a puckered colon, none of which are made for meat consumption.

It is fortunate that a majority of cultures do not share the western meat-intensive diet, because our earth is already suffering irreversible damage as a direct result of the western world's demand for animal flesh. This high demand has re-

slaughtered and eaten, and the male chicks are usually killed by suffocation, just after birth.

Like their brothers and sisters raised for food, battery hens often lose limbs or die in transport, are de-beaked, and given antibiotics, necessitated by the unclean close quarters, and large number of birds. Not only do their eggs contain residues of unwanted man-made substances, but they are high in cholesterol, which is reason enough to abstain from eating them.

Milk is another unnecessary food that is a product of great suffering, oppression, exploitation, and pain. Approximately 98% of milk in North America comes from factory farms. After the callous brutalities of artificial insemination and super-ovulation, the cows are kept constantly producing, averaging about 66 pounds of milk per day. This during a lactation period of about 305 days, totaling about 20,000 lbs. per cow, in less than a year. This high output is the product of ceaseless experimentation,

contains invaluable human antibodies, is free and convenient, and necessitates close physical contact. If breast feeding is not possible, there are wholesome, non-dairy substitutes available.

The dairy industry would like us to believe we need cow milk. We do not. They threaten calcium deficiency, but they are more desperate than accurate. A well balanced-vegetarian diet has all the calcium you need. It stands to reason that vegetarians have a relatively high intake of green vegetables, and that, after all, is where cattle get most of their calcium from. All the essential nutrients for human health are easily found in the plant kingdom.

Allergy to milk is widespread, and is a particular problem in children. Eczema, asthma, tonsillitis, and gastro-intestinal disturbances can result from intolerance to milk. Milk-free diets have been shown to be of benefit in the treatment of some heart disease patients. As cows' milk is for calves, human milk is for humans.

AMERICA SHALL HAVE HAMBURGERS !!



consumption ratios for pork, turkey, eggs, and chicken are 6:1, 4:1, 3:1, and 3:1, respectively. If a person cares about the welfare of plant life, vegetarianism is surely a lesser evil, and veganism even better.

Meat does not only mean the murder of millions of innocent animals and poor use of agricultural resources, however. The industries involved in producing animal flesh for food are also for large-scale, irreversible damage to human health. The meat available in stores and restaurants alike contains pesticides, cholesterol, antibiotics, fats, hormones, and growth stimulants. Illegal levels of unnatural substances are not uncommon, and many doctors and specialists agree that the legal limits may be set too high for health safety.

The widespread abuse of antibiotics in the meat industries results in potentially harmful residues in the meat, as well as the evolution of drug-resistant bacteria, which can cause human illness, disease, and death. This leads to decreased effectiveness of many drugs in treating human ailments.

Eating meat has also been directly linked to a majority of heart disease cases. In fact, it has been estimated that 97% of heart attacks could be avoided if people would only eat less meat. Meat



sulted in over-grazing of land, which can cause massive topsoil erosion, nitration of soil, groundwater and stream pollution, and soil infertility. Other effects include overfishing of lakes and areas of oceans, and worldwide deforestation.

Deforestation, in the context of agribusiness, usually means ruthless slash-and-burn destruction of our earth's quickly diminishing rainforests, to create more grazing land for livestock. This upsets bird migration, as well as insect, plant, and wildlife populations. As the deforestation continues, millions of plant and animal species are destroyed. Accompanying this are unnatural changes in heat patterns, wind currents, rainfall, and fresh water supplies, which further upsets the ecology. Meat kills animals, people and the earth.

In the egg market, all but a small fraction of eggs come from factory farms, and are also the products of tremendous suffering, oppression, exploitation, and pain. In a typical factory-type egg farm, the hens are cramped, four or five to a small cage. In these cages, there is insufficient room for them to open their wings, groom themselves, or find any comfort on the slanted wire floor. A large number of hens die in these stressed conditions, the rest are eventually

involved hormone and drug use, while governments pay billions of dollars a year to buy up the excess that is produced as a result.

The dairy product consuming majority eats its cheese, yogurt, etc., largely unaware of the brutality they support by purchasing dairy products. Male calves of dairy cattle usually go to the death camp-like conditions of veal farms, perhaps the worst of all animal abuses in the food industry. Their mothers will long for them and suffer in the dairies until milk production slips, at which time they are sent off to slaughterhouses to be butchered. It has been estimated that 80% of North American ground beef used to be dairy cattle. Their flesh contains residues of the hormones, antibiotics, etc. that they were given, that milk drinkers will drink, and beef eaters will eat.

Most of the people in the Far East, Africa, the Pacific Islands, and South America are unable to digest milk after infancy, the only time in life when milk is necessary food. During infancy, human intestines produce lactase, the digestive enzyme which breaks down lactose, the sugar in milk. Adults in these areas do not make lactase. It has been suggested that long ago nobody drank milk, or was capable of digesting it, after infancy.

During infancy, a mother's breast milk is at the perfect temperature,



It is clear, by this point, that there is a lot more to vegetarianism than feeling sympathy for the little lambs and piggies that pop into mind at the thought of farm youth, and there's a whole lot of meaning in the slogan "Meat Is Murder". It is easy to see the world is in bad shape, and recognize the urgent need for change, but not so easy to deal with the fact that by consuming animal products, we are directly responsible for destruction of our earth, ourselves, and billions of animals. To say "I don't eat much meat" is simply not good enough. Vegetarianism is a solution to many serious crises that currently face our planet. Our ability to deal with these crises will be directly related to sharing and respecting the earth with the other species.

Copies of this article are available for \$1.00 or a stamped, addressed envelope. Complete information kits, which include this article, are available for \$5.00 employed or \$3.00 unemployed from:

ARK-II Vegetarian Information Service, 3 Fox Mill Crescent, London, Ont. N6J 2B3 Canada.

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SHADES OF GREEN

Kirkpatrick Sale Speaks on Ecological Politics

described as you've described them: downright liberal at times. But there is another quarter to a half that does have a profound criticism of establishmentarian policies and it goes well beyond a mere concern for the environment to an understanding of basic social change. And it is my task, as I see it, in both the environmental movement and in the Green movement to press this word and this image of ecology upon both of them until they both become ecological.

This is a difficult thing to do because ecology is a complex notion. People tend to equate it with "environment" and think it means the same thing. (Some kid on a college campus once said to me, "Hey, man, don't step on the ecology!") It's not an easy idea to get across what ecology is. Both the Greens and the environmental people, if they're going to mean anything more than reformism, will have to understand that [ecology] in the sense that Murray [Bookchin] means by *social ecology*, or in the sense that the groups based in California are calling *deep ecology* -- means a profound understanding of the values that support the system that exists now and that must be transformed utterly to create the kind of system that we want.

KIO: I know of a lot of environmentalists who have an ecological understanding, but I find there's a real temptation to get into techno-fixes, such as scrubbers on coal-fired plants or filtration systems on sewage treatment plants in the name of public acceptability, in the name of government acceptability. So there's a problem in that the analysis does not translate through to ecological action.

Sale: But I would say they don't have an ecological analysis, and they are being reformist and are simply trying to get scrubbers into the smoke stack. An ecological analysis asks: what is that smokestack? Why do we have it? What's it producing? Is it necessary? Is there another way to produce this? And you don't take the problem and find a techno-fix to solve it, which wouldn't be much of a solution anyway. After all, the tall stack was a techno-fix solution originally, and the scrubbers are not likely to be a solution either. But you don't look at the problem and try and solve it that way. You understand things holistically: what is it, why is that we have all of these corporations with their factories along the Ohio River? What are they producing and how? You start making an analysis like that, and you begin to say that the electricity they're producing is going for evil ends. It is not simply lighting the study of some young boy in school, it's going to produce chemical fertilizers. And you look at the plastics that those factories are producing and the chemicals and you say that [the] ecological society doesn't want these things. And it's not a matter of making these factories better, it's a matter of doing away with them.

Let me give another example along these same lines, a perception that I've tried to put across to Green groups in New York. They're talking about recycling. Now, nobody could be against recycling, but I say to them -- that is an environmental response. An ecological response would look at the whole picture and say: why is this stuff being produced in the first place that we now have to recycle it? Why do we have so much

paper? And if, in the study of that, we discover that we have it because it is going for useless packaging, and is largely used by McDonald's and fast food places, we say this is a trivial act we are doing in trying to recycle it. What we want to be doing is working against the production of paper that is to be used by McDonald's and packagers of all kinds. That's what we have to be opposed to.

An ecological sense would say we don't want to cut down those trees in the first place for that paper so that we now have to recycle it. Recycling is only looking at the story at the very end of it, and the story must be looked at from the very beginning. This is an ecological understanding that is somewhat difficult to get across and works at variance with so much that we're taught and see around us every day. And it hits at the great fundamentals of technological society, and beyond that, at Western civilization. Now, that is where one is led to if one is ecological. But it is not easy bringing people along to questioning the values of Western civilization. This will take time.

KIO: What do you make of those technocratic Greens, for whom fundamental principles and values are of no concern, who only want to build a better mousetrap to sell to the American public?

Sale: The danger in the United States has been to try to follow the German model and, amongst the Germans, there are at least a half, if not more -- the so-called *Realos*² who want to make the compromises and get the power and build a better mousetrap, and who don't have a sense of deeply changing values. But, on the other hand, there are the *Fundis*³ who do; with people like Rudi Bahro⁴ who are challenging the basic values, who say "we're opposed to tanks, and we should be opposed to cars as well."

And that begins to hit home at the basic substructure of a technological society. The trouble with the American experience is that too many people have tried to buy the German experience, and to treat ecology as environmentalism, as in fact the German Greens tend to do. The platforms in many of the American Green groups list four values or twelve values, among which only one is ecology and that is largely understood to be environmentalism. As I said before, the task is to try to bring them along so that they understand there is only one value for a Green party, and that's ecology. And that ecology should be the fundamental substructure from which all the other values stem. And if you understand things that way then you take a whole different view of the environment, of democracy, of non-violence. I argued to one Green group in Berkeley that an ecological position on non-violence would not be opposed to violence. The argument is that you can see violence as being a useful economic force in human history -- in particular, largely as a means of population limitation, but even more importantly as a means of distributing populations so that they don't gather in the same ecosystem and over-use it. And that's what tribal violence has been for millions of years. So an ecological perspective says that you don't try to eliminate violence, and that peace is an illusion. It says rather that you try to work out the social systems that will minimize violence and defuse violence. And the



Kirkpatrick Sale is well-known as the author of *SDS*, a study of the American radical student organization of the 1960's. In the late 70's, he started getting into "Green" philosophy, publishing *Human Scale*, a critique of gigantism, in 1982, and *Dwellers in the Land*, a major work on bio-regionalism in 1985. The following is an interview conducted by Paul Franklin, in which Sale puts forward his own controversial perspectives on anarchism, ecology, Green politics and non-violence. Questions were prepared by Ron Hayley, Paul Franklin and Alexandra Devon. Editing and postscript by Ron Hayley.

KIO: You say, in a recent article in *Social Anarchism*, that it's important to bring about a synthesis between anarchism and ecological vision. What do you think the prospects are for that happening?

Kirkpatrick Sale: I'd say it's very good. I'd say that any anarchist with the slightest social perspective at all would be interested in tying in with a positive, effective and growing movement and in forming that movement. That is to say, not only is there an existing movement that is out for a very deep kind of social change and the replacement of technological values with a different set of values, but it is a movement which is open to the kind of decentralist, communitarian vision that anarchists could give it. It does not have that vision at this point. So it is a convenient merger of two different tendencies: an anarchist tendency amongst what I would consider a small number of people, and an ecological tendency among a large number of people, each of which has something to give to the other.

Whether it will in fact emerge, I don't know. But you see signs of it already. *Synthesis* -- the newsletter that's produced in California now -- comes out

of an anarchist group that expanded and finally became an environmental, Green kind of organization. And the people at *Social Anarchism* also are open to these ideas, and you see the work of Murray Bookchin and the *Institute for Social Ecology*. So this is not a new melding of forces and you see these two natural tendencies going together.

KIO: Would you agree with the statement that Greens need to go back to their anarchist, feminist, and Native American philosophical roots if they wish to avoid the lack of vision, the pragmatism, and downright liberalism which seems to characterize much of the environmental movement?

Sale: Yes. I don't know if it characterizes the environmental movement. It's a little tricky what we mean by the environmental movement. Is it the six million people who belong to various environmental groups like *Sierra Club* and *Nature Conservancy* and so on? In which case, the great bulk of them don't have any social sense at all, don't have any political sense, and don't have any fundamental understanding of ecology -- ecology being that perception of the web of nature, and that all of these things are connected. That you can't just talk about a dam that's being proposed, or a park that's being threatened. What you have to talk about is the political and social system that does that proposing and that threatening. Now, that's an ecological perception, and that is held by only a minority of those who are in the environmental movement.

Now, Green is something else again because there is a Green movement which has begun in the States which takes its model from Germany, of course. Among them, too, I would say probably a large percentage, although it's hard to say how much -- probably somewhere between a half and three-quarters -- would be

model that I always give is the Canadian Indians who developed lacrosse as a substitute for warfare, but there are plenty of other examples like that all around the world: cultures that have worked out ways to maintain their rivalries and their distances, their ecological niches without having full-scale war.

And you can imagine, with these people who have been marching for peace for fifteen and twenty years, you come to them and say peace is not an ecological issue, this goes down hard. But that is in fact the only way to build a Green Party is from an ecological perspective that casts into question a lot of the assumptions we always make and, in the cases of peace, democracy, social justice, and the environment, has an entirely new perspective that is wholistic and knitted together in a way that the German Greens have not been.

I want to see a Green Party, a Green organization, a Green movement that is thoroughly based on ecology and see what kind of power it might then have.

KIO: What strikes me is that you see violence as part of the social eco-system as much as non-violence.

Sale: Not as much as, no not nearly. Most lives of individuals and most societies aren't filled up with violence. Even in our awful world which teaches violence to the individual and the society, you don't find that. I don't say as important. I'm simply saying that a world without violence is impossible to imagine and therefore useless to work for.

KIO: Is there a danger that the deep ecology movement (which is led entirely by men) may be turning the patriarchal world-view on its head, maintaining a nature/humanity dualism, but with the good guy and bad guy roles reversed? What role do you think women have in elaborating an ecological philosophy?

Sale: It's obvious that feminism is a profound and sizable component of an ecological perspective. I imagine that there are some feminists who would put it the other way around, saying that an ecological perspective is part of feminism, but, to my way of seeing things, ecology is the value system that explains everything and provides what we need.

And the eco-feminist movement would argue the same way; that a proper sense of ecology leads you to the same view of the world that the feminists have been putting out for decades now. They are inextricably linked as far as I can see, and if it is true that there are a lot of men who seem to be coming up with this idea, it may simply be they are being led to a feminist understanding in their own ways. I don't see anything in the formulation of deep ecology or social ecology or bio-regionalism that in any way contravenes the values of feminism or puts forward the values of patriarchy. In fact, it seems to me self-evident that an ecological perspective leads you to an anti-hierarchical, anti-linear, anti-dominating -- and, therefore, anti-patriarchal -- sense of the world.

KIO: What do you see as being the difference between deep ecology and social ecology?

Sale: Well, there are differences of course, but there are different people who have derived them, and there are differences too between those and bio-regionalism. But the differences are minor and ones of emphasis, and it seems to me largely they are the same reaction to the same problem. And if Murray Bookchin [social ecologist] wants to call it one thing, and if George Sessions and Bill Devall [deep ecologists] want to call it something else, and Peter Berg and Ray Dasmun [originators of bio-regionalism] want to call it a third thing, that's just

their particular take on it, and they are not fundamentally different in any way. To me, they represent three strands of the same overall ecological movement, and there are probably others as well.

There are certain parts of the feminist movement, certain parts of the Green movement, certain parts of the American Indian movement which share these identical ecological perspectives, and sure there are going to be differences of emphasis among them. For example, at the last bio-regional conference, there was a deep ecology workshop that couldn't bring itself to talk about population limitation. I don't know exactly why, I wasn't in among them, but the official bio-regional position on deep ecology differs from that of Arne Naess [a founder of deep ecology] and George Sessions on the matter of population limitation. But I don't think that's a significant difference. These are nuances, and I would lump all of these together as part of the "new ecology" movement.

KIO: Do you really think it's possible, as is advocated by the deep ecology folks, to reduce the human population without authoritarianism and genocide?

Sale: Yeah, I do. Are there deep ecologists who advocate authoritarianism and genocide? I doubt that very much. It seems to me highly unlikely. [Editor's

comment: cities will revert to a manageable size, the countryside will once again be populated, and there'll be a healthy relationship between them. We know this doesn't take authoritarian measures every single poll taken in the United States and Europe indicates that people do not want to live in big cities, they want to live in small towns, they want to live in villages, they want to live in rural areas overwhelmingly.]

And, so, all it would take would be opening up the systems and the options so that people can live where they say they want to live. And then creating those villages and small towns in such a way that they aren't the sort of stifling and deadening places that technological society has made them. And, obviously, this can be done. Small towns don't have to look like Babbitt's Main Street, and they don't have to look like suburbia. And, in fact, long before industrialism forced that on those areas, the small town was -- throughout the world -- the backbone of every single society. And it seems to me that it could be so again, without authoritarianism or genocide.

POSTSCRIPT:

We realize that it isn't exactly kosher to have the "last word" at the end of an interview, but we feel that Kirkpatrick

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note: Sale misunderstood the question here. Deep ecologists advocate reducing the human population. We did not ask if the deep ecologists advocate these measures. I think population limitation is necessary, and I think the ideal human population, given a world using nature-based technologies, would be considerably smaller than it is now. I have no idea what it would be. That would be in an ideal future world.

I think the human population will readjust itself down. It has grown to these alarming proportions thanks to an industrial technological civilization, and I think that, when that goes, rational forms of living will reduce the population to levels that it had once in the past. In the meantime, I do think it's possible to limit the impact of these excessive numbers by population redistribution. And that does not take authoritarianism and it does not take murder -- genocide -- to accomplish. The difficulty with the world now is that the people are not distributed in the right places, and it is the industrial forces that are making them distributed in the wrong places. So, in freeing ourselves from this industrial system, we will be promoting a redistribution of population so that the

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seriously underestimates the dangers associated with deep ecology. For instance, Bill Devall, one of the main theoreticians of deep ecology, recently interviewed Dave Foreman of Earth First! (a radical ecology group in the United States well known for direct action tactics) in *Simply Living*, an Australian magazine. In it, Foreman, an advocate of deep ecology, was quoted as saying:

"When I tell people how the worst thing we could do in Ethiopia is to give aid -- the best thing would be to let nature seek its own balance, to let the people there just starve...they think this is monstrous. But the alternative is that you go in and save these half-dead children who will never live a whole life. Their development will be stunted. And what's going to happen in ten years' time is that twice as many people will suffer and die."

Likewise, letting the USA be an overflow valve for problems in Latin America is not solving a thing. It's just putting more pressure on the resources we have in the USA. It is just causing more destruction of our wilderness, more poisoning of water and air, and it isn't helping the problems in Latin America."

While we respect Foreman for a lot of the work he's done, this quote illustrates the dangers of a reductionist "ecological" analysis. It leads to what Murray Bookchin calls the "lifeboat ethic," an updated version of "survival of the fittest." Gone is any analysis of imperialism and its role in the destruction of food systems, or of subsistence economies in the Third World, to be replaced by Malthusianism [Malthus was an English economist who hypothesized that hunger was a product of overpopulation]. According to this "theory" (which has been refuted in Frances Moore Lappe's excellent book *Food First*), people starving in Ethiopia represent the working out of an inevitable "law of nature." But we know that people in the Third World were able to feed themselves before the West came along, and that structures of oppression merely exacerbate tendencies towards overpopulation. If any deep ecologist amongst our readers feels we are dealing unfairly with this issue, we welcome your comments in a future issue.

For those interested in *Simply Living*, an interesting and highly attractive "Green-oriented" publication, write to: Simply Living, P.O. Box 704, Manly 2095, N.S.W., Australia. The cover price is \$4.95 Australian -- get the conversion rate at your local bank and add some for postage. The above quote was from V2 #12.

Footnotes

- [As a very brief introduction, Bioregions are "unique life places with their own soils and land forms, watersheds and climates, native plants and animals." Bio-regionalism is the philosophy of learning to live within the limits of such places.]
- [Real-politicians who want to form an electoral with the Social Democrats.]
- [The so-called "Fundamentalists" or radical Greens.]
- [see review of Building the Green Movement in this issue of KIO]

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being anything more than a dynamic and fluid network of people, that includes many friends, former members and new people who are still attracted by the old values.

Any attempt to reduce this history to the printed page will obviously be guilty of great generalizations, partisanship in relating arguments, and offensive to some who may feel their efforts slighted. But with this in mind I would still like to relate my perceptions of the situation in the first two years of living on the land. I am not an unbiased observer. I left after the first two years in complete disillusionment. Along with some others, I was originally more motivated by the idea of a collective life rather than the mere fact of living in the country. It was no big deal for me to end up, once again, poor and living in the country.

As the graffiti exchange used as an introduction suggests, at the root of many of the problems, both practical regarding survival, and political in terms of various positions in the group, there was an essential conflict between the somewhat whimsical and abstract search for freedom, and the necessities of surviving in a harsh climate with few opportunities to generate money.

The desire to "struggle against work"

ANARCHY DOWN ON THE FARM:

WHO SHOULD FEED THE CHICKENS?

by Jim Campbell

"Freedom is just another word for nothing left to lose." "I think we've lost everything around here already. Have you tried to find the hammer lately?" Graffiti exchange on the outhouse wall at Dragonfly commune.

The history of Dragonfly, a rural anarchist commune in eastern Ontario offers a rich history for discovering many difficult truths. Dragonfly has just passed its fifteenth anniversary going back to its humble origins as a student commune in Kitchener in the fall of 1971. In 1978, eleven people bought an old farm and began moving in the fall. The farm was 248 acres, thirty cleared, with maple bush, beaver pond, scrub growth and cedar patches, an old frame house and plywood barn. The area, north of Bancroft, close to Algonquin Park is beautiful, sitting on the edge of the Canadian shield. Unfortunately, it shares the dreadful climate common to the shield: short growing seasons, frost potential any time of the year, and periods of forty below weather in the winter.

The collective has had a continuity over that fifteen years. Large numbers of people have come and gone, yet there was never a complete break with the past. There was a gradual development of anti-authoritarian politics, and loyalty to the values -- community, simplicity and resistance -- that were generated by the political tendency of the counter culture. The collective had functioned well in the city, operating internally with a free form anarchy. Externally, the collective was one of the mainstays of the community and attracted and influenced many people with the usual heady combination of drugs, politics and a life-affirming antipathy to the social norms.

However, the collective was unable to meet the demands of survival in the country. There are still people there, but the farm is only a pale imitation of the fantasies that had originally motivated the move from city to country. Indeed, and to their credit, there is little pretense now of

by remaining outside of the wage system as much as possible was one of the many motivations that led us to the country. But the paradox that should have been quickly faced was that the more one wants to avoid work, the more efficient one's work must become. Yet to recognize this fact would have meant a rejection of many of the most basic ideas of the counter culture.

One of the silliest ideas that the counter culture ever came up with was that we should work only when we feel like it. It sounds great and is certainly very attractive regarding wage labour, but breaks down quite quickly when we are supposedly determining our own activity. Freedom in this sense is an abstract and elusive concept. It is hardly an exercise in free will to sit around, day after day, smoking dope and cigarettes, drinking endless cups of coffee when the garden needs weeding. (Or if it is "free will" it seems to indicate a real lack of imagination in exercising it.) There was always more interest in planning what we could do tomorrow, next week, or next year. But it was seen as an imposition to follow through on the commitments of the past.

So long as nothing is done, everything is possible. But as soon as a course of action has begun, there is a terrible unfreedom. If a garden is planted in the spring, then one is committed to caring for it during the summer, harvesting it in the fall and being able to make use of it while it is growing and after it has been harvested. If there is not this follow-through, if this "limit on one's free activity is "challenged", then the work already done on the project is thrown away. Life remains abstracted from the demand of one's own long-term interest and desires. If living for the moment is interpreted literally, there is no connection between yesterday's plan and today's activities, between the needs of tomorrow and the desires of today.

Ideas do not determine reality. This should surely be an obvious point, yet the counter culture was predominantly idealistic. Not only in the sense of

attempting to live by some moral code, but also in thinking that the world of ideas was the predominant realm of life. But of course it isn't. Life does not take place in a vacuum. We are restricted by the context of the natural world, by the specific conditions of the economic context of the natural world, by the specific conditions of the economic and political worlds, and by the strengths and weakness of our own selves, i.e. our skills, our attitudes, our habits, etc.

A rural survival project that takes place in a climate where the heating season starts in September and ends in May, where the temperature will hit forty below two or three times a year obviously has certain implications for the autumn's activities. That is, lots of wood must be gathered. Yet there were those who thought it compulsive and city-like to want to start cutting trees as long as there was any wood left at all to burn. But, of course, if one can be on top of wood gathering enough to have several month's supply always on hand, then the wood is drier, burns hotter and it actually takes less wood to maintain the same heat. Moreover, it is certainly much easier to do the work with little or no snow than to try to go out with the bush lying deep in it. Yet this logic was never enough to motivate action. The laissez-faire attitude too often became a lazy-fare attitude.

There was a blindness to the specifics of our situation. It was often quoted that Scott and Helen Nearing, very well known back-to-the-landers in their seventies at that time, needed to work only four hours per day to be self-sufficient. This ignored the fact that they had spent years of hard work to get to that point, were much more skilled and knowledgeable and were living in a more benign climate. The problem was not simply how much people wanted to work, but that the articulation of our goals of self-sufficiency were completely out of line with our work capacities and skills. Discussions took place at a very abstract level, to refer to the exigencies [something of an urgent, pressing nature -ed.] of the real world was to be charged with negativism as though it were simply a failure of will in overcoming these very real obstacles.

Living in the country certainly reduces the amount of money needed to survive, but also reduces one's access to sources of income even more. Before we arrived in the country and even afterwards, much mention was made of making money by baking bread and other goodies. This is what had been done by the old couple from whom the land was bought. But the idea was ludicrous. One has to sell a huge amount of bread, at a profit of 50 cents a loaf to even pay for the gas for a trip into town which could cost several dollars for gas alone. Moreover, the old couple had maintained high standards of cleanliness, which was necessary to bring in the tourist customers, and they worked fourteen hour days besides. Obviously we were unable and unwilling to meet these preconditions. Yet, in arguments the point of reference would always end up being such flights of fancy, ideas picked up from other vastly different situations, and not the situation as it had to be faced.

After the only person with a regular income left, we were all very much in the same impoverished condition. Income sharing was proposed as the solution to this collective poverty. Yet income sharing doesn't increase the amount of cash available. All it does is make absolute poverty universal. For those like myself who needed some monetary security, and went to the cities in the winter to work and bring back some money and an Unemployment claim, income

sharing was no promise of security but a threat to reduce us to eventual dependence on those who had shown little inclination to raise survival money for themselves.

There was almost constant tension between the optimists and the pessimists, between those who could see only their dreams unfolding, and others who could only feel overwhelmed by the magnitude and numbers of problems that had to be faced. The irony of the situation was that the negativists -- of which I was a charter member -- and the optimists could both feel vindicated by the way things were going. The "workers" -- those who took on the task of trying to keep things together -- felt that life was hard and work unremitting, and it was. There were gardens to tend, animals to look after, two young children to care for, fields to try to bring into production, hopeless attempts to try to keep the old ramshackle house somewhat clean and tidy.

Those for whom life was not to be taken too seriously, for whom partying was a major preoccupation, life did just flow. Things did work out. But they did not see that they worked out not because of some karmic force, but because of the efforts of those people who were carrying the work load. And when things did screw up, it was worth a laugh, if it was even noticed.

These varying experiences only reinforced the tensions between the two positions. Unfortunately, lethargy is a stubborn opponent. At any given time, one or two people would end up feeling as though they were carrying the load and eventually burn out and leave. Consequently some other person would feel the demands of the situation and begin to try to keep things together only to find themselves similarly burning out in a few months.

It is not that the experience was entirely negative. Much work did get done. And at best, with ten people there, people did what they wished and what they wished was what needed to be done. The problem arose when the initial enthusiasm wore off. Then there was no incentive or mechanism to ensure that necessary work got done except for those who saw the need to go out and do it. To be sure, the collective was clear from the beginning that there was to be no compulsion. Everyone would do their own thing. And I wouldn't want it any other way. But, when work started by some



members with grandiose ideas would end up being completed by others after the enthusiasts had wandered off to other interests, then the limits of tolerance were reached.

The counter culture assumed that virtue, rather than hard work would be rewarded. This can best be illustrated by relating a series of discussions when I once said that "I should feed the chickens before going" when the twenty-five mile trip to Bancroft was being planned. Three people in a row went on about how I shouldn't say "should". But from a Scottish-Canadian farming background, "should" in that sense is simply a recognition of a task that needs to be done. It is not a moral burden, although granted that element can be present. So I let it go, went to town only to return late in the afternoon to discover that the chickens had not been fed. What could more clearly illustrate the point? The simple fact that the chickens needed feeding was not relevant. Our need to take care of the chickens properly in order to benefit from their egg production wasn't important. All that mattered was the attitude with which the work was done.

The roots of many of the difficulties of Dragonfly can be traced back to class arrogance. It is not that members of the collective came from high class backgrounds, but many came from comfortable urban middle class backgrounds such as middle level executives, social workers, etc. They had no understanding of, and certainly no respect for the farmers. There was no sense of the struggle which permeates the history of Ontario farmers. It was assumed that it was the stupidity of the farmers which got them to install electricity and go for cash

cropping and monoculture. But it wasn't stupidity but rather a last ditch attempt to cut down on endless labour and to survive economically in a social system which generated huge corporate profits from the labour of the farmers. These city dwellers assumed that, armed with the back-to-the-land books and magazines, they could succeed in surviving on the land in an area where the farmers had mainly disappeared decades ago.

It might seem like I am flogging a dead horse, to write a critique of the counter culture long after its flaws have become apparent to all but a few die-hards. But Dragonfly, as it was implemented, shares problems with many anarchist projects, both past and present. Anarchy is not simply wish fulfillment. The purity of anarchy and anarchists is too often measured by how little relevance it has with the real world. It has become an art form of the intellect rather than a guide for practical living and struggle. It is thought rather than action that is respected. Certainly while we must not mimic the desperate attempts of the Leninists to be relevant to the "masses", we should at least try to be relevant to ourselves, our own ideas, and the world as it exists. If anarchism cannot be pragmatic as well as visionary, then it is nothing.

I do hope that I haven't made Dragonfly sound too wretched. It isn't. If anyone wants a good time in beautiful surroundings, they would be quite welcome. There are lots of people around in the summer. Or some might simply want to hear the other side. If so, they can be reached at: DRAGONFLY FARM, Lake St. Peter, ON, K0L 2K0 CANADA. □

LIBERATION

review by Richard Swift

Andre Gorz is one of those thinkers that can turn things on their head and get you to think "of course! Why didn't I think of that?" In this book the iconoclastic French marxist brings together a number of themes that he has developed in his recent work, *Ecology as Politics and Good Bye to the Working Class*. In *Paths to Paradise* he takes on the ideology of perpetual growth that both the Right and a sizable part of the Left are committed to. According to Gorz, *the emperor has no clothes*. The natural resources just aren't there to sustain our competitive affluence ("What is good enough for everyone is not good enough for anyone"). Unemployment can no longer be viewed as a temporary aberration but as a permanent structural problem that will worsen with the micro-computer revolution. The remedies to overcome the discontents and the distortions of growth (i.e., the welfare state, crisis oriented medicine, environmental policing, and the mental health industry) are becoming more expensive and less effective. The attempt by socialist economies to catch up with capitalism has, not surprisingly, mired them in very similar problems.

But Gorz is not a purveyor of the theory of the apocalypse. He is more of a visionary, and it is here that he is most creative and valuable. For Gorz, the crisis in growth politics and economics provides a whole new set of possibilities. The end of the productivist ethos (the obsession with work and production) was foreseen by Marx as the potential end to the wage system and the beginnings of a society based on the meeting of unalienated human needs. Gorz takes it upon himself to spell out in some detail how such a society might be organized.

Unlike many on the Libertarian Left (Rudolph Bahro, Murray Bookchin, a good deal of the Green movement), Andre Gorz is a technological optimist. The others believe that our industrial tools have become so distorted that the only way to restore ecological balance is to return to the kind of symbiotic relationship that indigenous communities had with the earth, albeit a modern variant. But Gorz's belief in some form of modern technology is not a naive one. He feels that the micro-computer revolution and accompanying technological innovations have the potential to create a society based on the liberation from work. This society would be divided into a sphere of necessity (what Gorz calls *heteronomous production*) and a sphere of freedom (*free autonomous production*). Using the microchip revolution, this first sphere of production would be reduced to the minimum amount of labour necessary to provide us with the basic necessities of life and the tools of conviviality on which autonomous activity would be based. Gorz believes that the process of *de-skilling* means that this type of work can be shared by almost anyone, and tasks and jobs can be rotated to avoid boredom.

With the elimination of wasteful production (armaments and twelve different kinds of deodorant), and the use of labour saving technologies, the amount

of this work that any individual would have to do in a lifetime could be drastically cut. He sets 20,000 hours as a likely figure. (This works out to about four hours a day for twenty years, or two hours a day for forty years etc.) There would be maximum flexibility for each individual to decide the schedule and types of their work in the heteronomous sphere. This type of production could provide the machine tools, mass transit, soft energy systems and other amenities (not produced through local or individual effort) which would sustain and enrich the autonomous sphere of free activity. Life would no longer center around a "job". Income would be separated from work and every individual would be allotted a life-long social wage -- enough to comfortably provide for the necessities. The reduced amount of labour we would each be obliged to perform would likely make us more efficient, innovative and alert in doing what remained of our jobs.

Beyond that, life would be what you could make of it. The sphere of autonomous activity would be open to all kinds of individual and collective projects. Social arrangements would be such as to allow a flexible freedom for autonomous initiatives. In this way individual choice would be maximized and the dictates of the state and the social claustrophobia of small communities would be minimized. Gorz sees this as a way in which civil society, smothered by the state in both capitalist and state socialist countries, could re-assert itself. The autonomous sphere will be a sphere of self-production -- be it a small poetry magazine, an independent film, hand made clocks, or home and community renovation.

According to Gorz:

What needs to be done, or what the community or its individual members deem desirable, thus no longer relies on uncertain public or private financing. And most things which could not be done before, because of the high hourly labour costs involved, became possible once again: the provision, maintenance, embellishment and improvement of public facilities, neighborhoods and buildings; forest clearance; neighborhood services; running repairs to items in daily use; local science shops and medical centers to investigate particular health and scientific problems brought up by neighborhoods or communities; assistance for the sick or handicapped, etc.

But Gorz is not naive enough to think that society will naturally evolve into something like this human-centered alternative. Without some collective decision to move in something like this direction, Gorz delineates at least two other potential social outcomes given capital's lessening need for wage labour. One outcome (portended by Reaganomics and the "supply side" offensive) is based on the strategy of cutting social costs. The eventual results of such an attack on popular entitlements (i.e. old age pensions, family allowances, unemployment insurance) is the imposition of a new form of inequality on the already existing class structure. There would be a minority of full time wage workers and a majority of marginalized

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FROM WORK

a review of *Paths to Paradise* by Gorz

unemployed or under-employed in an ever-expanding service sector. The full time workers would be a shrinking blue collar work force protected by conservative unions, and professionals and government employees. The latter would be subjected to the constant threat of public spending cuts -- attacks on their pensions and careers. The majority service sector would provide everything: household, childcare, health and sexual services to the waged minority.

We are left, then, with the sort of economy now predominant in parts of North and South America (New York, Brazil, Mexico, etc.) where pauperism and overabundance of commodity goods and services go hand in hand, where organized society marginalizes and represses a dispossessed social majority: slum-dwellers in the shadow of skyscrapers precariously surviving on crime and the underground economy.

The other social outcome (which Gorz considers more likely because of the political instability that would result from cutting social costs) is a form of consumer society based on programmed self-exploitation. In this model, a society of essentially passive consumers would use pre-programmed micro-technologies to engage in isolated consumption of entertainment and gadgets.

Rather than being autonomous activities which extend individuals' and communities' spheres of control, autoproduction and autoservices can be centrally programmed through the information technology they use. Central programming of autosurveillance will use radial communications networks giving everyone individual access to a central memory, and will rule out both transversal communication -- and thus free, individual exchange of experience and information -- and collective access to memory stores and collectively run decision making processes. The power of systems (state, technical and commercial) over individuals is therefore reinforced, while the capacity of the periphery to act on the center is eliminated.

In this way, individuals can be made to train themselves, maintain themselves and "produce" themselves to fit a social norm which is pre-programmed by the automation technology that they use.

But these solutions and the Leftist variant of state-enforced "full employment" are not for Gorz. He sees them all as strategies for maintaining perpetual growth (beyond reason and purpose) and control from above. One of Gorz's main goals is to return democracy to the center of the socialist project -- to maximize individual and communitarian freedom. To do this he believes it is essential to destroy the authoritarian wage relationship that has become the focus of most of our lives. The subordination built into the management-labour relationship (be it capital or the state) infuses all of society. It is reproduced by the educational system, the media, the family and many



other social forms. The modern consequences are an elite of technocratic (and sometimes repressive) experts who set the limits of our freedom. Alienation associated with wage labour and white collar "careers" (workaholicism, job insecurity, destructive competition, anxiety, boredom and loss of self-esteem by the jobless) are a major cause of unhappiness and mental disorders. Gorz feels that a meaningful liberation can only be achieved if wage labour ceases to be the major focus of our lives. If our livelihood (in the form of a universal social wage) is separated from the reduced amount of wage labour we must each perform to meet society's basic needs, our time (and our lives) would mostly be our own to define our own projects and use of free time as we saw fit.

In his assault on wage labour Gorz is swimming against the mainstream of socialist thinking. A major socialist demand under capitalism has been for full employment -- a full time job for everyone. Trade unions are suspicious of part-time workers who do not pay as much in dues and may be undermining the bargaining power of full-time members. The Left, in defending working people, has come to romanticize the "dignity of labour". In state socialism, this has been elevated to a virtual secular religion -- worship of hard work and the state-employer. Those who do not wish to turn

their lives over to the industrial machine (the vast majority if the truth be told) are regarded as slackers or, worse, -- social parasites.

The recent literature on the deskilling of workers by management (Harry Braverman et al) has been a useful contribution to understanding the politics of production. But Gorz feels that it has led to a certain nostalgia for the control over production exercised by the traditional crafts. Any strategy for "reskilling" he feels is naive and (in the face of new technologies) fortifies the conservative reverence for wage labour. We must never forget the Auschwitz death camp emblem emblazoned over the main gate: *Werke nach Frie -- Work Will Make You Free.*

There is however a socialist tradition that is critical of wage labour. A classical goal of the labour movement, until its integration into the collective bargaining process, was an end to the wage system. In the late nineteenth century socialist propagandists like Paul Lafargue (*The Right to be Lazy*) and William Morris (*Useful Work -- Useless Toil*) tried to combat the religion of work. The Surrealists and the Situationists infused their cultural radicalism with a disdain for wage labour. It is to this tradition that Gorz is connected. But he moves beyond a simple anti-work ethic to practical proposals for removing wage labour from

the center of our lives.

Gorz is more than just a dreamer. He convincingly marshals evidence of a general trend away from the wage system -- in terms of the economy's need for labour and the increasing unwillingness of people to let a job define their lives. A thousand million DM investment in the German economy from 1970-75 actually destroyed 500,000 jobs. Eighty percent of the manual and office jobs in the United States will be automated before the end of the century. Opinion polls show that increasing numbers of workers in all industrial societies no longer see their jobs as their own self-defined activity and many, particularly women workers, would rather work part time. Gorz also sees hopeful signs in the proliferation of the means of communication -- small presses, photocopiers, radio stations, magazines and newspapers. He is encouraged by the self-help revolution -- people making and fixing things themselves rather than relying on experts. Today eighty percent of power tools are purchased by individuals. He sees other positive signs: the growth of co-ops, union agreements that reduce the work week but keep the same pay, individuals and communities who rely on barter or labour exchange relationships for part of their livelihood. Gorz sees the seeds for a virtual explosion of productive self-activity.

There are of course many doubts that could be raised. As Alexander Nove points out in his excellent book, *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*, it is quite questionable to talk about "an end to scarcity". Nove believes that there will always be a struggle over scarce resources and to what use they should be put. Even if our wasteful abundance is reduced to a more human-scale lifestyle there will still have to be a creative means to resolve tensions over the use of economic resources, including labour. Even if the overall goal of economic organization is the reduction of wage labour to the minimum, there will likely continue to be ferocious disagreements over what that minimum is. It will also take a fundamental re-orientation of politics toward grassroots control in order to insure that Gorz's heteronomous sphere doesn't become a new center for the centralization of power. The tools for political abuse remain here.

But when all is said and done Andre Gorz has provided us with a valuable vision of a potential future. And its visions that the Left needs. The tried (and not so true) formulas are increasingly difficult to peddle to a skeptical public. We need specific ideas to show people how their lives might be richer and more cheerful. Gorz provides such food for thought. After reading *Paths to Paradise* it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to set up a union of part time workers. Anybody interested?

Paths to Paradise, by Andre Gorz, Pluto Press, London and Sydney, 1985. □

Footnotes

1[Supply side is a particular "school" of economics which states that producers need incentives more than consumers do.]

Early in the Vietnam war, a small group of determined people set out to deliver medical supplies to both sides in that cruel war. The sailboat was called the *Phoenix*, and the CBC made a widely viewed film of the journey.

Returning home, the group was conscious of several things. First, the pictures which the news media had flashed around the world showed the American warships blocking the sailboat

call a *Macroanalysis Course* -- a look at the big picture inside of which our individual actions are taking place. Escaping or hoping the government will solve our problems does not change things. Lashing out in anger rarely brings effective results. To solve our problems successfully, there needs to be an understanding of what causes them and how they interrelate, so that developing analysis is a continuous process. In

of where we would like to be in the future, the kind of world each of us wants to live in. We know from our own experience that building a new society is hard work. From analysis, we've learned that social goals are connected to each other. Ideas for changing particular institutions need to be brought together. We need a positive and inspiring sense of who we can be, a sense of the whole which is life-affirming, hopeful and good. We need a "vision"

Whether those suggestions succeed in solving the problem(s) will be found in the evaluation of the next meeting, and thus, slowly, the group takes charge of its meeting, rather than it being in the hands of one person, and continues to work on improving how we do things. For one of the things we've learned by now is that it is not only what we do but how we do it that is important. The "what" is inextricably bound up with the "how".

A third area looks at, and works against, the various oppressions that weigh so heavily on many of us, the kinds of oppressions which we are working on when we examine the discrimination differently-abled people suffer, and the extent to which racism is part and parcel of our organizational structures. Under this heading comes anti-semitism, sexism,

MOVEMENT FOR A NEW SOCIETY

by N.T.



from entering South Vietnam. Public consciousness had been raised by that David and Goliath image. Second, the warships prevented the medical supplies from being landed -- an insane decision by the U.S. government which began bringing home to North Americans the nightmare they were involved in.

But the final, and perhaps most important realization was for the crew -- that as proud as they could be of their intentions, it had all been like a band-aid on the problem, a problem where what was really needed was surgery. The surgery was clearly "operating" on the roots of war itself.

So when they returned, they decided to focus on the causes of war and the ways in which their own lives were intertwined with those causes. They cut their living expenses by sharing house space, and bought food together to trim food budgets -- both of which meant they could now take part-time jobs in order to free up time and energy for study together. And so was born the group now called *Movement for a New Society*, a small group of activists determined not to duplicate their initial mistake. They were a handful of eight people originally, and, fifteen years later, they are a cluster of twelve houses in Philadelphia, similar clusters in Boston and Tucson, individuals in Toronto, Charlottetown, Oregon, India, Sri Lanka and England, and a thriving publishing house known as *New Society Publishers*. In short, they are a network of individuals and collectives with a common focus, a decentralized, non-hierarchical structure, intent on bringing about fundamental social change.

The year long study period resulted in the formation of what many people now

"macro-analysis seminars", people in self-run groups study how the world's problems relate to their own lives. Analysis and action must go together, for if we insist on having a near perfect analysis before we act, we are not likely to act at all ("paralysis by analysis"). But it's equally important to remember that however large our problems appear, they are human problems and can be solved by concerted people's efforts. The whole process is a self-directed and self-updated study process, and the method was so successful that they were asked to print up manuals on how they had done it, manuals which now include not only global perspectives, but also separate manuals focusing on particular problems (such as Central America).

Many social change actions have come about using this process, an outstanding example of which has been published in the book *Blockade* by Richard Taylor, detailing the successful reversal of American foreign policy in the Bangladesh/Pakistan war by eight people blockading ammunition ships with canoes!

The study kit was the first tool they put together, and with it was launched a whole range of items which played a key role in their own development, many of which have slowly spread into other organizations and groups. A look at four of these items will give a "feel" for the whole picture.

First, the study kit approaches the task of bringing about change by looking at the issues in a very specific way. In order of importance, they are: a) an analysis of where we are now, and, b) a sharing together of our individual visions

which can sustain us and keep us together in the hard times of struggle, so *Movement for a New Society* participants give time and energy to looking at not only what's wrong with our society, but also imagining and studying alternatives which might make life better for all people. They build visions together, and in so doing, are inspired to work toward everyone's liberation. Part c) is building a strategy for bringing a) and b) into line with each other, and the final part d) focuses on immediate tactics. In short, the political has become the personal, and personal has become the political.

Second, the process whereby we organize ourselves: currently (Roberts Rules of Order, hierarchies, etc.) needs radical change, for too often the power that resides in the Chair's hands results in power plays, hidden agendas, competition, factionalism and disintegration. So the processes we use came under the group's scrutiny and in time they found (from the evaluation they do at the end of every meeting) that they were getting on top of the problems, and eventually published a short manual to help others -- a manual which is now widely used, *Meeting Facilitation* by Berit Lakey.

One of several key suggestions is insisting on making time for an evaluation at the end of every meeting -- an evaluation which first looks at the things that went well that night, then the things that didn't go so well, and finally, random suggestions of how to improve the points made under the "minus" column. The people building the agenda for the next meeting then try to incorporate those suggestions which seem appropriate.

lesbian/gay oppression, working class oppression, and so on. None of these issues are easy to deal with, and, when lumped together, seem almost like an untieable knot. But with the help of various new processes tried out, evaluated and reshaped until results start coming, *Movement for a New Society* and other groups who have a high commitment to working on these interrelated issues are finding new ways to handle explosive and divisive issues in constructive and change oriented ways. Not without struggle, but not with the old accusatory, guilt-dumping processes which didn't move us forward on the issues themselves.

One example illustrates this idea. One group holding week long meetings on key issues found it was running into what might be figuratively called "meeting constipation"; nothing was moving but there were lots of hot air. It turned out that there were individuals in the meeting feeling that they weren't being taken seriously, weren't being heard. It might have been the single mothers, or the disabled or another group, but in this case it was the lesbians and gays. Instead of a confrontation and blow-up, space was made in the agenda for the lesbians and gays to have a half hour "speakout" -- a period during which they presented to the larger group what it was feeling like as a lesbian or gay to be part of this group. In short, "consciousness-raising". The presentation itself was twenty minutes long, with four people speaking, two women and two men, but with all of their group beside them at the front for support. They had already met to decide on items to be brought up. The larger group, for its part, listened openly and accepted; they

did not dispute, challenge or confront. They listened carefully and caringly in order that the "speakout" time be a learning time. In the final ten minutes, the facilitators were permitted clarifying questions to make sure the listeners understood clearly what the speakers were saying. In no way was the time allowed to wander or deteriorate into dispute, direct response or differences of perception. The large group was there to listen and learn; the "speakout" participants were there to help people become aware of what it was like for them to be part of the larger group. They also came out knowing that they had been heard.

The results were clear and immediate. The large group learned where it was being insensitive and needed to make changes, and the oppressed group learned it didn't have to continue putting up with its sense of oppression, which weighed them down like invisible baggage. Once the issue had been raised and dealt with in this non-confrontational way, the meetings could move on with a new sense of directness, lightness, and dispatch. It was as if, beforehand, everyone had felt they knew all the answers. Now the group realized that there were some important

questions that weren't being asked, and needed to be.

Fourth, and woven through all of these processes/methods, was the intentional building of non-violent communities: living communities where appropriate, working communities where possible. And, where neither were possible because of living in isolated areas, staying in touch with each other through an internal newsletter, phone calls, intervisitation and regular gatherings of everyone (called a *Nework Gathering* and usually held once a year in different parts of North America).

It is with regards to this latter point that the major resistance comes to examining group process -- i.e., from the old political processes which seem to attract authoritarian types as leaders. Those types resist this new look at the way we're doing things, largely I suspect, because the shift moves us in the direction of equal access to power, shared leadership, empowerment of everyone ultimately, and a collective model for our structure, rather than the triangular model with a few people at the top. A major push however can be made against resistance to new process by insisting on making time

for an evaluation at the end of each meeting, and evaluation done by someone other than the Chairperson and carried out as described earlier in this article. No judgments are being passed, no condemnations being handed out. An evaluation means getting a handle on some things that are properly ours: the shape, direction and effect of the meeting we are a part of. The leadership will begin to hear concrete and non-judgmental feedback, a pre-condition for changing things. (Note: it's important not to let these ten minute evaluations turn into dumping sessions. Always remember, we're after improving how to do things, not handing out garlands or shooting arrows. Finally, remember to end the meeting ten minutes early so the evaluation can happen before people have to leave.)

With these four building blocks in place, plus others, *Movement for a New Society* continues to inch forward -- trying out new processes, solving old problems in new ways, keeping the personal bonds between each other as strong as possible, evaluating everything they do and publishing their results, and the results of others, through an impressive list of pam-

phlets and books.

For more information contact:

KAL Visionworks, Box 5490, Station A, Toronto, Ont. Canada M5W 1N7 (416) 964-1278.

Transnational Collective, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143, USA.

Boston MNS, Box 1922, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA.

Tucson MNS, Box 40183, Tucson, AZ 85717, USA.

New Society Publishers, 4722 Baltimore Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19143 USA.

Books mentioned in this article may be purchased from:

BOOKS, EHLZ, Box 6248, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1P6. (416) 964-1278.

New Society Publishers (as of January 1987, books will be available in Canada through DEC Book Distribution, 229 College St., Toronto, ON M5T 1R4/ phone 416-597-0328) □

NEWS FROM MOSCOW

appeal from the *Group to Establish Trust*

Hello, Friends:

The *Trust Group Center Abroad* (Foreign Section of the Moscow-based peace and anti-nuclear power *Trust Group*) has embarked on a project to send couriers to the USSR to bring much needed information. People in the U.S.S.R. specifically requested information on radiation precautions (that was lacking in the Soviet press) in the wake of Chernobyl. This was life and death information -- not merely an intellectual exercise. To that end a team of Western *Trust Group* members was sent, and they successfully completed the action.

On August 3rd, two Americans, Bob McGlynn and Anne-Marie Hendrickson of New York City, two Britons, David Barnsdale and Peggy Walford, along with a member of the *Moscow Trust Group*, Nona Kovalenko, were detained in Moscow by the KGB for handing out smuggled leaflets that gave details on how

one can protect oneself from radioactive fallout. Our motivation was Chernobyl, but the action coincided with the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Japan. Our placards read -- in Russian and in English -- "Peace and environmental safety for all. No more Hiroshimas, No more Chernobyls."

The action was an unqualified success in that:

1. We were able to hand out almost all the leaflets.
2. There was an insignificant amount of repression.
3. There was world press attention, and the attention (as far as we've seen) has been objective, not Cold War.
4. A message got across that there is a unity of like-minded peace and environmental activists from both East and West and that "détente from below" is an objective, positive option.
5. We demonstrated that such actions

can be pulled off with careful planning.

6. This was the first time American and Soviet activists had done such a thing in the U.S.S.R. (Other *Moscow Trust Group* members accompanied us.) It was a unified action.

The action showed the conservative Western public that there is something positive in the Soviet Bloc (the *Trust Group*) that rejects Cold War militarism and embraces grassroots contacts; militarism becomes irrelevant as people from both sides join in mutually supportive relations.

The "umbrella of protection" Western activists have provided groups like the *Trust Group* works. Our many contacts with the *Trust Group* have prevented the KGB from completely suppressing the *Group*.

All of the above costs, though! Our "Mission to Moscow" has put us thousands in debt, the main expenses being

travel and phone. All involved in the formation of this project are either poor or out of work. Money was borrowed and is owed. We do not have the resources that other peace groups have. This is to be an ongoing project, and couriers must be sent at regular intervals.

PLEASE HELP US! ADDITIONAL MONIES CAN HELP SEND OTHERS!

Thank you,

Sergei Batovrin

Bob McGlynn

Anne-Marie Hendrickson

(for the *Trust Group Center Abroad*)

Please make cheques payable to "Bob McGlynn". (Sorry, the *Trust Group Center Abroad* is still in the midst of getting a bank account.)

Please send to: Bob McGlynn, 528 5th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718-499-7720), p.s. If anyone has press clippings on our action, please send them! □

Editor's Note: A more detailed description of the action appears in an article written by Bob McGlynn in the October 14, 1986 edition of *The Torch*. Their address is: *Torch*, c/o RSL, PO Box 1288, New York, NY 10116.

THE SPIRAL DANCE

excerpt from...

"The importance of the Goddess symbol for women cannot be over stressed. The image of the Goddess inspires women to see ourselves as divine, our bodies as sacred, the changing phases of our lives as holy, our aggression as healthy, our anger as purifying, and our power to nurture and create, but also to limit and destroy when necessary, as the very force that sustains all life. Through the Goddess, we can discover our strength, enlighten our minds, own our bodies, and celebrate our emotions. We can move beyond narrow, constricting roles and become whole.

— Starhawk, from *The Spiral Dance*

LETTERS

We received far more letters than we were able to print in this issue for reasons of space. We hope to print several of these in our next issue.

One Vote for Democracy

There was much that I found wise and helpful in Alexandra Devon's article on meeting process (*It ain't the meeting it's the motion!*, KIO #16), but I find myself in fundamental disagreement with her when she maintains that consensus is preferable to democracy.

To begin with, I think she confuses the essential defining characteristics of the consensus model and of the democratic model with things that have to do with the meeting process in general. For example, she rightly stresses the importance and value of things such as having a "social time before the meeting", making "a special effort to connect" with new people at meetings, having "trust between group members", having "shared values" in the group, and making the effort to "express our views, explain them, listen to the views of others and modify our views

when others make points we might not have thought about." On the other side, she points to the destructiveness of meetings in which "people constantly interrupt each other", in which "a few people dominate", or in which "the quieter people are ignored". However, there is nothing inherent in the virtues she lists which make them unique to consensus model meetings, and nothing inherent in the faults she names which limit them to democracy-model meetings.

I can guarantee her that if she asks around she will find plenty of people who can tell her about democratically run groups based on shared values and trust in which special efforts are made to make new people feel comfortable, in which people listen to each other, are open, and change their minds when others bring up points they haven't thought of, and in which decisions are usually negotiated compromises rather than rammed through. I can also assure Alexandra with absolute certainty that there are lots of people that could tell her about their experiences in consensus-model groups in which a few people dominated, people constantly interrupted each other, and the quieter people were ignored. I suppose one can argue that such groups were not practicing "true" consensus, but then one can say with equal validity that democratic groups characterized by these problems are not truly democratic either.

I also think that advocates of consensus fail to distinguish adequately between consensus as a specific model for holding meetings and consensus as a term generally used to mean "agreement". In the sense of "agreement", consensus can happen in any type of group operating with any decision-making model. I have certainly belonged to groups operating under a democratic model in which most decisions were made by consensus in this looser sense. Since we tended to agree about most things, issues rarely came to a vote. I suspect that any group having the ideal characteristics Alexandra lists as desirable (small size, clarity about goals, mutual respect, mutual trust, openness to each other's views, etc.) would tend to arrive at "consensus" a lot of the time, no matter whether they were officially making decisions by the democratic model, or by consulting the I Ching.

But the real issue, I think, is what kind of process is appropriate for groups which are not so perfect. Groups which are bigger than can fit into someone's living room, groups in which there is confusion or disagreement about goals, groups in which some people may not like each other as much as one might wish, groups in which some people are a little bit too full of their own opinions to be as open as they ought to be to others. In other words, most groups. What happens when some people tend to dominate and interrupt, while quieter people get ignored or are afraid to speak up?

I can tell you what happens in most groups, consensus-model groups as well as the democratic groups which Alexandra is so down on: the problem doesn't get dealt with adequately, so some people "go home depressed", others "go home and don't come back", and the ones best equipped to stomach lousy meetings remain. If you don't know of consensus groups where this is the typical pattern, you haven't looked very far.

The remedies Alexandra suggests are excellent ones: good meeting facilitation, establishing a time frame, making sure people who haven't spoken get a chance before others get to speak again, paying attention to the social aspects of why we come together in groups, and being aware of and considerate of each other's feelings

and opinions. (One might add challenging people whose meeting habits are unpleasant.) There is no reason why this can't be done equally well in a democratic group as in a consensus group.

In fact, I would argue that democratic groups are better equipped to deal with process problems when they exist. This is because democracy allows a group to proceed with what it wants to do in the face of people who are obstructive, obnoxious or insensitive. Democracy makes it possible for a group to say to such people, in essence, that *we don't think this particular discussion/behavior is constructive anymore, and we want to move on, whether you agree or not.* It enables the group to proceed in the way the majority of people in it want it to.

Consensus, on the other hand, allows people who are insensitive or stubborn to bring the whole group grinding to a halt. Ideally, of course, they "stand aside" or learn to participate more constructively, but what has actually happened in more consensus groups is that the group has been prevented from doing what most people in it wanted to do — in other words, prevented from functioning — because one or a few people have blocked consensus or dragged discussions on past the willingness of most members to continue participating in the group. The social change movement is littered with the corpses of groups which fell apart for precisely such reasons.

At the same time, consensus often serves to make the quieter people in a group quieter and more intimidated yet, because the onus on someone expressing an opinion is often much greater than in a democratic group. In a consensus group, you know that you may be put on the spot by more vocal members of the group who disagree with you and who pressure you to defend your point of view. This can be a frightening prospect for someone who is just developing the courage to speak up at a meeting. Typically a more timid person will quickly "stand aside" or say they've changed their mind, just to get off the hot seat. And they'll be all the more unlikely to speak up again. In addition to the personal unpleasantness of such a situation, this kind of dynamic can easily mean that a vocal few can push the group in a direction many members are unhappy with, but are afraid to speak up about. It is precisely in these kinds of situations that democracy and voting can empower the less aggressive members of a group, while consensus disempowers them.

It can be true, as Alexandra says, that in a democratic group "unless you have unanimity (which is rare) some people are placed in the uncomfortable position of carrying out or living with decisions they are not comfortable with." Whether people really feel uncomfortable with a given decision, of course, depends on how strongly they disagree, how fundamental the issue seems, and perhaps most importantly whether the discussion and process leading up to the decision left people feeling good, or with a bad taste in their mouths. But by her own description, exactly the same thing can happen in a consensus group in which some people "stand aside" to allow a decision which "is not what you hoped but you have to live with".

Whether "the integrity of the group in the face of a divisive issue" is maintained and whether "after the meeting (in spite of all the high emotion)" people are "able to join hands and sincerely say we respected each other's concerns" doesn't depend on whether the decision was arrived at by a vote, or by consensus with some people "standing aside", but on whether the meeting and decision were good or bad

according to criteria of substance and process which apply equally well to meetings held under either model.

What is really destructive of the integrity of a group is a situation where one person or a handful of people are able to block the desires of the overwhelming majority. When such a situation arises — and it does frequently in consensus-model groups — it makes a mockery of Alexandra's assertion that "consensus...allows each person equal and complete power in the group". On the contrary, in a situation where 100 people want to do something, and one person doesn't and refuses consensus, consensus ultimately hands all the power to one person, and totally disempowers everyone else.

Even short of this extreme, but by no means unusual, circumstance, I think that if you look more thoroughly at the track record of consensus-model groups, and not just at the few successful ones, you will find a recurring pattern: domination by a vocal few, silencing and/or departure of the majority who have jobs, children, or are not meeting-junkies, collapse of the group, and then the dominators move on to foist their wonderful model onto another group. Don't misunderstand me: some of the people who I respect most and who have the best meeting skills favour the consensus model and do well with it. If groups were composed of people like them, consensus would work. But most groups aren't composed of people like them, and in my experience, while either kind of group can function well or badly, democratic groups are more likely to function well and are better able to solve process problems that do arise.

If consensus works in your group, that's fine. But I think advocates of consensus are doing a disservice by urging others to adopt a model which works only in unusual circumstances and which has been responsible for driving so many people out of social activism.

Ulli Diemer
Toronto, ONT.

Alexandra Devon responds:

I really appreciate receiving a well-reasoned and respectful critique of my article. Some of the points you make regarding the possibility of abuse of power in the consensus model are well-taken. However, I think you may have misinterpreted my intentions in writing the article. I was not primarily interested in contrasting democratic and consensus styles of operating, but rather in comparing good and bad process. I was also not trying to put forward the view that consensus works in (or is appropriate for) all situations (some people might, but I'm not one of them). The type of group I was directing my comments at primarily was the small group, the type which can fit into a living room.

My main concern in writing the article was to discuss how social change collectives could be places where people are nurtured and empowered to do the work they came together to do. If people are able to do this through means other than consensus then I'm happy to hear it. Obviously, people need to develop ways of working with each other which suit their needs, but, far from driving people out of political action, consensus has for many people — women, quieter people, etc. — been an extremely validating experience, one which made them feel that their voice mattered. The over-all goal, whether pursued through consensus or democratic methods of operating, is to equalize power, or at least to put the less vocal and experienced individuals at a better advantage.

LETTERS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT ANARCHY

The following questions about anarchism appeared in issues #14 and 15. We are printing brief responses from Ron Hayley (to the questions in KIO #14) along with letters of response from our readers.

- 1) Define anarchism (i.e. movement, ideology, way of life, etc...)
- 2) Give a sketch of an anarchist society (utopia) in your view:
--structures - and what would people organise and do?
--modern technology - would it be involved? to what degree?
--crime - would there be any? how would it be dealt with if so?
--would there be money, bartering, or other? why or why not?
--what sort of diet would be eaten? how would food be acquired/produced?
--what would motivate people to participate?
- 3) Would an anarchist society as described in #2 ever be possible? why or why not?
- 4) Practical personal anarchism:
--as an anarchist, what do you do differently from Joe or Jane Smith?
--what things can we do in our everyday lives to move us closer to an anarchist society?
- 5) How did you find out about anarchism? How and why did you become an anarchist?
- 6) Any additional comments?

--the Peaceful Co-existence Collective, Ottawa (KIO #14)

- 1) What should we do about people taking up arms (from military warehouses made museums, for instance) and taking positions of authority by this intimidating force?
- 2) How could we prevent unions, or gangs from forming and controlling people through threat?
- 3) Would there be a massive increase in crime and vengeance for crime, including murder and destruction in the environment?
- 4) How would corporate manipulations of people, the environment, and the economy be affected?
- 5) How much predicting can you do before the relevance of such predictions gives way to speculation and/or guessing?
- 6) Do you believe that Inuit of decades ago lived in an anarchist community, the state of which can be revived in Canada from coast to coast?
- 7) What do you think of these questions?
- 8) Is socialism more idealistic than anarchism?
- 9) What must be done to promote an increase in the number of anarchists?
- 10) Are there any surveys of anarchists which reveal a common bond (like are a lot of anarchists in any particular age group)?
- 11) Is there much disagreement between anarchists on how to 'get' anarchy, or what life would be like?

--Glenn R. Harrington, London (KIO #15)

ANSWERS TO THE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE COLLECTIVE:

1) For me, anarchism is a philosophy (the word "ideology" makes me nervous

since it implies a self-validating body of ideas which counterposes itself to lived experience). However, anarchism is not "seamless". There is "old-style" anarchism and "new-style" anarchism. Old-style anarchism is the doctrine which said that the state was the root of all evil. Some anarchists -- for instance, anarcho-communists like Kropotkin and anarcho-collectivists like Bakunin -- also saw private property as an important evil, and were like the Marxists in that respect. Old-style anarchism, like Marxism, can be "reductionist" in that it treats only one form of oppression -- political in the case of anarchism, economic in the case of Marxism -- as worthy of attention.

New style anarchism tends to look at the interrelatedness of all forms of oppression -- sexism, racism, classism, and authoritarianism, amongst others. Since it tends to treat power, in all its manifestations, as the original "sin", it will often look at the interdependence of "man's" power over nature and "man's" power over "man" as suggesting the need for a new "socially ecological" society, one which harmonizes its relations with nature while creating diverse and satisfying social relations.

The essential thread, I think, which connects old-style anarchism and new-style anarchism is the recognition that change cannot be forced; that the kind of mutual aid interactions which will make the state redundant cannot be the product of an edict from on high, but must be entered into voluntarily. I find that anarchism works best when infused with a sensibility, as a body of thought, into other movements -- be they feminist, ecological, counter-cultural, or peace-related. When anarchists attempt to build their "own" movement, they tend to become sectarian and doctrinaire and engage in the kind of embarrassing in-fighting that characterizes the Social Revolutionary Anarchist Federation (SRAF) Bulletin in the United States, or some of the British publications.

2) Because of the things I have already cited, my vision of an "anarchist" society would be one of decentralized units -- eco-communities, as Murray Bookchin calls them -- where industry based on appropriate technology could thrive side-by-side with organic agriculture, and where the units of production would be small enough that all could participate and become "experts" to a limited degree. Communities would be governed by assemblies where decisions would be made, as much as possible, by consensus, and then executed by rotating administrators. Some modern technology (such as computers) might be employed. The important thing would be for people to develop an ethical orientation as to what would be socially and ecologically healthy, and to adopt technologies selectively on that basis. I don't think crime would automatically disappear, but its twin roots -- poverty and boredom -- would; the rest could be dealt with by confronting the perpetrators and teaching them to empathize with their victims.

I don't know that money would necessarily disappear. I can envision relatively benign societies based on a number of models: municipal ownership, "market socialism", "human scale" capitalism, barter and so on. Because there wouldn't be any "authority" dictating how people should live, people would probably experiment with a variety of models. My personal favourite would be "from each according to their abilities; to each according to their needs", where people worked at what proved enjoyable to them and could change and combine vocations as often as they liked. Presumably, some sort of "formula" might be re-

quired so that "dirty jobs" were equitably distributed. Alternatively, one could tie consumption to production through a system of "work points" so that people worked as often as they liked and consumed accordingly. Parasites and deadbeats would probably not be very popular, but society might choose to tolerate and support them -- especially harmless hermits and eccentrics. The talents of "differently abled" people would be utilized to the full, and barriers to their participation removed.

Also, in contrast with our society, which forces people to go through "life stages" in a pre-determined order (school, work, retirement, etc.), people would presumably be free to vary the stages so long as they gave as a contribution to the community some portion of their productive life-span.

Diet-wise, people would probably avoid wasteful and non-nutritious food, but I can envision a society which would tolerate meat-eaters so long as animals were treated humanely, and meat-eaters were willing to participate in the raising and slaughtering of their chosen food (as in the case of Native Americans, for instance, from whom we can learn much). Everyone would be encouraged to engage in the "bread labour" of producing food, as it would be as much in the interests of their own spiritual "wholeness", as in the interest of society.

3) I'm not sure. I think whatever gets created will have to be consonant with the best of a given country or region's traditions, and not some dogmatic blueprint dreamt up by us. Obviously, a huge change is needed in the consciousness and values of the people to make anarchy possible, but, at the same time, the lifestyle adopted must feel "right" and not unnatural to people. For me, anarchism is an ideal, a standard against which to measure the present, not necessarily something to be fully realized, in our life times. I think we need to work from two (often contradictory) vantage points. We need to promote the peaceful evolution of existing institutions (or, more specifically, preserve and enhance those which are relatively progressive), while continuing to work for the transformation of society as a whole.

4) An "anarchist" lifestyle is easier to achieve when you're young and willing to take greater risks. As you get older, you tend to get more hung up on "security" (though I hasten to add that working is not necessarily a bigger cop-out than living on welfare). Attempting to act out one's beliefs in one's daily life is extremely important, and I really admire, for instance, those people who have become vegans or vegetarians. By itself, it's not going to change the world, but it's taking an important concrete step. Native Elders, Art Solomon, argues that if one is going to be politically active then some aspects of one's "politically correct" lifestyle are going to suffer (like owning a car, and flying to conferences). Likewise, being overcommitted politically is going to result in not being "integrated" on a personal level. The challenge is to strike a balance between how one lives and the commitments one undertakes.

My attempts to live an anarchist lifestyle consist of trying to find a way to survive without working a full-time job, "living with less" so as to be less dependent on the system, sharing money and resources with friends, trying to foster "community" both in my political actions and in my relations with friends, fighting for what I believe in through organizations like the *Free University* and *General Male* (an anti-sexist men's action group), trying to propagate my ideas through publications like *Kick It Over*,

giving moral and what money support I can to people doing useful work, and trying to network people and resources together so as to make the circle of "conspirators" a little larger.

5) I found out about anarchism initially from the writings of Murray Bookchin after I became disillusioned with Marxism. I then went on to meet anarchists in my own community and read other anarchist thinkers. On a theoretical level, I admire Bookchin for bringing anarchism "up-to-date".

6) Feminism, ecology, non-violence, Native philosophy, and anti-racist perspectives are also of equal importance.

Dear KIO,

Thanks for the copy of KIO: it's a wonderful journal. Enclosed is \$7.50 for six issues.

Here are some answers to Glen R. Haint's questions (issue 15).

1), 2), & 3) Anarchism is not going to arrive overnight. It's a long process which will take time. When the time comes people will not want to control others. The only reason people want to control others is because we all (excluding civilized tribes, i.e. Bushmen) live in an authoritarian society and the only way to gain freedom (anarchy) is by being on top. "We're all anarchists at heart" is something I believe is true. Once we all have maximum freedom/anarchism no one will waste time or care about being on top. Crime would go away because: [there would be no reason to steal because you can get all you need (and want eventually)] -- poverty is the main reason people steal except for kleptomania which could be treated and is done accidentally not cruelly. 2) Murder would end -- without exploiters, who would want to kill anyone? Those who are sick could be treated (when I say treated I mean helped and educated, not brainwashed or punished). 3) Vandalism would end with the exploder as well. [Spray] painters who put their name, a brand name, he & she, gang names (gang in the sense of a group of friends, not those out to kill, etc.) could be done and not be offensive but a beautification of life. When it's done against someone else's art -- ruining other art -- in this society it's out of ignorance. There is always that striving against ignorance in anarchy, especially in the betterment of the individual (not only to enhance the mind but to keep it from doing things that are ignorant. Only in this society is ignorance looked upon fondly!).

4) There would not be anything corporate, only cooperative; there would be no need for big business, and industries would wither away as much as possible. Though some mass production may always be in need -- hopefully not. Though I'm positive even the mass produced goods would be much better for you, better quality, etc. This is syndicalism's role in anarchy -- worker production. The environment would also be taken care of without exploiters around to ruin it, looking for their freedom. Cleaning this world up is a lot of people's strongest ambition. 5) You can predict a lot, but aren't all predictions guesses. Therefore you must mean scientific predictions based on facts. In this case you can make very logical predictions that are very likely to be very close to the truth in anarchism but it depends on people caring enough to work in those directions. Making our predictions and not building up for the end -- just hoping that we'll end (up) the way we hope -- is just guessing.

LETTERS

We can all theorize as much as we want but without practice we've accomplished shit.

6) I still think it's possible. There are still tribes who live in anarchy as their ancestors did, but western civilization is bringing that to a quick end. In the beginning we may have started out in anarchy. Some chose to stay that way, others thought we could do better, we've found that wrong but still haven't corrected ourselves. It's time to start! No I don't think it's human nature to revert to control of others. We tried it this way and it didn't work.

7) These questions are questions I've been answering all 16 years -- actually only the last few, concentratedly anyway. They are some of the most important questions we must ask each other and ourselves if we wish to reach our goal.

8) Yes and No. I think socialism is an easier stage to reach but it doesn't satisfy everyone the way anarchism does. To change the economy is much easier than changing the governmental structure and social structure as well. But there is socialism and there is socialism. We've got Canada and Nicaragua with both socialist programs. So it's much harder to have a true socialism. Sure, we have violent anarchy/chaos and passive -- which some call anarchism-violent and anarchism-passive, I don't like this because "im" sounds not as free and the words need to be used in different contexts. Otherwise there's not much difference except how things get organized.

9) The only way to increase the number of anarchists is to teach them what it is and prove to them that they are anarchists inside. Distribute leaflets and you will find several people in agreement with those issues which are generally anarchistic.

10) Well, yes there are age groups. Many youth, especially punks that are anarchists as well as hippies from the '60's and now, older people in their 70's and 80's who were anarchists in the early part of the century. The least amount are probably those in their 30's, 50's and 60's, except a lot of 1960's hippies who are mostly in their 40's.

11) Of course there is lots of disagreement on how to get there. It depends on the circumstances. It would have to come a different way in the United States than in Honduras. Some ways to obtain it are: violent overthrow (best for dictators), passive neglect of the state and living without it to get rid of it (best for the west). For already left governments, (except the USSR which is a dictatorship), to progress into anarchism from state socialism. These are just a few very general ways of reaching all of humanity's desires.

I hope to hear other answers and more questions from many people on this subject. To Lynna Landstreet: your explanation to D. Crowbar was good, but you shouldn't get mad in debates, it loses its strength. Also I think you should check Kropotkin out. Bands are a great influence but writing has a lot to offer as well. A quick note to J. Orcutt: *Kick It Over* doesn't mean violence. If the name was taken from "Armageddon Time" or not, it

means don't depend on an institution to help you, kick that over, (i.e., the state). Not killing. Kicking things over as well as revolution can both be passive.

Thanks,
Bobby Sweet
St. Louis, MO

Native Prisoner's Rights

October 6, 1986: We send this message with our warmest greetings and a strong spirit. We pray that our letter finds each of you in good health and well-being.

Each of us is imprisoned in the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester. Once again our traditional religious practices have been forbidden by prison officials -- namely, Warden Gary Maynard. Following a prison takeover on December 17, 1985, some long-haired prisoners were televised during negotiations for the release of hostages. Some members of the state legislature criticized the physical appearance of these men. Subsequently Warden Maynard implemented a grooming code requiring all prisoners inside the maximum security facility to cut their hair above their eyes, ears and collar. No exceptions were allowed.

Prior to the announcement of this grooming code, a lawsuit for an injunction was submitted to the District Court of Pittsburg County. After implementation of the code, the Court issued a restraining order prohibiting the Warden from cutting the hair of Plaintiff Carnes in Carnes, et al., v. Maynard, C-86-92. Almost six months passed before the Court granted a Class Action motion to include all Native American prisoners in state prisons. The Court also scheduled the case to be tried at a later date in the Pittsburg County Courthouse.

Our suit is based upon religious teachings and practices prohibiting our hair to be cut except in time of mourning. But as in most cases involving State or Federal infringement on our religious practices, the government believes it has the supreme right to judge what is religious practice and what is not. They deny us freedom to observe and practice our religion, even when they acknowledge we do have a religion. In this instance, Warden Maynard told the news media that he ordered a uniform hair length because long hair caused rebellion.

The prejudicial attitude of the prison administration is not all that we contend with. The judge in this case, Robert Layden, stated to our attorney that all the Indians he knew had short hair. Because of this kind of thinking, we want to have a Medicine Man and other witnesses to testify for us. But we do not have funds to pay for witnesses' traveling expenses.

We are asking for your assistance in raising money to secure the testimony and attendance of these witnesses. However, if you are unable to donate, a letter in our behalf to Judge Layden will be very much appreciated. Our trial date has been postponed until the Attorney General provides us with the information we have requested. To find out the date of the trial which we urge you to attend if possible, please write to one of us, and we will be glad to reply.

In the Spirit of Crazy Horse,
Ben Carnes #97891
Standing Deer #83947
Harry Hall #128403
Post Office Box 97,
McAlester,
Oklahoma 74502 USA

Contributions can be sent to our attorney: Mary Lee Barksdale, 110 West Delaware, Tahlequah, Oklahoma 74464 USA

Letters should be sent to: The Hon. Robert Layden, Pittsburg County Courthouse, McAlester, Oklahoma 74501 USA

Anarchy Now and Forever

Dear friends,

Thank you for sending me the latest issue of KIO, which I found most interesting and informative. For your information, I am now on the downhill slide of a ten year term, which, with good time, should find me released soon after February 1987.

I was particularly intrigued by Ron's article "Why Did the Sixties Fail?" Also politicized in that decade, I have spent successive years wondering where my generation went astray. I think our almost obsessive preoccupation with ending the war blinded our eyes to a large extent to the even greater evil which is the system that fostered that example of imperialist adventurism. For the most part, I believe that we were only too aware of what it was all about, but our goals too quickly became singularly directed. Then, too, our one-mindedness brought together people of varied political ideology with intensely conflicting doctrines, generally preventing any cohesiveness toward addressing the problem of the state system itself.

I have found that, as an anarchist, my spirit in this oppressive environment the state calls a prison is largely maintained by my correspondence with other anarchists worldwide and by publications, such as KIO, which serve to reinforce my belief in humankind's inherent right of freedom. Largely instrumentalized as the result of my lengthy imprisonment, the requirements of day-to-day life are satisfied without much conscious thought; and were it not for my steadfast refusal to also surrender independent thought, I fear that I should become the prison number which the state envisions me to be.

Imprisoned for something as inglorious as theft, I have had to equate my own violative act with the obscenity which exists as the state/society today. At times the temptation has proven strong to seek to justify and thus excuse my actions as being caused and influenced by a criminal state. Objective reasoning dictates, however, that while I (and hopefully others) can come to terms with my previous failings, the iniquitous state requires nothing less than abolitionism. Actually, it has proven exceptionally difficult for me to come to terms with my own quest for freedom in light of my own deprivation of the freedom of others. The only acceptable solution, I have determined, is to acknowledge the past while also seeking to achieve a future cleansed of the myriad oppressive systems which confront us today and the denial of any person's freedom by another for whatever reason. Utopian idealism, perhaps, but having experienced humankind's ability, through the state system, to resort to its basest point, it would appear that the opposite extreme should be equally attainable.

Again, thank you for your letter and I eagerly look forward to future issues of KIO and perhaps a contribution to the formulation of my continually developing ideology and its reconciliation with the realities of life.

Anarchy now and forever,
LT
Norco, CA

Defining Terms

Dear Friends,

Thanks for sending me a sample copy of your paper. I found the articles on Honduras and on Sandino especially informative and if you keep up this kind of social history writing I want to read more. I was a little surprised by some of the content in the article on meetings by Alexandra Devon. Specifically, the discussion of consensus politics was presented as if it should be something rather new or unusual for anarchists when in fact it has always been one of the central features of anarchist theory and practice. Further, I don't see much need for introducing the term "facilitator" when the term moderator already is a well established name for the same thing. Old fashioned New England town meetings always had a moderator. Finally, there is no need to characterize meeting organization by a simple dichotomy of dictators or facilitators. There are many types in between the two.

Harold Barclay
Edmonton, Alberta

Alexandra Devon responds:

The article on process was written to help people examine the way meetings are conducted and to offer suggestions for improvements. Not all our readers share the same experience, jargon or literary level regarding anarchist theory and practice so the article might appear basic to some, but it was hoped it would stimulate thought and debate which it obviously has, so we're happy.

Prisoner Seeks Help

I am an inmate of Holman Prison in Atmore, Alabama. My name is Henry Zimmerman (#106929). On May 25 1986 I was stabbed while I was asleep by another inmate with a prison-made knife. I was stabbed once in the neck and once in the left hip. The Administration here plotted with (4) inmate informers to concoct a scheme so that I would appear the cause of this assailant's anger. I am writing you all to publish my story and to criticize the Justice System in Alabama which dismisses the majority of lawsuits against the State of Alabama, even though Holman Prison is a constant place of violence. My claim is pending in Federal Court and the Magistrate's name is William Cassidy, U.S. District Court, P.O. Box 2625, Mobile, Ala. 36602. The conditions here are imminent toward danger. We need this publication and I wish to elicit support from anyone who is concerned about us (prisoners). The Warden's name is Willie Johnson (same address as my own). I pray that you all may send letters for my plea of justice to the above-mentioned people, and to the Governor of Alabama, George Wallace, State Capitol, Montgomery Ala. 36104. I also pray that you all will establish a foundation for me because I have been incarcerated for 14 years for robbery without violence -- because of my poverty I was given life in prison whereas my accomplice was given 14 years. Because I am politically inclined, each time I go up for parole, I am sent back for obsolete reasons.

Sincerely appreciated,
Henry Zimmerman #106929 Holman Unit
Holman 37
Atmore, AL 36503-0037

The Poets' Cove

Persons interested in receiving a free copy of a new newsletter called *The Poets' Cove* should send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Shaun Woods, Box 15642, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 5B4.

LETTERS

Dear KIO,

Not that you should care, but I'm becoming increasingly disappointed with your publication. I feel that you're treating the very complex issues of "our" world in an oversimplified manner; a "populist" manner in short.

It seems in your attempt to keep KIO in a popular mode, you'll have been sticking to some rather safe subjects. I would categorize it as alternative but not revolutionary reading. For example, although problems (their origins and manifestations) in the "third world" (don't most of us live in the real third world?) are important, its simple presentation is merely academic. Maybe the "Anarchism in the Third World" part was a "new" (previously unmet) set of dates and places for us, but how do the other articles in this issue differ in content from those in a "left" journal?

I maintain that third world topics are safe ones, at least with the way you treat them. (If they weren't so lame, why would the Marxist-Leninists talk about them all the time? ha ha). When analyzing internally created problems within "their" (3rd world) society, one can allow an uncrucial reader to deluge her or himself in an orgy of look-at-that-ism; that is looking at things one dimensionally, as they are presented, and feeling no apprehension about its criticism because it isn't directed towards you. A common example would be a television presentation on repression in the Soviet Union; most people would just take it as an indication of the superiority of one system over another, even if the presentation has nothing to do with presenting a partisan view.

When analyzing externally created problems one can get into defining things as "bad" or exploitative or reducing a problem to its simplest presentation.

"Smash apartheid." O.K.—how? And

what will this reform give to people; what will it take away from us? "Stop imperialism! Imperialism is bad. It's based on greed." (yikes!) I think that these simple ideas can be expressed in a more interesting, intelligent approach which can give the reader further insight. I'm jaded on this, because to me this is political boredom, a constant repetition (not even an exercise in masturbation, as my friend said, I think). I think most of your readers will agree that the word masturbation shouldn't take on any nasty overtones. And just who are your readers? Do you know? Do you care? Are you trying to "convert" the lefties? What's happening here? I'd suggest getting off the run of the mill topics. Cartoons of Reagan are only funny to Reaganites now -- who cares? Make fun of Reagan all you want, but as for me, I can hear the same jokes on the Tonight Show.

Perhaps the letters are the most interesting part of your rag. Personally though, I can't believe what you did to a letter I wrote in. (It was long, purposely, so I didn't expect to see it printed.) People were calling me all night questioning its content. In your editing of it, sentences were worked in such an order that it made it unclear. Words were slightly altered to fit a different part of speech and punctuation was left out. I believe this was an unintentional exercise in bad reading and interpretation on your part; it was arranged to convey what you thought I meant, not necessarily the essence of what I wrote.

If that wasn't bad enough, my letter was terminated just short of my criticisms of Lynna's words from 2 and 3 issues back. Was this intentional? Do you think she deserves a "break" from all the hostile criticism she's gotten? Or did your rag just receive enough flack from its readers for one issue? Maybe you will consider these (criticisms) more carefully, and, like any open-minded person or group of people, either respond to them or learn from them.

--Laure A.
New York City

Ron Hayley responds:

Dear Laure,

Are you sure you read our last issue? If you can identify where we wrote "Smash Apartheid" or "Stop Imperialism", we'd sure like to know. I agree it's easy to sound like every other leftist rag when covering the Third World, but that's no excuse for not covering it. That's tantamount to handing the issue over to the Marxists.

I also agree that it's easy to present problems in the Third World in a way that feeds into liberalism: we "cluck cluck" or feel sorry for their problems, while failing to make the connections with our own lives. I think one of the greatest contributions people in North America can make is to present things as they actually are, most leftist coverage of the Third World is little more than propaganda for the public relations departments of various "liberation" movements. Too often the experience of these countries is presented as if their whole history was leading up to their inevitable liberation by a national liberation movement which represents all the people's aspirations. This does a tremendous injustice to the political complexity in those countries which is just as diverse and contradictory, if not more so, than anything here.

We tried to avoid that by including first-hand accounts and interviews with people actually living there. We tried to leave it to our readers to make up their own minds. As for "Anarchy in the Third World", I felt it was important to correct the shameful omission of anarchist history from accounts of Third World movements. In so doing, I didn't "tail" after the Marxists. I said quite clearly that: "[along] with the class privileges of various Third World elites... there is the related problem of political authoritarian-

ism and hierarchicalism." I cited several instances in which state power shifted from the imperialists to new oppressors, and cited Bookchin's statement that "if 'Power to the people' means nothing more than power to the leaders of the people, then the people remain an undifferentiated, manipulable mass." As I see it, the attitudes of authoritarianism and the desire to dominate nature and set up a new technocratic state are universal -- and that the struggle is really between indigenous cultures everywhere (and I include within that the counter-cultures here) and bureaucrats and technocrats (potential or actual) to be found in every country of the world.

We cover the Third World not in order to provide our readers with exotic, but to uncover whatever anarchism has any original relevance; however our own lifestyles are partially to blame for suffering which occurs there, and what might be done to get "our foot off their neck" and to learn from the Third World experience, and to link up with those who have common aspirations.

As for your complaints about your letter (incorrectly attributed to "Lane" in the last issue), first, we are not handwriting analysts. If you want to avoid any tampering with your prose, borrow a typewriter. Second, we try to print letters without doing major changes, so that grammar and punctuation is kept as in the original. We threw out your original after the issue came out because we were deluged with paper, but I'm quite certain we made no changes in the part of the letter which we did print, which was most of it. We sent off correct to the typesetter when we realized that the first part had been left out by mistake. And, third, as our masthead says, "all letters received subject to printing and editing, unless specifically requested otherwise." So, make your intentions known. If you say "you don't want your letter cut, then we'll either decide to print the whole thing, or we won't print it at all." □

NATO OVER LABRADOR

low-flying life

by Gary Moffatt

When members of the Alliance for Non-Violent Action conducted civil disobedience at the Department of National Defense in Ottawa on November 12, 1986 to protest the flights of Canadian military aircraft over Labrador, they drew attention to one fundamental aspect of the arms race often overlooked by the peace movement: the infringement on native peoples' rights by the armed forces. Labrador native peoples have long protested these military flights, and while Canada hosted a NATO Foreign Ministers' conference last year in Halifax, native spokespersons held a press conference accusing the Canadian government of practicing ethnocide and cultural genocide against the Innu people of Labrador. "Canada is a racist country. Canadians are denying a people their fundamental human rights," I said before Ben Michel.

The Naskapi and Montagnais Indians of Labrador call themselves Innu, meaning "The People". Since 1965, they have been subjected to low-level military flights over the Quebec-Labrador peninsula area, and in recent years there have increased dramatically to nearly 5,000 a year. The flights, which occur directly over their land, often at altitudes of 100 to 250 feet, have caused frightened animals to flee the area, creating food shortages for Innu communities. A woman speaker at the conference spoke of

miscarriages, frightened infants and emotional distress. Apinam Ispatau, a hunter in the region, stated: "I was cleaning a marten one time when the aircraft flew over. The noise almost knocked me out. The jets went over sixteen times." Canada has tried very hard to persuade NATO to locate a major base in Labrador. If it succeeds the resulting increased number of flights will make life in the forest unbearable to the Innu and wipe out their way of life. The Innu do not consider themselves Canadians nor do they want any part of the economic side effects that Canada expects from an expanded base; only a tiny minority of Innu would consider accepting a job there.³

Expanding the base at Labrador would have completed a process of genocide which has been going on for a long time; already the trout and small animals on the Innu food chain are dying off while their water is polluted by acid rain. The Innu have been blackmailed by the government into relocation into mock-suburban communities of small, tightly packed clusters of cottages. Only by living in these settlements can the Innu receive such essential public services as education. The communities lack running water and often only have a single tap for the whole village. The only alternatives the Innu have to these villages are the traditional hunting and fishing camps that are now being disrupted by the low-level

military flights (one is tempted to draw analogies to the "strategic hamlets" into which those peasants who are allowed to survive in the U.S. client states of South America are herded). The flights have created hearing loss and even trees are suffering the growth-stunting effects of aircraft exhaust. Efforts of the Innu to establish a degree of independence and continuance of their traditional lifestyle are being challenged at every turn.⁴

The threat in this particular area of Canada and to the native people therein should be linked to Canada's ongoing campaign of genocide against the entire Native population. The word "genocide" was coined by Professor Raphael Lemkin in 1944 to denote the destruction of an ethnic group or a nation by physical annihilation or cultural suppression. In their book *The Genocide Machine in Canada* (Black Rose, 1973), Robert Davis and Mark Zannis trace the history of Canada's genocidal policies towards the native peoples of northern Canada. After having their economic base destroyed by the widespread slaughter of animals, they were herded into strategic hamlets (by government functionaries concerned with reducing logistical problems in "servicing" them) and their cultural base was destroyed by forcing children into residential schools where they were taught to despise their traditional culture -- songs, dances and the gift-giving *potlatch* ceremony -- most of which were banned by government decree. They were left with no possibility of developing a viable economy of their own. Thousands died of starvation in the 1930's and 40's, and mortality rates still

rival those of Third World countries.⁵

Now the Innu of Labrador may be doomed to a similar fate. Canadian and NATO officials have little inclination even to enter into dialogue with them, and when they protested in Halifax during the NATO conference, the RCMP kept them far enough away that the ministers were unaware of their presence. One of the Innu said, "There's not really that much we can do. We're praying and counting on the goodwill of the Canadian people and the international community."⁶

References:

1. Halifax Chronicle-Herald 30-5-86 p.9
2. Toronto Star 29-5-86 p.A8
3. Montreal Gazette 1-6-85 p.A1
4. Georgina Kosanovic, *Nightmare Over Labrador*, ACTivist March-April 1986
5. Davis and Zannis, *The Genocide Machine in Canada*, Montreal, Black Rose, 1973.
6. Montreal Gazette 1-6-85 p.A4 □



PROVERBS FOR A YOUNG ANARCHIST

by Marilyn Johnson

Listen:
the fight is to survive,
Your life is not your own, to save or spend
carelessly;
each belongs to all,
and immolation's selfish.

Martyrdom's a most seductive prospect;
to make a hopeless, glorious last stand
(in technicolour)
a tactic of defeat.

Means form ends, deforming;
your bitterest enemy is not the state,
it's your despair;
rage is a treacherous ally.

Listen:
Life is a serious business, and,
I still hope, a long one.
You must endure.
You will never know
victory;
to win is to withstand defeat,
to destroy yourself is treason.

You can fault me, perhaps with justice,
for compromise; but, listen,
I'm still here, pigheaded and angry.

Stick around.
It's nice to have company.

