

BLACK #0 ROSE

CONTENTS

Number 8	Spring 82
FROM THE EDITOR _____	2
NOTE TO OUR READERS _____	4
POEM	
Eric Passy _____	7
PROTEST	
David Wieck _____	11
POEM	
Vincent Ferrini _____	17
REVIEW: <i>Louise Michel</i> (Edith Thomas) Lucien Klein _____	18
BEGINNINGS FOR A CRITIQUE OF THE THOUGHT OF MURRAY BOOKCHIN	
Clym Yeobright _____	26
LAST WRITES _____	47

From the editor:

By way of an introduction, I grew up in a house where to speak of a religion of any kind was forbidden. My father always said that people who went to church were ignorant. I also grew up knowing about the injustices perpetrated by the Massachusetts' Court System against Sacco and Vanzetti. This was exemplified as "those people" who control society i.e. bankers, international money agencies, and government officials who handle monetary policy. So it wasn't just the Church, but also money lenders who controlled the government and people.

My father was a professional musician and survived the crash of '29 by virtue of being penniless. My mother to this day believes that anyone who chooses to pursue a career in the arts is mad.

Growing up in an Italian environment in the forties, of course, meant being involved in traditional Italian picnics. Each year the extended families came together to discuss everything from politics to poetry. I can still remember my brother sitting on Carlo Tresca's lap at one of these picnics and pulling at his beard.

Carlo Tresca became somewhat of a folk hero for my brother and I. We knew all the exciting stories about his life up until the time of his assassination.

With the advent of the talkies my father was out of work, but soon managed to find a job as an examiner in a clothing factory in Roxbury. He embraced unionism and soon became a member of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. Names like Debs, and Callanni, were household words. Dad was also one of the first subscribers to *Contracorrente*, one of the many Italian anarchist journals of the time. At the dinner table there always was lively conversation about the evils of big business and how the working man was exploited.

I guess my basic distrust of institutions stems from these early childhood experiences.

After college, I was resolute in believing that only the artist was free as an individual to deal with oppression. Only the artist could objectively feel to define the injustices against people.

"only to grow here!"
the birds say, the leaves say,
reflecting the sun

BLACK ROSE

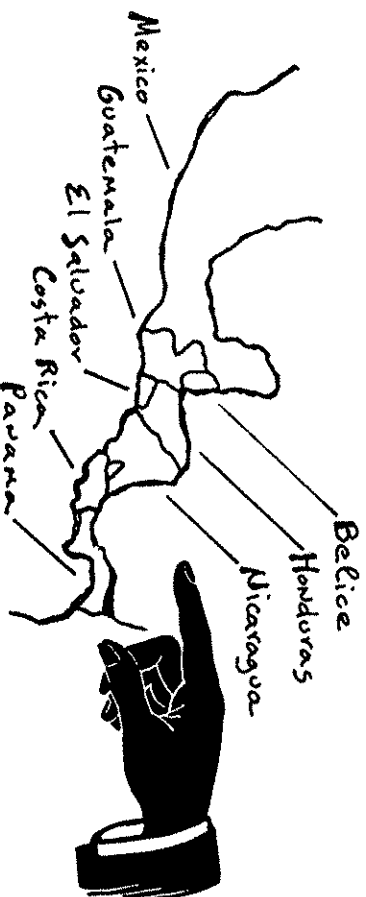
It was about this time that I became interested in the poetry of Ezra Pound and discovered that behind the "accepted" data of history there was always some conspiracy at work. Other poets, also pursued this line. So it wasn't difficult for Stephen Jonas in 1968 to write:

The Spring & Summer Annual

critical times are these
when bad government prevails
the forces of light & darkness contend
for upper-hand, disturbing the elements,
in such times the right man will find
himself beneath the grass
with the birds.

The poets are on record. The dominant impulse among some of them in the U.S. since the middle 50's has been without doubt one of anarchy against established beliefs and traditions of any kind. Fortunately some small magazine presses keep this fever alive today. The question of course is: can there be a literature in the U.S. against oppression such as is in evidence in Central and Latin America? Are the struggles in Poland and El Salvador real to us?

—Raffael DeCruittola



SPRING

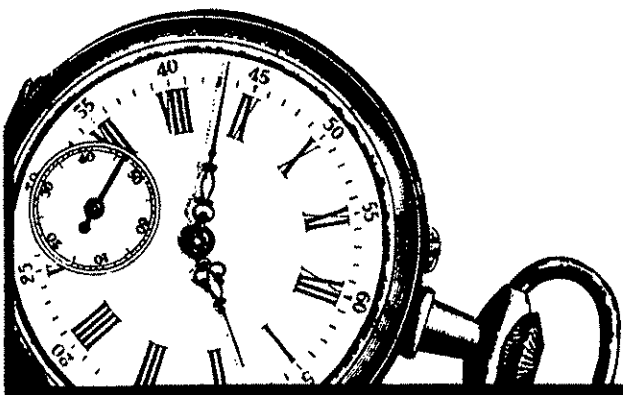
A Note to Our Readers

Black Rose struggles into print again! We—like much of libertarian press, alas!—could recite a long litany of financial woes that have caused our lateness, but they are all too familiar—and all too boring. These are difficult times not only for us, but for many others, and we did not feel justified in beginning what could be a never-ending series of appeals for financial help from our readers and supporters, who have been more than generous, in order to keep on publishing. *BR* has taken a pause to consider ways of breaking out of this constrict. We, as anarchists who want to do away with the power of money and eventually its existence, did not want to become obsessed or overcome by the lack of money.

Well, in discussing the problem among ourselves, we have come up with a solution that is quite unremarkable in its originality, but marvelous in its simplicity and overwhelming in its logic: we have decided that when we lack sufficient monies to publish, we will go to work for it as a group. (Presently we paint house, exteriors and interiors. Referrals of any possible work by our readers would be greatly appreciated. Greater Boston area only.) Since *BR* has no large or unmanageable debt, we think that supplementing money received through subscriptions by our mutual work should give us enough cash on hand to pay immediate bills, allow us to re-establish our regular publication schedule, and deal with other equally pressing magazine problems—better distribution, increased subscriptions, better contacts with our readers and other groups, expansion of the editorial group.

BR's existence depends ultimately on its being read. We think we can now manage to publish it regularly; we can only do our best to make it worth reading; we hope there will be enough readers who find that it is. We welcome your advice, your criticism, your support.

The Black Rose Collective





→ Autumn 1972

HE'S STILL IN THE WAR TODAY

He's still in the
war
today
he's in the war
today
glassey eyed
stiffened pride
broken windows
of his mind,
his silence is
loud,
as the rage contained
in his beat with slighted shuffle and entrenched feet
he's out processed
to America
"Mos" — thorzine
slighted shuffle,
he's in the
war today,
still in the
war today,
"11 BRAVO" ?
still in process,
in the war this way.
he laughs the
unknown goof,
and I want to cry,
beyond this
hardened shell
centuries after
the shock
but my eyes
are made
of glass,

SPRING

we're still in the
war today,
still,
even walking still,
in the war
this way.

yes —

He is my brother

I am his my pain
on a soft
pillow of death,
that opium
dreams fade away,
old papa san

always knew,
while today,
new dreams,

never take their place,
he's still in a war
today

today

he won't pray
he's in the war this way,
on the ever mourning
bus run

a ride into
the heavens

of

America's

hell,

to be incestuously
(raped),

as he is given a pure overdose of life.

chu-hoi! chu-hoi!
surrender your dignity —
to be at one with
your country's legion of merit.

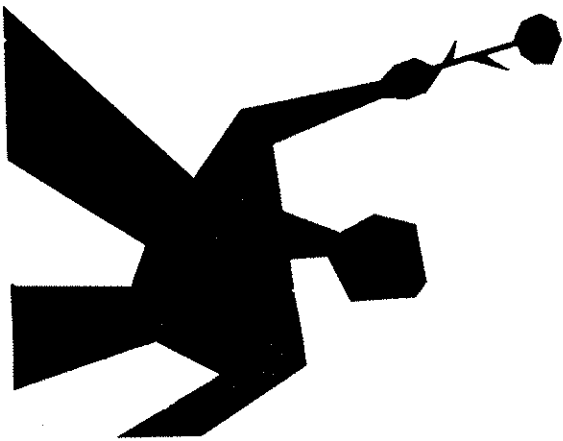
he is the war today

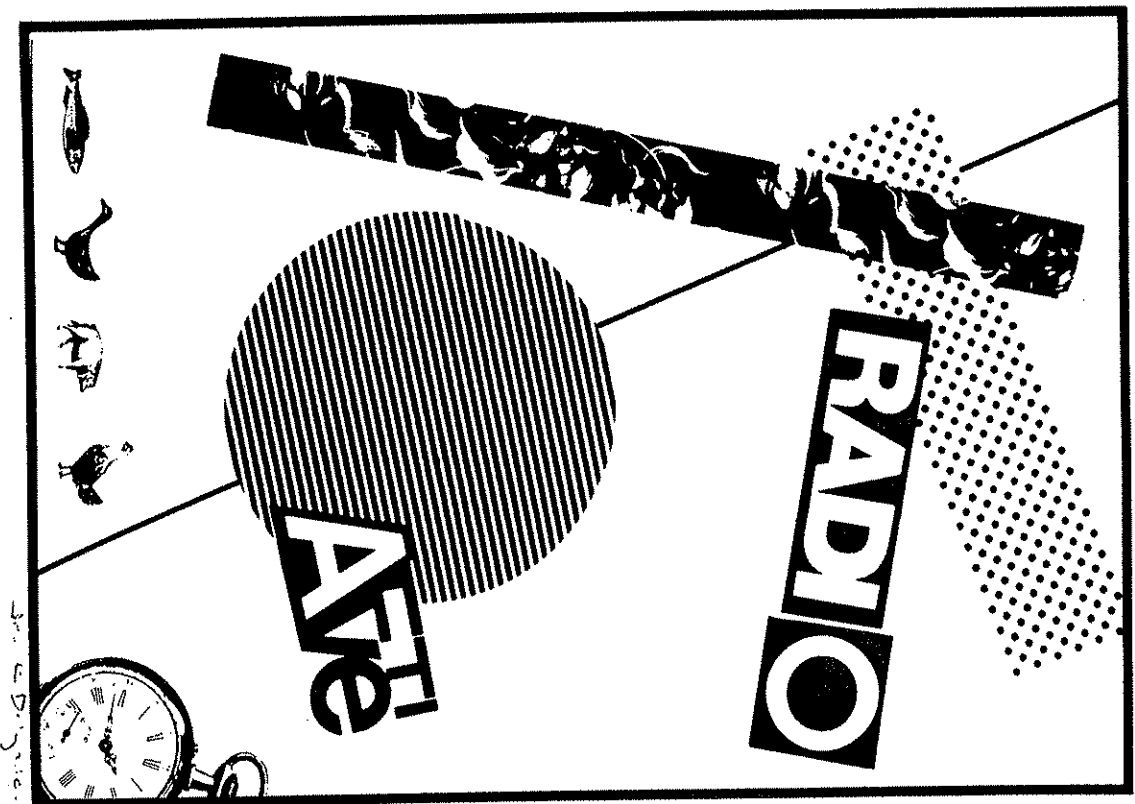
I am the war today

this way
we pray.

Requiem cant in pace — Amen
It shall not end this way

Eric Passy





Protest

During the late '50s and '60s, heyday of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and of the Committee of 100, Vernon Richards was as usual writing editorials for *Freedom*, the London anarchist weekly. Like other British anarchists he also found time to take part—without illusions—in marches and sit-downs, and he wrote about them. Noticing that illusions of yore now seem to be illusions again, he has assembled, for present reflection, under the title *Protest Without Illusions*, a collection of his earlier pieces.¹

Although Richards' commentary on the nuclear disarmament movement was sharply critical of its "illusions," the spirit of this volume is not negative or sour. The spirit reveals itself most clearly in the three dozen photographs included here, taken by Richards at various demonstrations. His camera did not seek out the confrontations; it enjoyed the "interesting and beautiful faces of serious and smiling protesters," their informality, the youthfulness of young and middleaged and old. If revolution, there is to be, not the grim authoritarian revolution, this is where it begins, does it not?

On the title-page there appears a quotation from Bertrand Russell (1959). Cited in a number of Richards' articles, it is thematic in this collection:

It is not enough to ban nuclear weapons. If you ban nuclear weapons completely, and even destroy all the existing stock, they will be manufactured if war breaks out. . . . We must work towards some system which will prevent war. It requires a different outlook and a different way of viewing all the affairs of men from any that has been in the world before.

Russell did not, of course, mean this as an anarchist would. When the philosopher, unpredictable in politics as in philosophy, abandoned the Committee of 100, Richards was hardly surprised: "Russell is an autocrat, a believer in the most centralized form of government"—namely, world government. (Richards is also short on trust of intellectuals who remain attached to privilege and rank. So there is another quotation on the title-page—from Thoreau.) For Richards, "working towards" would be social

revolution, which one should not expect to be nonviolent, "some system" would be a society without government and capitalism and therefore without war. There would be no illusion that this would be easy or that anything less would do.

This reading of the Russell quotation explains why Richards criticized the antinuclear campaign for limiting itself to nuclear disarmament, for hoping that the government, perhaps a Labor government, would heed sensible demands and sound reasons, and for believing that nuclear weapons are an isolated pathology rather than normal in, integral to, a capitalist and statist world. Richards:

We are not criticizing the CND for not having managed to rid the country of its nuclear armament. We do criticize them for treating what are virtually revolutionary proposals as if they could be dealt with as simple questions of policy, rather like wage restraint, or the decision to tax lollipops. Unilateral disarmament implies that a nation, or a people, are substituting moral values for power values. This means upsetting the whole economic structure: it means an end to privilege, it requires the decentralization of power. In a word it is the social revolution as anarchists understand it. And you cannot legislate for revolution; you have to make it.

Antinuclear people are now debating earnestly whether a weapons "freeze" may be a desirable objective—at a level of weaponry virtually unimaginable twenty years ago. The appeal—Richards was and is severely critical of this—is appeal to fear, doom-dread—but the people I meet know well enough that nuclear weapons can kill us all and they have chosen to entrust their fate to their government and to believe that safety demands multiplication of the arsenal. No more fear of dying than in macho courage is there solid foundation. What is needed is that

more people become so conscious of the potentialities of life and living that they will resent "selling their labor" to a boss, will hate authority and the social system based on it. Then they will resist war not because they are afraid to die but because they believe in life.

The serious and smiling faces, again.

Is the anarchist goal one more illusion? Hoping not to misrepresent Richards, I would answer: We "protest" without the illusions that such movements generate; we protest because we cannot not; our protest takes many forms, not all newsworthy; our purpose is not to persuade or

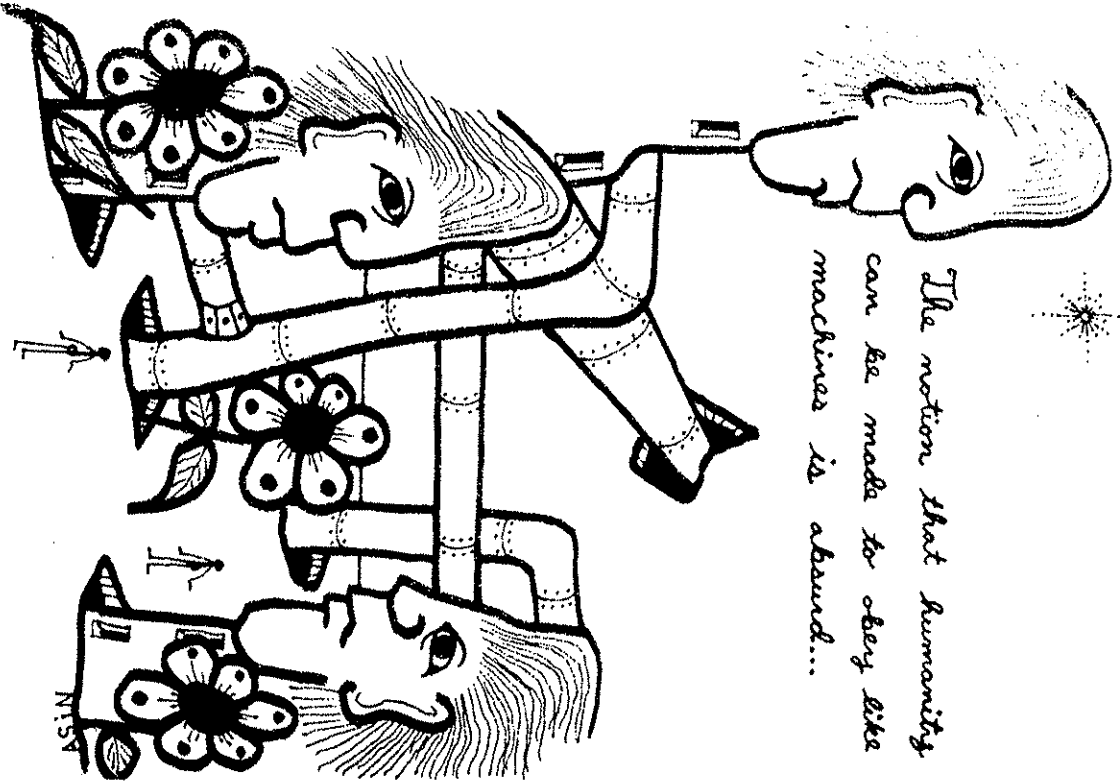
dissuade governments but to encourage our neighbors to think, act, and live differently; we had better do this for its immediate rewards; if there really is no way for human beings to achieve a radically different form of living, we are in Hell.

In his preface to this volume Richards expresses the view that nuclear power, not the weaponry, now represents the greater danger. Agree or disagree: but it is well to remember that the answers that seem most obvious are most likely to be wrong. Richards has never believed that the people in power are mad, as the conventional pacifist wisdom seems to hold. Is it not clearly in their interest to keep us all jittery? A nuclear war would be good neither for business nor for preservation of power and privilege; new weapons and a huge "defense" budget are not only good for business but necessary to it. In the nuclear power protests Richards finds hope for something positive. I would not disagree, although more crucial to the human future than the success or failure of these campaigns are the consequences, hard to foresee, of the world economic crisis, in which not only the "capitalist" sphere is implicated. If anarchist ideas have validity, they will be rediscovered by people who have never heard of anarchism but have decided that they had better begin to take charge of their own lives.

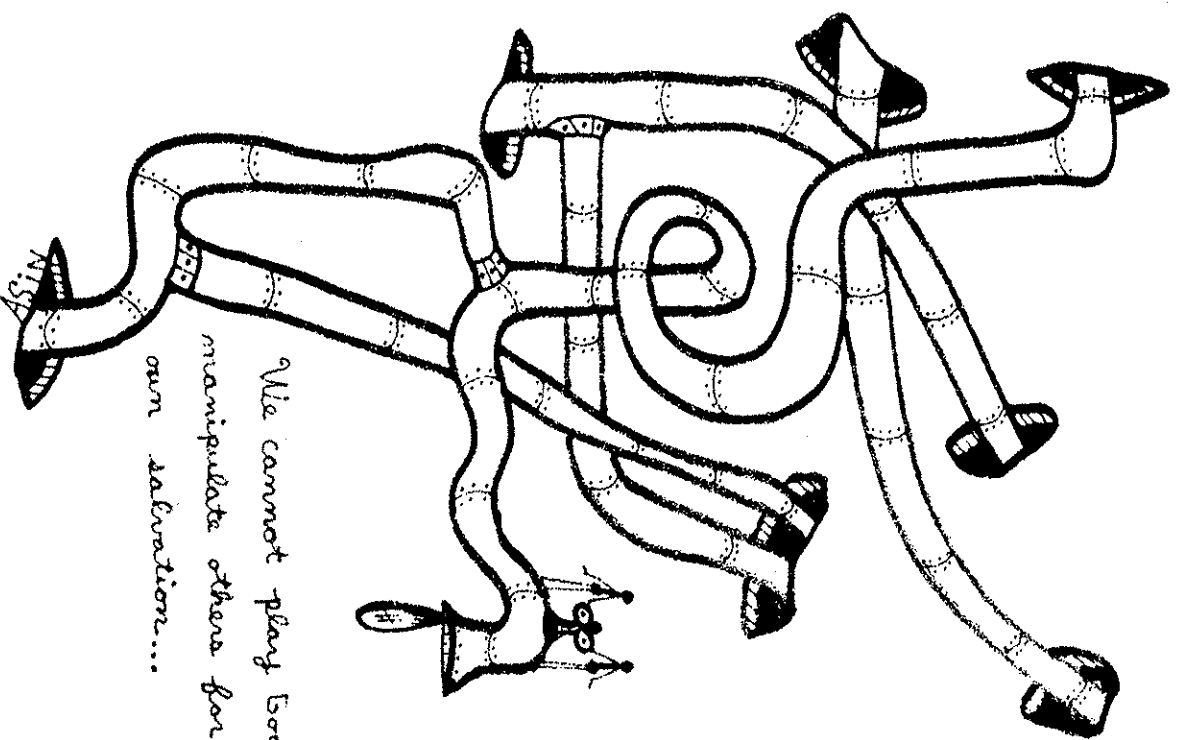
David Wiecek

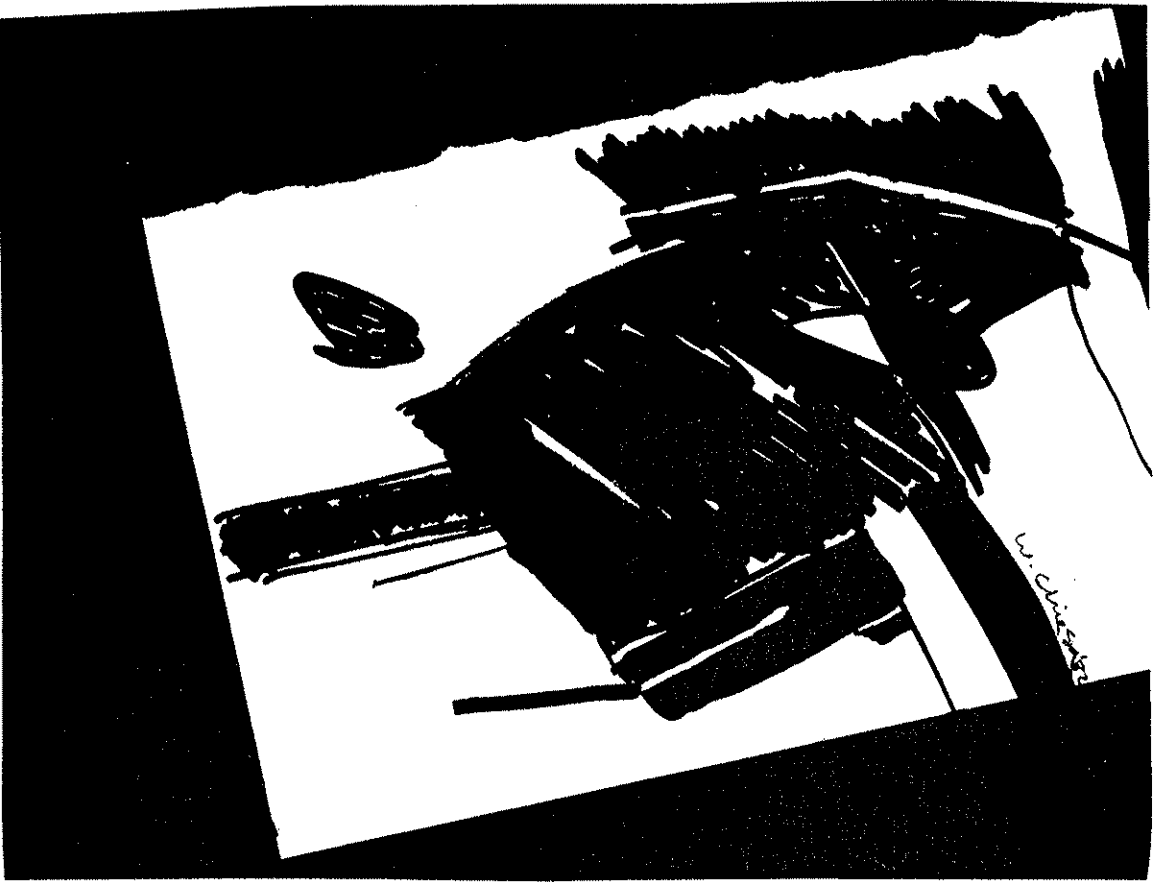
Published last year by Freedom Press, *Protest Without Illusions* is available for \$4.20, postage included, from Freedom Bookshop, 84b Whitechapel High St., London E1. Subscriptions to *Freedom* (now fortnightly), at the same address: \$25.00 per year. Richards is best known for his *Lessons of the Spanish Revolution* (1953, revised 1972), a vindication of anarchist methods.

The notion that humanity
can be made to obey like
machines is absurd...



We cannot play God and
manipulate others for their
own salvation...





The Second Great Lynn Fire of Thanksgiving Week 1981

(For the yellow factory of my
father on Broad Street & the
uprooted)

On November 28, 1981 a tremendous fire devastated many blocks of factories in the center of Lynn, Massachusetts, the shoe making center of the United States at the beginning of this century. As a large industrial city it attracted many immigrants of many nationalities seeking work. It has a militant labor history and was, for a time, the home of one of the most militant anarchist journals of North America, the Italian language Cronaca Sovversiva, until it was suppressed by the federal government during the First World War.

It was a Crossroads of pay envelopes & camaraderie at his bed-lasting machine beside his brother, I used to bring him his lunches, he was a breeder of friendships, then I worked there a year, a radio & a recorder, it was a beehive for the Unions of Hunger & a steady job in uncertainties— two broken tongue Generations on bread & onions up in fire & smoke burning all ethnic ties writing on the sky & the air with ruins of fingers for a few days as the wrecker's ball got them & an Epoch amputated, the perennial & the fungi of pain & joy are overturned, emptiness is guiding— some relics are homeless as the red brick names & History has a chasm in the jaded blue noons

Vincent Ferrini

November 27-30, 1981

SPRING

Review:

LOUISE MICHEL. By Edith Thomas. 444 pp. Montreal: Black Rose Books. 1980. \$19.95 (Hardcover) \$9.95 (Paper)

During the revolutionary spring of the Paris Commune in 1871, there arose a woman of great personal strength who was to become one of the major radical figures of her time. This woman was convinced that political change could not be brought about through the action of words alone. She was described, by one eyewitness of the time, as an "energetic woman fighting in the ranks of the Sixty first Battalion . . . she had killed several constables and police officers. . . ." George Clemenceau reported, with regard to this Commune, that "In order not to be killed herself, she killed others. . . . I have never seen her to be more calm. How she escaped being killed a hundred times over before my very eyes, I'll never know." This woman, who was to go into exile for her actions, but who was to return as a popular writer and agitator years later, was Louise Michel.

Louise Michel, however, is not as well known in this country as other revolutionary women, such as Rosa Luxemburg and Emma Goldman. One can puzzle over this, since Louise cer-

tainly had a tremendous following during her lifetime. For example, upon her return from exile in New Caledonia, she embarked on a speaking tour of several large Western European cities. Turnout was always large at these gatherings, with crowds oftentimes numbering in the tens of thousands. One cannot dismiss Louise's influence, furthermore, due to a lack of insufficient publications. Louise was a prolific writer, whose works ranged from plays (*Le Coq Rouge*) to expository political and historical commentary (*La Commune*).

If it is given, then, that Louise was undoubtedly an important person in the history of revolutionary movements, we must return to the question—why isn't she better known in this country? The reasons for this neglect are undoubtedly complex, but this reviewer offers three speculations. The first of these speculations should be made concerning the sensibilities and interests of the scholarly community as a whole in this country. Of paramount importance in evaluating the impact of women's histories

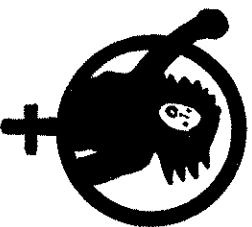
and biographies is the fact that, until recently, most historians have not seen fit to write about and analyze the actions of the female half of the human species. Louise, then, becomes a victim of a form of scholarly chauvinism and sexism present in the historical profession.

A second possible reason for the neglect of Louise is ideological; although she has been claimed by the Left as one of their own, she identified herself with the anarchist movement. It is clearly the case that among radical historians in the United States, those who place themselves under the rubric of Marxism far outnumber those who follow the banner of the Black Flag. Hence, simply in terms of scholarly and literary output, works which deal with female radicals, such as Rosa Luxemburg, will outnumber and thus overshadow those whose subjects are anarchist figures.

The notable exception to this second speculation is Emma Goldman. One must remember, however, that she published articles in English and spent most of her life in this country. Emma Goldman, then, is linguistically and historically accessible to Americans, which leads to a third possible reason for Louise's relative obscurity here: Most of the work on Louise has been done in her native country, France. These studies, of

course, have been written in French, and Americans, who are for the most part linguistically adept only in their native tongue, cannot have access to them. This linguistic isolation with respect to Louise Michel is truly regrettable, since several of the French works, such as Paule Lejeune's *Louise Michel L'indomptable*, are fine efforts.

There is good news from Black Rose Books, however, which will begin to break down the linguistic barrier that exists between interested American readers and French scholarship which has been done on Louise. Perhaps the best book which has been written on the "Red Virgin" is Edith Thomas's *Louise Michel*. The prose text of this work (which also contains generous samples of Louise's poetry which were left in their original French) has now been translated into English by Penelope Williams. One of the main virtues of Thomas's biography, which was published posthumously in 1971, is that it draws extensively upon archival material which was not available to previous scholars. These sources were put to good use by Thomas, since such rich information gives us a glimpse into the world of Louise. The reader is brought into the Parisian graveyards on the night of the Commune's fall, into the prisons of New Caledonia, and the crowded lecture halls of fin-de-siècle Europe.



BLACK ROSE

SPRING

Like many other radicals of her time, Louise's movement through life was arduous (yet exciting) and Thomas did not shirk from the task of giving us details of her struggle.

Louise, born in 1830, was one of those unfortunate persons in France who happened to be an issue out of wedlock. This did not prevent her, as Thomas points out, from having a relatively happy childhood. She received a good education, and was trained to be a schoolteacher. It is with the feelings of charity that are in part associated with the life of a schoolteacher in mid-nineteenth century France that Thomas identifies as a primary revolutionary impulse in Louise. This radical wrote, in 1853, that "We must set up an office of charitable endeavors, create job sites and public workshops wherever employment is scarce. Without work people lack bread, and when they lack bread, they often find gunpowder and bullets".

It is with an analysis of this charitable inclination that Louise's life can become a starting point for various reflections on anarchism. A first brief note concerns the affinities that Louise's personality has with other radicals. It is indeed interesting how the feelings of charity acted as an impetus not only for Louise, but for other anarchists as well. One immediately thinks of Peter Kropotkin, who describes similar emotions through

out the early sections of his *Memoirs of a Revolutionary*. But what is more salient here for our discussion of Louise is her apparent transition from a devotional and charitable creature, who seems to decry the use of "gunpowder and bullets", to one who advocated the use of violence during the uprising of the Commune.

Thomas attempts to understand this change, and does not provide us with an easy explanation. One perspective which arises out of a consideration of Thomas's biography focuses on Louise's psychological makeup. To Thomas, Louise seems to be a sort of revolutionary androgyne, who embodies what traditionally are thought of as male and female characteristics. On the battlelines of the Commune, for example, both the "male" and "female" sides could be manifested—Louise could be the soldier who fought against the forces of reaction, but at the same time be a compassionate nurse for the wounded. In a sense, then, "Black Louise" transcends many of the sexual categories of her time. It is regrettable that although Thomas is aware of the "double aspect" of Louise's character, she fails to fully appreciate its importance for this radical's political development. This reviewer maintains that the labels "male" (which is associated in much of the "public mind" with action and violence) and "female" (usually

linked with passivity and devotion) do not make sense when applied to Louise. The question of how the transition occurred for Louise then becomes a pseudo-problem: the elements of both revolutionary action and nonviolence were present from the early stages of her life. This is, in fact, something which Louise asserted, since she held that she was an activist from childhood. Thomas tends to dismiss this statement, though Louise's childhood feelings for change can be explained through a closer consideration of her personality.

A second force in Louise's political evolution, which is perhaps more obvious, was her frustration with the social situation of Second Empire France. Her attempts for political improvement, which sought to change this situation, took various avenues. Educational enterprises were always at the heart of her activities, and she managed several schools during the pre-Commune period of her life. She also became secretary of the "Democratic Society for Moralization", which sought to ameliorate the working condition of women. She once announced "If the men hang back when the time comes (for revolution), women will lead the way. And I'll be there."

She was indeed present in the Commune, and as a reward for her valour

she was sent, by the "new" French government, halfway across the world to her exile in New Caledonia. Thomas's account of Louise's life on New Caledonia is one of the better sections of the book. Here we witness the struggles of an individual who was central to the events which occurred during 1871 in the "Capital of the Nineteenth Century" forced to live on the edge of civilization. Her interests in nature, particularly biology and botany, were to sustain her during this period. She was influenced by the writings of both Charles Darwin and the eminent French physiologist, Claude Bernard, and she also carried out experiments for various French geographical and meteorological organizations. (Once again, one thinks of Peter Kropotkin, who was a distinguished geographer.) Politics, however, remained her primary passion, an emotion which was to be expressed, once again, upon her release in 1880.

When Louise returned to Europe, she was greeted by throngs everywhere. She became an important political speaker, particularly for the anarchist cause, until her death in 1905. Some of the incidents which occurred during this period are quite vivid, and Thomas's prose can be quite riveting when she describes these events, such as a large demonstration in which Louise participated.

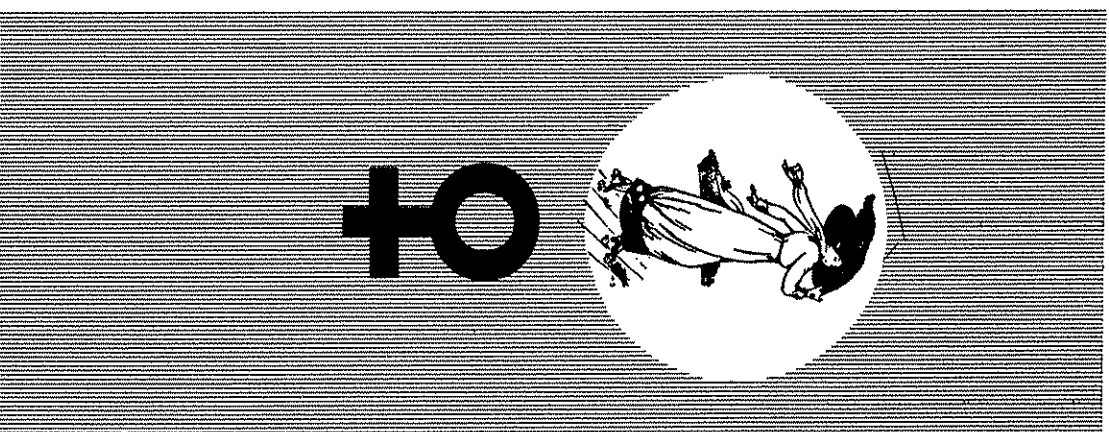
Somebody passed her (Louise) a black flag fastened to the end of a stick, and, with her improvised banner, she moved to the head of the crowd. They set off. Passing a bakery on Rue des Canettes, a cry went up: "Bread or work!" Louise was torn by the hard realities of the dilemma, but she shouted "If you are hungry, take some. But don't hurt the bakers." Demonstrators poured into the bakery, and terrified bakers began handing out bread.

Although many of the situations in this part of Louise's life are interesting, it is at this point that Thomas's narrative loses its stride. Of the 400 pages of text in this biography, 235 are devoted to the political harangues and intrigues which characterized this part of her life. These cabals are obviously interesting to the historian of this period who is thoroughly familiar with all the persons involved, or to the committed anarchist who wishes to learn more about his or her heritage. The general reader, on the other hand, may find some of these situations inspiring, but may consider others boring. On the whole, however, this section is valuable and contributes to the reader's understanding and appreciation of Louise's life and the times in which she lived.

To this reviewer's mind, however, the chief value of this work, aside from providing illumination into the world of this revolutionary woman, is

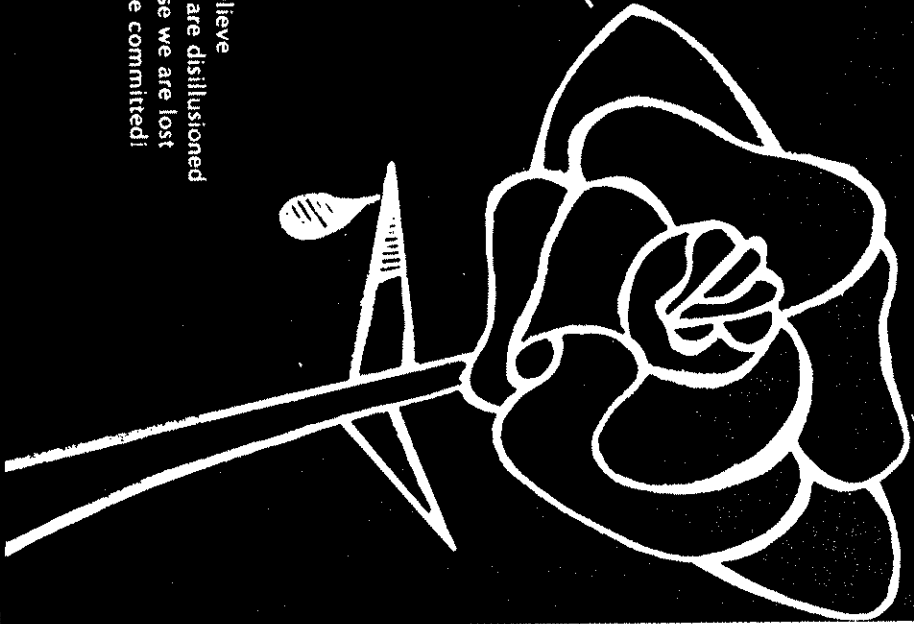
that Thomas, although critical at times of Louise, clearly takes a moral stand along with Louise on the desirability of political change. By taking this stand, she has much to teach both biographers and historians. Thomas, perhaps inadvertently, thus raises a classic historiographic question — should the writing of history have a didactic dimension, or should the practice of this discipline be more akin to socio-scientific methods? Although this question can only be answered through the individual reader's background and sensibilities, it is clear, after reading this oftentimes stirring account of the "Red Virgin" that those who appeal to both fact and values in history deserve our attention.

—Lucien Klein



Give Flowers to the Rebel Failed

Carl Harp (1949-1981)



Revolution

We join because we believe
We leave because we are disillusioned
We come back because we are lost
We die because we are committed!

Carl Harp

Carl Harp, a revolutionary anarchist, was found dead in his cell September 5, 1981 at Washington State Prison, Walla Walla. The authorities claim, shades of Salsedo, that he committed suicide. Friends who knew Carl well say that he was not in a suicidal frame of mind and that he was murdered. They have set up committees to search for the truth—see Last Writes for further information.

Carl was also a poet, an artist whose work appeared in Black Rose from time to time . . . Vale.

Beginnings for a Critique of the Thought of Murray Bookchin

Clym Yeobright

There is a lot of anarchistic thought currently in North America. There is a lot less that is specifically labelled "anarchist." Only a few thinkers spring readily to mind: the late Paul Goodman, the political and social commentary of Dwight Macdonald, the common sense anarchism of Karl Hess, the relentless criticism of Noam Chomsky, possibly some of the science fiction of Ursula LeGuin, and the body of work of Murray Bookchin, which I would like to consider.

Murray Bookchin is an avowed revolutionary anarchist. For roughly the last twenty years he has been writing and agitating about anarchism, trying to make anarchism a vibrant and vital critical social force in North America. While clearly remaining in many ways within the traditional framework of anarchism, and particularly what is called anarcho-communism, Bookchin has tried to challenge many dearly held positions within the libertarian socialist movement. This has provoked a great deal of controversy, especially in my experience at public gatherings of libertarian socialists and anarchists. This controversy has generated much heat but little light. Rarely in my experience has Bookchin's thought received the critical scrutiny it deserves. To the degree that this reflects a sorry state of anarchism in North America this is a pity, for a serious examination of Bookchin's thought would be a healthy thing, the sort of thing a vibrant and vital social movement would welcome. It is also a pity because Bookchin is dealing with matters which are important and worthy of consideration.

Bookchin's style often makes it difficult to understand exactly what he is trying to say, although in a general sense it is usually obvious what he means. The first thing to be done, therefore, is to fix what it is specifically that Bookchin is saying about many issues. Only then can one begin to judge to what extent Bookchin has succeeded in making anarchism a vibrant and vital critical social force, or at least helped to begin to make it so. I will try to fix Bookchin's thought by breaking it down into three inter-connected areas. First, the theory of post-scarcity anarchism; second, the notion of ecology; third, the ideas on organization. Having fixed a base for understanding Bookchin's work, I will then make some initial comments upon his work, with the idea that others will at some point make comments as well, thus beginning what ought to be a healthy discussion.

Bookchin's first major work is *Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, which is an unfolding of the theory of the same name. Post-scarcity anarchism is basically a simple idea. Human society has always had to deal with the problem of survival, the problem of scarcity. Hierarchy, domination, class struggle, the subjection of women and so on all come from the necessity of dealing with scarcity. "The great historic splits that destroyed early organic societies, dividing men from nature and man from man, had their origin in the problem of survival, in the problems that involved the mere maintenance of human existence." (*Post-Scarcity Anarchism*, hereafter PSA, p.9) Dealing with these problems of survival provoked as it were the development of technology. Technology, hitherto a support of hierarchical and dominative societies, has now rendered them obsolete, even dangerous to the continued existence of humanity, because technology has developed to the point where it has solved the problem of scarcity. If scarcity made hierarchy and domination necessary, post-scarcity makes them unnecessary and dangerous. "The seeds for the destruction of bourgeois society lie in the very means it employs for self-preservation: a technology of abundance that is capable of providing for the first time in history the material basis for liberation." (PSA, p.12) And: "For us there are the alternatives only of utopia or social extinction," (PSA, p.22) with utopia being post-scarcity anarchism. Or again: "We are confronted with the more drastic alternative of anarchism or annihilation." (PSA, p.40)

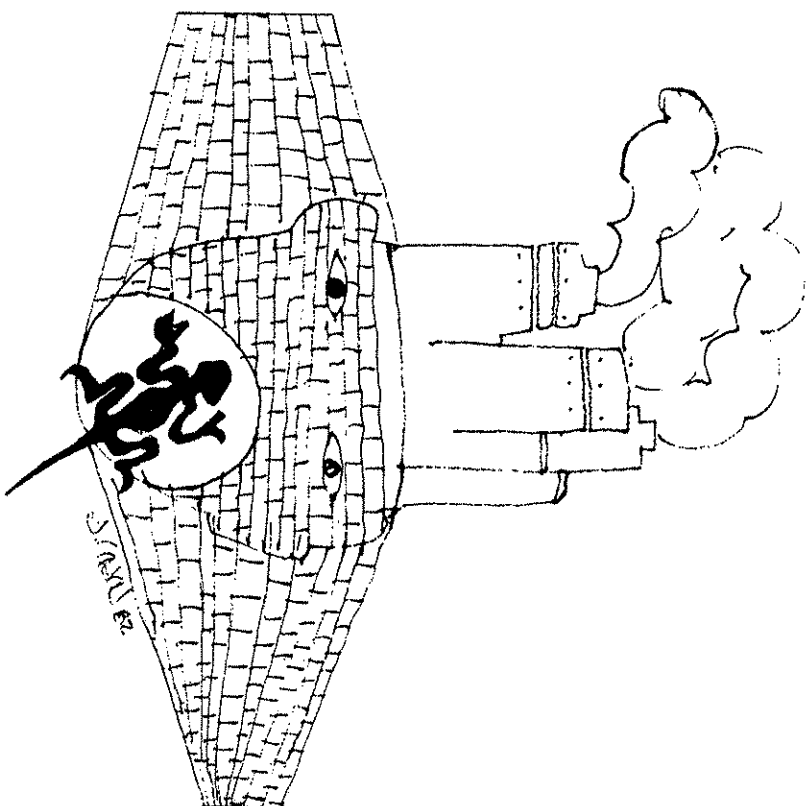
"For the first time in history," Bookchin says, we stand on the threshold of post-scarcity society." (PSA, p.10) A post-scarcity society is not one

of an abundance of consumer goods. "To view the word 'post-scarcity' simply as meaning a large quantity of socially available goods would be as absurd as to regard a living organism simply as a large quantity of chemicals. . . . Post-scarcity society, in short, is the fulfillment of the social and cultural potentialities latent in a technology of abundance." (PSA, p. 11) Existing social organization is based on hierarchy and domination and prevents the development of post-scarcity society. Hence, existing social organizations must be changed. A dominative technology must be replaced by a liberatory technology. If not, the existence of humanity is threatened.

Technology under hierarchy and domination threatens destruction not only from warfare but also and especially ecological destruction. "The point is that man is undoing the work of organic evolution." (PSA, p. 67, also *Toward An Ecological Society*, hereafter TES, p. 36) there will be no future unless this undoing is stopped. This is fast becoming to one degree or another general knowledge and a general concern. But general concern will not be effective unless general knowledge focuses on the roots of the problem.

For Bookchin, ecology is distinct from environmentalism. Ecology is a "broadly philosophical outlook that seeks the harmonization of humanity with nature" while environmentalism is "mere environmental engineering." (TES, p. 89) "based more on tinkering with existing institutions, social relations, technologies, and values than on changing them." (TES, p. 67) While environmentalism in some form may be a part of ecology, ecology is much more than environmental engineering.

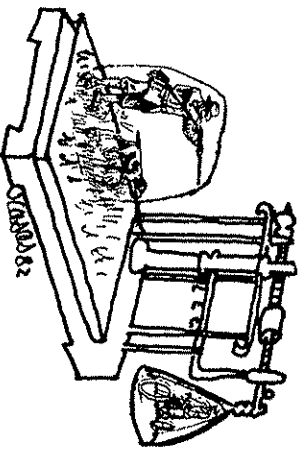
Ecology is "social ecology; the conviction that the very concept of dominating nature stems from the domination of human by human." (TES, p. 76) Contemporary society is "instrumentalist" in outlook and its ecology is in fact environmentalism. "Where social ecology, in my view, seeks to eliminate the concept of the domination of nature by humanity by eliminating the domination of human by human, environmentalism reflects an 'instrumentalist' or technical sensibility in which nature is viewed merely as a passive habitat, an agglomeration of external objects and forces, that must be made more 'serviceable' for human use, irrespective of what these uses may be." (TES, p. 77) Social ecology, therefore, argues that the current ecological crisis is the result of the misuse of technology due to the hierarchical and dominative social structure of which it is a part and that this crisis cannot be solved within that struc-



ture or any structure based on hierarchy and domination. The ecological crisis is a societal crisis and must be addressed as such for any hope of resolution. "Man has produced imbalances not only in nature, but, more fundamentally, in his relations with his fellow man and in the very structure of his society. The imbalances he has produced in the social world." (PSA, p. 62)

Ecological action demands social action. That social action must be directed against hierarchy and domination because these latter are the

chief cause of the social ecological crisis. A free and non-hierarchical society is a post-scarcity anarchist society. Thus an ecological society must be a post-scarcity anarchist society and the ecological activist an anarchist.



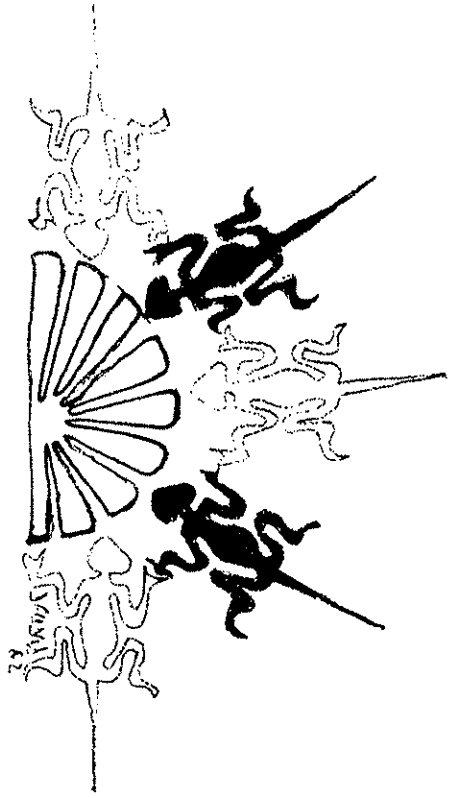
Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in Bookchin's consideration of the city, about which he has written a number of essays and a book, *The Limits of the City*. The problems of urban life are familiar ones—size, decay, pollution, crime, violence, loss of individuality, and so on. Various remedies for these problems have been proposed. Most of these Bookchin calls “myths of city planning,” destined to fail or worsen the problem they set out to solve. These remedies are myths because they are environmentalism and not ecology. “City planning, in effect, tries to ‘solve’ problems, not remove them. It thereby retains the status quo in its solutions when it seems most occupied in altering the urban structure, hence the mystifying role its ideology plays in modern social life.” (TES, p.138)

An ecological approach to the city, according to Bookchin, would look forward and backward to arrive at a solution. It would look backward in history to recover the best of the urban tradition, of what a city could ideally be, especially considering the Greek *polis*, or city-state. The *polis* was an arena for common association, centered around the com-

mon meeting-place, the *agora*, which was more than just a market-place, and not the private domicile. The individual was at one and the same time seen as individual and as member of society. “Neither collectivity nor subjectivity are unconditional; the Hellenic individual is, in microcosm, the society of which he is a part.” (TES, p.141) Each individual was expected to share in the management of public affairs. “The underlying theory of civic management is amateurism.” (TES, pp.141-142) The ideal size of a *polis* was formulated by Aristotle: “the largest number which suffices for the purposes of life and can be taken in at a single view.” (TES, p.143) Government affairs were conducted in face-to-face general assemblies and there was a strong communitarian sense. (TES, pp.142-143) Hellenic society was characterized by a strong ethical sense as well. “Even to such conservative thinkers as Plato and Aristotle, politics—a realm that could never be dissociated from ethics—denoted the achievement of virtue in the form of justice and the good life.” (TES, p.30)

The ecological approach looks forward by viewing the “future as more than a recovery of the past.” (TES, p.189) The Hellenic ideal of urban life can be achieved by applying technology to create a post-scarcity anarchist society. There is no need for these ideals to be perverted by the need to deal with scarcity. These ideals can be realized only with the help of a liberatory technology in a liberatory society. There is no need to develop a blueprint of this future society, though its general principles can be outlined. “Any addition or details would be utopian in the worst sense of the word.” (TES, p.189) Although Bookchin has attempted a description of a liberatory technology in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* and has sympathetically described some attempts at approximating these ideals in practice today, he has avoided any detailed sketch of post-scarcity anarchist society. (cf. TES, pp.162-165, 183-186)

As is the case with most anarchists, Bookchin believes that the means one chooses must be consonant with the end desired. The post-revolutionary society of the future must be pre-figured as much as possible in the revolutionary organizations of the present. It is “axiomatic that there can be no separation of the revolutionary process from the revolutionary goal.” (PSA, p.45) And: “The organization we try to build is the kind of society our revolution will create.” (PSA, p.220) The end is, as we have seen, post-scarcity anarchism. Logically, then any organization Bookchin would accept as revolutionary would have to accept the values of decentralization, human scale, face-to-face self-management, ge-



nine individuality, and communitarian and ethical sense as guiding principles, both as ultimate end and standard of behaviour as theory and as practice.

Bookchin strongly rejects all traditional forms of organization as inadequate, save one, and by implication counter-revolutionary. The usual socialist or marxist party fails because it perpetuates existing forms of hierarchy and domination. "The party is structured along hierarchical lines that reflect the very society it professes to oppose... it assimilates all the forms, techniques, and mentality of bureaucracy." (PSA, p.196) Thus, the failure of revolutions led by such parties is in part due to the very structure of those parties themselves.

Other forms of organization seem more promising but fail as well. Workers' councils, for example, do "not break completely with the terrain of hierarchical society," (PSA, p.145) though they are a step forward from the party organizations. Anarcho-syndicalism, of which workers' councils are really a form, fails as well. "The fact remains that council modes of organization are not immune to centralization, manipulation,

and perversion. These councils are still particularistic, one-sided and mediated forms of social management. At best, they can be the stepping stones to a decentralized society—at worst, they can easily be integrated into hierarchical forms of social organization." (PSA, p. 155)

Many organizations fail because they accept marxism as a revolutionary theory. Bookchin regards marxism as inherently counter-revolutionary, as "bourgeois sociology." (TES, p.195ff) Marxism is bourgeois sociology because it shares certain basic outlooks with the bourgeois Enlightenment thought which is the intellectual underpinning of capitalist society.

Marx attempted a scientific description of the workings of capitalist society. In doing so, he argued, according to Bookchin, that humans were essentially class beings, members of a class, "the 'personification of economic categories, the bearers of particular class interest,' not as individuals possessed of volition and ethical purpose. They were turned into the objects of social law." (TES, p.200) Human liberation is seen as coming after the collapse of capitalist society due to its inner workings. All of this is "natural" and ethically neutral, just as the workings of nature are natural and ethically neutral. If this is so, there is no basis for objection to hierarchy and domination in ethical terms, which "can be challenged—or validated—only by objective laws that have a validity of their own, that exist behind the backs of 'men' and beyond the reach of 'ideology.' This flaw... is a fatal one, for it opens the door to domination as the hidden incubus of the Marxian project in all its forms and later developments." (TES, p.200)

This is seen in Marx's views on nature and technology. Capitalism was once revolutionary because it developed the forces of production to a new level. In doing so capitalism creates the basis of the new revolutionary order. Thus, the conquest of nature, colonialism, the exploitation of labor are all morally neutral, part of the process of the inner workings of capitalism. Indeed, this domination is the basis of liberty. "Domination is annexed to liberation as a precondition for social emancipation. (TES, p.200) "Consciousness becomes the recognition of its lack of autonomy just as freedom becomes the recognition of necessity. A politics of 'liberation' emerges that reflects the development of advanced capitalist society into nationalized production, planning, centralization, the rationalized control of nature—and the rationalized control of 'men'" (TES, p202) But domination and the "realm of necessity" can never be the basis

of liberation, the "realm of freedom." "Marx's tragic fate can be resolved into the fact that, integral to his entire theoretical edifice, he colonizes the 'realm of freedom' by the 'realm of necessity as its basis'." (TES, p.26) Marx's theoretical outlook is one conditioned by scarcity, and one which perpetuates scarcity in its practical forms, much as capitalist society does. Since we are on the threshold of a post-scarcity society, Bookchin says marxism must be seen as counter-revolutionary and rejected in all its forms. "Marxism is dead because it was rooted in an era of material scarcity, limited in its possibilities by material want." (PSA, p.219)

Syndicalism is used by Bookchin to include anarchosyndicalism, workers' councilism, and self-management movements. (TES, p.115) Syndicalism is not marxism, though it has much in common with marxism. Syndicalism is committed to the creating of a self-managed stateless society. Nonetheless, syndicalism fails according to Bookchin because its model of social organization is based upon the factory and the working class, that is the "realm of necessity."

The factory is a capitalist fabrication, designed to foster production by efficiently organizing the productive process, including the workforce itself. "The factory is, in fact, a realm of necessity—not a realm of freedom." (TES, p.127) It is conditioned by scarcity. The worker is the "dehumanized mass being" who works in a factory, who is further reduced "into a hierarchical being." (TES, p.124) The syndicalist idea is that the factory will be the "school for social reconstruction" (TES, p.124) in which the worker will become aware that his interests are irreconcilably opposed to those of the governors and employers. The workers will then revolt, reorganizing society as a stateless, classless federation of self-managed factory councils, thus abolishing hierarchy and domination and creating a liberatory society. One can easily see that there are genuinely revolutionary aspects to syndicalism in Bookchin's terms, and Bookchin does admit that syndicalism is a step along the way to post-scarcity anarchist society. (PSA, p.147) But, as mentioned earlier, syndicalism is not immune to hierarchy and domination.

The factory teaches more than the lesson of social reconstruction. "The factory is a school for hierarchy, for obedience and command, not for a liberatory revolution. It reproduces the servility of the proletariat and undermines its selfhood, its capacity to transcend need." (TES, p.127) The factory is, after all, the realm of necessity. Its technology is a dominant technology. A liberatory society needs a liberatory technology.

"With syndicalism, however, this awareness is often warped by its acceptance of the factory as the infrastructure of the new society within the old, as a model for working class organization, and as a school for the humanization of the proletariat and its mobilization as a revolutionary social force. Hence, technics raises a startling dilemma for libertarian concepts of self-management." (TES, pp.127-128) How can a liberatory society be achieved if it is based upon the economic structure and dominant society? "Perhaps no more compelling argument has been advanced against syndicalist notions of economic organization than the fact that modern technology is intrinsically authoritarian." (TES, p.117)

The problem is compounded by the fact that the worker as worker has been dehumanized into a mass being and a hierarchical being. How can such a being become the liberatory being capable of genuine self-management if appealed to primarily as a worker? It cannot be done, and the attempt to do so is what Bookchin has called the "myth of the proletariat." (PSA, p.181)

It is only by "demassifying" the worker, by making the worker more than a "class being" that the worker can become the "self" capable of self-management. "This amounts to saying that workers must see themselves as human beings, not as class beings; as creative personalities, not as 'proletarians', as self-affirming individuals, not as 'masses'." ("Introductory Essay", *The Anarchist Collectives*, Dolgoff, editor, p. xxiv) Syndicalism, therefore, as much as marxism is trapped in the realm of necessity. Syndicalism, too, is a response to scarcity and falls far short of the needs and possibilities of a post-scarcity anarchist society. Syndicalism "is trapped by its very premises. For workers to become revolutionary as workers—as a class of dispossessed wage earners engaged in an irreconcilable struggle with a class of capitalist property owners—presupposes the very material want which in no small measure prevents the proletariat from directly organizing and controlling society." (*The Spanish Anarchists*, hereafter TSA, p.308)

As an aside, I would like to note that for Bookchin syndicalism is not merely a theoretical question. His rejection of and sympathy for syndicalism is drawn from history, specifically from his consideration of the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist movement, Spain being the one country in which anarchism had a well-organized mass following for some thirty or so years until the defeat of the Republic in the Civil War of 1936. Bookchin's best book, *The Spanish Anarchists*, is a history of that movement

up to the eve of the Civil War. He concludes that Spanish anarcho-syndicalism "marked the most magnificent flowering and, in the curious dialectic of such processes, the definitive end, of the century-long history of proletarian socialism." (TSA, p.302) An argument presented in briefer form in the "Introductory Essay" referred to above.

Having rejected marxism and syndicalism, indeed, any form of organization that is based on material scarcity, Bookchin forwards his own ideas on organization and social transformation. The purpose of organization is the achievement of a post-scarcity anarchist society. The organization ought as much as possible to prefigure that society: a self-managed, non-hierarchical, non-dominative, small scale, ethical society demands an organization embodying those values. These organizations have to be aware of the objective conditions under which they have to operate, conditions which are different from those earlier forms of organization had to face. "A European or American civil war of the kind that wasted Spain in the thirties is no longer conceivable in an epoch that can deploy nuclear weapons, supersonic aircraft, nerve gas, and terrifying firepower against revolutionaries. Capitalist institutions must be hollowed out by a molecular historical process of disengagement and disloyalty to the point where any popular majoritarian movement can cause them to collapse for want of support and moral authority." (Introductory Essay, p. xxxviii) This hollowing out process is already underway. Bookchin compares it to the earlier Enlightenment which laid the intellectual foundations of capitalist society and not surprisingly terms this process the "new Enlightenment." "People everywhere, from all walks of life, are "slowly challenging not only the authority of established institutions and values but authority as such." (TES, p.257) This new Enlightenment is invisible to conventional analyses. According to the usual socialist analysis it reveals meagre political results. "The significance of the new Enlightenment however, it that it is altering the *unconscious apparatus of the individual* even before it can be articulated consciously as a social theory or a commitment to political convictions." (TES, p.258) The material means for a post-scarcity anarchist society are there, as we have seen. What is lacking is the will to create such a society, the desire and ability to create the self that can live in a self-managed society. "Until such selves are minimally attained, self-management becomes a contradiction in terms. Self-management without the 'self' that is expected to engage in 'managing', in fact, turns into its very opposite: hierarchy based on obedience and command." (TES, p.1211)

The development of this self involves an understanding of spontaneity. "Spontaneity is integrally part of the very dialectic of self-consciousness and self-dealienation that removes the subjective fetters established by the present order." (TES, p.259) Spontaneity, for Bookchin, has a special meaning. "Spontaneity is not mere impulse. . . . Nor does spontaneity imply undeliberated behavior and feeling. Spontaneity is behavior, feeling and thought that is free of external constraint, of imposed restriction. It is self-controlled, internally controlled, behavior, feeling, and thought, not an uncontrolled effluvia of passion and action." (TES, p.259) Spontaneity is vital to organization as it leads to truly self-managed organic forms of organization. "The only serious question that is raised in connection with spontaneity is whether it is informed or not." (TES, p.260) The purpose of the revolutionary organization is to promote this process of information. When this process has become widespread and thorough, a revolutionary social change will "spontaneously" occur, only then standing a chance of success. (TES, p.260)

This remarking of the self and the forwarding of the new Enlightenment is performed by the revolutionary organization. The form of revolutionary organization is the anarchist affinity group, an organizational form first developed by Spanish anarchists in the pre-Franco period. Affinity groups are "intimate decentralized bodies that would deal with all facets of life and experience. Each group would be highly experimental, innovative, and oriented toward changes in life-style as well as consciousness; each would be so constituted that it would readily dissolve into the revolutionary institutions created by the people and disappear as a separate social interest. Finally, each would try to reflect as best it could the liberated forms of the future, not the given world that is reflected by the traditional 'left'. . . . Such groups could interlink, federate, and establish communication on a regional and national level as the need arises without surrendering their autonomy or uniqueness." (TES, p.263)

These affinity groups will have to struggle with two major problems. The first is to maintain the primacy of face-to-face decision-making. In Bookchin's examination of the Spanish anarchist movement he found this to be a major problem. Responsibility of decision-making became a massive social force, leading to the abuses of hierarchy and domination. "Confusion developed over the crucial problem of the locus for making policy decisions. The real place for this process should have been shop

assemblies, regular congresses, or when events and circumstances required rapid decisions, conferences of clearly mandated and recallable delegates elected for this purpose by the membership. The sole responsibility of the regional and national committees should have been administrative." (Introductory Essay, p. xxxvii)

The second problem is that of the differing degrees of knowledge and skill between members of the groups. This is the problem of the "influential militant"—the more informed, experienced, 'strong', and rationally gifted individuals who tended to formulate policy at all levels of the organization." (Introductory Essay, p. xxxvii) The only method of dealing with this problem is to be always aware of it and ready to act to cure it. "The organization must recognize that differences in experience and consciousness do exist among its members and handle these differences with a wary consciousness—not conceal them with euphemisms like the term 'influential militant'. The taught as well as the teacher must first be taught to ask himself or herself whether domination and manipulation is (sic) being practiced—and not to deny that a systematic teaching process is taking place." (Introductory Essay, pp. xxxvii-xxxviii)

This is my understanding of Bookchin's thought, by no means an exhaustive examination. What I have tried to do is outline major themes in Bookchin's work, and I have tried as much as possible to substitute my outline by using Bookchin's own words. Thus the extensive use of quotation. As mentioned above, hopefully this outline will spark a vigorous discussion of some of the more controversial points in Bookchin's work. There are some comments I would like to make on what I feel are salient points of that work. I have tried to select what I feel are general philosophical issues underlying Bookchin's comments on certain specific issues, such as syndicalism or ecology. What I would like to do is briefly consider three areas: First, the formulation of the theory of post-scarcity anarchism; second, hierarchy and domination from theoretical perspective; and third, hierarchy and domination from a practical perspective. Along the way I would also like to make one or two comments on technology and the role it plays in Bookchin's thought.

I find serious difficulty with Bookchin's theory of post-scarcity anarchism. The general idea itself I can accept, but Bookchin's formulation of the idea raises some serious problems. The idea that it is possible to provide all with the basic necessities of life while at the same time reducing greatly the amount of onerous labor involved and increasing greatly the

amount of leisure time available for all is not a new idea, nor, from a theoretical point of view, it is a particularly controversial one. Indeed, this view is held by a number of thinkers and has been part of the anarchist tradition at least since Peter Kropotkin's work at the turn of the century. The idea seems quite reasonable. But Bookchin wants to say much more than all this, and in doing so he raises difficulties.

Bookchin wants to claim that for the first time a truly liberatory society is possible, which is another way of saying that for the first time everyone could be free. Freedom is possible because scarcity has been overcome. All previous societies have been marked by scarcity. Scarcity necessitates hierarchy and domination. Hence, no previous society could be free. Thus, freedom is dependent upon technology: the more the technology develops, the wider the potential scope for freedom. This formulation seems reasonable enough, but upon examination its reasonableness fades. A number of conclusions follow from Bookchin's formulation, conclusions which I am sure he would not desire but which I feel he cannot escape.

If freedom for all was never before possible, then all previous revolutions and social upheavals were *a priori* doomed. They may have been noble and inspiring, but for all that futile. Since freedom for all is possible only in a post-scarcity situation, then it could be argued that social agitators ought to have spent their time developing the technology without which they had not hope of success. Scarcity, after all, justifies hierarchy and domination.

If scarcity does justify hierarchy and domination—and I do not see how Bookchin can avoid this,—then I do not see how he can have any compelling ethical criticism of historical abuse. An ethical criticism of slavery, for example, or the subjugation of women, could be vitiated by an argument showing that slavery or subjugation of women was a step in the development of technology at a certain historical period, or an efficient manner of dealing with scarcity at the time. Slavery and the subjugation of women, as Bookchin admits, were elements in the life of the Athenian polis in the classical period, helping to provide the citizens of Athens with the leisure time to develop the "Hellenic ideal." Bookchin so praises. In our times, denunciations, which Bookchin himself has strongly made, of the suppression of the anarchist movement by the Bolsheviks and the sabotage of the Spanish revolution by the Communists would lose their force if it could be shown that at the time there was no possi-

ity of a post-scarcity society (which Bookchin himself has contended with regard to the Spanish revolution, see TSA, p.308). If it could be further shown that since the time of these atrocities a post-scarcity capability has been developed, then it could be said that these suppressions were in a way necessary. This is, again, not to say that Bookchin himself says this, but that given his framework such conclusions are unavoidable.

Although Bookchin sees freedom as being now dependent more on consciousness than on technology per se (that is, now that the post-scarcity technology exists it wants only consciousness to use it to create a post-scarcity society), the fact that he makes freedom dependent upon technology opens him to many of the same criticisms he levelled against Marx. Again, this need not be the case. Freedom is obviously interconnected with technology and the economy. But it is Bookchin's formulation that raises the problems, a formulation that shares much with that of Marx. Bookchin has rightly criticised Marx for stating that what was important in social change was not what any individual proletarian may have thought of things but what the proletariat as a class was compelled to do by economic events. But Bookchin himself is open to a similar charge, that it did not matter what any individual agitator may have thought at any particular moment about what s/he was doing but what the state of development of the technology was at the time. Freedom, therefore, is a function of technology. As a result of this shared perspective, Bookchin's disagreement with Marx centers mainly around the question of whether or not, in Bookchin's words, "the 'realm of necessity' must always be the 'basis' or precondition for the realm of freedom", as Marx argued, or whether "the 'realm of necessity' can be colonized by the 'realm of freedom', the realm of toil by the realm of work, the realm of technics by the realm of play, fantasy, and imagination," (TES, p.26) which is to argue in Marx's terms on marxist terrain. Perhaps Bookchin is trying to take marxism and prove that marxism has to lead to anarchism to be consistent. This seems to be the case at times (see *Limits of the City*, p. x, for example) but if Bookchin has shown that marxism is inconsistent, he has yet to show that his formulation is any better.

This curious affinity for marxian modes of thought can also be seen in another aspect of Bookchin's thought. Marxists have held that socialism is a necessary "transitional stage" between capitalism and communism. Bookchin criticizes this position in part by claiming that communism, which is truly understood as post-scarcity anarchism, is achievable

without a transitional stage because a post-scarcity possibility has already been developed. "The problems of necessity and survival have become congruent with the problems of freedom and life. They cease to require any theoretical mediation, 'transitional' stages, or centralized organization to bridge the gap between the existing and possible. The possible, in fact, is all that can exist. Hence, the problems of 'transition,' which occupied the Marxists for nearly a century, are eliminated not only by the advance of technology, but by the social dialectic itself." (PSA, p.40) Bookchin's disagreement with socialism, then, becomes in part an objective one, and if it could be shown that there was need of a transitional stage, then Bookchin could have no argument against socialism. His only ground for argument would be over whether the socialism would be "libertarian" or "authoritarian," an argument which could in principle be settled by an objective examination of the state of the technology. Again, freedom is a function of technology.

Lest anyone continue to doubt my emphasis on this shared outlook with marxism, I urge them to consider Bookchin's brief account of the reasons for the decline of the *polis*. "Space limitations do not make it possible to discuss why the *polis* declined except to remind the reader that it was a class society and hence an inherently contradictory one. Eventually it fell victim to a growing Mediterranean commerce that undermined its most precious civic values while precluding its development along authentically bourgeois lines." (TES, p.144) This sort of explanation is characteristic of Bookchin rather than exceptional (see PSA, p.89, p.163, or *Limits of the City*, pp.33-34) Leaving aside the question of the choice of language (eg. "contradictory"), this description ignores the effect human desires, actions, and emotions play in human affairs. Lust for power, greed, frailty, or even accident surely play a prominent part in human affairs. This is especially the case with the decline of the *polis*. Thucydides, for example, while taking note of the importance of class warfare and commercial factors in contributing to the decline of the *polis*, nonetheless states: "The cause of this whole phenomenon was the thirst for power arising from the predatory and competitive impulses." (Book III, 82, for *Greek Civilization and Character*, Toynebee, ed., p.50) Given Bookchin's sympathy for Spanish anarchism one would have expected that the importance of individual human desires, actions, and emotions would be emphasized in his treatment of the *polis*. But the fact that Bookchin falls readily into this almost marxist sort of analysis shows

clearly the sort of difficulties inherent in his formulation of post-scarcity anarchism.

Freedom demands, according to Bookchin, that all forms of domination be rooted out. For Marxists, oppression is basically defined as economic exploitation. Remove economic exploitation and one has laid the basis of a liberatory society. Bookchin contends, however, that while economic exploitation is certainly a mode of oppression it is not the whole of the matter or even the key element. Indeed, he claims that in a classless society there can still be forms of oppression. (TES, p.208) This is because hierarchy and domination are at the root of oppression. "It is no longer simply capitalism we wish to demolish; it is an older and more archaic world that lives on in the present one—the domination of human by human, the rationale of hierarchy as such." (TES, p.210)

In claiming that there can be no free society without rooting out domination, Bookchin is undoubtedly correct, if only by definition. And he is certainly correct in criticizing Marxism for failing to recognize elements of domination within its outlook, as shown above. This emphasis on domination has been a strong point of the anarchist critique of various social systems. But again, I see difficulty not with the general idea but in certain specific formulations Bookchin makes of the idea.

Domination is the central element in Bookchin's powerful ecological critique. He claims, as mentioned above, that the ecological crisis has its root in the "domination of man by man." Hence, also the importance of his distinction between ecology and environmentalism. Clearly, domination is an important element in the ecological crisis, but it remains to be shown conclusively that domination is the root of the ecological crisis. This is not to say that it cannot be reasonably shown that domination is at the root but that Bookchin has yet to show that it is so.

The current ecological crisis is the result of the development of technology in the West and of an attitude toward that technology. Lewis Mumford describes this development as follows:

To understand the dominating role played by technics in modern civilization, one must explore in detail the preliminary period of ideological and social preparation. Not merely must one explain the existence of the new mechanical instruments: one must explain the culture that was ready to use them and profit by them extensively. For note this: mechanization and regimentation are not new phenomena in history: what is new is the face that these functions have been projected and embodied in organiz-

ed forms which dominate every aspect of our existence. Other civilizations reached a high degree of technical proficiency without, apparently, being profoundly influenced by the methods and aims of technics. All the critical instruments of modern technology—the clock, the printing press, the water mill, the magnetic compass, the loom, the lathe, gunpowder, paper, to say nothing of mathematic and chemistry and mechanics—existed in other cultures. The Chinese, the Arabs, the Greeks, long before the Northern Europeans, had taken most of the first steps toward the machine. And although the great engineering works of the Cretans, the Egyptians, and the Romans were carried out mainly on an empirical basis, these people plainly had an abundance of technical skill at their command. They had machines; but they did not develop 'the machine.' It remained for the peoples of Western Europe to carry the physical sciences and the exact arts to a point no other culture has reached, and to adapt the whole mode of life to the pace and capacities of the machine.

(*Technics and Civilization*, p.4)

The point in all this is that a variety of factors were involved in the development of technology and, thus, the ecological crisis. All of these factors may contain elements of domination, but it remains for Bookchin to demonstrate that domination is the root cause.

The danger in focussing on "non-material" factors such as domination is that actual forms of oppression can come to be seen as incarnating at a moment in history the general idea, and that centering on the general idea can blind one to what is actually existing at the moment. This, I feel, can be a serious problem, especially for those who, as Bookchin, accept to some degree Hegel's idea that history is a struggle to reach a state of freedom by developing consciousness. Perhaps an example will make what I am saying clearer. Bookchin has stated many times that "the most advanced form of class consciousness is self-consciousness" (TES, p.273) Self-consciousness is the basis in a way of the ability to self-manage. Freedom is to be found in a self-managed society. Hence, the importance of consciousness to freedom. "Inasmuch," Bookchin says, "as human beings are themselves products of the natural world, human self-consciousness could be described in philosophical terms as nature rendered 'self-conscious', a natural world guided by human rationality toward balanced or harmonious ecological as well as social ends." (TES, p.109) Now the danger here is that the individual human being could be swallowed up by nature rendered 'self-conscious'. That is, it is nature as a collective object which is developing with individual humans beings but pieces of that development. This sort of danger is similar to that Book-

chin fell into when describing the decline of the *polis*: As with that earlier danger, the tendency is to ignore the fact of human activity. In this case to focus on the development of and ideal image. It is a distortion which can lead to grave consequences and a focus on ideas and words rather than on what is actually the case. In my opinion if Bookchin is going to use phrases like "nature rendered 'self-conscious'" he ought to be very clear and quite careful to avoid misunderstanding.

The call to root out domination causes, I feel, some practical difficulties. The first danger is that it could lead to either surrender or nihilism. Bookchin's thought is totalistic: everything must change, domination must be totally rooted out. It is "anarchism or annihilation." This is intended, of course, as a spur to action. But to action of what kind? Bookchin has rejected all forms of organization except for the affinity group. He has rejected all forms of activity save those that totally root out domination. Anything else is not only futile but counter-revolutionary. And the situation, he says, is desperate: It is "anarchism or annihilation." But today despite some hopeful conditions, things do not seem likely to change soon. Even if there really is a "new Enlightenment", its movement is beyond the usual analysis, almost invisible in a way. Therefore, one either burns oneself out in frantic revolutionary activity to beat the day of doom, or one gives up. Either reaction is a form of nihilism, of despair. Bookchin is not, of course, intending to advocate such a situation, but I think this result is a distinct possibility. Indeed, I myself have seen this happen to a number of people who have accepted the analysis and despaired of any possibility of its realization. This is always a danger with totalistic political and social ideas and with calls to action such as "anarchism or annihilation."

Anarchism ought to be a way of life. Bookchin, I think, would not disagree with this. Anarchists can reasonably expect to live as long as other people. What anarchists have to do, then, is develop anarchism as a mode of everyday life, a code of behavior, a way of living, and not just as a set of ideas on how society ought to be organized. That is a way of saying that anarchism has to learn to deal with non-revolutionary situations. This is not an easy thing to do. Anarchism can be a philosophy of extremism, in the sense of being an extreme defense of freedom. Extremists always have a hard time accepting everyday life. But extremists also are too often the creators of an unfree society. Orwell says somewhere that in our age there will be and has been no successful ideology of totalitarianism that has not presented itself as a promise of freedom. I am not saying that anarchism is such an illusion, but merely that it is a danger in the taking of an extremist position which ought to be taken into account.

Bookchin emphasizes the importance of altering personal relationships and removing all traces of domination between people. This is best done, he says, in the affinity group. This is also the best way to be sure that, when the revolutionary moment comes, people will be able to assume the task of creating a self-managed society. The existing society will not be able to fight back. It will crumble, he says, of its own weight. Possibly this will happen. In any event it is unclear to me exactly how anarchists are to contribute to the creation of such a collapse and the possibility of such a renaissance. In the past anarchism took a variety of forms, each designed to create the new society in the shell of the old. This was the great strength of syndicalism, for all its faults. It provided an organizational structure within which the new society could be created while still meeting the need to deal with the existing world. Bookchin, I think, does not deal at all adequately with this difficulty, though he has given some indication that he is aware of this need in his comments on Spanish Anarchism in the "Introductory Essay." But a truly practical approach to the rooting out of domination remains to be created.

Finally, it seems to me that there are some difficulties with Bookchin's views of technology. Existing technology is dominative. A liberatory society demands a liberatory technology. That too is given. But how is a liberatory technology to be created? The impression given by Bookchin in *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* is that this will be an easy task. The technology is there, it needs merely to be recast. But in his considerations of technology Bookchin, I feel, underestimates the difficulties involved. If modern technology does indeed provide the possibility of a post-scarcity society, it also raises the possibility of long-lasting oppression, and the question of whether a highly developed technology can ever be made so accessible to all as to remove the need for expertise and specialized knowledge. These are serious and difficult questions and ones to which I would hope Bookchin would address himself in more detail.

Despite the fact that some of my remarks have been quite critical, I do not want to leave with the impression that I find Bookchin's work unacceptable. There are, I feel, compelling reasons for rejecting Bookchin's formulations of some of his ideas, but the ideas themselves are nonetheless valuable and provocative. The balance sheet on Bookchin's

work is, I believe, quite positive. But it would be an insult to let this work go by without comment, and I hope that my effort will be but one among many in trying to come to terms with it.

Last Wives

BLACK ROSE LECTURE SERIES WINTER/SPRING 1982

- Feb. 19: *Workers '80*: a documentary film made by Solidarity
- March 5: *Angry cries from Abroad: The West European Peace Movement* - Frank Brodhead and Mark Levine
- April 2: *Feminism and Representation: The case of Pornography* - Kate Ellis
- April 23: *The Social Thought of Wilhelm Reich* - Myron Sharaf
- May 7: *Sexist Culture and Violence Against Women* -
Emerge and the Mass. Coalition of Battered Women's Service Groups
- MIT ● Room 9-150
105 Mass. Ave., Cambridge Friday Nights - 8 pm.
Free

- The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, hosted a major retrospective show of the French painter, Camille Pissarro, this past summer. Pissarro, not only an important and influential artist, was also a deeply convinced anarchist, well known enough for his beliefs that he did not dare to return to France for fear of imprisonment during the period of the assassination of the French President Sadi-Carnot by the anarchist Caserio. BR hopes to print an interview with one of the major biographers of Pissarro, Ralph Shikes, in an upcoming issue exploring the nature of his anarchism.
- We are happy to note that a new issue of Open Road will be out soon. It will have a major article about the mysterious circumstances surrounding the death of our brother Carl Harp in Walla Walla Prison. Readers who want to find out more about the flagrant and outrageous activities of the authorities in this matter can write to United Family and Friends of Prisoners, PO box 22094, Seattle, WA 98112 or Black Dragon, CP 2, Succ. La Cite, Montreal, Quebec, Can., H2W 2M9.
- In February WMBR (88.1 FM, Cambridge, MA.) began to broadcast previous Black Rose lectures. The program is called "The Black Rose Hour" and is aired for one hour on Fridays at 8:00 P.M.

SPRING

● Black Rose Books in Montreal have just published *Radical Priorities*, a collection of short writings of Noam Chomsky edited by Carlos Otero. The essays chosen serve as a basic introduction to Chomsky's longer works, reprising in brief form most of the themes found in these lengthier works. Unfortunately, the editor of the book has chosen to preface Chomsky's work with an Introduction which is nothing short of deplorable. In this Introduction we are assured that Chomsky is the greatest thinker of our age and that although he has never developed in any real sense his attachment to anarchist thought we ought to be anarchists because the great man is himself an anarchist. Nonetheless, the book is a good one, though those who have read Chomsky's longer works will find it much less valuable than those who haven't. One hopes that one day Black Rose Books or whoever will be given the chance to publish something by Chomsky in which he actually does develop his anarchism and not merely reprise general libertarian themes as wonderful ideas.



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