SOIL OF LIBERTY

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Powerline Protest
Culture & Agriculture Paul Goodman
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Hold That Line!

By Don Olson

This is an expanded version of a talk I was invited to give at the Midwest Regional Meeting of the Union of Socialist Geographers held in Minneapolis February 24th through 26th.

A worldwide energy war is being waged by industry and government in collusion against the people. The oil crisis of 1973 led to spectacular increases in the profits of oil companies. The proliferation of unsafe energy technology, most especially nuclear power, has spawned widespread opposition. Opposition is most advanced in Europe where the centralization of energy and the development of the nuclear reactor program is most advanced. Last spring there were demonstrations of 60,000 at Kalkar, Germany, 50,000 at Mulville, France, and before then 200,000 at Bilbao, Spain. Recently, 30,000 marched in Australia to protest the uranium mining there. In Europe, they use the slogan “NUCLEAR POWER MEANS POLICE POWER.” One demonstration was killed by police at Mulville but in Germany the repression has been more intense as a resurgence of authoritarianism develops there.

In the U.S., 1414 people were arrested at the Seabrook nuclear site and another occupation has been scheduled for June 24th of this year. Inspired by Seabrook, up to a dozen regional anti-nuclear federations have been founded. Locally, we have the Northern Sun Alliance and one of its member groups, Northern Thunder of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, recently scored a minor success in getting a roadblock thrown in front of the proposed Tyrone nuclear plant.

Another technology which has spawned opposition has been high voltage transmission lines. In upstate New York, a 765 kilovolt alternating current (kv ac) line is being fought and plans for any future 765 kv lines have been dropped because of the opposition. A 500 kv ac additional line to the Bonneville Power Project in the state of Washington has federal marshals armed with automatic weapons guarding construction, according to a Washington state farmer. And we have received a letter from a lawyer in Texas representing a group fighting a powerline there.

Here in Minnesota farmers are fighting an 800 kv direct current line (often called a plus or minus 400 kv dc line). It is being built by two power cooperatives, Cooperative Power Association (CPA) and United Power Association (UPA).

The line starts from a generating plant in Underwood, North Dakota, which uses lignite coal from a nearby strip mining operation. The electricity is generated as alternating current and then converted to direct current for a 427 mile trip to Delano, Minnesota. There it is converted back to alternating current and distributed over two 345 kv ac lines that feed into Northern States Power sub-stations at Mankato and Coon Rapids, where CPA and UPA have facilities.

CPA and UPA are what are known as Generation and Distribution Cooperatives. They sell electricity to farmers in their respective 19 and 15 member local Rural Electrification Cooperatives which distribute the electricity at retail rates. CPA and UPA are both incorporated as non-profit corporations--CPA in 1956, UPA in 1971 although it has two parent organizations date back to 1933 and to the late 1930's.

The Rural Electrification Administration was a New Deal Program of the 30's to bring electricity to rural America which could not be profitably served by private utilities. Initially eligible for 25 interest loans, they now pay closer to market rates for capital.

Each local REA has a board of directors elected by the membership and each board appoints one member to sit on the board of directors of CPA or UPA. Throughout this struggle, CPA and UPA have continually pointed to this as a democratic structure, controlled from below. While the boards are the ultimate decision makers, discussions with a few farmers who had been on local boards revealed the old story of their being at the mercy of the greater technical expertise and information of management and especially of the general manager. The farmers felt that decisions came down from Washington and the local REA just followed orders. In addition, board members are supposed to bring in information from the members but no information is to go back out. Plus, the meetings are closed. The farmers felt that there had never been an informed discussion about the powerline decision by the local board of directors or the general membership, let alone by the people directly affected.

The farmers didn't hear about the line until the summer of 1974 when the power utilities were attempting to get local government approval for the line. Word spread. The first group--60 POWER LINES--formed in Grant County. Soon opposition groups were forming in other counties. But it was Pope County where the county commissioners opposed the line and wouldn't okay it. So the utilities did something which the State Supreme Court later said had never been done before--they voluntarily placed themselves under regulation by a state agency.

In April 1973, the Minnesota legislature passed a Power Plant Siting Act, which provided that the Minnesota Environmental Quality Council would make a final determination on power line routes after extensive public hearings. The act required a "certificate of need" from the Minnesota Energy Agency; hearings to establish a twenty-mile corridor that would contain several possible routes for a power line; hearings to determine the actual route of the line; and an environmental impact statement. The new law had provisions for exemptions in cases where construction had already begun on a project. This is what CPA-UPA initially claimed and then reversed themselves in April 1975 in order to get around Pope County opposition. So the state regulatory apparatus lumbered into motion.

The first hearings held around the state suffered from the Rosemary Woods syndrome--large portions of the farmers' testimony mysteriously disappeared from the transcripts, including the testimony concerning the line's adverse effects on irrigation. When it was discovered, it turns out that the official tapes had been destroyed. The MEQC then used powerline opponent Virgil Fuchs' tape recordings as an official record. However, large portions were rendered as "inaudible." Harold Hagen was one of two farmers on the 23-member citizens advisory board set up by the MEQC. Hagen did not feel that farmers' interests were very well served by such a ratio. And what meager discretion the board had on corridor placement was rejected in favor of a path close to one requested by the utilities.

Regulatory agencies are set up by the State to mitigate the worst excesses of capitalism. The problem of regulatory agencies in Minnesota is the problem of regulatory agencies since the form was first used in the U.S. around the turn of the century--they become creatures dependent on the industries they are to regulate. They often have no experts of their own and must rely on figures provided by the regulated industry. The oil reserve figures provided by the oil industry is a case in point. When the regulatory agencies do have experts, they often come from the industry being regulated. An example of this was Larry Hartman and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) he did for the MEQC. He had just quit work for Commonwealth Associates, a company employed by CPA-UPA to choose its powerline corridor. His EIS for the state used much of the language of the EIS submitted by CPA-UPA. In a subsequent lawsuit, the State Supreme Court condoned this by saying that the final decision was made by someone else--a hearing officer, and so it didn't matter.
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The farmers felt that decisions came down from Washington and the local REA just followed orders. In addition, board members are supposed to bring in information from the members but no information is to go back out. Plus, the meetings are closed. The farmers felt that there had never been an informed discussion about the powerline decision by the local board of directors or the general membership, let alone by the people directly affected.

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The NEIC was set up to be a higher authority over the various state agencies, but has become another layer of government, making it even more difficult for citizens to affect decisions. That is the opinion of Ram Hasting, long-time environmental activist who has frequently dealt with state agencies.

Hasting characterizes the DEP of Health as "a whitewash for industry." They always show up at nuclear power plant hearings to testify about how bad coal is (which it is true), but then never show up at hearings on coal-fired generating plants.

In its report dated October 1977 and entitled "Public Health and Safety Effects of High-Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines", the Department of Health had 13 recommendations. These included: grounding metal buildings and fences near the line; no refueling of vehicles to be done under the line; no loading or unloading of school buses under the line. The study contains many statements like:

"Little research to date has been done on the possible biological effects associated with DC transmission lines. (p. III-2)

"Extensive human studies, both epidemiological and experimental, have not been conducted." (p. III-4)

"With regard to HVDC transmission, insufficient research and experience exists to propose any meaningful performance standards, whether empirically based or otherwise, that have an objective of protecting the public health." (p. III-22)

"Effects due to long-term exposure to electric fields are, of course, the area of greatest uncertainty." (p. IV-22)

Yet the Department of Health gave the go-ahead to the line.

While there may be no immediate health hazards, the long-term studies have not been done, especially to determine the long-term effects of the line on unwilling experimental subjects.

The Minnesota Energy Agency has recently been greatly embarrassed in another utility matter. Last fall, the MDA gave a certificate of need to NSP's Sherco 3 and 4 additions. Going along with NSP's urgent plea to be able to start building even before an ES. A month later, MSP said they really didn't need Sherco 3 and 4 for another year. Four months later, NSP announced that four of their projected power plants were being delayed for six months to a year or more. So much for need figures of NSP and the MDA.

The farmers have all along questioned CPA-UPA's claims of need for the powerline. Especially when environmentalists like Wendell Bradley, physicist at Gustavus Adolphus College, claim that NSP had a 1000 megawatt surplus last summer, which happens to be enough to cover this line.

CPA-UPA reported a 7-10% growth rate in recent years and have until recently forecast a continuation of that rate to bring their forecast in line with the 7% growth rate projected by the electric industry as a whole. Actual growth in 1978 was 13%, 3% in 1975, and 2% in 1976.

Some people believe that CPA-UPA are just a cover for getting money to St. Louis and Chicago because those cities can not have any more pollution produced near them. CPA-UPA would have excess capacity and the electricity does feed into the grid of the Midwest Area Power Pool (MAPS) which has the excess power. Further investigation of MAPS continues. One researcher has told me that preliminary figures show a huge excess of power and that the system, much more than the required 15% reserve. MAPS operates an electricity marketplace and every hour contracts are made as to who has extra power and at what price. During the recent coal strike, MAPS was exporting 1000-1100 megawatts on the average to northern Illinois and Indiana.

Another state agency involved in this powerline process was the Dept. of Natural Resources. The DNR didn't want the line over DNR land because some animals won't approach the line and some birds won't nest under it. And then farmers wondered how their cattle will react.

Wendell Bradley characterized the whole process as follows: "The (MDA's) certificate of need hearing is an exercise in deception and fraud; the (BBB's) sitting procedure is merely theft and seizure; and the (MDA's) final EIS is a warrant for neglect." (Minnesota Daily, 3/1/78)

The farmers lost on taking state agency behavior to the State Supreme Court. In a collateral opinion, Judge Yetchi charged that the state agencies had "played a passive rather than active role", that correct procedures had not been followed, and that the EIS "appears to have been constructed in great haste and with little study or input on behalf of the citizens of the state." This judge also ruled against the farmers but went on to ponder in his judicial opinion:

"One point to me is obvious: that we cannot stand much more highway and above ground power line construction without permanently destroying and impairing our environment. The question is where do we stop?"

Well, the farmers have been out in the fields saying STOP. Using nonviolent obstructionist tactics, the farmers stopped the line in Pope County in December 1976 at a place they call Constitution Hill. A moratorium was declared until after the Supreme Court ruled. On September 30, 1977, the court ruled in CPA-UPA's favor on all nine cases.

Survey work started in from the North Dakota border. While there was some opposition in Traverse and Grant Counties, again Pope County has been the storm center, with Sterns County also providing militant opposition.

When asked "Why Pope?", most farmers would say it is because the farms are smaller in Pope than in Traverse and Grant where the soil is poorer and more land is needed to make a living. There they wouldn't miss a little land for a powerline, but in Pope and Sterns, a tower would be right in a farmer's backyard. Traverse and Grant are sugar beet, flax and sunflower country, while Pope has corn, wheat and some dairy and Sterns is heavy dairy.

The Pope County governmental apparatus and business community also supports the farmers. Besides the county commissioners, 21 mayors have come out in support and one has been arrested. Even the sheriff dragged his feet for while before calling in state troopers for help.

When Gov. Perchick committed 150 troopers in January to Pope County, flags were flown at half-mast and some businesses closed. At the end of the first week of troopers, the county attorney resigned, saying he had sympathy with the farmers and that he did not want to prosecute his friends.

So far, about 85 people have been arrested, most of them in Pope County. The people in this area are not the type to be out getting arrested or to take arrest lightly. Most would consider themselves conservatives, but have a relationship with the land they own and love. They really value hard work and independence. They want to be self-sufficient and self-reliant.

For some, their farms have been in the family for generations and many hope to pass the land on to their children. For some, their farms will be their retirement income and the decrease in value caused by the line threatens their retirement security.

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While there may be no immediate health hazards, the long-term studies have not been done. The line is not being unilaterally experimental.

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Dr. Paul Steinback, on leave of absence from the MEA, has charged that MEA procedures concerning the certificate of need are contrary to law. Despite this public charges in Perpich's presence, nothing has changed except that Richard Wallen, who was in charge of certificate of need procedures, has been given new duties. During a conversation with me, Steinback mused that Wallen should be paid by the utilities, so great was Wallen's manipulation by utility officials' flattery and so disgusting was his fauvish behavior toward those officials' positions of authority.

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branches have condemned the mistakes of the administrative agencies and the governor has tried to run the line down their throats.

Calling to many farmers was the way the route of the line was arbitrarily changed. One example was the re-routing of the line from the Bonanza Valley in Starnes County because of a bogus potential airport and because federally-irrigated farm land cannot be crossed. The heavily-irrigated Bonanza Valley gets federal funds that go to absentee agribusiness farms. Whether the line disrupts irrigation systems that small farmers pay for is considered of no consequence.

The seemingly high easement payments by CPA-UPA don’t go very far. A case in point is Matt and Gloria Volks of Starnes County. Active before the line was moved from the Bonanza Valley to a route crossing their farm, they have been extremely militant since then. They have been told by the irrigation company that their 3 year old, $50,000 irrigation unit will be impassable. Not irrigating their 320 acre farm will drop their yearly income by $30,000. They have been offered the going rate of a one time $17,500 settlement, plus a few hundred dollars more per year. But money is not the question for most farmers.

Eminent Domain

The use of eminent domain by the power companies has been one of the most aggravating aspects of the power line to the farmers while the king of England could simply confiscate, the 5th Amendment to the Constitution provided that due process must be followed and just compensation made. Eminent domain is supposed to be one of the sovereign powers of government along with taxation and the police power. It’s bad enough when government thinks it has this right but government has also handed it over to private companies. Railroads have had it and since 1902-3 utilities have had it in Minnesota.

Most farmers received a letter in the mail saying their land was condemned. Most land was taken on what is called a “quick claim” where money is just deposited with the county. According to Don Jacobson, head of public relations for UPA, only 1/3 of the property easements acquired were voluntary and roughly 2/3 were condemned. In Starnes County, only 4 out of 100 farmers had picked up the money by last January. Some farmers charged some voluntary easements happened by utility officials, telling a farmer that the neighboring farmer had signed, and then would run and tell the same story to that farmer. The same technique was used in upstate New York by utility officials.

Taconite companies in northern Minnesota have had eminent domain since 1946 and there is a bill in the legislature to repeal that power. There has been some talk of extending that repeal to the utilities, but that too would be a very tough fight.

Some leftists have been critical of the farmers concern about private property and eminent domain. While I would prefer a more collective or cooperative development, I support the farmers in their struggle against the state. The alternative is more small farmers being ground under and agribusiness taking their place and I would hate to depend on it for food. The centralization of food production must be fought as well as the centralization of energy production. Although the farmers concerned are all into chemical usage, at least there is the possibility of change, something not possible with agribusiness.

Leaders of the American Indian Movement have been readily able to identify with the farm land struggle. They know the importance of who owns or controls the land. AIM also knows the importance of this country’s energy systems because there is much coal, oil, shale and uranium on Indian lands. They are preparing to prevent a new round of rip-offs. The Northern Cheyenne of Montana led the way when in 1972 in canceling the coal leases granted in the 1960’s.

In contrast, CPA-UPA is involved in the struggle to extend the power line in Montana. CPA-UPA has also been leading the fight to maintain the 1972 Indian Reservation power line. (Northern Cheyenne have also been leading the struggle to maintain the 1972 Indian Reservation power line.) (Alaska-Native News, Early Spring 1978)

Most of the coal development in North Dakota is concentrated just south of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation with further development proposed just to the west. While coal in the Indian lands is not considered crucial at this time, their coal is eagerly sought by others. "It is plentiful, easy and economical to mine and close to transportation and water supplies." (9-10)

That quote came from a 1977 volume study entitled "Northern Great Plains Coal", a report of the Upper Midwest Council, an economic think-tank for the 9th Federal Reserve District. The study provides some good background information and a case study of CPA-UPA’s decision of powerline vs. a coal plant in Nebraska.

The Northern Great Plains (NGP) states of Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming possess total subbituminous and lignite coal reserves estimated at 7,518 billion tons, of which 231 billion tons are identifiable sufficiently to be classified as mineable reserves. Of these mineable reserves, 68.1 billion tons are available through strip mining, the remainder through underground mining (9). The Northern States Power, a private utility, plans to build a nine-mouth plant in North Dakota and a 500,000 kilowatt plant in Minnesota. In contrast, CPA-UPA found it cheaper to build a nine-mouth plant in a more centrally located area.

One reason was "its ability to borrow federally guaranteed money (which has lower interest rates)." This allowed them to afford the higher capital costs of the power line. Most of the capital for this billion dollar project came from government funds guaranteed by the Federal Finance Bank of the US Dept. of Agriculture.

Another reason was that by owning the transportation system, they have better control over operating costs as opposed to sustaining increasing rail transportation rates not under their control. (4-28)

Also, North Dakota did not have a power plant sitting at the time and environmental controls were less stringent than in Minnesota.

Many farmers feel that CPA-UPA just wanted to go big-time to generate more of their own power and not buy from others. CPA is also part of the proposed Yellowstone nuclear power plant. A reason given by CPA for going ahead with the line is a refusal by the Bureau of Reclamation to continue a long term hydro power contract. This tie was exposed through inquiries by Congressman Rick Nolan.

CPA-UPA’s other alternative considered was a load-center plant near Big Lake, Minnesota, within 10 miles of both NSP’s Shrew plant and its Monticello nuclear plant. Subbituminous coal would have come from Montana because it is not considered economically feasible to ship lignite for more than 700 miles due to its low B.T.U. value. B.T.U. stands for British Thermal Unit, the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit. Lignite has a B.T.U. value of 6,700/pound; Western subbituminous has about 9000 BTU/pound; and Eastern bituminous coal has about 12-14,000 BTU/pound.

Interestingly enough, the Northern Great Plains Coal study compared the yearly energy used to transport coal the 750 miles by rail from Montana to Minnesota with the powerline loss of electricity over its 472 mile length. Their conclusion was that "this transmission line loss is about 12 of the 75 miles, a difference of 1.75 times more than the loss incurred through rail transportation in this example."

However, this goes by CPA-UPA’s 60 Line loss figure. "A generally accepted utility industry figure is 10 Line loss for direct current line, which would make the power line loss much greater. (9-24,25)
Branches have condensed the mistakes of the administrative agencies and the governor has tried to run the line down their throats.

Calling to many farmers was the way the route of the line was arbitrarily changed. One example was the re-routing of the line from the Bonanza Valley in Sterns County because of a bogus potential airport and because federally-irrigated farm land cannot be crossed. The heavily-irrigated Bonanza Valley gets federal funds that go to absentee agribusiness farms. Whether the line disrupts irrigation systems that small farmers pay for is considered of no consequence.

The seemingly high easement payments by CPA-UPA don't go very far. A case in point is Matt and Gloria Wolda of Sterns County. Active before the line was moved from the Bonanza Valley to a route crossing their farm, they have been extremely militant since then. They have been told by the irrigation company that their 3-year-old, $50,000 irrigation unit will be impossible. Not irrigating their 330-acre farm will drop their yearly income by $100,000. They have been offered the going rate of one time $17,500 settlement, plus a few hundred dollars more per year. But money is not the question for most farmers.

**Eminent Domain**

The use of eminent domain by the power companies has been one of the most aggressive aspects of the powerline to the farmers, while the king of England could simply confiscate, the 5th Amendment to the Constitution provided that due process must be followed and just compensation made. Eminent domain is supposed to be one of the "sovereign" powers of government along with taxation and the police power. It's bad enough when government thinks it has this right but government has also handed it over to private companies. Railroads have had it and since 1902-3 utilities have had it in Minnesota.

Most farmers received a letter in the mail saying their land was condemned. Most land was taken on what is called a "quick claim" where money is just deposited with the county. According to Don Jacobson, head of the public relations for UPA, only 1/3 of the property easements acquired were voluntary and roughly 2/3 were condemned. In Sterns County, only 4 out of 100 farmers had picked up the money by last January. Some farmers charged that some voluntary easements happened by utility officials, telling a farmer that the neighboring farmer had signed, and then would run and tell the same story to that farmer. The same technique was used in upstate New York by utility officials.

Taconite companies in northern Minnesota have had eminent domain since 1966 and there is a bill in the legislature to repeal that power. There has been some talk of extending that to utilities, but that too would be a very tough fight.

Some leftists have been critical of the farmers' concern about private property and eminent domain. While I would prefer a more collective or cooperative development, I support the farmers in their struggle against the state. The alternative is more small farmers being ground under and agribusiness taking their place and I would hate to depend on it for food. The centralization of food production must be fought as well as the centralization of energy production. Although the farmers concerned are all into chemical usage, at least there is the possibility of change, something not possible with agribusiness.

Leaders of the American Indian Movement have been readily able to identify with the farmers' land price situation. They know the importance of who owns or controls the land. AIM also knows the importance of this country's natural resources; not only because there is much coal, oil shale and uranium on Indian lands. They are preparing to prevent a new round of rip-offs. The Northern Cheyenne of Montana led the way in 1972 in canceling the coal leases granted in the 1960s. Other tribes followed suit as they realized how they had been misled by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the coal companies. (The Northern Cheyenne have also been leading the fight to maintain Class 1 air standards (the best) in the face of extensive coal mining at nearby Colstrip, Montana.) (Nakata, Early Spring 1978)

Most of the coal development in North Dakota is concentrated just south of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation with further development proposed just to the west. While coal in the Indian lands is not considered crucial at this time, their coal is eagerly sought because it "is plentiful, easy and economical to mine and close to transportation and water supplies." (R-10)

That quote came from a government study entitled "Northern Great Plains Coal," a report of the Upper Midwest Council, an economic think-tank for the 9th Federal Reserve District. The study provides some good background information and a case study of CPA-UPA's decision of powerline vs. a coal plant in Minnesota.

The Northern Great Plains (NGP) states of Montana, North Dakota and Wyoming possess total sub-luminous and lignite coal reserves estimated at 1,741 billion tons, of which 231 billion tons "are identified sufficiently to be classified as mineable reserves." Of those mineable reserves, 661.1 billion tons are available through strip mining, the remainder through underground extraction in the future.

Northern States Power, a private utility, has sub-luminous coal by rail from Montana to electrical generation plants in Minnesota. In contrast, CPA-UPA found it cheaper to build a mine-mouth plant in North Dakota and sell electricity by power line. One reason was "its ability to borrow federally guaranteed money (which has lower interest rates)." This allowed them to afford the higher capital costs of the powerline. Most of the capital for this $3.5 billion dollar project comes from federal funds guaranteed by the Federal Finance Bank of the US Dept. of Agriculture.

Another reason was that by owning the transportation system, they perhaps have better control over operating costs as opposed to sustaining increasing rail transportation rates not under their control. (4-28)

Also, North Dakota did not have a power plant sitting at the time and environmental controls were less stringent than in Minnesota.

Many farmers feel that CPA-UPA just wanted to go big-time to generate more of their own power and not buy from others. CPA is also part of the proposed Typhoon nuclear power plant.) A reason given by CPA for going ahead with the line is a refusal by the Bureau of Reclamation to continue a long-term hydro power contract. This lie was exposed through inquiries by Congressman Rick Nolan.

CPA-UPA's other alternative considered was a load-center plant near Big Lake, Minnesota, within 10 miles of both NSP's Sherco plant and its Monticello nuclear plant. Sub-luminous coal would have come from Montana because it is not considered economically feasible to ship lignite for 700 miles due to its low B.T.U. value. B.T.U. stands for British Thermal Unit, the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one pound of water one degree Fahrenheit. Lignite has a B.T.U. value of 6,700-7,000 pound; Western sub-luminous has about 8,000 B.T.U./pound; and Eastern bituminous coal has about 12-14,000 B.T.U./pound.

Interestingly enough, the Northern Great Plains Coal study compared the yearly energy used to transport coal the 750 miles by rail from Montana to Minnesota with the power loss from the power plants in both states.

"That connection has been made with a "generally accepted utility industry figure" of 10 line loss for direct current line, which would make the power loss much greater. (5-24,25)
The coal for this powerline comes from the non-unionized Falkirk Mine located about 50 miles northwest of Bismarck. The Falkirk Mining Company is a wholly-owned subsidiary set up by the North American Coal Company, the largest independent coal company in the U.S. (about 8th or 10th overall). The Taplin family (children of the founder) have a controlling 37% of the stock. Headquartered in Cleveland, the company was eastern based until 1982 when it acquired a small lignite mine in North Dakota. Ten years later they began lignite exploration and expanded that mine to provide 3/4 million ton per year to a new generating plant being built by UPA at nearby Stanton. The coal is delivered daily by unit trains consisting of forty 100-ton hopper cars, the first application of a concept developed by Burlington Northern Rail. Unit trains go back and forth between the same two places, are continuously loaded in motion and continuously unloaded by specialized equipment. (Unit trains to Minnesota are 100-110 cars, about a mile long.) The 172 megawatts of power from Stanton are traded to NSP for NSP’s North Dakota customers. In return, UPA gets an equal amount of power from NSP in Minnesota.

Oil companies own now own or control 22 to 32% of all recoverable coal reserves in the U.S. and about 41% of all privately held reserves. Some oil company coal could double 30%, but economists estimate that oil companies will provide half of all new coal production in the next 25 years, the key period slated for a boom in production. This kind of control means monopoly pricing. Last August, Thomas G. Woodruff, then working as an energy analyst, testified before the Senate anti-trust subcommittee that oil company control of coal could double prices by 1980 and force them up even higher than OPEC oil prices rise, adding 10% to 20% onto electric utility bills.

"After 1973, the price of coal quadrupled when the price of oil did," explains Joe Harris, editor of Economic Inquiry. "The price of coal in fact should be tremendously lower."

According to a study of eight coal companies, a ton of coal cost $4.25 in 1963; in 1977, the price had soared to $21.50. Profits have soared too. From 1969 to 1973, profits per ton averaged 3.0c. From 1974 to 1976, companies were taking in $3.25 per ton.

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Twenty miles across the Missouri River, North American's Falkirk Mine will by 1980 supply 5.6 million tons annually to the CPA-UPA Coal Creek Plant at Underwood under a 35-year Coal Sales Agreement—-35 years being about the life of a coal plant. A mine-mouth plant, the coal will move on conveyors by the Missouri River, North American's Falkirk Mine will by 1980 supply 5.6 million tons annually to the CPA-UPA Coal Creek Plant at Underwood under a 35-year Coal Sales Agreement—-35 years being about the life of a coal plant. A mine-mouth plant, the coal will move on conveyors. This mining operation will be one of the largest mining complexes in the United States and the leading producer of coal in North Dakota. (1977 Annual Report)

Nearby, another plant of 200 megawatts is being built by Basin Electric Power Cooperative of Bismarck, North Dakota. That plant will take up to 6 million tons annually. And if ANG Coal Gasification Company, a subsidiary of American Natural Resources, gets the necessary approvals, it will build a coal gasification facility at that same site, taking up to 9 million tons for 25 years.

Another subsidiary of American Natural Resources, the Michigan-Wisconsin Pipeline Company, has an agreement for all of North American's lignite in a 40 mile radius of nearby Beulah for electric power generation, coal gasification or other uses.

Over the last decade, the coal industry, especially in the West, has increasingly been under control of the oil companies. Even with great increases in its mineable reserves, North America is falling behind, relative to other coal companies (it used to be 6th largest). With about 1200 million tons in 1976, it now has about 2500 million tons and claims "a lignite reserve position unequaled in the coal industry." North American's biggest problem has been a lack of capital, necessitating the joint projects with American Natural Resources (formerly American Natural Gas) in North Dakota plus a joint venture exploring for Appalachian lignite. Last year North American entered into a joint venture with Getty Oil which would put up venture capital for a lignite operation in Texas to compete as a natural gas replacement. (A vice-president of Burlington Northern told me that Western Coal is able to compete in the Texas market because of unit train efficiencies.) Getty Oil is also discussing with North American about available coal acreage in North Dakota. For the Falkirk Mine, North American signed an agreement that CPA-UPA would either finance the mine either directly or through loan guarantees by the federal government. The biggest block for the billion dollar coal gasification project is getting financing together, especially government financed capital for this new technology. Extra-high direct current transmission and coal gasification are the "marketing concepts" that North American hopes will make their lignite competitive with other fuels over wide sections of the United States.

Another new technology being pushed is coal slurry pipelines, especially a line from Wyoming to Arkansas. Efforts to obtain eminent domain power from Congress and Western legislatures are vigorously being fought by Burlington Northern. The slurry would use existing pipelines, made from miles of pipe and is in development for several years. Part of the scheme is to divert water to the new pipeline, like a 200-foot tall pipeline from South Dakota to Gillette, Wyoming and then down the pipeline.

One of the selling points of Western Coal is its low sulfur content, typically less than 10% compared to the 2 to 4% generally found in Eastern and Midwestern coal. However, as energy generation becomes more centralized, pollution becomes more concentrated (as well as creating the need for more and larger powerplants). If NSP's Sherco 3 & 4 additions are approved, it will become the largest coal fired plant in the U.S.—3000 megawatts. According to a recent Minnesota Pollution Control Agency study, even with Western coal, sulfur dioxide emissions over the 7 county Twin City metropolitan area will increase by 45%. By using statistical methods, there could be from 300 to 12,000 additional deaths over the 40 year life of the plant. Already farmers in the Sherco plant area have reported a 20% decrease in crop yields of soybeans with 1400 megawatts being produced. Environmentalists are fighting for smaller coal plants to spread the pollution. That is considered only a transition to the decentralized production of safe, clean, renewable energy.

Farmers in southern Minnesota are beginning the fight against a large NSP, CPA plus smaller utilities' coal generating plant proposed for the Mankato area. Composed of two 800 megawatt generators, the plant would take 7,000 acres of land. Opposition in the Mankato area is also developing to the 365 km ac leg of the CPA-UPA powerline. And so it goes as farmers continue to fight off the encroachment of suburban development, highways, powerlines, generating plants and other destruction of farmland. Some states have enacted laws protecting prime farm land, but often it will mean farmers and other citizens banding together to protect farmland as well as the rights of the people.

One last objection to the powerline that is also very important to the farmers is the esthetic consideration. These people don't want those 150 to 190 feet long towers marching across the flat prairie land. (This compares with a steel which is about 40 feet in height.)

In addition, CPA-UPA want a series of microwave towers running parallel to the powerline. Three hundred feet tall and every thirty miles, this little-known microwave system would be for communication and for monitoring the load current on the line. So far, the only opposition I know of has been in Douglas County, basing its opposition on Paul Brodeau's book The Zapppin of America. The farmers have a button of a powerline tower with a slash through it. Send $1 plus postage to the Lowry Town Hall, Lowry, Minn.
The coal for this powerhouse comes from the non-unified Falkirk Mine located about 50 miles northwest of Bismarck. The Falkirk Mining Company is a wholly-owned subsidiary set up by the North American Coal Company, the largest independent coal company in the U.S. (about 8th or 10th overall). The Taplin family (children of the founder) have a controlling 37% of the stock. Headquartered in Cleveland, the company was eastern based until 1967 when it acquired a small lignite mine in North Dakota. Ten years later they began lignite exploration and expanded that mine to provide 3/4 million ton per year to a new generating plant being built by UPA at nearby Stanton. The coal is delivered daily by unit trains consisting of forty 100-ton hopper cars, the first application of a concept developed by Burlington Northern Railroad. Unit trains go back and forth between the same two places, are continuously loaded in motion and continuously unloaded by special automated equipment. (Unit trains to Minnesota are 100-110 cars, about a mile long.) The 172 megawatts of power from Stanton are traded to PSP for NSP's North Dakota customers. In return, UPA gets an equal amount of power from NSP in Minnesota.

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Chronology

The following chronology is intended to give a bit of theebb and flow of this movement from my participant-observer viewpoint. Though I was actively involved, so much has happened that this is a compilation of information from a number of people.

The last phase of this struggle began in August when the Minnesota Supreme Court ruled in favor of the power companies. The path was cleared for a resumption of surveying and construction work on the Minnesota portion of the power line. As the crews began working again, the farmers continued their obstructionist tactics of the previous year. On October 4th, members of the Movement for a New Society gave a workshop on non-violence for some 80 farmers. A whole range of imaginative tactics ensued, such as driving up and down dusty roads in front of surveyors' trucks, blocking surveyors' trucks with abandoned trucks and 1000 pound boulders, spreading manure with a favorable wind, riding horses to block surveyors and then preventing arrests by riding slowly to let others get away. And after the snow fell, snowmobiles were used to encircle surveyors and to snatch tripods.

Three weeks later another group of urban supporters announced our intention to block survey work. Six of us were arrested on Nov. 22 amidst a flurry of press accounts of an urban-rural alliance.

The two power crews responded with court injunctions prohibiting interference as well as 5000 police officers for construction by individual farmers and unnamed others. Faced with losing their farms, participation dropped off markedly. Participants reported that meetings of groups like Save Our Countryside and Families Are Concerned Too were like courtesies. Many felt that all was lost. But a few people were able to persevere and the struggle kept going. To help build some momentum, a group of urban supporters announced our intention to block survey work. Six of us were arrested on Nov. 22 amidst a flurry of press accounts of an urban-rural alliance.

Three weeks later another group of urban supporters had been arrested but we decided not to leave because we felt we could not substitute ourselves for the farmers, even though some farmers wanted us to do so. At a meeting later that day, nearly 30 farmers assembled and decided that a new mobilization was needed with a large group of people willing to be arrested. Two days later three farmers were arrested. More people were mobilized by Saturday but it was snow and the surveyors could not work. But the corner had been turned and a new uprising was starting.

Over the weekend, the power crews finally decided to participate in a science court but without agreement to a moratorium on construction of the line. The science court idea, a pet project of Gov. Rudy Perpich, was to decide on the health and safety aspects of the power line. To the shock of the media and the governor, the farmers rejected the science court without a moratorium. They knew full well that the line would not be taken down even if hazards were proven. Instead, the easement for the line would merely be widened or fenced off or perhaps the voltage would be lowered—solutions proposed in the powerline controversy in upstate New York.

Demonstrations continued to the holiday break and were in full swing when the surveyors returned to work after the first of the year. At the end of that first week, Perpich made a dramatic announcement that after having "gone the extra mile" to solve this dispute, he would honor the request of the Pope County sheriff. The decision to decertify "anarchists" and declaring that "the issue is law and order" was committed that the Pope County sheriff and an order was given to Pope County with another 100 in reserve in neighboring counties. This is out of a statewide force of 500. Perpich seems to have been setting the stage for a violent confrontation, but the farmers refused to be intimidated. The next day by passing out flowers and hot coffee, instead of intimidating the farmers, the presence of the troopers spurred an increase in the numbers of people showing up to demonstrate. Caroline Kudella, the 500, declared that support had never increased so fast as it had since Perpich's talk. The reaction of the people of Pope County was that the troopers were occupying the countryside. Flaps by Lowry and the nearby county seat of Glencoe were flown at half-mast. Some businesses closed down. Slogans on the Lowry town hall read: "THE REDCATS ARE COMING," (referring to the maroon uniform and snowmobile suits of the troopers), "LOWRY-BORKER HILL OF THE 20TH CENTURY," and "STATE POLICE IN A POLICE STATE.

The demonstrations and arrests continued that week. On Friday, January 13th, the Pope County prosecutor quit, saying that he had sympathy with the farmers' point of view and that he didn't want to prosecute his friends.

The January demonstrations peaked on Friday the 20th. Only 300 of the 600 present could crowd into the second floor auditorium. It was a frustrating day spent chasing around the countryside trying to confront work crews because troopers and the light plane would radio ahead to surveyors who closed down as protesters approached.

The following Monday, 1200 people bussed to the state Capitol in St. Paul to press the legislature for a moratorium on construction of the power line. The health and safety aspects could be considered more carefully, the judge said, in more formal hearings. The question never even came up for a vote in committee. One sympathetic legislator charged that the whole procedure had merely been a diversion.

By this time, 300 people were showing up for the daily morning meeting at the Lowry Town Hall. Outside the hall hung a turkkey named "Wendy," a reference to the self-appointed sentry Wendell Anderson, who was governor when this mess began. Across the street, a maroon snowmobile suit of a trooper is hung in effigy. Inside the hall, information is exchanged, people discuss what should be done that day, the locations of surveyors and construction crews are ascertained, and then people pile into cars and head off. The troopers have helicopters and light planes to radio the direction demonstrators are heading and the locations of recent day's demonstration.

Some days there is a clear plan of action but often people come to the site with only the intention of disrupting the work and then invent the tactics once they arrive. New ideas are always sought. One example is the moving circle of 100 people with their arms linked. This way no one person blocks the surveyor's sight for more than a few seconds. The troopers dressed some people from the circle the day this was tried and nine were arrested. There was some jostling but most people escaped arrest as the circle kept going.

Partly because of the inevitableebb and flow of this kind of movement and partly because of a misplaced faith in the legislature, not much happened the next week. When demonstrations resumed, about 150 people were shown up. It is hard to organize demonstrations on a daily basis but the farmers and their supporters managed to do just that for quite a while. The arrests also resumed, including one 60-year-old retired farmer who declined bail and stayed in jail.

It happened that the farmers were never there again before and now he had the time. (Later he would harbor me from troopers after a chase through a woods and farmyard.) A 79-year-old friend of his said he too would have blocked surveying but he couldn't see well enough to get in the way. Nonviolent involvement was well extended into the community.

All along a continuing debate and current revolved around the question of violence or nonviolence. For some, their first expressed reaction to a problem was to pick up a gun but most of the sentiment was for nonviolence. But some continued to feel that some violence or at least a...
Three weeks later another group of urban supporters could have been arrested but we decided not to because we felt we could not substitute ourselves for the farmers, even though some farmers wanted us to do so. At a meeting later that day, thirty farmers assembled, decided that a new mobilization was needed with large numbers of people willing to be arrested. Two days later three farmers were arrested. More people were mobilized by Saturday but it was snowy and the surfers could not work. But the corner had been turned and a new uprising was starting.

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Demonstrations continued to the holiday break and were in full swing when the power crews returned to work after the first of the year. At the end of that first week, Perpich made a dramatic announcement that after having "gone the extra mile" to solve this dispute, he would honor the request of the Pope County sheriff. He made a public apology and declared that the issue is resolved.

Perpich seemed to be setting the stage for a violent confrontation, but the farmers defused the situation the last day by passing out flowers and hot coffee. Instead of intensifying the farmers, the presence of the troopers spurred an increase in the numbers of people showing up to demonstrate. Caroline Koubella, head of the SNCC, declared that support had never increased so fast as it had since Perpich's talk. The reaction of the people of Pope County was that the troopers were occupying their homes. Plans in Lowry and the nearby county seat of Glenwood were flown at half-mast. Some businesses closed down. Slogans in the Lowry town hall read: "THE REDCATS ARE COMING", (referring to the maroon uniforms and snowmobile suits of the farmers), "LOWRY--BUNKER HILL OF THE 20TH CENTURY", and "STATE POLICE IN A POLICE STATE.

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The following Monday, 1200 people bussed to the state capital in St. Paul to press the legislature for a moratorium on construction of the powerline until the health and safety aspects could be considered more carefully. After the meeting, the question of a moratorium hung in the air, in committee. No sympathetic legislator could decide what would happen to the procedure which had already been defeated.

By this time, 300 people were showing up for the daily morning meeting at the Lowry Town Hall. Outside the hall hung a turk-key name "Wendy", a reference to the self-appointed leader, Wendell Anderson, who declared that he was governor when this mess began. Across the street a man or snowmobile suit of a trooper is hung in effigy. Inside the hall, information is exchanged, people discuss what should be done that day, the locations of surveyors and construction crews are ascertained, and then people pile into cars and head out. The troopers have helicopters and light planes to radio the direction demonstrators are heading and the locations of force's day's demonstration.

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All along a continuing debate and current revolved around the question of violence or nonviolence. For some, their first expressed reaction to a problem was to pick up a gun but most of the sentiments were for nonviolence. But some continued to feel that some violence or at least a
show of force was needed for success. Accordingly, a trap shoot was conducted in the vicinity of construction activity, but was soon recognized as not being effective. People pointed out that opposition firepower could overwhelm their rifles and shotguns. But agitation for violence continued (mostly from an American Party member from a nearby area who has been the most aggressive ideological proselytizer. He boasted that if they were coming on his farm, they might kill him but not before he and his boys got a thousand of them. Too many John Wayne movies.)

On February 10th, during a demonstration at a cement plant in Alexandria to supply the powerline, a police riot occurred. State troopers were going to get cement trucks out of the plant no matter what. Luckily nobody was killed (one trooper almost got nailed). Three of our people were attacked and, of course, were subsequently charged with assault. (I was also arrested but left the scene and a month later I was picked up on a warrant for escape plus two other charges.)

The following Monday, the American Party member brought some friends to the demonstration. Along with some local farmers, they carried baseball bats and wore face masks as they rode along on a manure spreader being pulled by a tractor—an ominous picture prominent in the media. Again they did it the next day, only this time, after a bat-swinging incident (but no contact), they were well out of the right-of-way. Meeting fire with fire, farmers the next day scrawled anhydrous ammonia on the troopers. Commonly used on farms, anhydrous ammonia can be extremely toxic if breathed and can cause blindness. No one was hurt but the resulting storm of bad publicity led to a public meeting which regulated the bats and amonia. The incidents caused a loss of support and, after that, less than 50 people showed up on any given day.

The fear and negativity produced by the baseball bat syndrome was somewhat balanced by the influence of the Martin Luther King series shown on television at that time. The activists, local and urban, watched it and were impressed by the portrayal of nonviolence and the 126 arrests of construction workers by the state police, pushed by George Crocker, was one of classical civil disobedience—people sitting down in front of cement trucks. It was well organized in comparison to the less precisely planned previous demonstrations and arrests. After four days, the sit-ins didn’t continue because people felt they weren’t effective and because of the need to organize a large rally 10 days hence. (The highlight of that week was the arrest of three farmers who sprayed themselves with pig shit and dared the troopers to carry them away.)

The rally on March 5th was a great success. Billed as a March for Justice, from 5000 to 8000 people marched or drove the three miles from Lowry to a field opposite a construction site. (Of the total, only about 150 demonstrators came from the Twin Cities.) A number of farmers spoke on the health and safety hazards, about the civil rights violations by the utilities and about the need to keep the struggle non-violent. Two representatives of the powerline struggle in upstate New York brought greetings. They have successfully hampered the utility they are opposing with fewer numbers of activists by using very militant nonviolent tactics. Because of the cold weather and the great number of speakers, they failed to communicate their experience.

A union member from the Twin Cities got the biggest round of applause when he spoke of the necessity for unity between farmers and workers. Over the course of the struggle I have been involved in, I feel that the attitude of the farmers have been to organize and control them, the farmers are gradually seeing the need to make alliances to increase their strength against a common enemy of big business, utilities, government, etc. I don’t want to overstate it, but it is developing.

The workers on the line are all in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local No. 160 in Minneapolis. After a critical public statement by a union representative in January, I set up a meeting with three of them and some farmers. In the diplomatic jargon meetings like this are called a frank exchange of views. All the bureaucrats were interested in was money and jobs, each group taking care of its own business. The construction workers were more interested towards the farmers who have run the gamut from sympathy to hostility to fright.

West Coast 800 kv dc line

On March 8th and 9th, 93 Minnesotans went on a EPA-sponsored trip to the Bonneville Power Administration’s 800 kv (+400) line that runs from The Dalles, Oregon, to near Los Angeles, California. The purpose was to prove how safe the line is, even though it was only operating at one-third power at the time. More than 700 of its 800 mile length goes over non-populated land. An engineer who helped construct the line in 1969 said it was an experimental line then, and since they haven’t caused property damage, it still is an experimental line. The biggest complaint of farmers and ranchers in Oregon was that they were tired of looking at the towers and the lines. Carl Nagelbost commented that he felt “his hair stand on end as he stood beneath the lines which included both ac and dc current. I never park my machinery under the line at all. One time I did, the power drained from the tractor’s battery when I left it at the tower. They said they had not experienced such action.”

“All the farmers agreed that if they were to go through the procedure today, they probably would have organized protests as Minnesota farmers have done.” (Farmers had only filed suits individually before the line was built.)

One power company official told the group that “only 10% of the power used in the US was used by farmers and residents of cities... 90% was used by industry.”

In a letter, farmer Virgil Fuchs declared, “I saw nothing that changed my mind about how the line is run.” (All the above from the St. Paul Pioneer Press, 3/15/78.)

In another rural paper Virgil pointed out that since Oregon farms had so much more acreage and a different method of irrigation, they were not comparable to Stennis and Pope County farm situations.

On a side note, Bonneville has just completed a favorable cost-benefit analysis on a +1000 kv dc line (or 2000 kv ac) to run from The Dalles 1600 miles to Phoenix, Arizona. If everything goes right, it will be in operation around 1988.)
show of force was needed for success. Accordingly, a trap shoot was conducted in the vicinity of activity, and it was seen to be effective, but was soon recognized as not being effective. People pointed out that opposition firepower could overwhelm their rifles and shotguns. But agitation for violence continued (mostly from an American Party member from a nearby area who had been the most aggressive ideological proselytizer). He boasted that if they were coming on his farm, they might kill him but not before he and his boys got a thousand of them. Too many John Wayne movies.

On February 10th, during a demonstration at a cement plant in Alexandria supplying the powerline, a police riot occurred. State troopers were going to get cement trucks out of the plant at no matter what. Luckily nobody was killed (one trooper almost got nailed). Three of our people were attacked and, of course, were subsequently charged with assault. (I was also arrested but left the scene and a month later I was picked up on a warrant for escape plus two other charges.)

The following Monday, the American Party member brought some friends to the demonstration. Along with some local farmers, they carried baseball bats and wore masks; they rode along on a manure spreader being pulled by a tractor—an ominous picture prominent in the minds of the folk. Again they did it the next day, only this time, after a bat-swinging incident (but no contact), they were well out of the right-of-way. Meeting with fire, farmers the next day saw armed anhydrous ammonia at the troopers. Commonly used on farms, anhydrous ammonia can be extremely toxic if breathed and can cause blindness. No one was hurt but the resulting storm of bad publicity led to a public meeting which regulated the bats and ammonia. The incidents caused a loss of support and, after that, less than 50 people showed up on any given day.

The fear and negativity produced by the baseball bat and somewhat balanced by the influence of the Martin Luther King series shown on television at that time, all the activists, local and urban, watched it and were impressed by the portrayal of nonviolence and the 126 arrests of Chicago police in a nonviolent strategy, pushed by George Crocker, was one of classical.

Urban Supporters

City supporters have been a small but integral part of the movement, usually about 5-10% of any particular demonstration. Support from city people has been welcomed and there has generally been a lack of a missionary attitude on the part of city people. George Crocker has been the most involved and he moved to Lowry in January because he was spending too much time traveling back and forth. Generally well accepted by country people, George has been in a leadership position with other people along the line. George feels that he has learned to go along on country rhythms of activity and has realized that while he could help, they basically have to organize themselves. But help is appreciated. As one Lowry shopkeeper put it, "We're never at this.

George was part of the small group of mostly anarchists who began relating to this struggle in March of 1977. Initially, operating through the Peoples Power Project, we then had a non-organization before loosely operating through the Northern Sun Alliance. By mid-January a separate group was needed and the Live Wire Alliance was formed as a vehicle for the energy of a great number of other radicals who became involved.

Many city people have told me that they get so involved because they like the farm people they meet and because of the bonds of human solidarity which form by working together. Farmers sometimes ask why city people get involved, and get involved and get so involved. To injury to one is an injury to all," to opposition to centralized power generation and its political ramifications. As a result of our involvement I have noticed is to break down some of the anti-city feelings among the farmers involved. George and some of the other city people were active against the war in Vietnam. Most of the farmers supported the war and a few have changed their minds, saying that they could not now understand what we were saying then.

Live Wire and the Northern Sun Alliance have just gotten an office and gone together in the basement of the Minneapolis Tenants Union, 1513 East Franklin, (612) 874-1540.

civil disobedience—people sitting down in front of cement trucks. It was well organized in comparison to the less precisely planned previous demonstrations and arrests. After four days, the sit-ins didn’t continue because people felt they weren’t effective and because of the need to organize a large rally 10 days hence. (The highlight of that week was the arrest of three farmers who sprayed themselves with pig shit and dared the troopers to carry them away.)

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A union member from the Twin Cities got the strongest round of applause from the people he spoke of the need for unity between farmers and workers. Over the course of the struggle I have noticed a change in attitude toward labor and unions. Initially quite suspicious or even hostile, it is a result of the campaigns organized to organize and control them, the farmers are gradually seeing the need to make alliances to increase their strength against a common enemy of big business, utilities, government, etc. I don’t want to oversate it, but it is developing.

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(On a side note, Bonneville has just completed a favorable cost-benefit analysis on a 1000 kv dc line, for 2000 kv dc, to run from The Dalles 1600 miles to Phoenix, Arizona. If everything goes right, it will be in operation around 1980.)
During that week after the rally, the number of people showing up at Lawry declined drastically. Another low point was the personal and political attack on George Crocker carried out by a local long-time anti-power-line activist, a shopkeeper in Alexandria. He first attacked George with statements in the local press, criticizing George's radical, anti-war background and his 'hippiness.' He complained about trouble he was having raising money from other shopkeepers who, he claimed, were disturbed by George and the arrests. Although people gave George an overwhelming round of applause, they voted 49-51 against any more arrests. Considerable confusion surrounded the vote and some felt the matter had been rushed through, but it is true that the sit-down arrests go against many people's notion of what should be done. Many people were depressed and the next day the governor removed the state troopers because of the "no more arrests" vote. Their nine week deployment had cost $1,200,000.

However, some of the participants pointed out that demonstrations could continue without leading to arrests and within a week people were anxious to resume. The following Tuesday, workers welcomed the farmers, telling them to come anytime because their orders were to stop work if demonstrators appeared. The workers also bought many raffle tickets, buttons and T-shirts.

The next day George Crocker's trial began, the second powerline case to be tried and the second case resulting from the cement plant incident. The first trial ended in conviction of John Trip with many people feeling that this was largely because of the poor job his Alexandria attorney had done. Mark Herriot, a radical attorney from Minneapolis, defended George. Cleared on three charges, George was found guilty only on the fourth. A few of the jurors came back crying after the decision.

A defense committee was established at that time and other radical lawyers from the Twin Cities are now taking cases.

The Minnesota Poll reported that 65% of adult Minnesotans side with the farmers, 35% support the utilities and only 2% have no opinion. When asked if "farmers are right or wrong in attempting to delay construction of the powerline?" 50% said farmers are right, 45% said farmers are wrong.

In comparison, the January 29th Minnesota Poll showed 57% siding with farmers, 25% with power companies and 18% undecided. Only 43% approved of obstructionist tactics and 47% disapproved. Support for the tactics had increased. The most common answer of those who side with the utilities (56%) was that "there is a need for more electric power" and 57% of the total erroneously thought the power was going to the Twin Cities and suburbs.

The farmers have agreed to a Science Court without a prior moratorium on construction. Sensing weakness, the governor is all of a sudden pushing hard to get many of the members of the Board of Directors who used a psychologist in a very sophisticated play at their annual meeting in April. In an hour, he recounted all the struggles his grandfather had had while farming. The psychologist instructed the chairman of the board to pile up blocks symbolizing frustration and then made them fall down to symbolize the breaking point. He spoke of directing one's aggression towards another and proceeded to physically grab each board member from behind and shake them. The absurdity of the situation defused the anger of the farmers by the psychologist vicariously directing it at the board members.

As we finally go to press, the April 22st MINEAPEXES tribute brings the news that the November 1st operational date for the powerline has been pushed back up to six months and that another $250,000 million may be needed. CPA and UPA disagree as to whether the reason is "normal construction delays at the generation plant" or because of delays caused by powerline obstructions. Some of the additional money goes for expanding the mining operation in North Dakota.

CPA and UPA are winter-peak utilities but the Mid-Continent Area Power Pool will have "quite a bit of reserve capacity for next winter," according to the manager of MAPP. CPA's assistant general manager tried to explain this away by saying that "MAPP has more power to sell than the cooperatives had expected several years ago when they were planning their project because of projects developed by other MAPP members and because electric consumption has not grown as much as predicted. CPA's growth rate, he said, is down to 6 1/2 to 7 1/2% compared with its earlier projections of 7 to 11%. Economic and weather factors, as well as consumer conservation, have slowed the growth rate," he added. All things that opponents had been claiming. If some MAPP members are supposed to coordinate themselves, this is a weak argument.

Not much has happened in the last few weeks because the fields are too muddy for equipment to operate. Night-time raiding parties have all along been active, sometimes even scaring each other off. CPA-UPA reported $5,000 damage by early February, $125,000 by mid-March. Now, with no one around, daylight destruction has been substantial.

Seven men will probably soon be brought up on charges concerning a shooting incident in March. A raiding party was shooting at some cranes, were surprised by a company guard and a deputy, and put a shot through the window of the truck the two were riding in. Shooting to cover their escape, they got away. Three weeks later, two farmers were picked up, were told everything that had happened by state Bureau of Criminal Apprehension officers, and were threatened with attempted murder charges and a long stretch in Stillwater Prison. Re-getting is later, they made a statement implicating the others. There is also the possibility of a grand jury being called. Some of the farmers involved were concerned lest their actions cause the city people to leave their struggle, but that won't happen.

Soon the spring planting will absorb the farmers in the long hours necessary to run a farm. The hope is to focus on demonstrations on Tuesdays and Fridays, to keep things going on so efforts don't degenerate. Another shooting through the window of a truck with a guard inside took place last week.) It's hard to say where things are going and what will happen this summer, but most people are still confident.

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In March, the Runestone REA annual meeting (which includes part of Pope County) was the scene of an insurgency by many of the members. Learning from that event, the Storms REA Board of Directors used a psychologist in a very sophisticated play at their annual meeting in April. In an hour, he recounted all the struggles his grandfather had had while farming. The psychologist instructed the chairman of the board to pile up blocks symbolizing frustration and then made them fall down to symbolize the breaking point. He spoke of directing one's aggression towards another and proceeded to physically grab each board member from behind and shake them. The absurdity of the situation defused the anger of the farmers by the psychologist vicariously directing it at the board members. As we finally go to press, the April 21st meetings (which brings the news that the November 1st operational date for the power line has been pushed back to 6 months and that another $250,000 million may be needed. CPA and UPA disagree as to whether the reason is "normal construction delays at the generation plant" or because of delays caused by powerline obstructions. Some of the additional money goes for expanding the mining operation in North Dakota.

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### WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE POWER COMPANY'S BAD FOR YOU!

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In just this sense, Wendell Berry writes from Port Royal, Kentucky. It's his place, where he teaches, writes novels, essays and poems, and farms organically and with draft animals on a moderate scale. It's the place where he's carefully built his life. The man of the moderate man lies across everything Berry's written. His is a slow, deep, even, fair-minded, fair-minded. The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture, Berry's latest book---an extended essay on farming, the values it nurtures and the jeopardy it's in---exhibits all these qualities. It's also remarkable for the enormous energy of rage it contains right under its densely figured and closely argued surface.

What's got Berry to mad is the usurpation of the small family farm, the expropriation of the American Farmer. It's a usurpation and expropriation continually and progressively carried out by the open conspiracy of greed, power lust and careerist self-interest which we call by that ugliest of names, agribusiness. Big banks, big corporate manufacturers of farm machinery, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, big corporate landowners and "growers", the Department of Agriculture, whose administrators for 25 years have been admonishing American farmers to "get big or get out", and the big colleges of agriculture, whose professors---subsidized by corporate and government funds---feed programs, rational and personal to all the other organs of the conspiracy. And not far behind these "specialists" stands a second rank of despilers with identical interests and motives: Big chain grocers and distributors, huge manufacturers of processed foods, the giant fossil fuel corporations and gigantic power and utilities companies.

This supplanting of agriculture by agribusiness has had drastic consequences, all of them bad: the depopulation and devitalization of rural towns and communities, the destructive erosion and soil management programs on big farms worked for greed, the waste of small farms gone back to bushels, unworked because too remote or too expensive to run by contemporary means, the pressures on already crowded cities which have to bear the efflux of rural people, the degradation of the quality of the food we eat and the constant inflation of its price, the increased susceptibility of wilderness and farm land to strip mining, waste dumping and power installations.

Berry documents all this and more that's going on everywhere. He makes responsi- bility for it lie on the privileged and the powerful who have made a scramble of the rough outlines of this chapter, paradise, streamlined, mechanized, wound up and set to run like a colony right here at home.

But Berry pursues his subject much further than this, traces its roots more accurately and more deeply. He sees that the exchange of business for culture is the ecological crisis. Far from being only a matter of scenery and its preservation for hiking and fishing, it's a crisis of character and of agriculture. The issue is how we use the world and each other, and how we allow ourselves to be used. Use is inevitable. Only what Berry calls "kindly use" will keep us and the land from further abuses by business and its blind expertise.

For Berry "the disease of the modern character is specialization." Our habit of training vast numbers of people to do one thing also requires that these same people adapt to other specialists the "various competences and responsibilities that were once personal and universal." This in turn provides the ground on which a whole series of divisions grow, divisions within and among people, and between people and the world. And, as Berry says, "the first principle of the exploitive mind is to divide and conquer." The spurious attraction of big "labor-saving" machines and energy-intensive methods has been a favor- ite wedge. Berry is advocating a return to agriculture by more people and other means as fundamental to the reclamation of character and the restoration of social health.

The carefully worked farm is a beautiful and necessary instance of the wilderness humanized and used well. It's our best example of the "continuous harmony" that can be made to prevail between the wild and the civilized, the city and the wilder-ness. In the wild it's the flank which, as Gary Snyder has said, is "a nurturing habitat," but to make a nur- turing habitat, to keep the culture alive requires work. Berry finds the hatred of work to be a fundamental strand of American history from its beginnings, way in advance of industrialization. From our "contempt for work arose the idea of a nigger: at first some person, and later some thing, to be used to relieve us of the burden of work. It was begun by making niggers of people, we have ended by making a nigger of the world." To despise work is to despise the body and the earth. It is also to despise the energy which joins them and which William Blake called "eternal delight." The longest chapter of The Unsettling of America is devoted to "The Body and the Earth" and the farm as their nexus.

The fundamental division in our society, for Berry, is that between the exploiter and the nurturer. But we are all products
Reclaiming America

Reviewed by Geoffrey Gardner

The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture by Wendell Berry. Sierra Club Books, 228 pages, $9.95.

Whatever else it does, poetry that's worth reading over again performs at least two functions: By passionate care for the language we use, it expands the force and subtlety of our experience and its meanings. And, in the same turning, by uncaney fidelities to experience, it stretches the force and subtlety of our language, making it a more precise and comely bearer of a bigger range of meanings and value. So far as I've ever been concerned, this is all the political function poetry need perform. But what a splendid gift to also have poets who write from a core of involvements that drive them to speak about things and in ways more immediately political.

In just this sense, Wendell Berry writes from Port Royal, Kentucky. It's his place, where he teaches, writes novels, essays and poems, and farms organically and with draft animals on a moderate scale. It's the place where he's carefully built his life. The man of the moderate man lies across everything Berry's written. He is a slow, deep, earthy moderation, quiet-tempered, even-handed, fair-minded. The Unsettling of America: Culture and Agriculture, Berry's latest book— an extended essay on farming, the values it nurtures and the jeopardy it's in—exhibits all these qualities.

It's also remarkable for the enormous energy of rage it contains right under its densely figured and closely argued surface. What's got Berry so mad is the usurpation of the small family farm, the expropriation of the American Farmer. It's a usurpation and expropriation continually and progressively carried out by the open conspiracy of greed, power lust and careerist self-interest. Which we call by such names: agribusiness, big banks, big corporate manufacturers of farm machinery, chemical fertilizers and pesticides, big corporate landowners and "growers," the Department of Agriculture, whose administrators for 25 years have been admonishing American farmers to "get big or get out," and the big colleges of agriculture, whose professors—subsidized by corporate and government funds—feed programs, research and personnel to all the other organs of the conspiracy. And not far behind these "specialists" stands a second rank of despisers with identical interests and motives: Big chain grocers and distributors, huge manufacturers of processed foods, the giant fossil fuel corporations and gigantic power and utilities companies.

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Berry documents all this and more that's happened over the past century. He argues responsibility for it lies on the privileged and the powerful who have made a shambles of the American farm and its future paradise, streamlined, mechanized, wound up and set to run like a colony right here at home.

But Berry pursues his subject much further than this, traces its roots more accurately and more deeply. He sees that the exchange of business for culture is the ecological crisis. Far from being only a matter of scenery and its preservation for hiking and fishing, it's a crisis of character and of agriculture. The issue is how we use the world and each other, and how we allow ourselves to be used. Both is inevitable. Only what Berry calls "kindly use" will keep us and the land from further abuses by business and its blind expertise.

For Berry "the disease of the modern character is specialization." Our habit of training vast numbers of people to do one thing also requires that these same people subordinate to other specialists the "various competences and responsibilities that were once personal and universal." This in turn provides the groundwork on which a whole series of divisions grow, divisions within and among people, and between people and the world. And, as Berry says, "the first principle of the exploitive mind is to divide and conquer." The spurious attraction of big "labor-saving" machines and energy-intensive methods has been a favorite wedge. Berry is advocating a return to agriculture by more people and other means as fundamental to the reclamation of character and the restoration of social health.

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of an exploitive order, so the division is not only a division among people, but a division within people. The type of the exploiter is the strip miner. The type of the nurturer is the farmer. The goals for the exploiter are efficiency, profit and productivity. For the nurturer they are care, health and carrying capacity. The limit to which the land and its users can produce without diminishing each other. The means of exploitation are division, uniformity and organization. The means of nurturing are wholeness, diversity and order. The exploiter is mobile. The nurturer is rooted. The experiments of the specialist exploiter seek to uproot and replace the traditional. The experience of the competent farmer adds its unique share to the traditional store.

not underestimate its power. He must also be aware that every tough push against it from the "margins" will lead directly to confrontation with that power.

For the most part, Berry's outlook and program are themselves a new and unique supplement to the tradition of writers like the Kropotkin of The Conquest of Bread and Fields, Factories and Workshops, Ralph Borsodi, Scott Hasting and Paul Goodman. Berry is the strongest and latest avatar of a line of understanding comprehensively characterized by this comment by N.C. of Rural Neck, Kentucky, writing in the Farmhouse Home Journal in 1892, and quoted by Berry:

When people learn to preserve the richness of the land that God has given them, and the rights to enjoy the fruits of their own labor, then will be the time when all shall have meat in the smokehouse, corn in the crib and time to go to the election.

This is the rich compost of native American radicalism at its best.

Geoffrey Gardner lives in Minneapolis and edits Rice, a poetry magazine.

**LETTERS**

We welcome letters but please keep them short. The following letter has been considerably shortened.

Dear friends,

I would like to respond to the comments by M.H. Miller on my article, "Training for Nonviolent Revolution". (Vol. 1992) The article promoted two four-day skill sharing workshops organized by members of Movement for a New Society (MNS). The workshops included sessions on democratic group process, overcoming sexism in groups, conflict resolution, social analysis plus a large emphasis on skills and strategies necessary to organize demonstrations and other actions.

But justice does not suffice to ensure equitable, just, new society. It must be augmented by the spirit of brotherhood, the consciousness of the labourer, the understanding of the struggle of each against all, to subject the exploitive of the vanquished, and that is, to injustice in all social relations.

"To each his own" the "own" of each should be the part share due to him of the natural wealth and the accumulated wealth of past generations on top of what he produces by his own efforts. But how to divide justly the natural wealth, and determine in the complexity of offences and in the complex process of production, what is the individual's production? And how is one to measure the value of the products for the purpose of exchange?

If one starts from the principle of equal for himself, it is utopian to hope for justice. To claim it, is hypocrisy (maybe unconscious) which serves to cover up the nearest egoism and desire for domination.

By Errico Malatesta

Errico Malatesta was an Italian-born revolutionary and communisit. We include this piece because of the agricultural and land emphasis in this issue and because this selection is part of a book recently republished by Freedom Press entitled Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas. Available through Soil of Liberty Books, see page 25.

The problem of the land is perhaps the most serious, and dangerous problem which the revolution will have to solve. In justice (meaning justice which is contained in the saying 'to each his own') the land belongs to everybody and must lie at the disposal of whoever wants to work it, by whatever means he prefers, whether individually, or in small or large groups, for his own benefit or on behalf of the community.
of an exploitive order, so the division is not only a division among people, but a division within people. The type of the exploiter is the strip miner. The type of the nurturer is the farmer. The goals for the exploiter are efficiency, profit and productivity. For the nurturer they are care, health and carrying capacity (the limit to which the land and its users can produce without diminishing each other). The means of exploitation are division, uniformity and organization. The means of nurturing are wholeness, diversity and order. The exploiter is mobile. The nurturer is rooted. The experiments of the specialist exploiter seek to uproot and replace the traditional. The experience of the competent farmer adds its unique share to the traditional store.

Berger is skeptical about politics in any usual sense: “Organizations may promote... forgiveness and care, they cannot provide it.” Moral responsibility can’t be delegated. Still, Berger offers a 12 point program of public remedies worthy of much and detailed discussion. It amounts to a program of rural and urban reconstruction and reclamation. In its main features it’s regionalist and decentralist and carefully mixes communal and individual initiative. “If change is to come,” says Berger, “it will have to come from the nongrain.” Agribusiness is a huge and deeply entrenched orthodoxy. Berger does not underestimate its power. He must also be aware that every tough push against it from the “margins” will lead directly to confrontation with that power.

For the most part, Berry’s outlook and program are themselves a new and unique supplement to the tradition of writers like the Kropotkines of The Conquest of Bread and Fields, Factories and Workshops, Ralph Borsodi, Scott Narwin and Paul Goodman. Berry is the strongest and latest avatar of a line of understanding handsonly characterized by this comment by W. C. of Rural Neck, Kentucky, writing in the Farm and Home Journal in 1892 and quoted by Berry:

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Communism then appears to be the only possible solution, the only system based on human solidarity—which links all mankind, and only a desired solidarity linking them in brotherhood can reconcile the interests of all and serve as the basis for a society in which everyone is guaranteed the greatest possible well-being and freedom.

On the question of possession and utilization of the land it is even clearer. If all the cultivable land masses were equally fertile, equally healthy, and equally well situated for the purpose of barter, one could visualize a division of the land in equal parts among all the workers, who would then work in association if they wished, and how they wished, in the interests of production.

But the conditions of fertility, the health and situation of the land are so different that it is impossible to think in terms of an equalizable distribution. A government by nationalizing the land and renting it to land owners could, in theory, resolve the problem by a tax which would go to the State, what economists call the economic return (that is, whatever a piece of land, given equal work, produces in excess over the worst piece). It is the system advocated by the American Henry George. But one sees immediately that such a system presupposes the continuation of the bourgeoise order, apart from the growing power of the State and the governmental and bureaucratic powers with which one would have to contend. So, for us, who neither want government nor any individual possession of agricultural land is possible or desirable—economically or morally—the only solution is communism. And for this reason we are communists.

But communism must be voluntary, freely desired and accepted; for were it instead be imposed, it would produce the most monstrous tyrannical which would result in a return to bourgeois individualism.

Now, while waiting for communism to demonstrate, by the example of the collectives so organized from the outset, its advantages and be desired by all, what is our practical agrarian program, to be put into operation as soon as the revolution takes place?

Once legal protection has been removed from property, the workers will have to take possession of all land which is not being directly cultivated by existing owners with their own hands; they will have to establish themselves into associations and organize production, making use of the ability and all the technical skills of those who have always been workers as well as of the former bourgeoise who having been expropriated (and no longer able to live by the work of others) will by the necessity of things have become workers as well. Agreements will be promptly reached with the associations of industrial workers for the exchange of goods, either on a communitarian basis or in accordance with the different criteria prevailing in different localities.

Meanwhile, all food stocks would be expropriated by the people in revolt and distribution to the different localities and individuals organized through the initiative of the revolutionary groups. Seeds, fertilizers and farm machinery and working animals will be supplied to the land workers; free access to the land for whoever wants to work it.

There remains the question of peasant proprietors. Should they refuse to join forces with the others there would be no reason to harass them so long as they do the work themselves and do not exploit the labour of others... The disadvantages, the virtual impossibility of isolated work, would soon attract them into the orbit of the collectivity....

Anarchist Communist

Federation

Last March, an Anarchist Communist Federation was formed by a group meeting in Ann Arbor, the culmination of three other meetings in the Midwest since last October. For papers on its organization and principles, write:

Anarchist Communist Federation
Box 2076, Station A
Champaign, Ill. 61820

Send money for postage and 7.
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By Ray Olson

In his introduction to this new collection of essays by the most important 20th century American anarchist, Taylor Stoehr reminds the reader of Aristotle's definition of man as a political animal. The great philosopher believed that it is essential human nature to consider the courses of action open in any public situation and to choose the good—not the best, not the least evil—course. We do so daily but very seldom are we heard when our deliberations and choices trespass the domains of our governors, who have pretty effectively reduced the scope of real politics to the nuclear family and other affinity groups that pose no challenge to legally constituted authority.

It was—it is—one of Paul Goodman's signal distinctions that he recognized but did not observe the shrinkage of individual political effectiveness. He behaved and wrote, as these essays eloquently, crankily, movingly, and wittily show, according to the conviction that "the society in which I live is mine, open to my voice and action, or I do not live there at all."
In all Goodman's political writing the human scale is observed. His many "practical proposals" take the person, not the society, as arbiter of institutional effectiveness and institutional effectiveness as the measure of societal legitimacy. A society whose institutions frustrate and stunt actual persons is illegitimate, It is ripe for revolution or more likely, Goodman came to feel, dissolution. It will change through falling apart, breaking down, before it will change through reason or calculation. It will never change significantly through the politics of electioneering and parties, even revolutionary parties. These changes are, as the history of revolution in our time abundantly shows, cosmetic rather than fundamental. The inhuman, inflated scale remains and as long as it does, sweeping changes occur suddenly through catastrophic breakdowns only. "We are not going to get rid of the atom bombs by SALT talks or anything like that," Goodman said in his last public speech. "We'll get rid of them when accidentally a bomb falls on Akron, Ohio and that'll be just too bad for the people in Akron, Ohio, but then there will be a world-wide movement, beginning here, to cut back on the atom bombs."

In the meantime the increasing disorder within a blotted society may allow for smaller changes in mores and institutions that may cumulatively amount to something: "... if disorder can develop, then my faith as an anarchist is that very many things will fall apart to just the right size. That is, things will fall apart unless the law 'n' order of the center ruthlessly suppress disorder, or the ideologies of the left try to foist, lead, or otherwise engineer it for their own conventional power-grabbing political purposes.

Such is Goodman's view of the means available for precipitating large societal changes. It seems to me essentially correct, simple as it is, mandating a program, if that's what you want to call it, to help lessen restraints and watch out for falling rocks. But prior to any programmatic behavior even of such humble dimensions comes the injunction to act now as if one lived in a free society. "Mercily by continuing to exist and act in nature and freedom, the libertarian wins the victory, establishes the society..."

If you haven't read Paul Goodman's political writing, this book is the ideal introduction. If after you've finished it you want more, it has two siblings: Creator Spirit Core: Literary Essays and Nature Heals: Psychological Essays. They're in the same format from the same publisher at the same price. Or ask for them at the public library.

Ray Olson is a librarian in St. Paul.

HOBAN'S MOURNING SONG

Statelike, yet we have a flag of the raw stuff the neutral color, a march without a rhythm or key, our drum and trumpet, no play.

Unarmed, yet we have the power of what the court drops out. Lonely, loyal, merry-minded, doubt-free we go our way.

Champtoc is dead as I shall die unnoticed by the wayside, his spirit does not haunt the world and his death-grip is relaxed.

--Paul Goodman

(Champtoc was the second major sage of the philosophical Dialect canon.)

Andrew Ant the Anarchist

Andrew Ant the Anarchist, text by Bob Munden, illustrations by Christine Rafferty and Stan Strueh, Anarchos Press (New York), $5.50

The publisher of this book is "a nonprofit independent press concerned with developing a humanistic, libertarian-socialist literature for children." Andrew Ant is a credible step in that direction, and is well worth the price. The skillful, imaginative black-and-white ink drawings are likely to arouse a child reader's interest and curiosity. The book deserves to be bought as much for what it achieves as for what it attempts. This much said, I'll get more descriptive and critical.

The story more or less traces Andrew's part in the social revolution in "the ant kingdom of Anotolia." As a young ant Andrew is lovingly nurtured and happy, but as he reaches maturity he is assigned the status of worker ant and so enters the most exploited sector of his society. Soldier ants, banker ants, and king and queen ants all have more comfortable lives than workers. Andrew tries to stir his fellows to revolt, but they are afraid and do not "trust their feeling for justice." Then the bankers' callous refusal of aid for Anita, an injured worker, supplies the spark for the tinder box: enraged workers rise up, drive out the bankers, and find it easy to administer the food stores themselves. They therefore proclaim that henceforth everyone is to be a worker and share equally in the labor and the rewards of the colony. Now leisure is available to all, justice reigns.

All this seems intended to make children aware of unfair sharing out of labor, goods and services in modern societies, and to reassure children that their sense of justice need not accommodate itself to rationalizations of the status quo. This is certainly libertarian-socialist. But the book is less successful as (1) humanistic (2) literature (3) for children. As a character Andrew is thinly realized and poorly grafted onto a rather primitive revolution--
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doratio's mourning song

Strangled, yet we have a flag
of the raw stuff the neutral color,
a march without a rhythm or key
our drum and trumpet raged play.

Unarmed, yet we have the power
of what the bottom drops out.
Lonely, loyal, mucky-minded,
doubt-free we go our way.

Chastity is dead as I shall die
unnoticed by the wayside.
His spirit does not haunt the world
and his death-grip is relaxed.

--Paul Goodman

(Chastity was the second major saga of the philosophical Deist canon.)

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I was impressed by Miller's good thinking concerning direct action, but was disappointed by what I perceived as disparaging condescension. We can all learn from disagreements, but why not in a comradely manner. Also, positions were attributed to me with which I do not agree and never advocated.

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While overcoming the omission Miller wisely suggests not ignoring the vital importance of community organizing and campaigns, for they can indirectly contribute to workplace militancy. I have accepted a split between work and "real life" to emotionally defend myself against the boredom and powerlessness I feel. My hunch is that this is common among many other working people. Campaigns in the community which question the quality of life off the job can attract thoughtful attention because it takes place in.

Literature

Errico Malatesta: His Life and Ideas, compiled and edited by Vernon Richards (Freedom) $4.30

Jose Pellicer - Anarchists in the Spanish Revolution (Solidarity - Toronto) $4.30

Clenfuegos Press Anarchist Review
No. 1 - 1976 $0.74
No. 2 - 1977 $2.30
No. 3 - 1977 (Fall) $4.30

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Phil Mater - Portugal: The Impossible Revolution? (Free Life) $5.95

Ursula LeGuin - The Dispossessed $1.75

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Sample issues: Zero: Anarchist/Anarcha Feminist monthly 54¢; Open Road 74¢; Synthesis 56¢; Fifth Estate 99¢; Freedom 99¢

All prices include postage. Make checks out to Salt of Liberty Books
PO Box 7036
Pavement Station
Madison, WI 53707

With signs of growing conservatism in our times come also signs of declining faith in capitalism—i.e., that the grubby myth written and endlessly rewritten by Horatio Alger is at last losing its hold. Anarchist Press is trying to substitute better myths. There are few books of this kind, and I'm glad my children have this one.

Victor Urbanowicz Lives in Ames, Iowa. He is interested in the way socialists and especially anarchists' ideas are represented in literature.

The work of anarchists is prominently a work of education to prepare the people intellectually and psychologically for the tasks of their social liberation. Every attempt to limit the influence of economic monopsonism and the power of the state is a step nearer to the realization of this goal. Every development of voluntary organization in the various fields of social activity towards the direction of personal freedom and social justice deepens the awareness of the people and strengthens their social responsibility, without which no changes in social life can be accomplished. Most anarchists of our time are convinced that such a transformation of society will take years of constructive work and education and cannot be brought about without revolutionary convulsions which still now have always accomplished every progress in social life. The character of these convulsions, of course, depends entirely on the strength of resistance with which the ruling classes will be able to oppose the realization of the new ideas. The wider the circles which are inspired with the idea of a reorganization of society in the spirit of freedom and socialism, the easier will be the birth pains of new social changes in the future.

Rudolph Rocker
Anarchism and Anarchist-Syndicalism

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There is an ideological reason to expect good character portrayal in a libertarian tale. Means must be consistent with ends, as we say, because a person is an end as well as a means. Consider the words of two anarchists speaking half a century apart: "If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution!" "There is only one reason to be a revolutionary—because it is the best way to live." Despite the risks involved, a person should grow morally and intellectually from taking part in libertarian agitation. If not, something may be wrong with the person or the activity. In a story like Antoine Fox, then, the main character's personality is not just window dressing to draw the reader (age 67) into the amusing abstractions of class analysis. The growth of the revolutionist is inseparable from the revolution.

But perhaps I'm asking the producers of the book to write my book instead of theirs, and I'll conclude on the credit side. I concede that revolution as the book portrays is valid, and effective, as a historical myth to give flesh and feeling to anarchist ideals. The book is also a timely effort.
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the realm of "real" life. Connections can be made between those who experience off the job with management's direction of our work. Hopefully such campaigns encourage a critical outlook which focuses on work, thus healing the split. Campaigns allow people to become involved in action where they can learn new skills while developing a sense of their own power. I have experienced this progression myself, and suspect it is not an uncommon sequence.

Management of the economy by working people is essential to our freedom. Yet, it is conceivable that regional groups of self-managing workers could practice policies which exploit less developed regions by racism or competition. If sex and the present structure of the nuclear family are left unchanged then oppressor/oppressed characters will be reproduced in each new generation. If fears of lesbians and gays and the limitations of compulsive heterosexuality are not called into question people will continue to suffer sexual repression. If large group violence continues as the predominant method of resolving social conflicts many precious people will be killed and our new institutions become perverse. Authoritarianism, patriarchy, sexual repression, violence, racism all contribute to our daily problems, they all predate capitalism.

I agree with Miller on many points. However, I question that we are not a negative or to organize a people militia at some point. This is an open question. There is no reason to avoid the conventional wisdom of a violent culture and to attempt nonviolent alternatives for change. My limited knowledge of revolutionary history prompts me to view organized violence as a dangerous and perverse means, the last resort. A libertarian analysis of power and violence suggests massive noncooperation is the more humane, forceful and democratic means of denying popular power. A personal reason is my hope to live without killing anyone. Is this an unusual hope?

The pitfalls of milita-type actions in defense of the revolution are well known. Organized violence is the strength of the ruling class. Our strength lies in control of production and in refusing taxes, armed service and obedience to laws. Success depends upon the strength of our mass industrial and community organization not on armed struggle.

Preparation for armed struggle, storage of materials and training of people allows us wide open to agent provocateurs, who could discredit the movement as terrorist and provide the excuse for government repression. Few have ever heard a government agent urge a nonviolent strategy.

One danger is of imbedding undemocratic structures within our movement if we rely on military action so often characterized by top down command and blind obedience. Miller seems acutely aware of these problems, stressing that defense committees should be based on volunteerism and federalism, and should be disbanded soon after the revolution. I fear this is like swimming upstream against a strong current: the chances of drifting back may be overwhelming. While I am not a student of armed insurrection, it appears that the early characteristics of small self-reliant bands would have a strong tendency to be transformed with escaladed warfare into rigid military forms. A nonviolent struggle movement would increase popular self-reliance and decentralization of power, without dependence on elites. Through economic, social and political noncooperation, people develop an independent capacity to create and defend a revolution and thus are not left dependent on elites.

Growing up in this culture it is all too easy for me to scrap my values and my intuitive distrust of violence in the attempt to be "serious, effective and tough-minded." Friends, the commodity of precious time condition us. We are wise to be suspicious of the common sense assumptions which bind us to authoritarian and masculine values and ways of looking at the world.

Sincerely, Steve Chase, Minneapolis

Dear Comrades,

How surprised I was to read in Saul of Liberty—an anarchist-feminist magazine—a quotation Bolshoy, an interpretation of the situation in Palestine. Just to quote a sentence from the article: "...the root cause and fundamental aspect of the dispute is clearly colonial Palestine, namely Zionism..." makes me want to answer and point out some anarchist ideas in contrast.

Pierre Van Passen, who was a well known international journalist, wrote in his book, The Profession of the jews, on the persecution of the jews even before the First World War. For centuries the various states tried to rid themselves of "the Jewish problem." They restricted Jews to ghettos, Jews were not allowed to enter the professions, trades, or admitted to established colleges and schools.

None of the rapacious states represented in the UN by their cunning politicians, who were again carving up the world wanted the survivors of the holocaust within their domains. Zionism became a dumping ground. For the US, creation of the state of Israel meant a foothold in the Middle East. For President Truman, who was running for re-election, it was a device to get the Jewish vote.

Anyone, with the least bit of objectivity can see that life for the ordinary person, both Jew and Arab, is measurably better in Israel than in the surrounding Arab dictatorships. Compare the status of women in these countries. In referring to the many political parties and groups in Israel, the writer unintentionally concedes, that the people of the state are full of universal and unrestricted civil liberties.

Even the anarchist groups freely carry on propaganda, organize demonstrations, protest and picket lines. Proponents, the anarchists, periodical consistently protest the policies of the Israeli government. It reminds the Zionists and the other politicians that the land was settled originally by socialists and anarchists. Proponents of the anarchists, the bureaucrats, capitalists, bourgeois feminists—short all the unsavory aspects of Israeli society.

Proponents urge the cooperative and Kibbutz movements not to play politics, not to allow themselves to be used as tools in the interests of the state or the political parties. Proponents appeal to the Jewish and Arab people to unite and work out their own way of life without politicians, without becoming victims of ambitious, ruthless states. Mankind is not the problems confronting the people of all lands must and can be solved only by the people themselves. The rivalry between states threatens the extermination of mankind.

Many years ago, Randolph Bourne summed up the situation in the Deistic sentence: "War is the health of the State." (and we may add, the health of the peace movement.) Can we rid the name of peace Sadat of Egypt and Begin of Israel come to Washington seeking the latest and deadliest weapons to wage war.

The Israeli anarchists, like their comrades all over the world take the position that the earth belongs to all and everyone has the right to live anywhere without interference or permission of the state. Without the interference of the Israeli 'liberationists', Zionists, Arab fascists, totalitarian Russia and its partner in crime, the bourgeoisie democracies. It still becomes the writer of the article, to take the side of the Arab fascists bent on exterminating a whole people ("drive them into the sea") on the pretext that they are "socialists."

The plain fact of the matter is that the existence of a progressive humanist civilization threatens the age-long tyranny of the Arab oligarchies. It is for this, and only this, that they are preparing a war of extermination.

Sincerely yours for a better world,
E. J. Goldoff
New York City

Letter will respond to her letter in the next issue. It is to include a few comments in this issue.

Just because the earth should belong to everyone doesn't mean that one people can force out another people from an area of land. That's anarchy in the popular misconception. Just because we have certain freedom in the U.S. doesn't mean we don't have to deal with the genocidal displacement of Indians that continues to this day. You ignore the problem of the displaced Palestinians just as the Israeli state did for decades. The Israeli state continues its outland expansion of settlement on occupied land even after international protest.

Because of the Holocaust and the pathology of the Western democracies, I can understand the Jewish concern for self-defense, but not with the state structure of Israel. What liberties exist in Israel (even for Jews) would not exist in a genuine state ready for endless war. The development of a peace movement in Israel is an encouraging sign. Both Israelis and the Israeli left need for reaching social revolution.
the realm of "real" life. Connections can be made between problems we experience off the job with management's direction of our work. Hopefully such campaigns encourage a critical outlook which focuses on work, thus healing the split. Campaigns allow people to become involved in action where they can learn new skills while developing a sense of their own power. I have experienced this progression myself, and suspect it is not an uncommon sequence.

Management of the economy by working people is essential to our freedom. Yet it is conceivable that a regional group of self-managing workers could practice policies which exploit less developed regions by racism or competition. If sexism and the present structure of the nuclear family are left unchanged then oppressor/oppressed characters will be reproduced in each new generation. If fears of lesbians and gays and the limitations of compulsive heterosexuality are not called into question people will continue to suffer sexual repression. If large group violence continues as the predominant method of resolving social conflicts many precious people will be killed, and our new institutions become perverse. Authoritarianism, patriarchal, sexual repression, violence, racism all contribute to our daily problems, they all predate capitalism.

I agree with Miller on many points. However I question that we need not be active but to organize a people militarily at some point. This is an open question. There is good reason to avoid the conventional wisdom of a violent culture and to attempt nonviolent alternatives for change. My limited knowledge of revolutionary history prompts me to view organized violence as a dangerous and perverse means, the last resort. A libertarian analysis of power and struggle suggests massive non-cooperation is the more humane, forceful and democratic means of defying popular power. A personal reason is my hope to live without killing anyone. Is this an unusual hope?

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Growing up in this culture it is all too easy for me to crap my values and my intuitive distrust of violence in an attempt to be "serious, effective and tough-minded." Friends, the complex features of law condition us. We are wise to be suspicious of the common sense assumptions which bind us to authoritarian and masculine values and ways of looking at the world. Sincerely, Steve Chase, Minneapolis

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Chained to the Treadmill?

Break Those Chains!

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES
$3 - 64/year
free to those incarcerated in prisons
and mental hospitals
SOIL OF LIBERTY staff members are Fluffy
Golod, Mickey Lauria and Don Olson. Special
thanks this issue to Pat Christensen, Geoff
Gardner and Freida Gardner.
We are very late with this issue. While
we like to combine activism with putting out
this magazine, we have been very busy over
the last few months. Don's powerline activ-
ties, Fluffy's tenant union organizing
especially the Cockroach Corners building
owned by the Minneapolis Star and Tribune),
and Mickey's neighborhood organizations and
school have kept us busy.
In order to partially catch up, we are
adding 4 pages and calling this issue #1 and
#2 for this year. Due to increased printing
cost we must raise our price to $3.50/copy.
We will be publishing Sam Dolgoff's "A Cri-
tique of Marxism" as soon as we get enough,
so please renew promptly and anything extra
is appreciated. Since the last issue we
have received $129, about the cost of this
issue.
Printed by Haymarket Press.

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