

News & Reviews

Fifth Estate Collective

1999

The 15 minutes of fame for Ted Kaczynski, the convicted Unabomber, are not up after all. He's been in the news several times recently. Kaczynski is releasing an autobiographical account of his life, entitled *Truth Versus Lie*, printed by Context Media. This new, small, New York City publisher picked up the manuscript after hearing that Simon and Schuster rejected it.

Publisher Beau Friedlander says the 525-page hardback will "give the other side of a one-sided tale, that was spun by his family and his attorneys in their attempt to save him from the death penalty." Kaczynski wrote the text in longhand in prison following his 1998 life sentence for 16 bombing attacks which left three people dead and 29 wounded as part of a campaign against industrial society.

Under federal statute, Kaczynski cannot profit from his book sales, so any royalties will go to his victims' survivors as compensation.

Context Media is also releasing *The United States of America v. Theodore John Kaczynski* by Michael Mello, a Vermont professor.

Several critics of this newspaper's opposition to the Unabomber's tactics and lack of interest in his *Manifesto*, have claimed that some statements attributed to him were government fabrications. Apparently, there's little, if any light shed on that dispute since he barely comments on the acts to which he pled guilty.

Kaczynski accuses his brother of "treason" for betraying him to the authorities and says forgiveness will only come if he leaves his wife and joins with radical environmental groups in opposing technology.

Uh, Ted; don't give him our address.

On a grimmer note, the government is holding Ted in a special Super Max prison in Florence, Colorado, where he is in solitary confinement 23 hours a day. This type of treatment is usually reserved for high security risk prisoners or ones dangerous to guards or other inmates; Ted certainly fits none of these categories unless the feds think John Connor and the Green Anarchists are plotting something like a helicopter escape caper (oops, hope we didn't give anything away).

Given Kaczynski's near-hermitage in the Montana woods, he's probably dealing with the solitude OK, writing his memoirs and the like, but this type of imprisonment can often induce madness in inmates. In a scene needing a Sartre and an Ionesco to produce an existential theatre of the absurd, Ted is sharing a cellblock with Timothy McVeigh, the convicted Oklahoma City federal building bomber, Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who masterminded the attack on New York City's World Trade Center, and Luis Felipe, Latin Kings gang leader, convicted of several murders and racketeering.

Their one hour of exercise is held in separate cages where they are forced to communicate through a mesh fence, but are separated by enough distance that they have to speak in voices loud enough for the guards to 'hear. Talk about being on different pages! One can only imagine of what their conversations consist; this scene cries out for theatrical production.

However, no one should miss the modern panopticon nature of this mode of incarceration. Its intent is to induce madness, and should be opposed no matter who is the inmate or what is the crime.

The eight-times yearly published *Earth First! Journal* has reportage available nowhere else on the destruction of the wild and its radical opposition. Although much of the news of constant assaults on the earth for profit is understandably depressing, the fact that there are so many intrepid bands of eco-warriors at work defending the planet is heartening.

The February-March 1999, 42-page -edition contains a front page story on a massive and brutal police raid on the Minnehaha Free State, seven buildings constructed in the path of a Minnesota highway route. Depressing. Also, there is news of a mass movement of poor farmers in Karnataka, India who burned down three Monsanto genetically engineered cotton fields, and promise more if the chemical company doesn't withdraw from the country. Heartening.

There's debate over the tactics of the Earth Liberation Front whose arson caused \$12 million in damage to a Vail, Colorado ski resort, but may have hampered local organizing efforts. Numerous other campaigns are reported, as well as featuring a lively letters section, poetry, merchandise, an international contact list, and even a how-to section for clandestine actions. Highly recommended.

The April-May edition contains thoughts on the impact of Y2K.

You can make a weekly newspaper out of the opposition papers that currently exist if you subscribe to enough of them, and I would put this one near the top. Subscriptions are \$25 a year from Post Office Box 1415, Eugene OR 974 ; www.earthfirst.org.

Good news: After a three year hiatus, Toronto's *Kick It Over* magazine has returned to print with a fresh new crew. Long time staff member Bob Melcombe has turned it over to a group from Guelph, Ontario and the result is very hopeful.

There's an emphasis on anarchist art which has produced some tasty graphics, plus articles on "Broadening the Anarchist Gene Pool," by Joseph Heathcott in which he calls for beginning "to view anarchism not as a fixed order to achieve ('workless' society, a Pleistocene utopia), but rather as a set of tools and strategies for analyzing social conditions, identifying illegitimate forms of authority, and devising broad, participatory strategies for change."

Also, a touching portrait of Attilio and Libera Bortolotti, two stalwarts of the anarchist scene of an earlier era; plus "The City in Anarchy" and "Looking for an Anarchist Living Room" which look at perspectives for change. Four issues,, \$14.50 from KIO, PO Box 1836, Guelph ON, N1H 7A1, Canada.

Searching for a lost title, I looked behind a bookshelf only to discover another misplaced volume, the amazingly prophetic, *End Time: Notes on the Apocalypse*, by G.A. Matiasz. This potboiler of a novel was published in 1994 by AK Press and is set in 2007.

A civil war is raging across the former Soviet Union, and the U.S. is fighting a counterinsurgency war in Southern Mexico against rebels claiming the legacy of Zapata. This was written several years before the Zapatista rising in Chiapas.

End Time also focuses on a mass based Bay Area anti-war movement that takes on the proportion of a revolutionary upsurge. The response of the government to domestic insurrection becomes no different than to those abroad. Numerous other themes appear, from the personal to questions of violence versus reform. A bit much in places, but generally a good read. Available for \$10 from AK Press, POB 682, San Francisco CA 941 .

Bill Meyers put together III Publishing in 1988 to specialize in satire and anarchist/anti-authoritarian titles in genres as diverse as science fiction, novels and thrillers.

III currently finds itself in trouble as independent book stores fall beneath the juggernaut of Barnes and Noble and Border's. The chains won't stock their titles unless they buy shelf space which is too expensive for a small publisher.

What you can do: Check out III's book list available from POB 1581, Gualala CA 95445 which includes their new titles, *The Nihilist Princess*, and *Down and Out in the Ivy League* by J.G. Eccarius, who also wrote the now-classic of blasphemy, *The Last Days of Christ the Vampire*. Ask your independent bookseller to stock III titles and other indies.

Just last issue we were bemoaning the fate of the resistance press, but suddenly several new ones have appeared to fill the gap left by those that have departed. *Feral* is a new quarterly which says it is "dedicated to the expansion of biocentric and anarchistic theory and practice" and "promotes wildness in all species including humans."

The quarterly publication's first edition is an attractive magazine format featuring a lead article by Joanne E. Lauck on, "The Transformative Power of the Wild," in which "human relationships with wilderness through a

relationship with insects is discussed.” Co-editor, Chris Kortright and a friend discuss what it means to be “Not Left But Wild,” then offer wild insurrection as an alternative to leftist ideology. The ubiquitous John Zerzan has an essay as do David Orton, James A. Barnes and others. There are also reviews and tasty art by Freddie Baer, Johann Humyn Being, and Mr. Fish.

Issue number two will be on the theme of “Wildness or the wild;” number three on “The Future.” They welcome essays, photos, poetry, art, and fiction; also readers. Issues are \$3. Contact feral at 530 Divisadero, Suite 321, San Francisco CA 94117; **highwater@hotmail.com**

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