

Renew the Earthly Paradise

reprint from FE #322, Winter/Spring, 1986

Fifth Estate Collective

2005

The evolution of the FE has been characterized by a willingness to reexamine all the assumptions of radical criticism, which has led it away from its earlier libertarian communist perspective toward a more critical analysis of the technological structure of civilization, and toward a criticism of the trajectory of Western civilization combined with a reappraisal of the indigenous world and the character of primitive or original communities. In this sense we are primitivists.

We are not anarchists per se, but pro-anarchy, which is for us a living, integral experience, incommensurate with Power and refusing all ideology. Where Power commands, anarchy remains a latent potentiality, with sporadic manifestations of freedom and revolt. Our work on the FE as a project explores possibilities for our own participation in this movement, but also works to rediscover the primitive roots of anarchy as well as to document its present expression.

It is no accident that the modern critique of the technological mega-machine coincides in its conclusions with the prophecies of the Native American shamans and dreamers. People are today less willing to bear the burden of civilization, to wear its barbed armor—they see it as intolerable, and are yearning for the land. The Indians say that this world is doomed, and they are right; the land is beckoning, reclaiming us. Not patriotism to the Empire, not the work-commodity culture, not the mediatized simulation of human meaning, not any of it will stand in the way of freedom. A new discourse is just beginning to be born—a discourse that will eventually become a song; a song which will put an end to History, so that earthly Paradise can be renewed.

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