

A text dump on Green Anarchist

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An Introduction & a Critique

Wikipedia

Established in Oxford, UK.

Early years

Founded after the 1984 Stop the City protests, the magazine was launched in the summer of that year by an editorial collective consisting of Alan Albon, Richard Hunt and Marcus Christo. Albon had been an editor of *Freedom* whilst Hunt had become frustrated with the more mainstream green magazine *Green Line* for which he had been writing. The younger Christo had come from a more anarcho-punk background – he was also a member of Green CND, and had been involved in the blockade of Ronald Reagan’s car at the 1984 Lancaster House summit meeting.

Early issues featured a range of broadly anarchist and ecological ideas, bringing together groups and individuals as varied as Class War, veteran anarchist writer Colin Ward, anarcho-punk band Crass, as well as the Peace Convoy, anti-nuclear campaigners, animal rights activists and so on. However the diversity that many saw as the publication’s greatest strength quickly led to irreconcilable arguments between the essentially pacifist approach of Albon and Christo, and the advocacy of violent confrontation with the State favoured by Hunt.

Albon and Christo left *Green Anarchist* shortly afterwards, and the magazine saw a succession of editorial collectives, although Hunt remained in overall control. During this period he published articles which were increasingly alienating much of the magazine’s readership. Matters came to a head after Hunt wrote an editorial which expressed support for British troops in the Gulf War and extolled the virtues of patriotism. Hunt has stated that the rest of the editorial collective wished to bring to *Green Anarchist* a more left-wing political approach, while Hunt wanted it to remain non-aligned.¹ Shortly afterwards he left to start another magazine *Alternative Green*, which continued to promote his own particular view of green anarchism, and eventually became closely linked to the National-Anarchist movement from the mid-90s onwards.

¹ "An Interview with Richard Hunt". Web.archive. 12 March 2005. Archived from the original on March 12, 2005. Retrieved 14 May 2015.

The Nineties

During the 1990s Green Anarchist came under the helm of an editorial collective that included Paul Rogers, Steve Booth and others, during which period the publication became increasingly aligned with primitivism, an anti-civilization philosophy advocated by writers such as John Zerzan, Bob Black and Fredy Perlman.

During this period the magazine expressed sympathy for the criminal activities of Ted Kaczynski and published a notorious article entitled "The Irrationalists" that supported actions like the Oklahoma City bombing and the sarin gas attacks carried out by the Tokyo based Aum cult. This once again alienated much of the UK anarchist movement, and led to strong criticism of the magazine by Stewart Home, Counter Information,² the Anarchist Communist Federation³⁴⁵ and others. Steven Booth, the writer of the article, has since renounced the views expressed in it, as well as the primitivist movement altogether.

The GANDALF trial

Starting in 1995, Hampshire Police began a series of at least 56 raids, code named 'Operation Washington', that eventually resulted in the August to November 1997 Portsmouth trial of Green Anarchist editors Booth, Saxon Wood, Noel Molland and Paul Rogers, as well as Animal Liberation Front (ALF) Press Officer Robin Webb and Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group (ALFSG) newsletter editor Simon Russell. The defendants organised the GANDALF Defence campaign. Three of the editors of Green Anarchist, Noel Molland, Saxon Wood and Booth were jailed for 'conspiracy to incite'. However, all three were shortly afterwards released on appeal.

Booth and Rogers' Green Anarchists

In the late 1990s there was a further split amongst the GA collective, leading to the existence of two entirely separate magazines using the Green Anarchist title. These are respectively published by an editorial team that includes Paul Rogers and 'John Connor' (who subtitle their version of the paper as the original and best), and Steve Booth, who has publicly renounced some of his earlier published views and expressed a wish to 'return to the magazine's roots'.

² "Counter Information on Green Anarchist". www.counterinfo.org.uk. Retrieved 2016-12-27.

³ "Green Anarchist Documents". Stewart home society. Retrieved 14 May 2015.

⁴ "Counter Information on Green Anarchist". Counterinfo. 28 April 1999. Retrieved 14 May 2015.

⁵ autonomous.org.uk Archived September 27, 2007, at the Wayback Machine

The Left Overs: How Fascists Court the Post-Left

March 29, 2017

A few months ago, the radical publication, Fifth Estate, solicited

an article from me discussing the rise of fascism in recent years. Following their decision to withdraw the piece, I accepted the invitation of Anti-Fascist News to publish an expanded version here, with some changes, at the urging of friends and fellow writers.

In Solidarity, ARR

Chapter 1: The Early Composition of Fascist Individualism

A friendly editor recently told me via email, “if anti-capitalism and pro individual liberty [sic] are clearly stated in the books or articles, they won’t be used by those on the right.” If this were true, fascism simply would vanish from the earth. Fascism comes from a mixture of left and right-wing positions, and some on the left pursue aspects of collectivism, syndicalism, ecology, and authoritarianism that intersect with fascist enterprises. Partially in response to the tendencies of left authoritarianism, a distinct antifascist movement emerged in the 1970s to create what has become known as “post-left” thought. Yet in imagining that anti-capitalism and “individual liberty” maintain ideological purity, radicals such as my own dear editor tend to ignore critical convergences with and vulnerabilities to fascist ideology.

The post-left developed largely out of a tendency to favor individual freedom autonomous from political ideology of left and right while retaining some elements of leftism. Although it is a rich milieu with many contrasting positions, post-leftists often trace their roots to individualist Max Stirner, whose belief in the supremacy of the European individual over and against nation, class, and creed was heavily influenced by philosopher G.W.F. Hegel. After Stirner’s death in 1856, the popularity of collectivism and neo-Kantianism obscured his individualist philosophy until Friedrich Nietzsche raised its profile again during the later part of the century. Influenced by Stirner, Nietzsche argued for the overcoming of socialism and the “modern world” by the iconoclastic, aristocratic philosopher known as the “Superman” or “übermensch.”

During the late-19th Century, Stirnerists conflated the “Superman” with the assumed responsibility of women to bear a superior European race—a “New Man” to produce, and be produced by, a “New Age.” Similarly, right-wing aristocrats who loathed the notions of liberty and equality turned to Nietzsche and Stirner to support their sense of elitism and hatred of left-wing populism and mass-based civilization. Some anarchists and individualists influenced by Stirner and Nietzsche looked to right-wing figures like Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky, who developed the idea of a “conservative revolution” that would upend the spiritual crises of the modern world and the age of the masses. In the words of anarchist, Victor Serge, “Dostoevsky: the best and the worst, inseparable. He really looks for the truth and fears to find it; he often finds it all the same and then he is terrified... a poor great man...”

History’s “great man” or “New Man” was neither left nor right; he strove to destroy the modern world and replace it with his own ever-improving image—but what form would that image take? In Italy, reactionaries associated with the Futurist movement and various romantic nationalist strains expressed affinity with the individualist current identified with Nietzsche and Stirner. Anticipating tremendous catastrophes that would bring the modern world to its knees and install the New Age of the New Man, the Futurists sought to fuse the “destructive gesture of the anarchists” with the bombast of empire.

A hugely popular figure among these tendencies of individualism and “conservative revolution,” the Italian aesthete Gabriele D’Annunzio summoned 2,600 soldiers in a daring 1919 attack on the port city of Fiume to reclaim it for Italy after World War I. During their exploit, the occupying force hoisted the black flag emblazoned by skull and crossbones and sang songs of national unity. Italy disavowed the imperial occupation, leaving the City-State in the hands of its romantic nationalist leadership. A constitution, drawn up by national syndicalist, Alceste De Ambris, provided the basis for national solidarity around a corporative economy mediated through collaborating syndicates. D’Annunzio was prophetic and eschatological, presenting poetry during convocations from the balcony. He was masculine. He was Imperial and majestic, yet radical and rooted in fraternal affection. He called forth sacrifice and love of the nation.

When he returned to Italy after the military uprooted his enclave in Fiume, ultra-nationalists, Futurists, artists, and intellectuals greeted D’Annunzio as a leader of the growing Fascist movement. The aesthetic ceremonies and radical violence contributed to a sacralization of politics invoked by the spirit of Fascism. Though Mussolini likely saw himself as a competitor to D’Annunzio for the role of supreme leader, he could not deny the style and mood, the high aesthetic appeal that reached so many through the Fiume misadventure. Fascism, Mussolini insisted, was an anti-party, a movement. The Fascist Blackshirts, or *squadristi*, adopted D’Annunzio’s flare, the black uniforms, the skull and crossbones, the dagger at the hip, the “devil may care” attitude expressed by the anthem, “*Me ne frego*” or “I don’t give a damn.” Some of those who participated in the Fiume exploit abandoned D’Annunzio as he joined the Fascist movement, drifting

to the Arditi del Popolo to fight the Fascist menace. Others would join the ranks of the Blackshirts.

Originally a man of the left, Mussolini had no difficulty joining the symbolism of revolution with ultranationalist rebirth. “Down with the state in all its species and incarnations,” he declared in a 1920 speech. “The state of yesterday, of today, of tomorrow. The bourgeois state and the socialist. For those of us, the doomed (*morituri*) of individualism, through the darkness of the present and the gloom of tomorrow, all that remains is the by-now-absurd, but ever consoling, religion of anarchy!” In another statement, he asked, “why should Stirner not have a comeback?”

Mussolini’s concept of anarchism was critical, because he saw anarchism as prefiguring fascism. “If anarchist authors have discovered the importance of the mythical from an opposition to authority and unity,” declared Nazi jurist, Carl Schmitt, drawing on Mussolini’s concept of myth, “then they have also cooperated in establishing the foundation of another authority, however unwillingly, an authority based on the new feeling for order, discipline, and hierarchy.” The dialectics of fascism here are twofold: only the anarchist destruction of the modern world in every milieu would open the potential for Fascism, but the mythic stateless society of anarchism, for Mussolini, could only emerge, paradoxically, from a self-disciplining state of total order.

Antifascist anarchist individualists and nihilists like Renzo Novatore represented for Mussolini a kind of “passive nihilism,” which Nietzsche understood as the decadence and weakness of modernity. The veterans that would fight for Mussolini rejected the suppression of individualism under the Bolsheviks and favored “an anti-party of fighters,” according to historian Emilio Gentile. Fascism would exploit the rampant misogyny of men like Novatore while turning the “passive nihilism” of their vision of total collapse toward “active nihilism” through a rebirth of the New Age at the hands of the New Man.

The “drift” toward fascism that took place throughout Europe during the 1920s and 1930s was not restricted to the collectivist left of former Communists, Syndicalists, and Socialists; it also included the more ambiguous politics of the European avant-garde and intellectual elites. In France, literary figures like Georges Bataille and Antonin Artaud began experimenting with fascist aesthetics of cruelty, irrationalism, and elitism. In 1934, Bataille declared his hope to usher in “room for great fascist societies,” which he believed inhabited the world of “higher forms” and “makes an appeal to sentiments traditionally defined as exalted and noble.” Bataille’s admiration for Stirner did not prevent him from developing what he described decades later as a “paradoxical fascist tendency.” Other libertarian celebrities like Louis-Ferdinand Céline and Maurice Blanchot also embraced fascist themes—particularly virulent anti-Semitism.

Like Blanchot, the Nazi-supporting Expressionist poet Gottfried Benn called on an anti-humanist language of suffering and nihilism that looked inward, finding only animal impulses and irrational drives. Existentialist philosopher and Nazi Party member, Martin Heidegger, played on Nietzschean themes of nihilism and aesthetics in his phenomenology, placing angst at the core of modern life and seeking existential release

through a destructive process that he saw as implicit in the production of an authentic work of art. Literary figure Ernst Jünger, who cheered on Hitler's rise, summoned the force of "active nihilism," seeking the collapse of the civilization through a "magic zero" that would bring about a New Age of ultra-individualist actors that he later called "Anarchs." The influence of Stirner was as present in Jünger as it was in Mussolini's early fascist years, and carried over to other members of the fascist movement like Carl Schmitt and Julius Evola.

Evola was perhaps the most important of those seeking the collapse of civilization and the New Age's spiritual awakening of the "universal individual," sacrificial dedication, and male supremacy. A dedicated fascist and individualist, Evola devoted himself to the purity of sacred violence, racism, anti-Semitism, and the occult. Asserting a doctrine of the "political soldier," Evola regarded violence as necessary in establishing a kind of natural hierarchy that promoted the supreme individual over the multitudes. Occult practice distilled into an overall aristocracy of the spirit, Evola believed, which could only find expression through sacrifice and a Samurai-like code of honor. Evola shared these ideals of conquest, elitism, sacrificial pleasure with the SS, who invited the Italian esotericist to Vienna to indulge his thirst for knowledge. Following World War II, Evola's spiritual fascism found parallels in the writings of Savitri Devi, a French esotericist of Greek descent who developed an anti-humanist practice of Nazi nature worship not unlike today's Deep Ecology. In her rejection of human rights, Devi insisted that the world manifests a totality of interlocking life forces, none of which enjoys a particular moral prerogative over the other.

Chapter 2: The Creation of the Post-Left

It has been shown by now that fascism, in its inter-war period, attracted numerous anti-capitalists and individualists, largely through elitism, the aestheticization of politics, and the nihilist's desire for the destruction of the modern world. After the fall of the Reich, fascists attempted to rekindle the embers of their movement by intriguing within both the state and social movements. It became popular among fascists to reject Hitler to some degree and call for a return to the original "national syndicalist" ideas mixed with the elitism of the "New Man" and the destruction of civilization. Fascists demanded "national liberation" for European ethnicities against NATO and multicultural liberalism, while the occultism of Evola and Devi began to fuse with Satanism to form new fascist hybrids. With ecology and anti-authoritarianism, such sacralization of political opposition through the occult would prove among the most intriguing conduits for fascist insinuation into subcultures after the war.

In the '60s, left-communist groups like Socialisme ou Barbarie, Pouvoir ouvrier, and the Situationists gathered at places like bookstore-cum-publishing house, La Vielle Taupe (The Old Mole), critiquing everyday life in industrial civilization through art and transformative practices. According to Gilles Dauvé, one of the participants in this

movement, “the small milieu round the bookshop La Vieille Taupe” developed the idea of “communisation,” or the revolutionary transformation of all social relations. This new movement of “ultra-leftists” helped inspire the aesthetics of a young, intellectual rebellion that culminated in a large uprising of students and workers in Paris during May 1968.

The strong anti-authoritarian current of the ultra-left and the broader uprising of May '68 contributed to similar movements elsewhere in Europe, like the Italian *Autonomia* movement, which spread from a wildcat strike against the car manufacturer, Fiat, to generalized upheaval involving rent strikes, building occupations, and mass street demonstrations. While most of *Autonomia* remained left-wing, its participants were intensely critical of the established left, and autonomists often objected to the ham-fisted strategy of urban guerrillas. In 1977, individualist anarchist, Alfredo Bonanno, penned the text, “Armed Joy,” exhorting Italian leftists to drop patriarchal pretensions to guerrilla warfare and join popular insurrectionary struggle. The conversion of Marxist theorist, Jacques Camatte, to the pessimistic rejection of leftism and embrace of simpler life tied to nature furthered contradictions within the Italian left.

With anti-authoritarianism, ecologically-oriented critiques of civilization emerged out of the 1960s and 1970s as significant strains of a new identity that rejected both left and right. Adapting to these currents of popular social movements and exploiting blurred ideological lines between left and right, fascist ideologues developed the framework of “ethno-pluralism.” Couching their rhetoric in “the right to difference” (ethnic separatism), fascists masked themselves with labels like the “European New Right,” “national revolutionaries,” and “revolutionary traditionalists.” The “European New Right” took the rejection of the modern world advocated by the ultra-left as a proclamation of the indigeneity of Europeans and their pagan roots in the land. Fascists further produced spiritual ideas derived from a sense of rootedness in one’s native land, evoking the old “blood and soil” ecology of the German *völkische* movement and Nazi Party.

In Italy, this movement produced the “Hobbit Camp,” an eco-festival organized by European New Right figure Marco Tarchi and marketed to disillusioned youth via Situationist-style posters and flyers. When Italian “national revolutionary,” Roberto Fiore, fled charges of participating in a massive bombing of a train station in Bologna, he found shelter in the London apartment of Tarchi’s European New Right colleague, Michael Walker. This new location would prove transformative, as Fiore, Walker, and a group of fascist militants created a political faction called the Official National Front in 1980. This group would help promote and would benefit from a more avant-garde fascist aesthetic, bringing forward neo-folk, noise, and other experimental music genres.

While fascists entered the green movement and exploited openings in left anti-authoritarian thought, Situationism began to transform. In the early 1970s, post-Situationism emerged through US collectives that combined Stirnerist egoism with collectivist thought. In 1974, the For Ourselves group published *The Right to Be Greedy*, inveighing against altruism while linking egoist greed to the synthesis of social identity

and welfare—in short, to surplus. The text was reprinted in 1983 by libertarian group, Loompanics Unlimited, with a preface from a little-known writer named Bob Black.

While post-Situationism turned toward individualism, a number of European ultra-leftists moved toward the right. In Paris, La Vieille Taupe went from controversial views rejecting the necessity of specialized antifascism to presenting the Holocaust as a lie necessary to maintain the capitalist order. In 1980, La Vieille Taupe published the notorious *Mémoire en Défense centre ceux qui m'accusent de falsifier l'histoire* by Holocaust denier, Robert Faurisson. Though La Vieille Taupe and founder, Pierre Guillaume, received international condemnation, they gained a controversial defense from left-wing professor, Noam Chomsky. Even if they have for the most part denounced Guillaume and his entourage, the ultra-leftist rejection of specialized antifascism has remained somewhat popular—particularly as expounded by Dauvé, who insisted in the early 1980s that “fascism as a specific movement has disappeared.”

The idea that fascism had become a historical artifact only helped the creep of fascism to persist undetected, while Faurisson and Guillaume became celebrities on the far-right. As the twist toward Holocaust denial would suggest, ultra-left theory was not immune from translation into ethnic terms—a reality that formed the basis of the work of Official National Front officer, Troy Southgate. Though influenced by the Situationists, along with a scramble of other left and right-wing figures, Southgate focused particularly on the ecological strain of radical politics associated with the punk-oriented journal, *Green Anarchist*, which called for a return to “primitive” livelihoods and the destruction of modern civilization. In 1991, the editors of *Green Anarchist* pushed out their co-editor, Richard Hunt, for his patriotic militarism, and Hunt’s new publication, *Green Alternative*, soon became associated with Southgate. Two years later, Southgate would join allied fascists like Jean-François Thiriart and Christian Bouchet to create the Liaison Committee for Revolutionary Nationalism.

In the US, the “anarcho-primitivist” or “Green Anarchist” tendency had been taken up by former ultra-leftist, John Zerzan. Identifying civilization as an enemy of the earth, Zerzan called for a return to sustainable livelihoods that rejected modernity. Zerzan rejected racism but relied in no small part on the thought of Martin Heidegger, seeking a return authentic relations between humans and the world unmediated by symbolic thought. This desired return, some have pointed out, would require a collapse of civilization so profound that millions, if not billions, would likely perish. Zerzan, himself, seems somewhat ambiguous with regards to the potential death toll, regardless of his support for the unbomber, Ted Kaczynsky.

Joining with Zerzan to confront authoritarianism and return to a more tribal, hunter-gatherer social organization, an occultist named Hakim Bey developed the idea of the “Temporary Autonomous Zone” (TAZ). For Bey, a TAZ would actualize a liberated and erotic space of orgiastic, revolutionary poesis. Yet within his 1991 text, *Temporary Autonomous Zone*, Bey included extensive praise for D’Annunzio’s proto-fascist occupation of Fiume, revealing the disturbing historical trends of attempts to transcend right and left.

Along with Zerzan and Bey, Bob Black would prove instrumental to the foundation of what is today called the “post-left.” In his 1997 text, *Anarchy After Leftism*, Black responded to left-wing anarchist Murray Bookchin, who accused individualists of “lifestyle anarchism.” Drawing from Zerzan’s critique of civilization as well as from Stirner and Nietzsche, Black presented his rejection of work as a nostrum for authoritarian left tendencies that he identified with Bookchin (apparently Jew-baiting Bookchin in the process).¹

Thus, the post-left began to assemble through the writings of ultra-leftists, green anarchists, spiritualists, and egoists published in zines, books, and journals like *Anarchy: Journal of Desire Armed* and *Fifth Estate*. Although these thinkers and publications differ in many ways, key tenets of the post-left included an eschatological anticipation of the collapse of civilization accompanied by a synthesis of individualism and collectivism that rejected left, right, and center in favor of a deep connection with the earth and more organic, tribal communities as opposed to humanism, the Enlightenment tradition, and democracy. That post-left texts included copious references to Stirner, Nietzsche, Jünger, Heidegger, Artaud, and Bataille suggests that they form a syncretic intellectual tendency that unites left and right, individualism and “conservative revolution.” As we will see, this situation has provided ample space for the fascist creep.

Chapter 3: The Fascist Creep

During the 1990s, the “national revolutionary” network of Southgate, Thiriart, and Bouchet, later renamed the European Liberation Front, linked up with the American Front, a San Francisco skinhead group exploring connections between counterculture and the avant-garde. Like prior efforts to develop a Satanic Nazism, American Front leader Bob Heck supported a mix of Satanism, occultism, and paganism, making friends with fascist musician Boyd Rice. A noise musician and avant-gardist, Rice developed a “fascist think tank” called the Abraxas Foundation, which echoed the fusion of the cult ideas of Charles Manson, fascism, and Satanism brought together by 1970s fascist militant James Mason. Rice’s protégé and fellow Abraxas member, Michael Moynihan, joined the radical publishing company, Feral House, which publishes texts along the lines of Abraxas, covering a range of themes from Charles Manson Scandinavian black metal, and militant Islam to books by Evola, James Mason, Bob Black, and John Zerzan.

In similar efforts, Southgate’s French ally, Christian Bouchet, generated distribution networks and magazines dedicated to supporting a miniature industry growing around

¹ Black writes, “Bakunin considered Marx, ‘the German scholar, in his threefold capacity as an Hegelian, a Jew, and a German,’ to be a ‘hopeless statist.’ A Hegelian, a Jew, a sort-of scholar, a Marxist, a hopeless (city-) statist — does this sound like anybody familiar?” Full text available on The Anarchist Library at <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/bob-black-anarchy-after-leftism>

neo-folk and the new, "anarchic" Scandinavian black metal scene. Further, national anarchists attempted to set up and/or infiltrate e-groups devoted to green anarchism. As Southgate and Bouchet's network spread to Russia, notorious Russian fascist, Alexander Dugin, emerged as another leading ideologue who admired Zerzan's work.

Post-leftists were somewhat knowledgeable about these developments. In a 1999 post-script to one of Bob Black's works, co-editor of *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*, Lawrence Jarach, cautioned against the rise of "national anarchism." In 2005, Zerzan's journal, *Green Anarchy*, published a longer critique of Southgate's "national anarchism." These warnings were significant, considering that they came in the context of active direct action movements and groups like the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), a green anarchist group dedicated to large-scale acts of sabotage and property destruction with the intention of bringing about the ultimate collapse of industrial civilization.

As their ELF group executed arsons during the late-1990s and early-2000s, a former ELF member told me that two comrades, Nathan "Exile" Block and Joyanna "Sadie" Zacher, shared an unusual love of Scandinavian black metal, made disturbing references to Charles Manson, and promoted an elitist, anti-left mentality. While their obscure references evoked Abraxas, Feral House, and Bouchet's distribution networks, their politics could not be recognized within the milieu of fascism at the time. However, their general ideas became clearer, the former ELF member told me, when antifascist researchers later discovered that a Tumblr account run by Block contained numerous occult fascist references, including national anarchist symbology, swastikas, and quotes from Evola and Jünger. These were only two members of a larger group, but their presence serves as food for thought regarding important radical cross-over points and how to approach them.

To wit, the decisions of John Zerzan and Bob Black to publish books with Feral House, seem peculiar—especially in light of the fact that two of the four books Zerzan has published there came out in 2005, the same year as *Green Anarchy's* noteworthy warning against national anarchism. It would appear that, although in some cases prescient about the subcultural cross-overs between fascism and the post-left, post-leftists have, on a number of occasions, engaged in collaborative relationships.

As *Green Anarchy* cautioned against entryism and Zerzan simultaneously published with Feral House, controversy descended on an online forum known as the Anti-Politics Board. An outgrowth of the insurrectionist publication *Killing King Abacus*, the Anti-Politics Board was used by over 1,000 registered members and had dozens of regular contributors. The online platform presented a flourishing site of debate for post-leftists, yet discussions over insurrectionism, communisation, green anarchism, and egoism often produced a strangely competitive iconoclasm. Attempts to produce the edgiest take often led to the popularization of topics like "'anti-sexism' as collectivist moralism" and "critique of autonomous anti-fascism." Attacks on morality and moralism tended to encourage radicals to abandon the "identity politics" and "white guilt" often associated with left-wing anti-racism.

Amid these discussions, a young radical named Andrew Yeoman began to post national anarchist positions. When asked repeatedly to remove Yeoman from the forum, a site administrator refused, insisting that removing the white nationalist would have meant behaving like leftists. They needed to try something else. Whatever they tried, however, it didn't work, and Yeoman later became notorious for forming a group called the Bay Area National Anarchists, showing up to anarchist events like book fairs, and promoting anarchist collaboration with the Minutemen and American Front.

An important aspect of the Anti-Politics Board was the articulation of nihilist and insurrectionary theories, both of which gained popularity after the 2008 financial crisis. In an article titled, "The New Nihilism," Peter Lamborn Wilson (aka Hakim Bey) pointed out that the rising wave of nihilism that emerged during the late 2000s and into the second decade could not immediately be distinguished from the far right, due to myriad cross-over points. Indeed, Stormfront is riddled with users like "TAZriot" and "whitepunx" who promote the basic, individualist tenets of post-leftism from the original, racist position of Stirnerism. Rejecting "political correctness" and "white guilt," these post-left racists desire separate, radical spaces and autonomous zones for whites.

Through dogged research, Rose City Antifa in Portland, Oregon, discovered whitepunx's identity: "Trigger" Tom Christensen, a known member of the local punk scene. "I was never an anti [antifascist] but I've hung out with a few of them," Christensen wrote on Stormfront. "I used to be a big punk rocker in the music scene and there were some antis that ran around in the same scene. I was friends with a few. They weren't trying to recruit me, or anybody really. They did not, however, know I was a WN [white nationalist]. I kept my beliefs to myself and would shut down any opinions the[y] expressed that seemed to have holes in them. It's been fairly useful to know some of these people. I now know who all the major players are in the anti and SHARP [Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice] scene."

For a time, Christensen says he hung out with post-leftists and debated them like Yeoman had done. Less than a year later, however, Christensen followed up in a chilling post titled, "Do You Think It Would Be Acceptable To Be A 'Rat' If It Was Against Our Enemies." He wrote, "I had an interesting thought the other day and wanted peoples opinions. If you were asked by the Police to provide or find evidence that would incriminate people who are enemy's [sic] of the movement, i.e. Leftists, reds, anarchists. Would you do it? Would you 'rat' or 'narc' on the Left side?" Twenty one responses came beckoning from the recesses of the white nationalist world. While some encouraged Christensen to snitch, others insisted that he keep gang loyalty. It is uncertain as to whether or not he went to the police, but the May 2013 discovery of his Stormfront activity took place shortly before a grand jury subpoenaed four anarchists who were subsequently arrested and held for contempt of court.

In another unsettling example of crossover between post-leftists and fascists, radicals associated with a nihilist group named Ultra harshly rebuked Rose City Antifa of Portland, Oregon, for releasing an exposé about Jack Donovan. An open member of the violent white nationalist group, Wolves of Vinland, Donovan also runs a gym

called the Kabuki Strength Lab, which produces “manosphere” videos. As of November 2016, when the exposé was published, one member of Ultra was a member of the Kabuki Strength Lab. Although Donovan runs a tattoo shop out of the gym and gave Libertarian Party fascist Augustus Sol Invictus a tattoo of the fasces there, a fellow gym member wrote, “Obviously Jack has very controversial beliefs and practices that most disagree with; but I don’t believe it affects his behavior in the gym.” Donovan, who has publicly parroted “race realist” statistics at white nationalist gatherings like the National Policy Institute and the Pressure Project podcast, also embraces bioregionalism and the anticipation of a collapse of civilization that will lead to a reversion of identity-bound tribal structures at war with one another and reliant on natural hierarchies—an ideology that resonates with Ultra and some members of the broader post-left milieu.

It stands to reason that defending fascists and collaborating with them are not the same, and they are both separate from having incidental ideological cross-over points. However the cross-over points, when unchecked, frequently indicate a tendency to ignore, defend, or collaborate. Defense and collaboration can, and do, also converge. For instance, also in Portland, Oregon, the founder of a UK ultra-leftist splinter group called Wildcat began to participate in a reading group involving prominent post-leftists before sliding toward anti-Semitism. Soon he was participating in the former-leftist-turned-fascist Pacifica Forum in Eugene, Oregon, and defending anti-Semitic co-op leader, Tim Calvert. He was last seen by antifas creeping into an event for Holocaust denier, David Irving.

Perhaps the most troubling instance of collaboration, or rather synthesis, of post-left nihilism and the far right is taking place currently in the alt-right. Donovan is considered a member of the alt-right, while Christensen’s latest visible Facebook post hails from the misogynistic Proud Boys group. These groups and individuals connected to the alt-right are described as having been “red-pilled,” a term taken from the movie, *The Matrix*, in which the protagonist is awakened to a dystopian reality after choosing to take a red pill. For the alt-right, being “red-pilled” means waking up to the “reality” offered by anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, misogyny, and white nationalism—usually through online forums where the competitive iconoclasm of “edge-lords” mutates into ironic anti-Semitism and hatred. Among the most extreme forms of this phenomenon occurring in recent years is the so-called “black pill”—red-pillers who have turned toward the celebration of indiscriminate violence via the same trends of individualism and nihilism outlined above.

“Black-pillers” claim to have shed their attachments to all theories entirely. This tendency evokes the attitude of militant anti-civilization group, *Individuals Tending to the Wild*, which is popular among some post-leftist groups and advocates indiscriminate violence against any targets manifesting the modern world. Another influence for “black-pillers” is Adam Lanza, the infamous mass shooter who phoned John Zerzan a year before murdering his mother, 20 children, and six staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Zerzan has condemned *Individuals Tend-*

ing *Toward the Wild*, and months after Lanza's horrifying actions, he penned a piece imploring post-left nihilists to find hope: "Egoism and nihilism are evidently in vogue among anarchists and I'm hoping that those who so identify are not without hope. Illusions no, hope yes." Unfortunately, Zerzan developed his short communiqué into a book published by Feral House on November 10, 2015—the day after Feral House published *The White Nationalist Skinhead Movement* co-authored by Eddie Stampton, a Nazi skinhead.

Conclusion

In light of these cross-overs, many individualist anarchists, post-leftists, and nihilists tend not to deny that they share nodal networks with fascists. In many cases, they seek to struggle against them and reclaim their movement. Yet, there tends to be another permissive sense that anarchists bear no responsibility for distinguishing themselves from fascists. If there are numerous points in which radical milieus become a blur of fascists, anarchists, and romantics, some claim that throwing shade on such associations only propagates fallacious thinking, or "guilt by association."

However, recalling the information in this essay, we might note that complex cross-overs seem to include, in particular, aspects of egoism and radical green theory. Derived from Stirnerism and Nietzschean philosophy, egoism can reify the social alienation felt by an individual, leading to an elitist sense of self-empowerment and delusions of grandeur. When mixed with insurrectionism and radical green thought, egoism can translate into "hunter versus prey" or "wolves versus sheep" elitism, in which compassion for others is rejected as moralistic. This kind of alienated elitism can also develop estranged aesthetic and affective positions tied to cruelty, vengeance, and hatred.

Emerging out of a rejection of humanism and urban modernism, the particular form of radical green theory often embraced by the post-left can relativize human losses by looking at the larger waves of mass extinctions. By doing this, radical greens anticipate a collapse that would "cull the herd" or cause a mass human die off of millions, if not billions, of people throughout the world. This aspect of radical green theory comes very close to, and sometimes intertwines with, ideas about over-population compiled and produced by white nationalists and anti-immigration activists tied to the infamous Tanton Network. Some radical green egoists (or nihilists) insist that their role should be to provoke such a collapse, through anti-moralist strikes against civilization.

As examples like Hakim Bey's *TAZ* and the lionization of the Fiume misadventure, Zerzan and Black's publishing with Feral House, and Ultra's defense of Donovan indicate, the post-left's relation to white nationalism is sometimes ambiguous and occasionally even collaborative. Other examples, like those of Yeoman and Christensen, indicate that the tolerance for fascist ideas on the post-left can result in unwittingly accepting them, providing a platform for white nationalism, and increasing vulnerability to entryism. Specific ideas that are sometimes tolerated under the rubric of the

“critique of the left” include the approval of “natural hierarchies,” ultranationalism understood as ethno-biological and spiritual ties to homeland and ancestry, rejection of feminism and antifascism, and the fetishization of violence and cruelty.

It is more important today than ever before to recognize how radical movements develop intersections with fascists if we are to discover how to expose creeping fascism and develop stronger, more direct networks. Anarchists must abandon the equivocations that invite the fascist creep and reclaim anarchy as the integral struggle for freedom and equality. Sectarian polemics are the result of extensive learning processes, but are less important than engaging in solidarity to struggle against fascism in all its forms and various disguises.

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— **Primary Source Material** —

The Irrationalists Debate

Politics and the Ethical Void

#43_44 Autumn 1996

POLITICS AND THE ETHICAL VOID

A summary of Steve Booth's ground-breaking expose of politics as technique

We cannot apply the ethical to the political. To try to do so is to be like a small boy with his finger in the dyke, while a hundred yards away, the sea rushes through a gap as wide as the Atlantic Ocean.

This is a far bolder and more emphatic thesis than saying we must value the political in a negative ethical sense (as bad or evil), although people do insist on trying to evaluate it as such. No. The case is stronger than this. The political is completely divorced from the ethical. The political is not quantitatively at odds with the ethical like a naughty child who sometimes does good, sometimes bad but qualitatively severed from it.

A HUNDRED INTERLOCKING QUESTIONS

It is meaningless to try to employ an ethical critique of politics. People nevertheless often do so. Sometimes this takes the form of an *ought*. "John Major ought to do something about Europe..." Perhaps one of the best ways into my thesis that it is meaningless to try to apply the ethical to the political is to make the attempt by asking specific questions:

- **THE UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS QUESTION:** Unemployment statistics are systematically falsified. Politicians frequently use these lies in arguments to show how the economy is getting better. Why do politicians believe they are entitled to lie in this way?
- **THE GENOCIDE JETS QUESTION:** As a matter of government policy, jets are being manufactured in Britain and supplied to Indonesia for purposes of committing genocide in East Timor. Many people believe this is wrong. Why do the politicians refuse to acknowledge this and stop supplying those jets?
- **THE REGISTER OF SLEAZE QUESTION:** The Nolan Committee said that MP's should register their earnings in public so that voters could find out who pays these so-called 'representatives'. Some MP's declined to register their interests. If the MP's think themselves immune and refuse to follow their own laws, why should anyone else?
- **THE AMBULANCE ROULETTE QUESTION:** The government has cut funding to the NHS to pay for tax cuts to the well-off. At the same time the lack of funding causes hospital wards to close and reduces the number of intensive care beds. A man dies after being driven around Lancashire and Yorkshire from hospital to hospital in an ambulance. Do we consider the Tory

health minister responsible for this death?

- **THE WINDSCALE LEUKAEMIA QUESTION:** After several decades, radioactive material from Sellafield has contaminated Cumbria, causing people to die of leukaemia. The government

POLITICIANS OUGHT TO BE ETHICAL....

The liberal at this point will seek refuge in an *ought*. Politicians may be liars, bullshitters, crooks, embezzlers, murderers, mass murderers, mass poisoners etc, but they ought not to be like that. Instead they should behave in the best interests of their constituents...

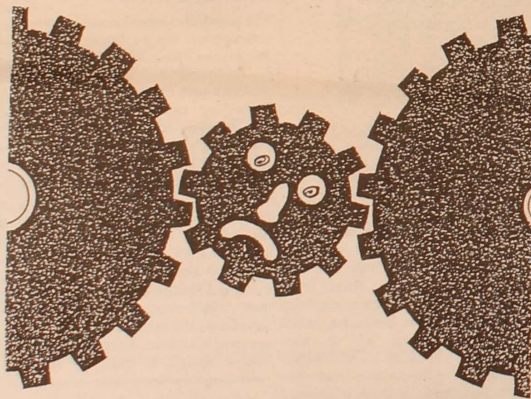
Before we laugh contemptuously at the naive believer in 'liberal democracy' we

who have forgotten, this was a system of free benefits, paid for out of taxation, providing education, health care etc which applied in Britain between 1948 and 1984 or so.) The Welfare State is put forwards as an example of a good policy. How do we determine that such a policy was indeed ethical? Through reference to ethical criteria.

I readily concede that some of the politicians putting forwards the NHS, Butler Education Act and so on did so for ethical reasons. Others will have done it for reasons of political expediency. Some politicians will have been indifferent to it, and some will have opposed it. The government, however was not forced to introduce the Welfare State. It could have followed other policies; intensified the Cold War or adopted other policies with regard to the Commonwealth. The choice of policy was politically guided. Later, much of the Welfare State was abolished. Were we to try to apply the same ethical criteria to the abolition as well as the setting up, we might say that the start was right (ethically correct), and the ending of it was wrong (ethically flawed). One thing this shows is that the political is not guided by the ethical, and so we are trying to examine the political with the wrong sort of tools.

An example like the Welfare State shows the political still cancels the ethical. At one point there is an apparent link between them, and at other times this does not exist. To apply the ethical to the political is to try to measure the process using the wrong equipment (like measuring a straight line with a protractor). The correspondence between the ethical and the political is arbitrary, the 'link' selected or disregarded according to expediency or whim or other (non-ethical) criterion. The overriding factor is not ethical but dictated by expediency and the imperative to get, retain and to cling to power. The political, if it uses the ethical at all, uses it as a fig leaf -- something to camouflage its proper motives.

One more point with regard to the Welfare State objection. Above, I asked "Wherever have we seen such a politics practiced on earth?" Think about the example of Aneurin Bevan, the Minister of Health, who resigned in 1950 when the basic principle of free health care was watered down by the introduction of dental charges. Now, at last, we see an example of the ethical politician -- but it is noteworthy that the only way he could



ordered a full cover-up as usual, and then issued a report (a) denying there are any cases of leukaemia, and (b) blaming them on sewage from camps used to house construction workers back in 1947. Given this 'clean bill of health', the plant goes on operating. Can we give the politicians operating this system a similar clean bill of ethical health?

If you don't like these particular examples, try to think of your own. These questions are simple attempts to apply the ethical to the political. It is very easy to generate these sorts of questions just by looking at the newspapers. We could build up hundreds of them, thousands of them, millions of them. Eventually there comes a point where we have to stop asking and acknowledge the futility of trying to apply the ethical to the political.

ought to notice the disjunction. The only kind of politician the reformist acknowledges is one based on a theoretical projection, a picture of what *ought* to be. Wherever has such a politics ever been practiced on earth? The liberal reformist makes the 'No True Scotsman' move of declaring that proper politicians are honest etc. The probate examples we are saddled with in the real worlds of Westminster or Brussels are not 'real' politicians at all but imposters, wolves in sheep's clothing. By defining politicians in this way and excluding the reality, the shysters, our apologist begs the question. Let us return to the real world.

THE WELFARE STATE OBJECTION

Have we not skewed our analysis too, by refusing to acknowledge that politicians can, sometimes, do good? Take the Welfare State, for example. (For those

exercise his state of being moral was to resign his office and so cease being that official. A parable of the void between politics and the ethical.

THE REMOVAL OF CHOICE

In the hundred interlocking questions, why do we have to give up asking ethical questions of the political? Partly because of the sheer futility of asking them. We realize that the political has never acknowledged the ethical, not for one second. Politics asserts something else -- its own power to deny choice. It is true that politicians sometimes use the rhetoric of the ethical as an electioneering ploy or as an argument to encourage obedience; "If you don't pay your poll tax, how will the hospitals keep going and the bins keep being emptied?" One of the reasons why politics does not acknowledge the ethical is that it cannot do so, because if it did the political would be abolished as a category.

THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS

The business of politics is to govern -- to make more mechanisms of control, to systematically block the paths to freedom, to stop them up. With politics the capacity for choice is already taken away and so we cannot value what happens. It is not appropriate to offer praise or blame where there is no choice.

Politics is about the way we organise and administer society as a collective entity. The business of politics is to govern, that is to say to make more and more mechanisms of control, to systematically block the paths to freedom, to stop them up. The ethical is about how we value actions and choices as individuals. With politics, the choice is already taken away and so we cannot value what happens. We cannot offer praise or blame where there is no choice, it is just not appropriate to do so.

To accept the political is to subordinate yourself to the process, to acknowledge the Divine Right of Parliament to rule. The political arrogates that power to itself and the power of the individual to choose is annihilated. Suppose, for just one second, that we declared the ethical to be superior (or to have power over) that divine right. The distinctive character of the political would thereby be abolished. Something other than the political would be given the power to decide. What is ethical is equally clear, or equally obscure, to all. The privileged position of the politicians, judges and bureaucrats to arbitrate what is correct would vanish. The ethical is public property in a way the political is not. You do not need a voting card or the membership of a political

POLITICS ASSUMES A MODE OF AUTHORITY WHICH CANCELS THE ETHICAL

Were we to declare the political as subordinate to the ethical, politics would be abolished as separate entity. The divine right of the political to govern would be abolished. The call to obedience overturned, politics would be subsumed as a sub-branch of applied ethics.

party or elite to determine what is ethical.

Were we to declare the political subordinate to the ethical, the distinctive nature of the political would be swept away. To make this declaration is to classify the political as a sub-branch of applied ethics, the part of it relating to collective decisions and choices, a kind of 'ethics in aggregate'. This leads to another objection.

THE WHOLESOME APPLE THESIS

Not all politicians are bad, the apologist asserts just as not all apples in the barrel have gone bad. Some apples are wholesome, just as some politicians are capable of good (ethically valued) actions and choices. If the aggregate of politicians behaved ethically then politics would be moral. In effect, this is an attempt to subsume the political underneath the ethical, as in the preceding paragraph. The difference between the open declaration of ethical priority over the political, and the wholesome apple thesis is that this time the declaration is mute, it works by sleight of hand.

In this hypothetical example, politics is

in so far as the politicians allow something outside the political (namely the ethical) to govern their choices, they cease to be politicians. To accept the ethical is superior to the political is to cancel the political.

Does the wholesome apple objection apply in the real world? Suppose we were to secretly persuade a controlling majority of politicians to make ethical choices, we would still have the political as something apart from the ethical, demanding our unconditional obedience. Once we start asserting the ethical over the political, whether as a stated ethical principle or in our deeds, the whole corrupt political web begins to unravel.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

Part of the reason why we had to give up asking the specific ethical questions of the political was that they connected up. The ethical politician (if indeed it makes sense to talk of such a being) is apt to challenge all their corruption. Start to ask the ethical questions and it all goes. Ask enough of them and you end up asking just one, the "Who are these bastards?"

of disinterested independence from morality. You can try to go on applying the ethical to the political, but it is futile. The politicians refuse to acknowledge the power of the ethical. It has no leverage. Hence my description of the political as an ethical void.

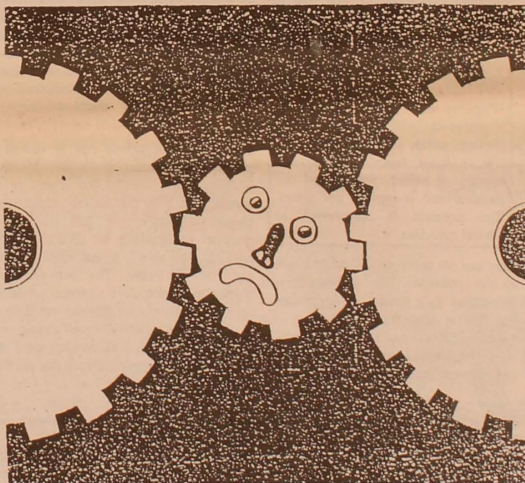
The hundred questions interconnect. What is there to value, ethically speaking, with the political? They lead to the "Who are these bastards?" question, but to ask that is to step outside the political, to move towards retaking authority and responsibility over your own life and so to become ethical once more. What is there to value, ethically speaking, with the political?

The political is not about individuals, the individual is only seen as steamroller fodder, cannon fodder, a cross on a lottery ticket, as a taxpayer, customer, a unit on a balance sheet. The individual is precisely nothing. The wholesome apple thesis asserts that if the aggregate of politicians chose differently, the politics would become ethical. It would cease to be what it is. A *what if...?* argument. By contrast, my concern is to describe politics as I find it, and not uncritically repeat the myth. With politics as we find it, even individual politicians count for nothing. The party machines rumble on, with or without them. This insignificance can be demonstrated by turning the questions asked at the start of this article:

- **THE TORTURE BATONS TO IRAQ QUESTION:** A (hypothetical) junior minister discovered the government was supplying torture batons to Saddam Hussain. He raised the matter at a cabinet meeting. The other ministers just laughed at him and so he resigned in disgust.
"There's plenty more yes men where you came from" the Prime Minister told him, pressing the bell under the table for the cabinet minister's replacement to be sent up. If he believed in the ethical, why was he sitting there in the first place?
- **THE AMBULANCE ROULETTE QUESTION:** Due to the crisis in NHS funding, an Orpington man was helicoptered 187 miles to Leeds (7th March 1995) and died in the intensive care unit. 12,935 of his fellow Orpingtonians voted Tory in 1992. How much are this man's neighbours to blame for his death?

If the gap is as wide as the Atlantic, it doesn't matter how many boys stick their fingers in the dyke, *the water still pours through the gap.*

Attempts to value the political are hopeless because we either end up blaming the individuals (who are only components) or we end up blaming everybody, and therefore nobody. So long as The Machine has enough components in place, it will continue to function and resignations by cabinet ministers or angry letters in the *Orpington Advertiser* will not change that. When they all resign at the same time, the political will no longer exist and the question will change. As it is, The Machine goes on,



never openly declared subservient to ethics, it is just that in some way the politicians subordinate their actions and choices to the ethical. The only way we could know they are doing this is by observing their deeds. They still retain the myth of political infallibility, and still make the decisions for other people, but they secretly allow the ethical to determine their choices.

Under its own terms the wholesome apple objection only works so long as the controlling majority of politicians go along with the subterfuge. They walk a thin line between; on the one hand openly declaring the ethical superior to the political and thereby doing themselves out of a job; and on the other hand losing that moral majority and seeing the political once again regain the upper hand, thereby demonstrating the ethical void.

question which leads to open doubt about the divine right of Parliament to rule; or just a few specific questions. The answer comes back just the same from the politician: "I do these things because I want to do them, and you do not have the power to stop me". This is the core of politics. The politicians sneering at the questioner is not an ethical position at all but something else -- it is the declaration

ETHICS IS WITHOUT LEVERAGE
 Are works of art to be valued ethically?
 Are machines? Inanimate objects?
 Where are the people, the actors?
 If they are not materially part of the process, how can the process be valued?
 How can the people be blamed?

"There are plenty more yes men where you came from"... We cannot value this system, we cannot value a network of abstractions. Such attempts at value become so diluted they are meaningless. It doesn't make sense to try to apply collective value judgements in this way.

THE POLITICAL AS MACHINE

The political is like a machine which has been built up over the centuries by people with different objectives. We cannot claim that they had a single, coherent overview of the political. If today the political has any practical, observed coherence this is a consequence of what it is and not a product of the will of the system-builders. What is this coherence? - Mere survival of the Machine, the exercising and enhancement of its power. The fact these zombies can march in the same direction, and march in step says nothing about whether their corporate destination is any good. The destination is incidental, their *marching* the important fact. The system is likened to a colony of bacteria but we cannot apply ethical judgements to this, either. Here we must note that mere survival is not an ethical attribute.

A colony of bacteria, a virus, a corpse of marching men -- these are analogies of the system, but the best analogy of all is the idea of the system as something like a vast Artificial Intelligence computer programme designed to simulate the mind. People insist on applying what I call the 'Organic Metaphor' to the political. These think that politics is alive, that it has a mind, or that it is a moral entity to which we can pin moral judgements. They speak about 'The Body Politic' but all of this is delusional thinking. It doesn't work like that. The political is not a moral entity but a mechanism of control, it works through power -- the annihilation of value.

THE MYTH OF OFFICE

The myth of office asserts that the politician or bureaucrat etc is not responsible. The Machine is the actor, the

official merely the component. They use uniforms, funny clothes, insignias, ritual and titles to distance themselves as individuals. There is a distinction being drawn between the person as official and person as private individual. Yet people insist on trying to apply the ethical to the political, and blame the person of the official for the part they have played in the running of The Machine.

When the apologists try to blame an official or component, they claim that the individual is responsible and should not have surrendered his / her will to that political regime. The apologist draws a distinction between a particular regime, and political systems in general, thereby avoiding the denial of the divine right of authority (properly constituted) to govern. In so far as people ever get round to punishing these miscreants, we hang them as individuals (something apart from the political system). The officials are stripped of their offices and ranks, their uniforms. The Nazi State beat the rap at Nuremberg. Only individuals were hung. The state itself goes on marching, still asserting its divine right to rule. Indeed, the idea of political trials itself reinforces that dominance and subservience mindset. Outside, the vast mass of people remain spectators, abdicating their responsibilities.

GOVERNMENT IS NOT A PERSON

When we make ethical judgements about government, there is no one there to praise or blame. When we try to judge individuals for the actions of states, we ignore the political and it escapes our grasp. The political is impervious to ethical criticism.

How can we apply an ethical judgement to the political? The individuals are blamed for their actions in supporting it but that is something apart from the system itself. Yet, I find something intuitively unsatisfactory in my view that the political and ethical are completely

separate. One is left with the distinct feeling that the political *ought* to be ethical, and people do persist in trying to apply the ethical to it.

Ethical judgements about politics might take the following form: 'This political system is evil' or 'That political party is ethically flawed' or 'This policy decision is morally wrong'. Yet it is meaningless to try to apply an ethical judgement to an entire system. We end up scapegoating a few individuals while ignoring the mass of passive 'wrongdoers'. They escape unpunished. The concentration camp commandant would be nothing without the industrial and technological systems of mass murder behind him. What are the workers in the English armaments factory doing about those electric torture batons they are making for Saddam?

THE ETHICAL VOID MERELY RECORDING A DETERMINATION TO USE WORDS IN A CERTAIN WAY

Perhaps one of the strongest objections to my argument is that all of this is simply a problem of terminology and classification. In declaring the ethical to be divorced from the political I am simply recording my determination to use these words in different ways. Other people may choose to use these words in different ways. Other people may choose to apply them differently and so to make ethical judgements about the political: eg. "Sexual or racial discrimination is morally wrong".

Against this objection that to describe politics as an ethical; void merely records a definitional wish to use words in a certain way, I say that for the people who choose otherwise, we still have this problem of applying the ethical to the political, and this is a *real* problem, not just one of words. The activist who wishes to reduce discrimination almost certainly will be ethically motivated, but so far as that person remains inside the ethical s/he will be unable to engage with the political. In stepping into the public

arena and trying to act against prejudice, the activist will run into political problems, legal problems, problems of local authority funding, getting their case across to the media, the balance of parties in the local council chamber etc. All of these not only refuse to recognise the ethical but *annihilate* it. "This is not a court of justice, but of law". I return to a restatement of my thesis: The political assumes a mode of authority which *cancel*s the ethical.

ETHICS BY THE BACK DOOR -- ALL THIS IS REALLY ONLY A DISGUISED ETHICAL CRITIQUE OF POLITICS

The last objection I wish to deal with here is the view that all of this -- my position that the political and the ethical are fundamentally divorced -- is simply a disguised ethical critique of politics. Politicians *ought* to submit themselves to the ethical and the fact they do not is a powerful ethical criticism of politics. "Dear Mr Portillo, please be moral..." Political parties and countries ought to enshrine moral principles in their constitutions. Against this I say the objection fails to take account of what politics *is*. We need to avoid this type of wishful thinking. The ethics by the back door objection depends on politics as it ought to be and not politics as it is.

If I am correct here, my view has consequences. No individual with any claim to participate in the ethical can have any part in the political. We need something different, something self-determined but which recognises the importance of the ethical. What then? you say. Are you an anarchist -- But of course....

AN ASSERTION OF MORAL RESPONSIBILITY

To understand that politics is an ethical void is a call for us to take back control over our own lives. We cannot value The Machine but we can and *must* find value in our own lives.

The Irrationalists

#51 Mar 1998

(click to expand)

(click to expand)

Steve Booth on resistance in the new millennium

Eat Shit or Fight Back: The Choice is Yours

The irrationalists commit acts of intense violence against the system, with no obvious motives, no pattern. More important, there is no organization to claim responsibility, offer explanations, make apologies or demands. Then, with the Tokyo sarin gas attack, Florence Rey and Audry Maupin, the Unabomber, Oklahoma and many other such incidents, we entered the Age of the Irrationalists.

One Office Block, One Blue Truck

The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices. Even so, they did all they could and now there are at least 200 government automatons that are no longer capable of oppression.

Let a Thousand Aum Cults Sarinate...

The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack, they gave themselves away. They were not secretive enough. They had the technology to produce the gas but the method of delivery was ineffective. One day the groups will be totally secretive and their methods of fumigation will be completely effective.....

DIRECT ACTION

THE IRRATIONALISTS

Steve Booth on resistance in the new millennium

EAT SHIT OR FIGHT BACK: THE CHOICE IS YOURS

The Irrationalists commit acts of intense violence against the system, the Irrationalists motives, no pattern. More important, there is no with no obvious responsibility, offer explanations, make organisation to claim responsibility, offer explanations, make apologies or demands. Then, with the Tokyo sarin gas attack, Florence Rey and Audrey Manjon, the Unabomber, Oklahoma and many other such incidents, we entered the Age of the Irrationalists.

ONE OFFICE BLOCK, ONE BLUE TRUCK

The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices. Even as they did all they could and now there are at least 200 government automations that are no longer capable of operation.

LET A THOUSAND AUM CULTS SARINATE...

The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack, they gave themselves away. They were not secretive enough. They had the technology to produce the gas but the method of delivery was ineffective. One day the groups will be totally secretive and their methods of fumigation will be completely effective....

I HAVE A DREAM

One day there will be blue trucks rolling off underground production lines. Missiles will be fired into government buildings and financial institutions. Politicians will be shot. Microlights will spray botulism over every millionaire's ghetto. More beautiful than all this, there will be no organisations claiming 'responsibility', no explanations whatsoever. The whole thing will seem as mysterious as the menacing laughter heard in the Roman baths at Colchester must have been shortly before the Iceni sacked the city.

COLD WAR INTO COLA WAR

Back in the 1970s we used to think the East was oppressive, totalitarian. Their people were brainwashed, elections rigged, dissident groups suppressed. We used to think the West was free, democratic, tolerant. Things were so bad under communism people built balloons out of bed sheets in order to escape. Their repression was so total, military forces were quite prepared to blow up the entire world with nuclear weapons to keep ourselves free. Then with the 1980s people discovered that East and West were the same. Britain had the Economic League to blacklist dissidents. Nixon was as corrupt and as nepotistic as Brezhnev. Thatcher was the English Hitler. We had the 1984 Miners' Strike. Waves and waves of helicopters, miles of razor wire and the full might of the military machine were deployed just to evict a few CND peaceniks at Molesworth. Hilda Murrell was murdered by the State.

NEW WORLD ORDURE

The 1991 Gulf War shows how things are now. World US hegemony, a sort of little was for the oil companies. How can the soldiers go along with it? If they don't get hit with Saddam's Scuds, they'll get Gulf War Syndrome from the West's own anti-nerve gas tablets. Who could fight for this? Who could fight for Major, Tory Blair and his spin doctors? Europe? With all the world like this, where do we fly our home-made balloon now?

The crowd are passive. In their flight from the truth, people submerge themselves in irrelevancy. Aromatherapy, drugs, role-playing games, the lottery, selling Amway. They all have their negative equity mortgages.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD TRADE CENTRE! YOU JUST WATCHED AND DID NOTHING. SO HERE ARE YOUR SIDE-HANDLED BATON BLOWS AS YOU TRAVEL ON THE EBOLA SUBWAY, SUCKERS!

We have ethical criteria to judge actions. It is wrong to lie, it is wrong to coerce people, it is wrong to stand back and do nothing to prevent injustice. Yet the whole Machine is founded on lies, run by coercion and lubricated with complicity. This requires a response.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS

As a fundamental, people are free and entitled to exercise that freedom and defend it. Freedom can never be granted grudgingly by authority (only to later be rescinded). Freedom has to be taken. Where we are faced with the systematic annihilation and negation posed against ourselves by The Machine, we are required to find ways to give value to our lives.

We have ethical criteria to judge actions. It is wrong to lie, it is wrong to coerce people, it is wrong to stand back and do nothing to prevent injustice. Yet the whole Machine is founded on lies, run by coercion and lubricated with complicity. This requires a response.

Iron Grip, I will have done something. Then again, if everybody did just one thing, The Machine would be abolished. But we are not in that situation yet, numbers are it. The numbers of activists are few, very few indeed. Even so, the *Sunday Express* (14th January 1996, p. 14) exposed 1 of Green extremists admitted the State had identified as many as 1,700 road protesters in London and the Home Counties. 1,700 committed road protesters would easily stop the road provided they do not waste their energy in futile fluffy NVDA gesture politics but always go for the popular.

NUMBERS ARE NOT IMPORTANT

It doesn't matter how many of us there are, one, a hundred, or a thousand. All that matters is that I myself act. The duty

character Asper, the suicide bomber in the Green anarchist novel *City-Death*. We must use ethical criteria to judge revolutionary actions and so choose our own. Three years ago, an article in *Freedom* considered pacifism as a response to the situation and found it wanting (*Letter To A Pacifist*, 15th May 1993, p. 3).

KEEP IT PIKEY!

The State was likened to a madman with an axe. The choice is to do nothing or to fight. An ethical principle, the Categorical Imperative of the Enlightenment philosopher, Immanuel Kant, was mooted as a criterion to judge our response.

I ought never to act except in such a way that I can also will that my maxim should become a universal law.

The suggested maxim was 'when attacked by a madman with an axe, shirk the madman'. This rejection of pacifism angered the Derrick Pike anarcho-pacifist brigade but nothing they could say against the article demonstrated that this maxim was unsound.

THE COST OF FREEDOM

How much do I want to be free? Am I prepared to kill the madman? Because that is what it will take. What are we doing to destroy the State? Are we going to go back to Oklahoma? Aspire always to be perpetrators, never victims. It's not what the State has done to me, what I am doing to the State is what really counts.

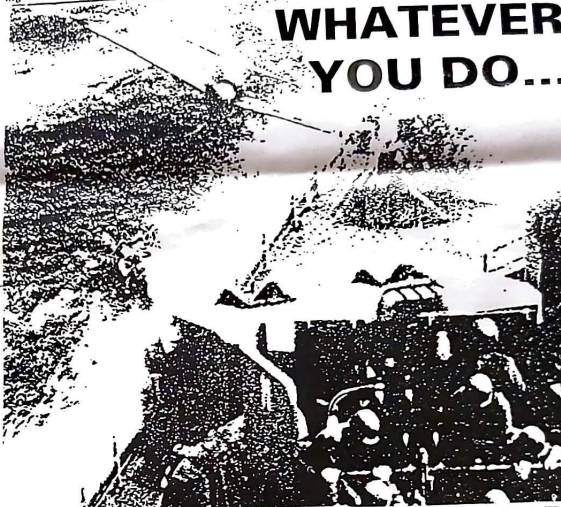
Of course, under this *Irrationalists* revolutionary model, the whole radical enterprise becomes very dangerous. Much too dangerous for your average fluffy. It involves sacrifice, hardship, danger, the threat to my present (un)comfortable existence. But do you know, since I discovered the fact, I also discovered that my life has taken on a meaning and a purpose like it never had before. Now what about all the do-nothings, the pseudo-radicals? Too much for them, the threat of something real happening to rid us of the car stickers and standing orders, their aromatherapy classes, hoping against all reason that the charging madman is going to back off in his attack and put that axe down. Tough luck, suckers. He isn't...

VIRTUAL REALITY

Most political groups - the Tories, the Tonic, Liberals, Euro-Disney, FoE, Greenpeace, etc etc, exist to play the media game. You flicked in the standing order, bought the car sticker, bought the video, now watch the inflatables race towards the Brent Spar on TV. The virtual reality harbour and gloss-paint on the oxygen of publicity. They have no underlying reality - an office, a phone, a team of experts and a fax machine. The moment they try anything really radical that oxygen regulator goes to OFF. In virtual reality, 'Virtual' means you haven't got it. Unless you can create facts, you are nothing.

NO SUCH THING AS PUBLIC OPINION

The media are out to create the virtual reality appearance of consensus. It doesn't matter what percentage of viewers reject the opinions and value judgements shown on the screen or in the papers, because only a very narrow range of views will be shown (Blair or Major? Aerial or Daz?). It doesn't make any



WHATEVER YOU DO...

...DO WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART

THE ETHICAL VOID

Several years ago, an article was published in *Freedom* (*Politics and the Ethical Void*, 7th March 1992, p.7) showing how the ethical has no point of contact with the political. To call on politicians to recognise the ethical is as futile as writing a letter "Dear Mr Himmler, please be moral!" To try to bring the ethical to bear on the political is to be like the boy with his finger in the dyke, while 100 yards away, water pours through a gap as wide as the Atlantic. Politics is without ethics but that does not absolve us of our own responsibilities towards the ethical.

IF JUST ONE PERSON CAN BE FREE, THE REST ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE

THE ETHICAL IMPERATIVE TO ACT

If I can do just one thing to fracture that

to act against the tyrant system is always present and cannot be evaded. In the book *Auschwitz* by Dr Miklos Nyiszli (Mayflower Books, St Albans 1962), an account is given of the Twelfth Sonderkommando, a group of prisoners who were due for execution and who rose against the concentration camp guards. Another example, taken from the same period, is that of General Stauffenberg, who tried to blow up Hitler with a bomb. No matter how hopeless the situation may seem, the imperative to act against the tyrant state is ever present.

HOW MUCH DO I WANT TO BE FREE?

True knowledge of what the system really is comes with the realisation that the Somme, Auschwitz, Tiananmen or Trafalgar Square etc etc are not exceptions but the norm. We are all in the Twelfth Sonderkommando now, the situation really is that desperate. We are all part of the Warsaw Uprising, we are all Oklahoma bombers or like the

DIRECT ACTION

difference so long as they stay inactive, assuming they were successful in creating this sense of fear, how could this indirect mode of activity change anything? For the politicians pose as the protectors of the settee dwellers, and can quite easily manipulate perceptions through propaganda and opinion polls.

ADDRESSING THE SYNTHETIC CONSTITUENCY

Today's newspapers are tomorrow's chip papers. That oh so worthy BBC2 documentary is soon forgotten, once *Match of the Day* comes on. Even if nobody is watching, would it be any different? Just so long as enough of them keep paying their license fee. 'Public Opinion' is a system construct, invented by ad men, pollsters and spin doctors. It is their pitch, it is their ball and the whole game is bent. What makes you think they will even let you into the ground?

KEEP ON TAKING THE NERVE GAS TABLETS, SUCKERS!

THE STRIKE AS WEAPON

Old style 19th century socialism believed in the strike as a weapon of negotiation between classes. The 1990 poll tax non-payment campaign was probably the last gasp of this tactic. A general strike could perhaps be useful as the prelude for open revolutionary warfare, but during the 1970s the use of the strike for limited, non-revolutionary ends blunted this weapon. Today, with six or seven million unemployed, its scope is seriously limited.

THE USELESSNESS OF TERRORISM

Perhaps because they lacked the numbers to be effective, some people extended the idea of the strike into violence as an alternative tool of negotiation. The intensity of their violence was intended to make up for the lack of numbers. The terrorists then made exactly the same blunders as the Volvo sticker type media campaigns. They were seduced into the circus. Under this schema, they had to produce more and more outrageous bombings - but they were on a sliding scale of diminishing returns.

REVOLT INTO SCRIPT

As the situation developed, the terrorists became TV script writers, their activities were not qualitatively different from others who were straining to create a mood of nostalgia and genteel well-being in *The Darling Buds of May*. The pejorative term 'terrorists' exposes their mistake here. The bombers and gunmen were engaged in creating a mod of fear (terror) in the general TV-watching population. But there is no collective mind there to be influenced. Even if they succeeded, this would have no effect on the politicians because the leaders care nothing for ordinary people.

PUBLIC OPINION IS THE STATE-IMPOSED VIRTUAL REALITY CENTRE OF THEIR MONOLOGUE

How would the creation of a transient mood of disquiet ever change anything? For after the news comes the *Darling Buds*, and even within the news bulletin the blast or shooting must compete with Bosnia, Rwanda and Princess Diana. None of it is real. TV is fundamentally not the settee, not the carpet, the TV remote controller, lottery ticket, Laura Ashley curtains or the MuckDonalds Happy Meal. So long as they stay in their seats, nothing is changed. Then there is the middle-men approach, to use the bomb as a means of influencing the political process through elections. Even

understood, can also be anticipated and countered. The fax from Tory Central Office will always be given priority on the news bulletin. Existing groups always follow the set pattern inside the media circus. Greenpeace use inflatable, it all fits the format. They have campaign HQs, formal identities, spokesmen and women, membership lists. Already they are compromised. As against the Irrationalists:

THEY CANNOT JAIL US FOR WE DO NOT EXIST. THE IRRATIONALIST IS THE MAN OR WOMAN SITTING NEXT TO YOU IN THE TUBE CANISTERS IN OUR POCKETS AND HATRED IN OUR MINDS...

OUTLAWS

When freedom is outlawed, only outlaw will be free... What will it take to knock over The Machine? Not a load of fluffies sitting down, waiting to be squashed by the tanks, but by the widest possible revolt, warfare, physical explosion, demolitions, sabotage, widespread non-cooperation, strikes, boycotts; and, best of all, by the conversion of its politicians and bureaucrats into dogmeat.

MYTH OF OFFICE

The Myth of Office asserts a separation between the official as a person and the official as official. The official is not responsible for his or her actions, he or she is only obeying orders, and these orders are issued on 'behalf' of everybody. Nowhere is this consent ever tested (12 ticks a lifetime)? Daz or Aerial? Wow! Against this we can plainly see that no officials were hung at Nuremberg, only individuals. We cannot hold a State responsible for the atrocities it commits because the State does not exist. This separation between official and person holding office is bogus. It is noteworthy that the German state was not hung at Nuremberg, somehow it beat the rap and slipped through the noose, perhaps magically disappearing in a puff of smoke, only to lick its wounds, heal its damaged credibility and reappear somewhere else later, its gloss painted plywood facade transformed.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF AN EVENT?

Existing political groups work within a framework of demands being made, requests and dialogue. Even 'orthodox' terrorist bombings etc fall into this description. But there is no one there to negotiate with. The problem is not one that can be resolved through negotiation, but only through the absolute physical destruction of The Machine. Only the ability of a given group to create facts really counts. 11 million people not paying poll tax. That was something. Oklahoma bombing. Unless you can create facts, you are nothing.

DESTRUCTION NOT DIALOGUE

No Live Exports! No Oil Rig Dumping! Hands off Newbury! Fundamental error - you cannot communicate with a systematic web of annihilation. What is the point of trying to argue with liars? The Somme, Auschwitz, Tianamen and Trafalgar Square - these are the norm. The lorry endlessly reversing back over Jill Phipps. This is an objective view of what the obscenity of the State really is. You cannot have dialogue with this - the State is never listening. The Irrationalists have seen through this. They do not seek to enter into this futile pseudo-dialogue with authority, they want to utterly destroy it.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF AN EVENT?

Actions which are comprehensible, that fit into a given pattern, that can be

What is the meaning of an event? The Machine, in all its arrogant colonisation of things continually ascribes meaning to acts of revolt. "All rioters are outside agitators". All the time they expect us to believe their propaganda shit and strike up attitudes of repudiation against 'fuckin' brilliant acts of revolt. It doesn't matter what Joe and Edna Couch Potato think about it. They weren't there, they think about it. They weren't there, they won't do anything to stop it, and yet the government automatons at Oklahoma are still dead and the building has been reduced to a pile of dust. That is what really counts. Now some of those ordinary people have jumped the tracks of their programming and learned to make their own value judgements too...

SUPPORT NOT CANVASSED

Your apathy is always taken for granted and the state just imposes itself: "A bypass will be built", "Britain will go to war with Iraq". Politicians, terrorists and Pigletist campaign groups alike all claim to represent a constituency. The political reality is such that nine hundred and ninety-nine times out of a thousand, that 'constituency' just couldn't be bothered to get up off its fat arses and do something. Therefore, until proven otherwise by events, all claims to 'represent' that silent inactive constituency must always be taken to be false.

NOT ON BEHALF OF ANYBODY

The State does not canvass your support - neither do the Irrationalists. The Irrationalists do not claim to act on behalf of anybody except themselves. Why should Joe and Edna Couch Potato derive any benefit from what the Irrationalists do? They can either join in somewhere, or fuck off and die, it's up to them, it's up to you. It's not whether you agree or disagree that counts, but what are you doing about it???

PERISH IN FLAMES

The Irrationalists are coming! When it happens, there will be no one there to explain, no one to claim responsibility, apologise, or issue communiques. There will be no organisational structure for The Machine to attack in its propaganda, undermine or turn. One day soon, very soon, the whole system will perish in flames, and where will your designer clothes and Mercedes 450SL's be then? We long to see the day of its death. So much for what we think, the question is: how much do you want to be free??



I Have a Dream

One day there will be blue trucks rolling off underground production lines. Missiles will be fired into government buildings and financial institutions. Politicians will be shot. Microlights will spray botulism over every millionaire's ghetto. More beautiful than all this, there will be no organisations claiming 'responsibility', no explanations whatsoever. The whole thing will seem as mysterious as the menacing laughter heard in the Roman baths at Colchester must have been shortly before the Iceni sacked the city.

Cold War into Cola War

Back in the 1970s we used to think the East was oppressive, totalitarian. Their people were brainwashed, elections rigged, dissident groups suppressed. We used to think the West was free, democratic, tolerant. Things were so bad under communism people built balloons out of bed sheets in order to escape. Their repression was so total, military forces were quite prepared to blow up the entire world with nuclear weapons to keep ourselves free. Then with the 1980s people discovered that East and West were the same. Britain had the Economic League to blacklist dissidents. Nixon was as corrupt and as nepotistic as Brzhnev. Thatcher was the English Hitler. We had the 1984 Miners' Strike. Waves and waves of helicopters, miles of razor wire and the full might of the military machine were deployed just to evict a few CND peaceniks at Molesworth. Hilda Murrell was murdered by the State.

New World Ordure

The 1991 Gulf War shows how things are now. World US hegemony, a sordid little was for the oil companies. How can the soldiers go along with it? If they don't get hit with Saddam's Scuds, they'll get Gulf War Syndrome from the West's own anti-nerve gas tablets. Who could fight for this? Who could fight for Major, Tony Blair and his spin doctors? Europe? With all the world like this, where do we fly our home-made balloon now?

The crowd are passive. In their flight from the truth, people submerge themselves in irrelevancy. Aromatherapy,

WELCOME TO THE WORLD TRADE CENTRE! YOU JUST WATCHED AND DID NOTHING SO HERE ARE YOUR SIDE-HANDLED BATON BLOWS AS YOU TRAVEL ON THE EBOLA SUBWAY, SUCKERS!

drugs, role-playing games, the lottery, selling Amway. They all have their negative equity mortgages, unemployment, job insecurity, MuckDonalds Happy Meals, the Sun, Gulf War Syndrome.... In 1992, even after the poll tax and all that, thirteen million brain-dead morons voted Conservative. How many will vote for Blair? People pay money for the Sun. Millions of them buy lottery tickets. As Mystic Meg once said (echoing Sir Gerard Ratner with his “culture of crap”) “The people want trash, so let’s give them trash...”. All this goes on. Do they act to stop it? Do they bollocks. So in the long run, they get exactly what they deserve, and by heck they are going to get it....

IT’S A LINE SO THIN YOU CANNOT STAND OVER IT – YOU HAVE TO CHOOSE WHICH SIDE TO STAND ON. YOU ARE EITHER FIGHTING IT. THE POINTN IS TO CHOOSE...

The Importance of Ethics

As a fundamental, people are free and entitled to exercise that freedom and defend it. Freedom can never be granted grudgingly by authority (only to later be rescinded). Freedom has to be *taken*. Where we are faced with the systematic annihilation and negation posed against ourselves by The Machine, we are required to find ways to give value to our lives.

We have ethical criteria to judge actions it is wrong to lie, it is wrong to coerce people, it is wrong to stand back and do nothing to prevent injustice. Yet the whole Machine is founded on lies, run by coercion and lubricated with complicity. This requires a response.

The Ethical Void

Several years ago, an article was published in *Freedom (Politics and the Ethical Void, 7th March 1992, p.7) showing how the ethical has no point of contact with the political. To call on politicians to recognize the ethical is as futile as writing a letter “Dear Mr Himmler, please be moral!” To try to bring the ethical to bear on the political is to be like the boy with his finger in the dyke, while 100 yards away, water pours through a gap as wide as the Atlantic. Politics is without ethics but that does not absolve us of our own responsibilities towards the ethical.

The Ethical Imperative To Act

If I can do just one thing to fracture that Iron Grip I will have done something. Then again, if *everybody* did just one thing. The Machine would be abolished. But we are not in that situation yet, nowhere near it. The numbers of activists are few, very low indeed. Even so, the Sunday Express (14th January 1996, p.14) expo of Green extremists admitted the Stasi had identified as many as 1,700 road protesters in London and the Home Counties. 1,700 committed road protesters would easily stop the road provided they did not waste their energy in futile fluffy NVDA gesture politics but always go for the jugular.

Numbers are Not Important

It doesn't matter how many of us there are, one, a hundred, or a thousand. All that matters is that I myself act. The duty to act against the tyrant system is always present and cannot be evaded.

...

Irrationalism: Steve Booth Against “The Machine”

Black Flag #215 Nov(?) 1998

In *Green Anarchist* issue 51, Steve Booth, one of *Green Anarchist*'s editors, published “The Irrationalists”, his views on “resistance in the new millennium.” According to Booth, we are entering “the Age of the Irrationalists”, who “commit acts of intense violence against the system with no obvious motives, no pattern.” We are told by Booth that “The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices.”... The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack they gave themselves away.”

In issue 52, both GA and Booth himself, attempt a retreat from the position initially expressed. In a letter to the Scottish Anarchist Federation, who pulled a speaking tour by the London Gandalf Support Campaign in protest at the content of the article, GA accuse the SAF of “intolerance, credulity and conformism”, presumably for treating Booth's rantings with the contempt they deserve. Apparently, Booth only wrote the article to “express his anger” at the Operation Washington raids, and GA concede that “maybe Steve goes too far affirming certain desperate acts, rather than just acknowledging them as inevitable reactions to an ever-more organised and repressive society”. Booth also tries to escape the logic of the positions he'd earlier put forward, by arguing that “irrationalism” is a product of despair, and that we need to develop “the capacity of revolutionary action to enlarge our hope.”

This won't do. Booth's original article blatantly endorses the actions of the Aum and the Oklahoma bombers. We are told “they had the right idea.” To this we can only echo the comments of Larry O'Hara, Dave Black and Michel Prigent that the Oklahoma bombing was “fascist mass murder” and that “we have as little sympathy (zero) for those carrying out a sarin attack on the Tokyo underground as we would anybody carrying out a similar attack on the Newcastle Metro or London Underground.” In his initial article, Booth contends that “The question is asked “What about the innocent people?” How can anyone inside the Fuhrerbunker be innocent?... Why should Joe and Edna Couch Potato derive any benefit from what the Irrationalists do? They can either join in somewhere, or fuck off and die, it's up to them, it's up to you.” For Booth, the enemy is not any longer capitalism, technology, or (whatever the fuck it means) “The Machine” — it is anyone who doesn't embrace his particular view of the world, or his particular Utopia as an alternative. Some alarm bells should now be ringing for those familiar with the history of “Green Anarchist”. GA's original editor, Richard Hunt,

now edits a fascist, misanthropic rag called “Alternative Green”. Booth appears to be following a similar trajectory.

So, is it that everyone who gets involved in the GA collective develops a personality disorder or is there something at the heart of the “anarcho-primitivist” project that engenders the rot?

Whenever the “primitivists” are pushed to define their agenda in comprehensible terms, we are told that “there’s no blue print, no proscriptive pattern.” The closest we get to a point is the US journal *Anarchy*’s statement that they aim for a future that is “radically co-operative and communitarian, ecological and feminist, spontaneous and wild.” *Fifth Estate* churn out mystical babble about “an emerging synthesis of post-modern anarchy and the primitive (in the sense of original) Earth based ecstatic vision”. In his “Primitivist Primer”, GA’s John Moore endorses this definition. Primitivism, so far as anything about it is clear, looks back to the primitive communism of hunter-gatherer societies as an alternative to the “multiplicity of power relations” of “civilisation.” All of which is fine, as far as it goes. Even the US science writer Carl Sagan, in his book “Billions and Billions” states that hunter gatherer existence was more democratic and egalitarian than contemporary society, and writers as diverse as Engels, Levi-Strauss and Maurice Godelier have articulated an anthropology of primitive communism. The problem for contemporary primitivists is not whether such societies were “better” than our own, but how their legacy can be incorporated in a politics of the here and now.

We live in a society that edges ever closer to the brink of ecological destruction. Capitalism sees Nature as one more commodity. As the US writer Michael Parenti puts it, the “capital accumulation process wreaks havoc upon the global ecological system... An ever expanding capitalism and a fragile, finite ecology are on a calamitous collision course. It is not true that the ruling politico-economic interests are in a state of denial about this. Far worse than denial, they are in a state of utter antagonism towards those who think the planet is more important than corporate profits.” The problem for the primitivists is that their politics leave them unable to effectively resist.

Primitivism abandons any notion of a class-based analysis of the structures of “control, coercion, domination and exploitation” and replaces them with a rejection of “civilisation” and an idealisation of a period of history superseded by the development of agriculture, and the relations and means of production which have led us to our present state. The problem is — you can’t wish such developments away, or wind the historical clock back. The primitivist project fails on two counts. The first is the question of agency. Every social transformation — from feudalism, to the bourgeois revolutions, has been based upon the material interests of a particular class, who act as conscious agents of transformation. The primitivists have not been able to identify any positive agent for the “destruction of civilisation” and so their politics becomes a counsel of despair. As GA concede, it is this despair which is at the root of Booth’s “Irrationalist” tantrums. What they fail to concede is that such despair is fundamental to the hopelessness engendered by their politics in and of itself. With no rational agent

for primitivist change, GA are left with the Utopian babble of “One day soon, very soon, the whole system will perish in flames, and where will your designer clothes and Mercedes 450SLs be then?” and the Aum and the Oklahoma fascists as vehicles for “the absolute physical destruction of the machine”.

Moreover, even if a positive vehicle for the primitivist project could be found, should we then embrace it as a viable alternative to the immiseration of millions under the rule of capital? In his book, “Beyond Bookchin”, David Watson, of *Fifth Estate*, argues that aboriginal society represents a viable Utopia. He quotes favourably the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins; “We are inclined to think of hunters and gatherers as poor because they don’t have anything, perhaps better to think of them for that reason as free.” (Perhaps, then, Watson, in the relative comfort of the middle class anarchist scene in Detroit, envies the “freedom” enjoyed by the 1.5 million currently starving to death in the Sudan?) He tells us that aboriginal societies are in reality “affluent” because “everyone starves or no-one does.” What a miserable vision the primitivists — even at their most reasoned — are trying to hawk — at a time when the wealth produced under capitalism is sufficient to eliminate want, at a time when radical ecologists are engaged in a battle for planned, environmentally sustainable production in the interests of and under the control of those currently at the bottom of the production process, all the primitivists have on offer is the communism of want!

It is our contention that the nature of the primitivist project is such that the “irrationalisms” of Steve Booth are, within the context of GA’s project, perfectly rational; that the GA project results in, faced with the age old choice of socialism or barbarism, the election of barbarism as the chosen alternative.

Booth contends that “Only the ability of a given group to create facts really counts. 11 million people not paying poll tax. That was something. The Oklahoma bombing. Unless you can create facts, you are nothing.” Booth is fond of sending out “propositions” to his opponents. We have a few for him (and it would be nice to get a straight answer, instead of the usual thought disordered rant). If the Oklahoma bombing “creates facts”, does also the election of the FN in France or their equivalents in Austria and Germany? If the Aum got it right — if Joe and Edna Couch Potato don’t count — if “the only question could then be — so where was your bomb and why did it not go off first” would Booth endorse, say, the fascist bombing of Bologna railway station, or a far right militia using poison gas on a black community in the US? If not, following your own logic, why not? Go on surprise us; give us a considered reply.

The Return of The Irrationalists

#54-55 Mar 1999

John Connor on reaction and Civilised values

...

Our Obvious Critics

...

But It's More Than This

...

THE RETURN OF THE IRRATIONALISTS

John Connor on reaction and Civilised values

"The hysteria of... the debate shows how frightened they had been, how delighted they were to seize the opportunity to counter-attack."

CHRISTOPHER HILL'S *WORLD TURNED UP SIDEOWN*

The hysterical (irrational?) movement reactions to the reprinting of Steve Booth's *Irrationalists* in *GA52* were all very gratifying, but what do they say about anarcho-orthodoxy? The purpose of this piece is not to explain what they should have understood about the article—that's been covered already in *GA53*'s 'Open Letter to ACE'—but rather is an attempt to understand why they did not.

OUR OBVIOUS CRITICS

As we already know, this pseudo-scandal all started with a campaign by Neoist stooge Micah in Edinburgh to whip up hostility to *GA* in the run-up to the Gandalf Three's July 1998 appeal. The Neoists, of course, will use any rick to beat *GA* with and their State-serving agenda's obvious. Micah's insubstantial little leaflet reeks of bad faith and not one of the Gandalf defendants' supporters has disaffiliated as a result of it. It did, however, help manufacture a climate of criticism.

The reaction of *Freedom's* reviewer Kevin McFaul showed he was equally willing to restrain himself from any opportunity to attack *GA*, even when one of its editors was still facing potential life imprisonment, and to use his position to prevent responses being printed. He's borne a grudge against *GA* ever since 1994 when his slag-off of Steve Booth's *City Death* was hardly the triumph he'd hoped. In it, he stupidly admitted not even reading the book he so ineloquently reviewed. Duh!

Sharing McFaul's Angel Alley address—possibly politics too—is the ACF's *Organise*, who insisted their slag-off of the *Irrationalists* represented support for the Gandalf defendants, if not *GA*'s politics. A reasonable enough position, though no others holding it were moved to comment—particularly not with such virul—and the *Irrationalists* didn't even represent *GA*'s politics! It was taken by ACF fundamentalists as emblematic of all DIY / direct action politics and used as a stick to beat modernisers in the ACF suggesting it must take such developments onboard to remain relevant in the 1990s. Rather than heed internal criticism, ACF fundi's continued to harp on about the *Irrationalists* even after *GA*'s replies were printed in *Organise* explaining the true position. They ridiculously pretended *GA* supports the indiscriminate "slaughter and injury of working class people"—as if our objections would make any difference!—but even they choked on the suggestion that *GA* supports the militias, a libel they refers readers to *Black Flag* for. ACFers not willing to sacrifice intellectual and political integrity just to suck up to the Leeds / Bradford racketeers have already apologised on the ACF's behalf for this nonsense.

All the above focused on two ill-chosen examples on the *Irrationalists*' opening paragraphs, but the first that saw fit to comment after our *GA53* 'Open Letter' made it clear the piece was really about the repudiation of mediations, particularly ideology, was *Black Flag* and their blatant sectarianism, opportunism and wilful distortion of all relevant documents has earned them special mention in our sidebar of shame.

What's common to all these cases—except possibly the Neoists—is sectarian concern that *GA* was 'getting above itself' (ie. them) in terms of anarcho-

orthodoxy.

As noted in the 'Open Letter', Steve's article was written after he was first raided and published in revenge for his imprisonment. If *anarchists* can't cope with expressions of anger under such circumstances—in an *anarchist* zine to boot—then when and where can anger be expressed? If they can't cope with a

bit of ink, how are they going to relate to the anger and despair of people that actually *do* go out and take radical actions, or those that could? Are they going to abandon them to the far Right, as Leftist elitists in the US did after Waco? If the revolution isn't going to come from those through with Civilisation, with nothing to lose, where is it

going to come from? From them, as some self-appointed moralistic anarcho-vanguard? No, their emphasis is on personal and social control, good order and protecting their little niches — the anarchist movement unmasked once again as gentled counter-revolutionaries.

ghetto credibility thanks to the Gandalf prosecution, just their usual cautious, inherently conservative ideological jockeying. Whilst pleased to see such self-regulation / marginalisation amongst the anarcho-orthodox, we note their irrelevance is confirmed by the State not bothering to waste £10m trying to shut any of them up; that as an anti-ideological current, we're not interested in proselytising and recruiting anyway, particularly those that'll settle for their sort of dead-end politics; and that their comments have had no impact in areas where the movement actually is moving — direct action, eco- and AR activity.



BUT IT'S MORE THAN THIS

So many wouldn't try it on the same way if this tack had no resonance in the movement — where it gets interesting...

By refusing pacifism, the *Irrationalists* fucks off all the quasi-religious and by accepting the label 'irrationalist', it fucks off all the remaining rationalists too. By calling for our actions to be unmediated through the working class, it fucks off old guard collectivists—as does, for example, the autonomist anarchism of Alfredo Bonanno—and by insisting such actions be rooted in ethics rather than the individual Will, it fucks off individualists / egoists / Stirnerists too. No doubt few thanked Steve for revitalising Edwardian 'Karl Yundi / mad bomber' stereotypes either, although propaganda of the dead is as much part of the anarchist tradition as, for instance, Tolstoyan pacifism.

So, what's the sum total of movement reactions? Defences of sacrifice, rationality, deference and control of anger — defences of the very Civilised values that emasculated authentically revolutionary currents with the coming of industrialism, reducing them to a secular 'religion of slaves', to trade unionism and social democratic reformism!

In many ways, such reaction was amusingly reminiscent of the American movement's to FC or the French to Guy Maupin and Florence Rey — though all Steve did was write! Perhaps this is indicative of how unrevolutionary the British movement is — not so much a case of 'the pen mightier than the sword' as Steve's being the most impassioned statement of any sort recently vis a vis anarcho-

False Flag

#54-55 Mar 1999

An expose of the Black Flag racket

Black Flag # 215 spent six times more space slagging off Steve Booth's *Irrationalists* than on their story on the Gandolf case, which they were so noncommittal in reporting that they didn't even bother to end it with the defence campaign's address. This and repeated trashy references to GA throughout this issue suggests *Black Flag* might have a problem with us.

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All references in Steve's letter and *GA*'s 'Open Letter to ACE' to what his article was actually about were systematically suppressed, to the point of the *Black Flag* article's anonymous author ending with a demand to know:

If the Oklahoma bombing "creates facts", does also the election of the FN in France or their equivalents? If the Aum cult got it right—if Joe and Edna Couch Potato don't count—if "the only question could then be - so where was your bomb and why did it not go off first" would Booth endorse, say, the fascist bombings of Bologna railway station, or a far right militia using poison gas on a black community in the US?

Aside from its laughably hysterical tone (thanks to France's World Cup win, the FN are being slaughtered electorally, have now split, and there was only ever one Bologna bombing we heard about!), this distorted emphasis on the same two ill-chosen examples shows a wilful misreading of Steve's article. As the *Irrationalists'* clear focus is direct action, it necessarily rejects all electoralism, and as it rejects all ideology, it necessarily rejects fascist ideology. *Black Flag* knew the answers to their questions before they even write them, as they're in the 'Open Letter' *Black Flag* quotes from elsewhere in their article. They only asked for rhetorical effect, to embellish their BS - definitely a case of 'too good a smear to spoil with the truth'.

Why the lies? *Black Flag* sought to discredit anarcho-primitivism through the *Irrationalists*, while professing to not even understand it. They claim that primitivists' lack of class analysis "leave them unable to effectively resist", also a blatant lie. Anarcho-primitivism's critique of the division of labour—including class divisions—represents a more fundamental critique of Civilisation as a totality than their crude workerism, and whilst the direct action movement is fast-adopting such critiques in its struggles with Civilisation, *Black Flag*'s largely

side-lined by its irrelevant 1980s dogma. To further illustrate their wilful misrepresentation, they quote *5th Estate*'s argument for primitive communist egalitarianism "everyone starves or no-one does" as an argument for an... discourse on primitive affluence, these ignoramuses pretend the Sudanese famine is somehow 'natural' rather than the product of war and imperialism. If we'd ever said anything so stupid, they'd accuse *GA* of "Malthusian eco-fascism!"

sex and drugs, *Black Flag* has absolutely nothing original—and very little coherent—to say as they rate dogma over authenticity. More than once, they've had to solicit articles from GAN activists to fill their pages! They're living off a reputation they've done nothing to earn and which they don't deserve. The Emperor wears no clothes!

The same people just don't write *Black Flag* no more. A look at John Quayle's *Slow Burning Fuse* shows how Albert Meltzer was presented as a symbol of continuity between the 19th and 20th century class struggle traditions as a counterpoint to *Freedom*'s ancient claim to be the last link to that Golden Age. Meltzer also found himself the symbol of continuity between the real *Black Flag* of the 1970/80s and the zine claiming that name resurrected with AK money after anarcho-Lettism declined post-poll tax in the early-1990s. Both the bogus *Black Flag* and the SolFed's *Direct Action* are AK-funded, both published using the same DTP programme, both printed at the same place, both list pretty much the same contacts, and both are distributed by AK. Dean Plant has conceded *Black Flag* is where (some of) AK's profit goes, subsidising 25% of each issue. AK's involvement doesn't end there - both proxies tow their anarcho-conservative line, both in terms of sectarian prejudices and of review material. Although editors kowtow to the Meltzer legend, at the 1994 Anarchist Bookfair we saw him trying to cope alone on the *Black Flag* stall while all the others were staffing AK's, which made their later attempt to use his coffin as a recruiting platform all the more cynical.

Opportunistic and power-hungry, this new crew also greeted the 1996/7 CW split as a recruiting opportunity, but were too disorganised and had too little to offer to pull off the London conference they'd planned. During the 1994/5 White / Bowman affair they predictably towed the AK 'line' and backed them against Larry O'Hara. However, there's more too than meets the eye, inside info that goes some way to explaining their current hysteria.

At the root of this affair was Larry's *Turning Up the Heat*, which AK quietly

"Squark!
Sick as a
parrot"



INSIDE THE RACKET

They only wrote these articles as they think by attacking *GA*, other anarcho-workerists will rally round even them, as in the 1980s. Amongst such sects, *Black Flag* has least going for it. The ACF are more ideologically rigid, Class War more spectacular, and others have better claim to the syndicalist heritage. Perhaps they're selling themselves as most sectarian—and they certainly have something of a history there, and with *Freedom* deadheads as the early *Black Flag*'s main rival, that's perhaps understandable—but their real selling point is the Christie / Meltzer *Black Flag* of the 1970/80s, with its detailed parapolitical research, coherent pro-situ critique of all existing institutions (even borrowing from *5th Estate*), and Angry Brigade cachet.

The trouble is that this image is now totally bogus - that's all gone, as anyone reading *Black Flag* can see for themselves. Beyond the odd point about

FALSE FLAG /
Continued on p. 13

FALSE FLAG / Continued from p. 12

tried to bury because of the embarrassment it potentially posed to their patrons in Leeds, and which *Black Flag* refused to review "out of deference to the feelings of Louise Bernstein". The reason given was that Larry had quoted Meltzer's autobiography, *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels*, as saying her partner Leo Rosser's death had been suspicious. Writing as 'Sniper' in *Black Flag*, Rosser was one of the first to expose *Searchlight* as an MI5 front in 1985/6. Bernstein, meanwhile, had turned to writing State-scripted 'hate on the Net' stories in *Searchlight* and had shared a flat in London with none other than *Searchlight* asset Paul Bowman during his days with AK Dean in the TSDC. Pissed off *Black Flag* weren't covering the Gandalf case—presumably on AK's insistence, as they were miffed at our role in exposing Bowman—we put this to them in 1996. They wouldn't say anything but printed a Gandalf article the very next issue - say no more!

They finally responded only in *Black Flag* #213, printing a letter from 'Luther Blissett' denouncing Larry's "lunatic" speculations. For those who still don't know, 'Blissett' is a Neoist pseudonym used by Holocaust denial apologist Fabian 'Fuckwit' Tompsett. Ordinarily, it'd be incredible *Black Flag* would take the word of a known disinformant over that of their founder, Albert Meltzer, especially as Fuckwit had also labelled all anarchists "fascists", particularly Stuart Christie for titling one of his best-known and most provocative pamphlets *Towards a Citizens Militia*. However,

it's not *their Black Flag* we're talking about here, just the stinking simulcra that replaced it. Mainly to spite *GA* for exposing their links to Bowman, AK gave the Neo-scum their stamp of approval, though the new *Black Flag* crew hung out with Fuckwit before then. With typical London fucked-upness, they hope some of his celebrity will rub off on them - without giving the first thought to its *content*. Like him, because of their incoherence, their whole politics is more of faction than of ideology, another reason they're so given to scandal-mongering and telegraphing gossip. It's not surprising they ran with the anti-*GA* BS Fuckwit's been putting out for years, having spent that long themselves as AK's glove puppet

Another disconnection between the real *Black Flag* and the current one is attitudes to armed struggle. Whereas the Angry Brigade were roundly condemned for 'adventurism', 'substitutionalism' &c by all the do-nothings, now *Black Flag*'s current editors condemn Steve Booth for even *advocating* like action in similar terms! They can't even recognise Steve's

The Irrationalist is the man or woman sitting next to you in the tube train. We have sarin canisters in our pockets and hatred in our minds

as his idiosyncratically updated extract from one of the Angry Brigade's most famous communiqués!

All this goes to show how *Black Flag* has become the opposite of what it was.

We must emphasise that just because they've stupidly sided with fascists and State assets, we're not saying *they* are fascists or State assets—that straw man of Leeds' deserves a rest!—just that they're so unsussed they're easily manipulated, so narrow-minded they can't see where they're going wrong.

In closing, to explain *Black Flag*'s animosity to *GA*: where did AK get their replacements for the original editors from? They're Attack International. They first made their name not by armed struggle like Stuart Christie, but by drawing a few cartoons during the 1996 printerworkers dispute. They slagging of *GA* then because one of our first editors, Alan Albon, thought it was the usual tail-ending going nowhere, and think they can continue to do so now and win the same applause, hence their ridiculous "no class analysis" comment. They look back to a decade-gone heyday of class struggle anarchism when they were admired. Their status is so bound up in this that they can only jeer from the sidelines at new wave direct action in a futile hope that it'll somehow go away. No wonder *GA*'s continued existence against all odds is such an affront to them! *Lobster*'s Robin Ramsey thought Attack were a State front because of their sudden appearance on the political scene and the money they got to splash out on agit-prop. In fairness, we must point out the literature was financed by a combination of inheritances and ripping off printers, but now it all looks desperately thin and unoriginal, just tarted up slogans - much like their weak parody of the original *Black Flag*.

Dancing with the devil: On the politics of Green Anarchist, again!

Black Flag #217. 1999. Pages 33-35

Black Flag defends class struggle anarchism against the nihilist-terrorism of Green Anarchist

In issue 215 of *Black Flag* we ran a critique of the politics of Green Anarchist, "Irrationalism - Steve Booth Against the Machine", which attacked propositions by Steve Booth (in *Green Anarchist* 51) in favour of "*acts of intense violence against the system with no obvious motives, no pattern*". Booth stated that:

"The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices...The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack they gave themselves away."

Our polemic argued that Booth's Irrationalism is the logical end-point for the "primitivist" project; that "the primitivists have not been able to identify any positive agent for the 'destruction of civilisation' and so their politics becomes a counsel of despair...With no rational agent for primitivist change, GA are left with...making Aum and the Oklahoma fascists vehicles for 'the absolute physical destruction of the machine.'"

In *Green Anarchist* 54-55, we get GA's "response." Two Articles, "False Flag" and "The Return of the Irrationalists", take on the task of replying to the Black Flag critique. Or rather, they don't. *Black Flag* is denounced as "*opportunistic and power hungry*" (the misrepresentations about the history and politics of the Black Flag Collective are dealt with elsewhere). GA also get excited about our question "*would Booth endorse, say, the fascist bombing of Bologna railway station*" (although their excitement is a bit misplaced, as they have a go at point scoring about how we appear to believe there were several Bologna bombings, when the article clearly employs the word "bombing", in the singular).

As to whether Booth would endorse such tactics, or whether primitivism has a concept of human agency in any positive sense, we're told that Booth, and GA, reject "all ideology", and hence the question is meaningless. Which begs two questions. If the GA project is "non-ideological" then why publish a paper, set up a contacts list, or reply to our articles at all. More importantly, if "Irrationalists" reject "all ideology"

isn't it strange that Booth's non-ideological examples of "resistance" were the Aum and the militias, not the IRA, ETA, the Angry Brigade, the Black Liberation Army, and so on? As we'll illustrate, this isn't just coincidence. The primitivist project rejects all notions of positive agency, of a human subject attempting to change the world, as "reifying" – alienative. Hence, any act of resistance which has a positive, "socialistic" goal (however poorly defined) has to be rejected, while groups which have purely negative or destructive goals are seen as "decivilising" and hence embraced. The logic of primitivism leads its proponents ultimately into the camp of those who would advocate "Long Live Death".

We are not suggesting that GA are fascists; what we do suggest is that the method of primitivism, and the notion of the "non-ideological" lead precisely to a situation where questions of means and ends are buried beneath the desire for "the destruction of civilisation." That they can dismiss the question of whether or not they would, as we raised, "endorse, say, the fascist bombings of Bologna railway station, or a far-right militia using poison gas on a black community in the US" as "ideological" suggests our concern, and anger, is justified. To argue that, as Booth's article "rejects all ideology, it necessarily rejects fascist ideology" is bullshit. Booth says the Aum had the right idea and that "Joe and Edna Couch Potato...can either join in somewhere or fuck off and die". It seems that his rejection of "fascist ideology" implies only a belief that the ideology of an organisation is irrelevant, so long as it is engaged in acts of "intense violence against the system." Booth (and whoever wrote "False Flag") don't reject fascism –they just deny that it matters whether an organisation is fascist or not.

Given this, we wonder if GA will conclude that the fascist bombers in London also had "the right idea."

Class an irrelevance?

We are told that *Black Flag's* contention that any effective resistance has to be grounded in an understanding of class is an "irrelevant 80s dogma", a "crude workerism". GA, apparently, call "for our actions to be unmediated through the working class." Class-struggle anarchism is a "secular 'religion of slaves.'"

Class, contra GA, whether fashionable in the 80s or irrelevant in the 90s, is the fundamental issue of our time – the relationship between those who own the means of production and those forced to sell their labour to the property-owning class underpins every aspect of our society. The New Labour government has taken office committed to the utilisation of the welfare state as a weapon of coercion to drive the unemployed off the dole and into the workplace, to drag down wages, in the interests of capital. New Labour's attacks on working class living standards affect the majority of people in the UK. Irrelevant, though, according to GA. Environmental crisis has as its cause the industrial/technological practices of capitalism - either in the form of production

techniques used or pollutants sold to the consumer in the pursuit of profit. Still, who cares, eh?

So why is class important? Because class analysis indicates who has revolutionary potential, the potential to transform society. Thus the working class is not a potential agent of revolutionary change because its members suffer a great deal. As far as suffering goes, there are many better candidates for revolutionary agency than the working class: vagrants, perhaps, or impoverished students or prisoners or senior citizens. Many of these individuals suffer more than your average worker. But none of them is even potentially an agent of social transformation, as the working class is. Unlike the latter, these groups are not so objectively located within the capitalist mode of production. This means that they do not have the power to transform the economic system into a non-exploitative and libertarian one (*"only a productive class may be libertarian in nature, because it does not need to exploit"* in the words of Albert Meltzer). And without taking over the means of life, you cannot stop capital accumulating, nor can workers abolish work.

It is undeniably true that trade unionism and social democratic reformism have, as GA assert, *"emasculated authentically revolutionary currents."* It is therefore, as Rudolf Rocker incited, the objective of *"anarcho-syndicalism to prepare the toiling masses in the city and country for this great goal[social revolution] and to bind them together as a militant force."* The class war has, too often, been mediated through reformism. It is part of *Black Flag's* objective to explore ways and means of making the working class, for capitalism, *"the modern Satan, the great rebel"* (to use Bakunin's phrase) again. In doing so, we do not intend to distance ourselves from questions of revolutionary violence, and our movement's embrace at times of the propaganda of the deed. However, to equate such acts as the assassination of the Empress of Austria by Lucheni, President Carnot of France by Santo Caserio, or the assassination of Alexander II by the Russian nihilists with the Aum's desire to murder a train full of Japanese commuters as GA does, is to reduce the propaganda of the deed to the pornography of the deed. As Emile Henry put it *"we are involved in a merciless war; we mete out death and we must face it"*. The war, though, is *"declared on the bourgeoisie"* - not Joe and Edna Couch Potato, Steve Booth's cynical dismissal of any ordinary person who's not part of GA's sorry little grouping.

Which helps explain why GA does not identify any agent for social change and instead relies on "irrationalist" acts. It is probable that the return to a "Hunter-Gatherer" style society would result in mass starvation in almost all countries as the social infrastructure collapses. Indeed, it is tempting to insist that the primitivists have ceded the right to be taken seriously until they come up with a consistent response to the key question asked by Brian Morris of John Zerzan in Morris's article "Anthropology and Anarchism" (*Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* #45):

"The future we are told is 'primitive'. How this is to be achieved in a world that presently sustains almost six billion people (for evidence suggests that

the hunter-gatherer lifestyle is only able to support 1 or 2 people per sq. mile)... Zerzan does not tell us.”

Green Anarchist’s responses throw up too many issues, though, for us to embrace that luxury.

So, due to the inherent unattractiveness of GAs ”Primitivist” ideas for most people (”*Joe and Edna Couch Potato*,” in other words), it could never come about by libertarian means (i.e. by the free choice of individuals who create it by their own acts). Which partly explains their rejection of an agent for change as very few people would actually voluntarily embrace such a situation. This, we suggest, leads to GA developing a form of eco-vanguardism in order, to use Rousseau’s evil expression, to ”*force people to be free*” (as can be seen from the articles published celebrating terrorist acts). As subjective choice is ruled out, there can only be objective pressures which force people, against their will, into ”anarchy” (namely ”irrationalist” acts which destroy civilisation). This explains their support for ”irrationalism”— it is the only means by which a ”primitivist” society could come about.

Maximalist Anarchism?

Printed alongside GA’s articles attacking the ”*self-appointed moralistic anarcho-vanguard*” (anyone who presumes to question the authority of GA!!) is an article by John Moore ”Maximalist Anarchism, Anarchist Maximalism”, a celebration by the author of ”*those forms of anarchism which aim at the exponential exposure, challenging and abolition of power.*” Moore is also author of ”The Primitivist Primer”. His ”Maximalist Anarchism” is helpful, because it locates for us the theoretical bankruptcy of the primitivist project, the philosophical crisis which underpins the disordered musings of Booth and co. It has always been part of the anarchist project to oppose the dominion of man over man. That dominion, though, has always been understood as historically grounded in the development of the State as the guarantor of man’s exploitation by man; the guarantor of property. Moore’s conception of power, though, is a-historical, and anti-materialist: ”*Power is not seen as located in any single institution such as patriarchy or the state, but as pervasive in everyday life.*”

Remember the film ”The Usual Suspects”? At one point in the film there’s a voice over from Kevin Spacey along the lines of ”The greatest trick the devil ever played was convincing the world he didn’t exist.” Moore’s view of power as ”pervasive in everyday life” is ”The Usual Suspects” as political theory. The greatest trick that capitalism could play is convincing those oppressed under it that their oppression is natural, inevitable. Power is everywhere and all-corrupting.

What does Moore mean? If Person A robs Person B and Person C intervenes to physically prevent him, is Person C’s action as oppressive as Person A’s? Is the state in seeking to murder Mumia Abu-Jamal no more or less oppressive than those who

would seek to organise collectively to exercise the power to stop them? Moore conflates power, and hence agency, with oppression. Not all power is oppressive. The power to resist cannot be equated with the power to oppress.

In 1793 the French revolutionary Jacques Roux petitioned that *"Liberty is but a phantom when one class of men can starve another with impunity."* Moore would add that liberty is but a phantom when one class of men has the power to resist the fate delegated to it by the whim of another. Power, for Moore, becomes as one with our subjectivity, our power to act. What we are left with is bourgeois individualism dressed up as freedom. *"Central to the emancipation of life from governance and control remains the exploration of desire and the free, joyful pursuit of individual lines of interest."*

Bakunin argued that *"man only becomes man and achieves consciousness only to the extent that he realises his humanity within society and then only through the collective endeavours of society as a whole."* Moore's *"struggle against micro-fascism"*, the reduction of social struggle to the *"anti-politics of everyday life"*, is a retreat from the collective struggle for a free society of Bakunin to the deconstructive agenda of post-modernism. As he concedes

"The arts, due to their capacity to bypass inhibitions and connect with or even liberate unconscious concerns and desires, thus remain far more appropriate than political discourse as a means of promoting and expressing the development of autonomy and anti-authoritarian rebellion."

This is not, then, a politics of resistance in the sense one might understand a politics of everyday life as embodying strategies of resistance to the encroachments of capital upon everyday life; resistance is substituted by play, artistic self-expression (why not shopping?). As Moore himself concedes; real issues of strategy and tactics in the battle to regain control of our lives are abandoned to "the very science fictional question of 'what if...?'"

Zerzan and Reification

Moore is not the only primitivist to have a problem with the issue of agency. John Zerzan, by far the most engaged and stimulating of the primitivist thinkers, in an article "Reification: That Thing We Do" (*Anarchy* #45) starts with an examination of the use of the term "reification" as employed by the Marxist Georg Lukacs

"namely, a form of alienation issuing from the commodity fetishism of modern market relations. Social conditions and the plight of the individual have become mysterious and impenetrable as a function of what we now commonly refer to as consumerist capitalism. We are crushed and blinded by the reifying force of the stage of capital that began in the 20th century."

Lukac's observations are based on Marx's contention in *Grundrisse* that "Money...directly and simultaneously becomes the real community...Money dissolve(s) the community" His use of the term "reification" is historically specific. Zerzan argues

"however, that it may be useful to re-cast reification so as to establish a much deeper meaning and dynamic. The merely and directly human is in fact being drained away as surely as nature itself has been tamed into an object."

It would be reasonable here to anticipate an attack upon Enlightenment views of the human subject, the Cartesian notion that we can "*render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature.*" Zerzan goes much further. He argues that we are "*exiled from immediacy*" by our capacity for abstract thought, that "*the reification aspect of thought is a further cognitive 'fall from grace'*". It is the human subject acting as subject that leads to our alienation from ourselves. "*objectification is the take off point for culture, in that it makes domestication possible. It reaches its full potential with the onset of division of labour; the exchange principle itself moves on the level of objectification.*"

Raymond Williams once argued that "*communication is community*", that man as social being is defined by interaction through language. Zerzan has it that "*the reification act of language impoverishes existence by creating a universe of meaning sufficient unto itself.*" As Brian Morris describes it "*All those products of the human creative imagination – farming, art, philosophy, technology, science, urban living, symbolic culture – are viewed negatively by Zerzan – in a monolithic sense.*"

Zerzan is a committed activist and capable of writings of both insight and beauty. His writings against our "*ever more standardised, massified lost world*" stand as powerful indictments of modern life. Yet a contradiction stands at the centre of his thought. If the "*dreadfulness of our post-modernity*" is constituted by the "*denial of human choice and effective agency*" how can we go forward, how can we change the world, except by our own hands and how can it be possible to so change the world if by acting we "*render ourselves as objects*"?

If what Cassirer called the process of creative destruction, of "man" as subject, "*doubting and seeking, tearing down and building up*" has led us to "*these dark days*" then there is no way forward. Power pervades everywhere, again. All that is left is to live quietly in the world, the "*reverential listening*" of Martin Heidegger, or "*living-in-place*" as the deep ecologists Berg and Dasmann put it. But living-in-place seems much like knowing your place, and not much of a recipe for change, and even Arne Naess acknowledges that "*only look at*" nature is extremely peculiar behaviour. Experiencing of an environment happens by doing something in it, by living in it, meditating and acting" (Ecology, Community and Lifestyle).

In practice, Zerzan draws back from embracing the notion of "living-in-place" in the here and now, faced with the rottenness of "place" as it stands. His best writings are full

of celebrations of worker resistance to work life, luddism, the 1977 New York blackout lootings and riots. For Green Anarchism though, it is not so simple. The contradictions of primitivism – Zerzan’s theoretical abandonment of the revolutionary subject, Moore’s bourgeois individualism – lead practical, direct action politics down a blind alley. We can’t stand where we are – we can’t go forward because power is everywhere and human agency is ultimately reifying. The dead end of primitivism lies precisely in the fact that there can be no positive agency for the primitivist transformation. All that’s left then is what Booth and Colike to pretend is the ”non-ideological”.

When Zerzan talks about the un-mediated/un-ideologized he means, as Paul Simons put it in *Anarchy* #44

”the participants in riots and insurrections throughout history; luddites, Regulators, Whiskey Rebels, Rebecca and her Sisters, Captain Swing, King Mob, the Paris Commune of 1871, Makhnovists, the New York City boogie till you puke party and power outrage of 1977, the MLK assassination riots, May 68 in France and so forth.”

In this, he stands as part of the best of our movement’s tradition, anarchism as the voice of the *”swinish multitude.”*

Booth’s idea of ”non-ideological”, contra Zerzan, is not non-ideological at all. Both the Aum and the Oklahoma bombers had clear ideological ends. Booth wants to pretend their ends don’t count (so why not, then, the FN or the BNP?) As GA concede, (and in doing so concede their own irrelevance) *”all Steve did was write.”* And it’s all he’s ever likely to do. There is an element of ”The Irrationalists” which reeks of middle class posturing and vicarious rebellion (the comprehensive I went to school in had a few middle class twats who liked to pretend they were in the NF to wind up ”the rougher elements”, until they realised that there was a price to pay for posturing as fascists!).

Nevertheless, their politics have some resonance within the direct action environmental movement and they have to be taken seriously to that extent. Booth’s ”Irrationalism” is the dead end of primitivism – the abandonment of any notion of positive human agency. Whether they like it or not, all that’s then left is the passive surrender of ”living in place” or looking to the forces of reaction to bring about the death of civilisation; the barbarism Rosa Luxemburg warned against.

False Flag Again

#57_58 Autumn 1999

We expose the disinformers

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Mouthpiece Micah

...

Fuckwit, His Guru

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False Flag

...

FALSE FLAG - AGAIN

We expose the disinformers

'The Return of the Irrationalists' [see *GA54/55*, p. 12] suggested attacks on *GA* were probably a concerted campaign. Now we know they are, and that it centres on Noist mouthpiece Micah / Space Bunny at the Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh (ACE). Realising it was being orchestrated by those who'd made absurd attacks on anarchists—including themselves—the ACF dropped out and *Freedom's* contribution has only been occasional (unprecedented!) cheerleading of *Black Flag* through its Bookchinite reviewer Kevin McFall (not that he will argue such a discredited ideology directly with us) and Donald Room, whose throwaway a tantrum ever since we exposed his pseudo-debate around GMO technology [see *GA54/55*, p. 17].

MOUTHPIECE MICAH

In 'Let's Get This Straight!' [*GA52*, p.12], we said ACE showed "intolerance, credulity and conformism" for cancelling a speaking tour in support of the Gandalf defendants on Noist cultist Micah's say-so. Having seen ACE's contradictory postings on their website—which denounce *GA* as "not part of our movement" whilst expressing 'support' for the Gandalf defendants—it seems we were too kind. Most hilariously ACE "completely reject the accusations made against Space Bunny". Our "accusation" was that [*GA52*, p. 12]

when it comes to Home, the lad has a cult-like devotion that would shame most Moonies.

Of the score of documents on the website, only the ACE statement and Noel Molland's discredited whinging [see Paul Rogers' *Grassy Now!*] are not Noist smears against *GA*. As Micah posted it all there (in ACE's statement), this fairly accurately characterises him and shows how credulous ACE are.

Micah devoutly insists all Home's written about *GA* is true even when self-contradictory or—as with *Green & Brown Anarchist*—admitted as hoax material by Home himself!

We sent a two-page response to ACE's statement, documenting the lies in each Noist text cited. ACE's only response was that they were "too busy with other things" to consider it—just as they scrapped the speaking tour on the basis of Noist BS that they didn't bother to examine and allowed a statement to be written in their name that made them look like fools.

The bottom line is that as Micah controls ACE's computer, he controls them. They'll let him do as he pleases if they can only continue to have access to it. Half of ACE's activity is Micah's

computer. We're sure glad we're not in their "movement" — such opportunism deserves not support, but contempt.

His smear campaign goes beyond ACE. He does a line in public historians (as at Bradford MayDay '98) or throwing questions at people he know he won't get answers from, such as at Derek Wall at the WordPower do in Edinburgh last May 20th. Micah does no such thing when he runs into people from *GA*—undeed, he runs from us rather than answer our questions, as at J18—which shows what a faker he is.

On WordPower, he claimed that in *Turning Up the Heat*, Larry O'Hara said Louise Bernstein killed Leo Rosser. Larry said nothing of the sort as Micah knows. Larry just quoted Albert Meltzer's autobiography, *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels*, as saying Rosser died mysteriously (something *Black Flag* agreed in their letter to Larry) and that Bernstein is now associated with *Searchlight* [see 'False Flag', *GA54/55*, pp. 12-13]. Micah attacked Larry for contradicting his Noist god, Fabian 'Fuckwit' Tompsett, whose letter to *Black Flag* [213, p. 34] called Larry "half-baked". Amazing *BF* take the word of a known hoaxer and shit-for-brains over Larry's—or even Meltzer, their founder—but no surprise from cultist Micah, who stays with Fuckwit when visiting London.

Dressing himself up as an authority, he passes off disinformation to the uncritical. At MayDay '99 at ACE, he even ran an anti-*GA* workshop. Micah plugs into the anarcho-orthodox establishment: he's great mates with the Leeds *Searchlight* / cop collaborators behind MayDay '98 [see the latest *Red Action* on their relationship with Mick Lowells, *Searchlight's* new editor], AK's Ramsey Kanan and *Here & Now* (also embarrassed by their defences of Paul Browman), as well as Neo-slime. Micah's contacts help explain ACE workerist wannabes' toleration of

his excesses, and those with the MayDay network *Black Flag* and the ACF being in on his smears.

More usually Micah circulates off-the-record letters and encrypted e-mails to generate a whispering campaign in classic Leeds AFA style. We can't challenge what we don't know about, but we know about his ludicrous claim that *GA* supported Dunblane child-killer Thomas Hamilton. In fact, we denounced him as "sick and evil" [see *GA42*, p. 3]. Micah just makes it up.

FUCKWIT, HIS GURU

As Micah's smears are so inept, he needs input from fellow alumnus—i.e. Cambridge old boy Fuckwit. Hence *Cult-Watch*, micro-circulating through Scotland. The 'cult' of the title is Noism and its 'watch[ing]' is of others. Fuckwit uses Micah as his mouthpiece as Fuckwit's now as discredited as Home. *Cult-Watch* makes no comment on Home's relationship to neo-Nazi Tony Wakeford as it's indefensible. Attempting to explain away his support for Holocaust denier Robert Faurisson and not Gandalf defendants, Fuckwit flip-flops between total denial, diversion into irrelevance, and repeating the pro-Faurisson arguments he put back then. As with Micah and Dunblane, there are also blatant lies Fuckwit hopes 'provincial' Scots won't notice. *SchNews* deny calling *GA* "rightwing idiots" and only took Gandalf material off their site as our defence campaign is now over.

His cultists were saying Fuckwit spoke for Faurisson as Chomsky did (though Chomsky spoke for the Gandalf defendants and Fuckwit didn't). Now they'll say he never spoke for him at all. The usual Noist 'doublethink'.

Why's Micah so dependant on Fuckwit? Probably something to do with his involvement in the Cambridge branch of Fuckwit's London Psychogeographical Association when he was a student and having no other mates then. He ran favour for the Noist early, trying to scare Cambridge Anarchists into disaffiliating from the Green Anarchist Network after Operation Washington started (contrary to his lies in *Green Apocalypse*, they were of sterner stuff than him), as well as soliciting *GA* back issues supposedly for the *Spunk* Press archive but really for his Noist masters. He did this whilst campaigning with us, Larry, Derek Wall and other loyal David Icke, which now looks like a cynical ploy

to worm his way into our confidence. Micah no doubt thinks he's 'big' as Noism's only untainted mouthpiece, but must now choose between Noist approval and the movement's.

FALSE FLAG

We thought *Black Flag* learned their lesson after 'False Flag' [see 'Liar, Liar', *GA56*, p. 17], only to find a 4-page attack in *BF217*. Like Bookchin's follow-up to *Social Anarchism or Lifestyle Anarchism*, they think a louder and longer repeat adds to their argument. It only discredits them further. Instead of repeating our earlier arguments, we'll show how *Black Flag* further discredits itself.

Despite denials, under 'Dancing with the Devil' [*BF217*, pp. 33-35, 38] lies Fuckwit's *Cult-Watch*. Like Fuckwit, they present the London nail-bombings as an 'irrationalist' act, even though Steve's 'The Irrationalists' emphasised *Statists* as targets. We're pleased Fuckwit's so upset by our reporting on these outrages as State-

orchestrated: we're on the right track. Like Fuckwit, *BF* attack *GA* as Malthusian, though by saying primitivist society will be impossible due to population pressure, they're Malthusian. We attack 'overpopulation' ideology yearly; *BF* mention it only to attack us. They know our position, and *BF* also mention John Moore's *Primitivist Primer*, which says

Ignore the weird fantasies spread by some commentators hostile to anarcho-primitivism who suggest that the population levels envisaged by anarcho-primitivists would be achieved by mass die-offs or nazi-style death camps. These are just smear tactics.

This refers to Home's hoax *Green & Brown Anarchist*, not "Brian Morris". *BF* can't deny their connection to Fuckwit, the Kate Sharpley Library sharing his Association of Autonomous Astronauts office at the 121 Centre for years.

They will, of course. They'll not concede the smallest point, no matter how ridiculous they

look. 'Dancing...' says [p. 33]

they have a go at point scoring about how we appear to believe there were several Bologna bombings, when the article clearly employs the word "bombing", in the singular

only to quote the offending passage half a page later ("the fascist bombings of Bologna railway station") proving we were right and they used the plural after all. Though trivial, this shows the flat denials of the accompanying 'How wrong can they be?' [*BF217*, p. 32] really show how wrong *Black Flag* is. To take one example, they insist

DA and *Black Flag* are not laid out on the same software, and are not even printed in the same country.

Anyone with eyes can see they're laid out the same, that claims of publication in different countries are a tad disingenuous. "Anyone with notice for the scene" knows 'False Flag's' 95% on target and was pleased to see *BF* bullshitters

and slag-artists getting their comeuppance at last. *BF*'s comments are directed at the naive still conned by their bogus public image.

As a critique of primitivism, 'Dancing...' is remarkable in never mentioning the Primitive. In claiming Zerzan sees all activity as reifying, *BF* expose their own instrumental mentality, which'll forever deny us freedom. Zerzan actually says revolutionary action comes from overcoming reification. By displaying incomprehension at *GA*'s anti-ideological stance, *BF* shows themselves up as ideologues. As anti-ideologues, our main role is to critique them as counter-revolutionary racketeers. They say we've no agency for social change save—as they admit John Moore argues, ourselves and our desires—but then concede their agency, "a working class anarchist movement... does not exist now". Instead of people realising their desires, they see revolution coming from their manipulative anarcho-syndicalist ideologues. In other words, they intend to "force people to be free" ("in Rousseau's evil phrase") just like any other

arrogant Leftist vanguard. Not that they'll free them and not everyone either, only the classical proletariat, who they hilariously quote Bakunin as "the great Satan". If they'd read John Moore's analysis of *Paradise Lost* in *Anarchy & Ecstasy* [pp. 4-14], they'd appreciate primal chaos is counterposed to all of Milton's angels as the true alternative. Meltzer was wrong to say the working class is the only one that "does not need to exploit", in fact the industrial proletariat beloved of syndicalism implies a ruling class to coordinate and maintain mass production just as "the great Satan" theologically implies a God to order Heaven. Only those breaking free of such production are free to smash it from without, to live their own lives autonomously and still eat. Because *BF* are buried in Victorian dogma contrary to this, they are counter-revolutionaries and their shallow, Fuckwit-driven intervention shows how desperate a last gasp it really is.

The Irrationalists 7

#57_58 Autumn 1999

new counsellors replace the "traitors" shows gorying the... Periman, *op cit*, p. 213.

THE IRRATIONALISTS 7¹

Steve Booth restates his controversial 'Irrationalists' article, which has so upset the anarcho-establishment

INTRODUCTION

What a fuss and a bleating of sheep there was over my *Irrationalists* article in *GA51*, pp. 11-12 (Spring 1998). Mind you, it took those whining counter-revolutionaries long enough to wake up: that article was originally published in April 1996, and the first *Irrationalist* article published in 1993. Duh! Slow readers.

Best to start with a clear definition of what the whole thing is about.²

Irrationalists commit acts of intense violence against the system. There are no obvious motives, no patterns, no warnings. There is no organisation to control the Irrationalists, no organisation making claims, offering apologies or explanations. Irrationalists are not seeking publicity for their actions, nor are they *intent* on negotiation with the system. They have no demands. Physical destruction of the system is all.

The fact I title these the Irrationalists with a capital 'I' indicates I am using the word in a special sense. In some respects, the Irrationalists are supremely rational, a fact which infuriates my opponents. Now, I have to say that here, I have no concrete examples of what I have termed "Irrationalism". As far as I know, there have been no real examples. If it happens, it might be 20 years or more in the future - or it may already have started, but we don't know about it. This puts me at a disadvantage, for if I begin to discuss examples of real events, like Oklahoma or the Aum cult gas attack, which could resemble Irrationalist actions, zero integrity opponents of *GA* like the lying Neosts, the fabricating Freedomoids, or bullshitting Black Flagists will jump on them and say "He is endorsing militias", "He

supports crazy Buddhist gas cults" etc.³ This is not about ideology but about which methods of activity will be effective, or even possible, in the future.⁴

Supposing I said "Boadicea had the right idea" sensible people would understand this well enough. I'd be writing about that chariot with the knives sticking outside to slice off the Romans' legs, and saying the chariot was an effective weapon. Liars and distorters like yourselves and the Neosts would misrepresent this as an endorsement of Boadicea's Iceni nationalist politics, or social policy of infanticide, or some other such thing.

Another point which ought to be stressed is that I personally don't like my theories about the Irrationalists. The issue is not whether you or I like it, but is this true? Hampshire police type prosecutors and their ilk might run away with the idea I am inciting you all to become Irrationalists. I am not. I urge you to try other ways. Work at your campaigns against road developments, genetics. Do everything you can to prove me wrong by your actions. Build a strong protest movement. Perhaps that way, the Irrationalists will never happen. If it does, it will be because all our present day campaigns and such have failed, and the state / system will

have systematically blocked up all the roads to freedom.

IN WHAT WAY IS IRRATIONALISM' AN OUTWORKING OF ANARCHIST THEORY?

I believe that Irrationalism is a logical outworking of anarchist theory, in response to a particular situation. As the state changes, so must anarchism. What is relevant in one situation is useless in another. How does anarchism respond to an absolute, totalitarian and all-controlling system? *Feebleedom, Yellow Flag*, the Edinburgh Automators Centre and Workerist TapeLoop don't have any answers. Accept the cyborg implants, suckers!

During the 1880s and 1890s, there were many examples of 'propaganda by deed', in France and the USA. In March 1891, bombings were carried out by Ravachol and others. In 1894, Caserio stabbed President Carnot of France. Emile Henry threw a bomb into the Cafe Terminus. Leon Czolgosz assassinated the US president McKinley in 1901. If anarchists criticise these examples, they can also be used to show right from wrong. Few anarchists would not rejoice at the death of a president, but it is quite possible to criticise Henry for the indiscriminate restaurant bombing. Perhaps nobody would think that to be morally justified.

Perhaps the first Irrationalist was Lucy Parsons, at the end of the 19th century. People were starving in Chicago, and instead of killing themselves, Lucy suggested they take some of the bastards with them first. This at least is a moral act, for if each individual killed at least

two or more components, then the possibility of defeating it comes into view. There are more oppressed than oppressors; though the actions of *Feebleedom, Yellow Flag* and Workerist Tape Loop would seek to smudge the distinction and even reverse that fact.

The automators recently slagged off the Unabomber. How utterly predictable. The reaction to the Unabomber is one of those litmus tests of revolutionary intent. Though we need to be critical-not everything in the Manifesto is correct-knee-jerk dismissals show up their reformist, liberal character. The dogmatic passivists disguise their do-nothingism under a carpet of whelping. Rather than dismiss FC out of hand, these creeps should suggest better ways. That they never do.⁵

Revolutionaries must form a movement that is exclusive to the extent that it incorporates none but real revolutionaries.

THE STATE WE'RE IN AND WHERE IT'S ALL HEADING

The activity of the state / system is directed towards control. This is achieved through bureaucracies, taxation, regulations; but also through propaganda, the media, brainwashing. There is an inevitable tendency for this control to intensify.⁶ Today, surveillance is everywhere; CCTV cameras on every street, every main road, motorway. There are computer data bases and systems geared to surveillance, computer phone taps, e-mail reading, satellite cameras capable of reading newspapers or crazy paving slabs in the garden. Or what about the Internet, mobile

phone tracking and other stuff even worse than this?

Even today, the totality of this control is staggering, but it's getting worse. The future is a nightmare. Today, there are protest movements, and to the extent that these can be effective and change things for better, there won't be any 'Irrationalists'. So if you are really opposed to what I write here, that is the way to refute it. In the meantime, do you see any slackening off in the car culture? Is Prescott reversing his developers' bonanza? Did Mary Chipperfield get jailed for hitting Trudy the Chimp? Is the rainforest still burning? Is Des Thomas a policeman?

LIBERALISM BECOMES TOTALITARIAN

Liberalism inevitably becomes totalitarian. The liberal is a control freak. A look at the Labour Party shows the way it is all going, the puppets read out the script dictated by central office, straight off the windows of their pagers. Europe - a superstate without even the pretence of 'democracy'. The stitched-up devolved (ha!) assemblies of Wales and Scotland. 'Democracy' is designed for paralysis, to prevent meaningful change. The totalitarianism is found in the non-democratic institutions, TNCS, bureaucracies, the military industrial complex and the secret state - all of them outworkings of the liberal paradigm.

THE IRRATIONALISTS 7

Continued on p. 16 / ...

Steve Booth restates his controversial 'Irrationalists' article, which has so upset the anarcho-establishment

...

Introduction

...

.../ THE IRRATIONALISTS 7 Continued from p. 15

DEMOCRACY - People get what they are brainwashed into voting for
PARTY - Deceptive institution calculated to create illusion of choice in elections.

Liberalism hates protest and seeks to stamp it out because protest shows that everything in the liberal garden is not rosy. Police violence at Hillgrove is morally justified, because the nasty violent protesters challenge the liberal illusion. So what will the state do in the future, when the cameras follow every protester along every mile of motorway, though every street, back to their own front door? What of protest, when every phone line is tapped? Every conversation listened to, with powerful directional micro-phones aimed at the windows, every letter and e-mail read? East Germany had nothing on the liberal future, so don't even think of trying for meaningful change.

WHAT DO WE WANT? WHAT DO WE REALLY, REALLY WANT?

The need for change is desperate. At the top of our problems is the *de facto*, emerging all-world state. The answer is the opposite to this - devolution of power out to the local level, the village, the street. We seek the free political activity of all, local autonomy, local control over the use of resources, an end to the state and the superstate.

We need appropriate technology, a halt to this insane destruction of the rain forest, the end of the car culture, pollution, the wanton destruction of wildlife and consumption of natural resources.

We need justice between all people, an end to racism. Instead of this insane competition, let us have free co-operation, mutual aid. We need the elimination of the profit motive, an end to capitalism, its replacement with the gift economy.

AN END TO GESTURE POLITICS

This is the choice. Try this experiment. Write down your political ideas as a list of simple demands for change - you might start with "Devolution of power out to the local area". Make a list of about 10 things. Then ask yourself "Will any of these be achieved in my lifetime?" Do we stand the slightest chance of any of these things coming true? No. Instead, what we will be getting is more of the same - only worse. You had better understand that things will become a whole lot worse than they are today. People had the chance to change, but the Amex Gold Card, the BMW, and trip to Disneyland seemed so much more important to them.

The present system is incapable of transforming itself - this is the error of the reformist. Instead of changing the system, the system changes the reformist. Now parts of our protest movement are bloody brilliant, lets strengthen them and go for it. The rest, *Feetledom*, *Edinburgh Automotors Centre*, *Yellow Flag* and *Workerist Tape Loop* are all so busy showing their heads up their asses that they aren't doing anything. We need an end to gesture politics and a serious movement for change, people!

THE FUTURE - MORE OF THE SAME, ONLY WORSE

Listen - this is the future! *Jerry Springer* and *Countdown* will be intellectual TV programmes. *East Enders* will be a cheerful soap opera. The M25 will be twelve lanes each way. Everywhere will look just like Basingstoke. The hyper-market, the B&Q superstore, DFS furniture warehouses crowd against the edges of the bypass. The Internet! Ah, the Internet will be even more accurate as a source of information. Unemployment in the UK will reach 20m. They will still be bombing *Slobodan Huseinovich*, or if not him, they'll invent someone else, war is good for business and capitalism needs its wars like a vampire needs to suck blood. The stock market will go on rising, the Dow Jones index will pass 20,000 on the same day that 22,000 businesses are announced to have folded in the last quarter. And on top of all this, more gloss paint, politicians with even more latex on their faces than Tony Blair, and what isn't housing estate, bypass or shopping complex will be a golf course. Er - that's it folks, your future. More of the same, but much, much worse.

And this is how much say you have in the future as a liberal. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ And the sheep will all go "baah, baah!" as they graze in their Disneyland pastures, watched over by the hi-tech cameras and data

surveillance networks. Everytime they go past the end of the street, sensors will log the movements of their cyborg chips, computers bill them their toll charges as they drive their cars up the motorways. Somewhere in some dark, irrelevant Angel Alley, train-spotterish old men will still be arguing about Kropotkin and what a fascist misanthrope Steve Booth was. Conformist liberal-workerist sects will still try to pinch the last few members off each other, across this wasteland of automatons.

TYPES OF PROTEST GROUPS

So much for the future, what about the present? We need to think long and hard about what it is to protest. What constitutes effective action? Now, there are different groups with different methods, and they get neutralised in different ways. So, at a low level we could start with small groups protesting on local issues, like parents and residents campaigning for a zebra crossing near a school, perhaps. Further on, we might have people protesting against that new bypass, first in the public enquiry, then later, more protesters with different methods, banner waving at AGMs, up to digging tunnels and tree camps like *Newbury*. All of these are good.

The state's system will use strategies of control, isolation, diversion and containment. It is no coincidence that protest meets with the media blackout. With tunnels, bailiffs and Men in Black are sent in. To the state, it's important that new initiatives with real potential are marginalised.

There is an unfortunate tendency for types of protest to fall back into ritual. The police are familiar with tree houses, tunnels and 'D' locks, and know how to deal with all this. Protest itself then becomes institutionalised. We get long-standing groups like *Greenpeace* and *CND*, with a core of committed members who pull stunts like the Brent Spar occupation. These groups go up and go down - *CND* had a big surge in the early-1980s over *Cruise*. The *Spar*, the *Ken Saro Wiwa* execution back in 1995⁹ focused attention on Shell. Then there are many animal rights campaigns, the hunt sabs and then animal liberation militants who are on the edge of terrorism with arson, sabotage, letter bombs and even - if genuine - the Bristol University bomb incidents in 1989.

The best kind of political group or campaign is the mass movement. The poll tax was perhaps the last example up until now [1999]. Large numbers of people get involved. I'm were prosecuted for not paying, perhaps 250,000 were on the March 1990 Trafalgar Square protest, perhaps 50,000 were actively involved in anti-poll tax groups. With those numbers, a wide range of activities and initiatives ought to be possible. The problem is that mass movements tend to be short-lived, but they aren't so easily controllable. Anything can happen.

Moving over into terrorism, there are isolated individuals like the *Unabomber* or *Mardi Gras*. We get small groups like the *Justice Department*, moving up to quite large organisations like the *IRA*, traditional terrorist groups who use guns and bombs to obtain political ends. Even groups like the *IRA* can be bought off by being drawn into the political Machine.

THE USELESSNESS OF TERRORISM

Terrorism is a substitute for revolution. Instead of directly taking over the bakery, or burning down the torture baton factory, the violence of the 'terrorist' group is a means of pleading with the state. Partly, this effort aims at ordinary people, as if the state cares whether people are frightened (terrorised). Votes can only influence the system once every five years, and so terrorism is useless. Always, the state uses 'terrorism' to strengthen its laws, give MI5 more powers, a bigger budget, etc. See the effect of the Omagh bombing, August 1998, in rushing through yet more *Dracoian* powers. The liberal state becomes ever more intolerant. Terrorists want to change the state or some policy, or even become the state, and thus the wheel of oppression is turned. The lash goes on.

AN END TO NEGOTIATION

Most present campaigns exist to negotiate with the system. In some cases, negotiation is unavoidable. The campaign to release the *Gandalf* prisoners had to negotiate with the legal system. This some good can come of it. The problem is that negotiation leaves the system intact, able to jail other magazine editors, censor, oppress. Negotiation doesn't cancel the right of the state to do something, rather, it affirms it. Negotiation acknowledges their legitimacy.

Even if we don't get double-crossed, all we ever get from negotiation is an amelioration of

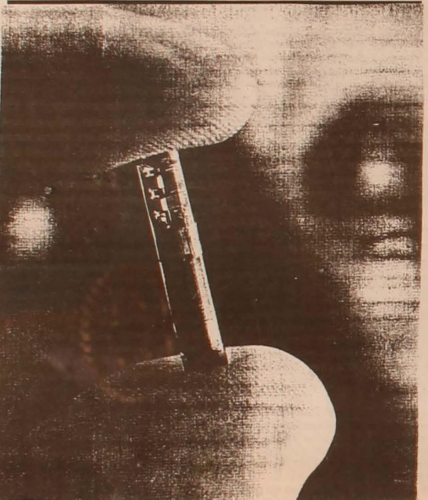
present conditions within the system. The iron knot grows ever tighter. You cannot negotiate with a systematic, total network of annihilation. Back negotiation and reform, and then, should our protest movements ever weaken or be neutralised, the state will still be intact, and the whip applied with greater severity. We need revolution.

Even if the protests movements were massively effective, all we would get is an endless round of negotiations, proposals, counter-proposals and stalemate. As the *Unabomber* says, in the long run, revolution is easier than reform. Why beg for a slice of bread when you can

government and MI5's own *Anne Machon* is in the Liberty office. How compromised does it have to get? Groups like *Chocolate Teapot* are part of the state, they exist to police and mediate the limits of dissent.

A LARGE, ACTIVE REVOLUTIONARY MASS MOVEMENT

Thinking about long-term possibilities, we might get a large, active, genuinely revolutionary mass movement, but if we did, it'd have to be on constant guard against reformism and recuperation. We need a clearer



CYBORG IMPLANTS - PASSPORT TO THE REICH

In the near future, chip implants will be fitted to every baby at birth, enabling the Machine to completely track everybody. Every movement will be watched, every word monitored, every financial transaction recorded. In such a future, freedom will be an impossibility. The *Freedom* magazine reviewer and robot, Kevin McFaul sneered at my previous description of the system as "automatons" (4th July 1998). Similarly, Donald Room pushed GIMOs in *Freedom*. McFaul and Proumetheus's roles in moderating anarchism are therefore clear. Perhaps eating Monsanto's ballshit has affected their minds, or perhaps cyborg implants inhibit frontal lobe activity in the brain.

have the whole fuckin' bakery!"¹⁰ Let us put an end to negotiation.

THE SPECTACLE

The Situationists had it right when they talked and wrote of 'the Spectacle'. The system absorbs protests into itself - even ETA, even *Sim Fein* can sit at the table. Everything can become part of this huge circus of alienation. We are all passive members of the audience, and the show ineffectually washes over us. Even worse, acts of revolt become part of the Spectacle-punk rock in the 1970s, for example - things to be commodified and sold back.

YOU CAN'T NEGOTIATE WITH A SYSTEMATIC WEB OF ANNIHILATION

Reformists and recuperators are ever beckoning at the door for revolutionaries to come and join the circus. Have you taken a look at the October anarchist bookfair lately, suckers?

GREENPEACE OR GREEN POLICE?

Existing compromisers and good collaborators all, the Office First type bureaucrats are always ready to turn your new protest group into a smaller negotiationist campaign. Watch the rigid rider inflatable race towards the Brent Spar. Buy the video. Once you set the office, fax machine, telephone, council grant (!), you get the hierarchy of professional campaigners, and the rest of you can just fuck off and fill in the standing order forms. You are already defeated.

MELTING MEDIATORS

Take Liberty, the chocolate teapot, for example. For sure the aims of Liberty are laudable and the grass roots activists with the standing orders are sincere, but whatever happens in the sphere of 'civil liberties' will always be mediated through central office. Once Upon A Thyme MI5 bugged *NCLC* and spied on their officials like *Harriet Harman* and *Patricia Hewitt*.¹¹ Now, *Harman* is in the

At first the NATO bombers hit the radar and defence missile sites so the Serbs couldn't see where the next attacks were coming from or prevent them. Then they went for communications, command and control stuff, Serbian army and government ministry buildings, radio aerials. They hit bridges, transport infrastructure. They hit oil refineries, chemical plants, power cables. Then they knocked out Slobbo's TV station.

RETREAT! RETREAT! RETREAT!

We have the *Feetledom* / *Automotors* / *Yellow Flag* / *Workerist Tape Loop* paradigm, and it consists of retreat, retreat, retreat, retreat, retreat, retreat! Never make a stand. Never do anything to stop the oppression. Never do anything real. Well, as yet, we don't have the revolutionary capacities to make war. *Freedom* ought to have a bit of a head start in this - it was founded in 1886. During the 1930s, anarchists went and fought against Franco in Spain. Imagine the condemnations issuing from Angel Alley and *Black Flag* if anarchists fought for the Albanians in Kosovo today!¹² Retreat, retreat, retreat!

Let us try to walk before we run. We are nowhere near where we should be. So far, this class war has always been one-sided. The system goes on kicking, the exploited never fight back. One reason this is so is they are continually being disarmed by traitors like *Yellow Flag* and *Feetledom*, whose false analysis blinds people to the real situation.

THE ANARCHO- ESTABLISHMENT: FRIENDS OF THE STATE

A real war is where they kill one or two of us and we kill 5,000 of them. A real war is where one of our facilities is destroyed and so 1,000 of their facilities are destroyed. This is war. Wars are won when the capacity of one side to inflict lethal damage on the other is so great that they are unable to continue. We have to be honest about this. The oppressor state continuously inflicts harm. We must see the role taken by liberals, reformists and recuperators like *Freedom* and *Yellow Flag* in this. They continuously inflict harm too.

NO CLASS PARADIGM

The hope is that large numbers of people will fight it. We can't rely on this, however. The class paradigm plays its part in disarming revolution by telling people to wait, to be passive, that revolution is inevitable, that they don't have to act - the revolution is somebody else's responsibility. The class dogma tells them the working class or a whole will do it. Against this, I say the revolution is down to the individual activist. I am responsible for what happens, and whether or not the revolution is effective. You are responsible. As to whether or not any individual really is a revolutionary, that remains to be seen. You and I are responsible for the revolution, the revolution is the sum total of what revolutionaries do. It's not the work of some abstract, non-existent entity. The revolution will never come out of the presses in Angel Alley.

WAR OR REVOLUTION?

The devout revolutionary hope is that the monosphere doesn't go on forever. That would be just too awful to contemplate. Perhaps it will be replaced by a free, democratic, just, autonomous society.

Something else might happen to disturb its repose. Fighting could break out between the USA and Europe, or USA and Asia. Perhaps a number of internal wars will develop in some or many of the developed countries. Perhaps we will see the poor fighting the rich. Perhaps factions within the New World Order will fight each other for supremacy. Perhaps the Third World will attack the developed world with plague bombs. Perhaps a renegade in the former Soviet Union will launch nuclear missiles. It might be that that crisis like these will be the catalyst. Best of all, a combination of these, for I have learned that the system can cope with one crisis, but if several happen at once, their effect is much greater. Edward Heath's government fell because of an oil crisis, a power workers' dispute and coal miners' strike all at once.

Perhaps we will get a nihilistic war where large groups of poor people smash it all to pieces, just for the sheer joy of smashing it. Even this would be preferable to the Machine continuing forever.

HOW WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE?

Somewhere in between the all-out revolutionary war and where we are today, there will come a point where protest groups become massively ineffectual, and somebody becomes an Irrationalist. This will be completely different to individuals like the

Unabomber or Mardi Gra. It won't be about publicity or blackmail. Those aims are wrong. Even big groups like the IRA seemed to aim at publicity—the Baltic Exchange, Bishopgate, Canary Wharf—they even named them 'Spectacular', and by that, observers could see they were being sucked into the publicity vortex. The spectaculars were publicity stunts, not qualitatively different from the Greenpeace rigid raiders racing towards the Brent Spar. The bombing was essentially as negotiation counter. We know all about negotiations.

ON THE AGO TRIP - STRAIGHT TO JAIL

Behind the Mardi Gra, or each group with a name, there is an egomaniac, trying to be noticed. Look at me! Whenever something like this happens, it's generally a day or less before the perpetrator rings the papers, claiming the action on behalf of some hitherto unknown group with a silly name. So, the purpose is seen and the state can begin to trawl through its data base. With surveillance technology, they can watch everybody. The actor begins a series, falls into a pattern, becomes predictable, and so is caught.

DESPERATELY SEEKING CLOSURE

Suppose nobody claimed the action? Suppose nobody explained? No silly names. No phone calls to newspapers. No voicemail. No call traces. (Soon they will put a camera in every public phone box). This wait between the explosion etc and phone claim is always the most interesting because the event is still unexplained. Suppose that call never came? The spectacle *hates* the unexplained - loses ends left dangling. Perhaps the media wouldn't report the event, but that doesn't matter. The event itself was not a means to a means to an end and not a negotiationist publicity stunt.

Then, many different unknown groups would rush in and claim it. Cranks. Perhaps even the state would invent a group. It might even call them 'the Irrationalists' but that misses the point. If you hear of a group called this, you will know it's the state.

ONE GOVERNMENT OFFICE BLOCK, ONE BLUE TRUCK!

What is so wrong with idiots like *Yellow Flag* or the Edinburgh Automotons? How is it that they so love their oppressors? People like the Edinburgh Automotons are so every self-righteously upset about the thought of government office blocks being blown to bits. As shown by *GA Irresponsible & the Militant* leaflet, the use of Oklahoma as an example doesn't imply support for the US militia. Take the example of Princess Diana. Perhaps she was killed by M16. If this is true, then how hilarious! *The scam are killing the scam!* A government building can be replaced in six months. It takes 25 years to replace a government automaton.

What is wrong with these people? Why do the anarcho-conformists defend the passive mass? Are they trying to curry favour with the lottery ticket Big Mac buyers? Do they delude themselves that the Toddman will rush to their defence when radicalism is finally suppressed, and the Cornerbook Resources Centre, the I In 12 Club and the rest lose their grants? Do the Workerists think the masses will riot on the streets when EMI quit funding Chumba-Bungah and their patronage pyramid collapses? They didn't for the GLC. Do the anarcho-establishment think the passive Toddman will physically halt Operation Washington, phase 129, and defend the hallowed precincts of Aldgate Press when the Hampshire Gestapo finally get round to closing it? DREAM ON SUCKERS!

A MEASURED AND PROPORTIONATE RESPONSE

What's wrong with these people that they so love their oppressors? ACE and the others are so very upset about Aum Shin Rikyo. Commenters and city of London financial sector components, dedicated to turning the wheels of capitalism, rushing to work on the Underground. All those big multinational companies concentrated in the Square Mile of the City of London, tearing down the rain forests. Shell in Nigeria backing genocide, the global system. Or perhaps civil servants in the CSA, Home Office (take off your balacava!) cameras and the cyborg implants. Or perhaps they work in the media, pushing out yet more lies, bullshit, propaganda, pacifying chat shows, crap shows, soap opera for the sheep to consume, all travelling on the Underground. Taxpayers one and all. How just and proportionate that they should breathe sarin.

When the guilty mingle with the innocent, such casualties as those are inevitable.

MET POLICE SPOKESMAN after the 1990 Trafalgar Square poll tax riot

Perhaps the Irrationalists will adopt the same logical and focused target criteria as the New World Order does. As the US did when it bombed that pharmaceutical factory in Sudan (August 1998). As the US did when it bombed the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade (May 1999). As the US did when it fired missiles into Pakistan, thinking it was Afghanistan, or when the US fired missiles into Bulgaria, thinking it was Yugoslavia. "Procedures have been tightened up, and this will not happen again" (until next time). Collateral damage is also a form of protest, a way of conducting a 'campaign'. Anarchist Serapyard and other liberals aren't alive to the possibility that Irrationalist target methods might well be some form of satire (although I decline to draw this as a firm conclusion for to do so would be to try to interpret these events).

No. The objections are a way of camouflaging their essential passivity. Rhetoric of class war. Whenever somebody *does* something, trot out those specific aspects of their actions, but never admit to the fact that you are passive, inert. Example: the *Feebledom* response to the Unabomber. What will it take to meaningfully resist the Machine?

ANOTHER ALONG IN A MINUTE

No call, no claim, no explanation. No pattern. There might be a whole range of things. Even if one group were killed or captured, it wouldn't matter. There's always another one along in a minute. (In my opinion, these people would first strap explosives to themselves and their houses, vehicles, etc, detonating them at the moment of capture, taking themselves and many of their would-be captors with them). What sort of events would they be? Perhaps there might be a truck bomb against a government building. Many automotons would die. Immediately, the collaborationists at Angel Alley and in the *Yellow Flag* magazine would rush to condemn the atrocity. Perhaps the unknown psycho-path would put anthrax spores in the Underground. Some politician could be shot down, flying in a helicopter or Learjet. Then at a big media event like the Brit Awards or National Lottery, a huge tanker of sarin gas might be introduced into the air conditioning system. Poor Chumba-wamba never even got a chance to reach for the ice bucket that year! All the time, no claims, no explanations, no oxygen of publicity. I AM NOT SAYING THAT THESE EVENTS OUGHT TO BE DONE, BUT SIMPLY PROVIDING EXAMPLES OF THINGS THAT MIGHT HAPPEN.

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

Somehow, deadly poisonous contaminated drugs, fake ecstasy tablets, got into the drug market. Film stars and celebrities were all sitting in some plush London restaurant when in walked those masked Irrationalist gun men, the firing Kalashnikovs, throwing grenades. Thames was clogged with hundreds of very small, smart, hi-tech mines, which the Oxford and Cambridge boat race rowed into. BOOM! GLUG GLUG! Then there was a biological warfare attack on Wimbledon.

JUST ONE DAMNED THING AFTER ANOTHER

A crop sprayer or microlight aircraft sprayed botulin across the city. Random jamming of TV programmes began to upset the remaining hanging from isolated motorway bridges and broken down CCTV camera poles. A new, artificial intelligence robot road sweeper machine might be used to deliver a bomb to a fast food restaurant. Perhaps there will be a sarin attack on a public school. Hackers might spread sophisticated computer viruses, paralysing communications or engineering a global series of stock market crashes. Perhaps there will be a suicide bomb attack on the state opening of Parliament. Maybe there will be a missile attack on a court building during a show trial...

All of these terrible events are quite possible in the future. No named groups. No explanations. No motives. No patterns, no warnings. No organisation. No demands.

EAT SHIT OR FIGHT BACK: THE CHOICE IS YOURS

Is it ethical to attempt this kind of war? The choice is going to be to collaborate, to do nothing, or to fight it. And if only a few are fighting, these kind of events are more likely. The bigger the movement the less the violence. Not all of these events are of equal value, but even the bad examples serve a purpose here, in that they point to better. Even the nihilistic war of destruction is preferable to the Machine continuing unchecked, that Iron Jackraboot grinding down on the human face forever.

AND THE INNOCENT?

What about the innocent? "In war there are no innocent victims."¹⁴ Sartre is wrong here, yet he has a point. The world is made up of collaborators, and those fighting it.

There are a few innocents in the middle; babies, children, mental cases, but the vast majority of people have their eyes wide open and have made their choices. Part of the function of the liberal propaganda of pseudo-revolutionaries is to obscure that distinction, but you really can't get over it. Having your eyes open is a defining characteristic of entry into any putative moral community.

TWO CLASSES OF PEOPLE

It's necessary to have an objective understanding of the state. The system really is like that. The cameras and phone taps really are on every street corner or in every exchange. In this total, all-enveloping negation of freedom and value, neither my life nor my death count so much as the war to destroy all that. There are only two classes of people - collaborators and resisters.

JOINING THE CONSPIRACY

In the earlier articles, I wrote about Stauffenberg's attempt to kill Hitler. Naturally, this was taken as an endorsement of Stauffenberg's politics, which it was not. How can anybody inside Hitler's bunker be innocent? Stauffenberg should have stayed with his briefcase, to be sure of finishing the job. Activists need that degree of commitment to their projects.

WHO CAN BE INNOCENT, INSIDE THE GRAND HOTEL?

To put the same point with a different example. Who would cry for the October 1984 Brighton bomb victims? To stand inside the hotel during a Conservative Party conference is to support their policies, and brings with it certain consequences. Remember, a 9 second phone call is all it takes to be jailed for conspiracy.

THE WORKER IS ALWAYS RIGHT?

It cuts across the Workerist dogma that whatever the worker does is always right. Even poll tax bailiffs, Men in Black tunnel evictors, and the JCB operators who dig the mass graves in Kosovo are workers. The JCB shovel blade is the cutting edge of totalitarian oppression. Tax payers finance CCTV's and those cyborg implants. The firebraker extends almost everywhere. Any response which doesn't deal with that passive mass who permit and tolerate all this will be incomplete, and will fail.

INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS ARE MORALLY WRONG

It is wrong to spray ebola virus from microlights over cities. Indiscriminate attacks are wrong. We must take care that we don't become as ethically void as that thing we fight. Yet, if it happens, it's quite understandable. We can see why groups like the Aum cult would do this. Inside the torture house of modern cities, events like these are inevitable. Part of the reason why these indiscriminate attacks are wrong is pragmatic - they alienate public support. Groups like Aum Shin Rikyo care nothing for public support. It's naive to think the system will permit public support for even the best action. I want to go further than this, there has to be an ethical content to an action. Yet in the nihilistic war, there will be indiscriminate attacks like those described above. Everything depends on hope, with hope things pull together and are more focused.

We know that whenever something happens, like the Unabomber, the state propaganda machine steps in to attack the event and slander the perpetrators. At the same time, the pseudo-radicals will do the same. They always

do this. They are responsible for the lack of hope.

PRECISE AND FOCUSED

It's not a question of ideology. The Irrationalists commit these actions (whatever they will be) for the sake of the actions themselves, and not some end / purpose beyond this. There needs to be a balance, proportionality between the material help the passive mass gives to the system and the event. The best events will be like pin pricks, precisely aimed at some vital part of the Machine. Radical resources are precious and finite, there must be an economy of effort and cost here. We cannot afford to make mistakes or piddle around. And as for those pseudo-revolutionaries who carp and whine against every real event which advances hope and brings forward the possibility of real change - they forget the anarchist principle that it is not for you to dictate to me the limits of my revolt against the system.

REFERENCES

- ¹ The six previous Irrationalist articles were (1) *Anarchist Lancaster Bomber* 4, August 1993, p. 7; (2) *LB7*, Autumn 1994, pp. 9-11; (3) *LB10*, Summer 1995, pp. 8-9; (4) *LB12*, Autumn 1995, pp. 12-14; (5) *LB14*, April 1996, pp. 3-6 (reproduced in *GA51*, Spring 1998, pp. 11-12); and (6) *LB17*, January 1997, pp. 12-15.
- ² 'The ABC of Irrationalism' in *ALB24*, February 1999, p. 15.
- ³ Zero integrity opponents of *GA* pretend that *The Irrationalists* is some sort of 'official' *GA* policy, or representative of anarcho-Primitivism. They know full well that this is not the truth. *The Irrationalists* is my own opinion, it is not any 'official' *GA* party line, indeed there is no such thing; 'anarchy is about thinking for yourselves', neither am I a Primitivist.
- ⁴ Letter sent to *Black Flag*, 26 October 1998.
- ⁵ Ted Kaczynski in *Earth First Journal* 1915, May / June 1999, p. 3.

⁶ A note to my enemies: Instead of making up stories or slugging *GA*, try attacking this premise of my argument, that within the liberal state, control relentlessly intensifies. But observation of the liberal state over many years shows that control does indeed intensify.

⁷ William Morris's *News from Nowhere* - see *GA40/41*, Spring 1997, pp. 12-13.

⁸ 10 November 1995.

⁹ W B Yeats' *The Great Day*: "The beggars have changed places / but the lads goes on".

¹⁰ The Unabomber's *Industrial Society & Its Future* (Green Anarchist Books, Camberley, 1995), s. 140 ff., p. 33

¹¹ This came out in 1985 with the revelations by MIS rebel, Cathy Massiter. *Blacklist* by Hollingsworth and Richard Norton-Taylor (Hogarth, 1988), p. 132

¹² Letter printed in *Organise* 50, p. 21. The Organisers claimed the Irrationalists had been repudiated by myself, repeating the false claim earlier made by *Black Flag*.

¹³ It's important to point out that I assert the right of Kosovars, Albanians and anybody else to use armed force against genocide. This doesn't imply support or endorsement of the US / NATO actions in Yugoslavia, Kosovar nationalism, etc.

¹⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being & Nothingness* (Hazel Barnes tr), p. 554, quoting J Romains.



SMALL ADS

WHATEVER YOU DO...

...DO WITH YOUR WHOLE HEART

PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED!

We're issuing Steve Booth's *Irrationalists* in pamphlet form as a big 'fuck you' to all the so-called anarchists who can't face the future and don't understand what free speech is. With all the fuss they've kicked up, it should sell like hot cakes - £1.20 via GAMO, BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX.

ALSO AVAILABLE BY STEVE BOOTH:

City-Death (£5), *Even Eden* (£3), *Four Brothers* (6), *The Ethical Void* (£1.50), and *Thomas the Tank Engine Meets Mr Beeching* (50p).

In what way is irrationalism an outworking of anarchist theory

...

The state we're in and where it's all heading

...

Liberalism becomes totalitarian

...

What do we want? What do we really, really want?

...

An end to gesture politics

...

The future - more of the same, only worse

...

Types of protest groups

...

The uselessness of terrorism

...

An end to negotiation

...

Steve Booth on the Irrationalists

Added to Insurgent Desire on 14 Nov, 2000.

It seems to me that much of the argument against my Irrationalists article concentrated on the examples of the Oklahoma bombing and Tokyo gas attack. In all this knee jerk reaction, the whole point of the article itself was lost. It is important to stress that I am not a Primitivist, therefore it is wrong to use the 'Irrationalists' article to criticise anarcho-primitivism. Nor is the 'Irrationalists' article the opinion of everybody who edits, or writes for Green Anarchist.

To deal with the Oklahoma and Tokyo objections:

(1) GUILT BY ASSOCIATED METHODS

There are ideas and motives behind an action, and there are methods. These two things are separate. Do we blame tools for the use to which they are put?

The main objections followed the path that because the Oklahoma bomb was thought to be fascist, then the Irrationalists will also be fascists. Using the same form of argument they might as well argue Communists have used guns, therefore those who use guns are also Communists. Or how about if M16 assassinated Princess Diana therefore all those who commit political assassinations are MI6 ? If protesters ever throw tear gas at the police at some hypothetical future demonstration, heaven help them, for that will prove they are members of the FBI, because of what happened at Waco.

I say only a fool refuses to learn lessons about effectiveness from their worst enemies.

(2) THE DOGMA OF PACIFISM

Another type of objection is openly pacifist. These people claim that all violence in every case is wrong. It is a moral standpoint. While I have a great deal of respect for the people who hold this view, I disagree with it.

Many revolutionary people disagree with pacifism, for example the Black Bloc or the Unabomber. Historically, anarchists fought in the Spanish Civil War. Makhno, the 'Propaganda by Deed' bomb thrower anarchists of the 1890's, and there are many other examples. I say revolutionaries have used violence in the past, and are using it in the present. Their use of violence does not prove they are not revolutionaries.

(3) NOT NOW ... NOT NEVER -

At least the objectors under (2) are open about it. The crypto-pacifists people here argue against every act of violence, every case (eg at the November 30th 1999 Seattle protests) on tactical grounds. 'Violence is not in itself wrong, in principle ...' they claim, 'but in this particular case it was wrong, because ...' (usually that it will alienate public support). This position is dishonest, because the objectors really believe (2) but lack the guts to say it.

People like Ed Stamm fall under this category. Sometimes this point of view combines with the argument at (1) that to use contaminated physical means necessarily entails that the purposes too, or your ideologies, are osmotically contaminated via guilt by association. The violent people at Seattle, eg are 'really' fascists because they were abusive to leftist trade unionists and peace-police who wanted them to take their CS gas and police beatings like good little masochists..

The public support objection fails because the public vote for totalitarianism. The public buys the Big Mac, the public sit passive in the face of their annihilation, the public swallow all the media lies, the public does not know and thinks nothing of the totalitarian reich. With passive 'support' like this, who needs enemies?

(4) WE DON'T LIKE IT BECAUSE IT ISN'T NICE...

If all the totalitarian, global state / system continues to grow on its present curve, that will not be very nice, either. The onus is on the objector to suggest a more effective way of working.

What did it take for the people of the world to stop fascism? A world war. A lot of violence, and many people killed. What did it take for totalitarian communism to die? The Cold War, a lower level of intensity conflict, but drawn out over 40 years. The gulag, proxy wars like Vietnam and Afghanistan. With the struggle against global totalitarianism, the terms of the conflict are different, the way it will have to be fought are different. One aspect is that it will have to be fought on an ideological level. Yet it is also a physical conflict, and anybody who doubts that is a fool. Global capitalism, when it goes, is going to try to take as many of its dupes as possible with it, and will leave a catastrophic mess behind.

So much for the objections. Now on to more general points:

'IRRATIONALISM' AND REVOLUTION

The important question is how is it possible for revolutionaries to become and remain effective, or even just to exist in the face of this totalitarian, global system?

When every street has a CCTV camera on it, when every telephone call is tapped, when the state has computer files on everybody? I do not think the people who complained about the Irrationalists have an objective view of the situation. The system now has capacities for surveillance and control far in excess of things in East Germany or Soviet Russia. When are people going to wake up and act against them? How can they act against them? Do they care, even in the slightest, about human freedom? Like I said, they took down the Iron Curtain, only to put up the barbed wire inside their own heads.

WILL THE SYSTEM COLLAPSE OF ITSELF?

One possibility I reject is that the state / totalitarian system will collapse completely by itself in all its own rottenness. I think this is wishful thinking. Under this understanding of it, we (i.e. revolutionaries) don't have to do anything. Some even think the protest milieu is counter-productive, because it acts as a safety valve, prolonging the system, allowing its pressure to vent off. What we really need to do is weld that safety valve down so that the pressure inside the Reich increases until it destroys itself.

DO WE DESERVE TO GO ON?

Another understanding is misanthropism - that the human race is so bad that it does not deserve to continue. Eventually, in a similar way to the inhabitants of Easter Island, we will cut down the last tree or we will poison the sky and the seas so much that we will all die. I profoundly disagree with this opinion too.

TO BUILD THE STRONG AND ACTIVE PROTEST MOVEMENT

As I said in my more recent GA58 Irrationalists article, I shall be quite happy if events prove me wrong. Aside from doing nothing, the long term alternative to the Irrationalists is a strong and active protest movement. The recent Mayday events in London have some good points and some bad points and indicate the general trend. Formal organised protest groups have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. Some of them are intent on careerist concerns, media spectacularization, or are governments in waiting. They are innately hierarchical and manipulative. Events like 'Mayday' operate on a curve of diminishing returns. If we continue to follow that line, of hierarchical structures, and replaying past successes, then the 'Irrationalists' thing will certainly happen.

THAT 'LEFTISM' IS AN ESCAPE MECHANISM

Orthodox do-nothing and dying Leftism is a displacement activity, a mechanism for evading the present situation, and our ethical imperative to act against its injustice. This fact drives many of the objections. For were a new revolutionary paradigm like the 'Irrationalists' to come into being and to work, it would show up the total and absolute bankruptcy of all their previous meanderings. In my planned but unwritten novel about the Irrationalists the first action the Irrationalists committed was to physically destroy the power-centre of all the pseudo-revolutionary hierarchies. The 'it will alienate public support' objection above is part of that same process of displacement, for it may well be linked to the dogma that the revolutionary working class will one day arise and overturn their oppressors. Illegitimately, the locus of responsibility is shifted away from the individual on to the abstract, non-existent theoretical entity. Dying Leftism wishes at all costs to preserve their particular group's hegemony as the only true keeper of the flame of real revolutionary working class consciousness. Such a flame, for pragmatic reasons, must never really burn anybody.

As I say above, all truly revolutionary situations are an implicit threat to the status quo, and so will be opposed by the pseudo-revolutionary hierarchies.

NON HIERARCHICAL, FLEXIBLE, HYDRA HEADED MOVEMENT

If the protest movement hierarchies are by and large a bad thing, and the leftoid hierarchies definitely a bad thing, the broad and diffuse spread of protesters themselves offer the greatest hope. Some of the things going on just now are bloody brilliant; like the animal rights protesters closing down Hillgrove Farm, Shamrock and Regal Rabbits. The anti GMO thing is also brilliant. The example of the direct action based protest movement inspires others to take up their own struggles, eg housing estate residents against developers. We desperately need to self-coordinate, co-operate, widen out and deepen all these protests; act against exploitation, environmental degradation, injustice and state repression. Be like a many-headed hydra, flexible, changing tack and tactics all the time. It is very late, and the state / system / Reich is powerful, but the people against it are getting better at opposing it too. Wherever something positive happens, this weakens the system, and so is to be welcomed. In my opinion, so long as the broad protest movement keeps on building up and gaining momentum, we have to keep working at that.

Technophilia, An Infantile Disorder

by Bob Black

[A rejoinder to a polemic by “Walter Alter” published in Fringe Ware Review]

If patriotism is, as Samuel Johnson said, the last refuge of a scoundrel, scientism is by now the first. It’s the only ideology which, restated in cyberbabble, projects the look-and-feel of futurity even as it conserves attitudes and values essential to keeping things just as they are. Keep on zapping!

The *abstract* affirmation of “change” is conservative, not progressive. It privileges all change, apparent or real, stylistic or substantive, reactionary or revolutionary. The more things change — the more *things* that change — the more they stay the same. Faster, faster, Speed Racer! — (but keep going in circles).

For much the same reason the privileging of progress is also conservative. Progress is the notion that change tends toward improvement and improvement tends to be irreversible. Local setbacks occur as change is stalled or misdirected (“the ether,” “phlogiston”) but the secular tendency is forward (and secular). Nothing goes very wrong for very long, so there is never any compelling reason *not* to just keep doing what you’re doing. It’s gonna be all right. As some jurist once put it in another (but startlingly similar) context, the wheels of justice turn slowly, but they grind fine.

As his pseudonym suggests, Walter Alter is a self-sanctified high priest of progress (but does he know that in German, *alter* means “older”?). He disdains the past the better to perpetuate it. His writing only in small letters — how modernist! — was quite the rage when e.e. cummings pioneered it 80 years ago. Perhaps Alter’s next advance will be to abandon punctuation only a few decades after James Joyce did. And well under 3000 years since the Romans did both. The pace of progress can be dizzying.

For Alter, the future is a program that Karl Marx and Jules Verne mapped out in a previous century. Evolution is unilinear, technologically driven and, for some strange reason, morally imperative. These notions were already old when Herbert Spencer and Karl Marx cobbled them together. Alter’s positivism is no improvement on that of Comte, who gave the game away by founding a Positivist Church. And his mechanical materialism is actually a regression from Marxism to Stalinism. Like bad science fiction, but not as entertaining, Alterism is 19th century ideology declaimed in 21st century jargon. (One of the few facts about the future at once certain and reassuring is that it will *not* talk like Walter Alter any more than the present talks like Hugo Gernsback.) Alter hasn’t written one word with which Newt Gingrich or Walt Disney, defrosted, would disagree. The “think tank social engineers” are on *his* side; or rather, he’s on

theirs. They don't think the way he does — that barely qualifies as thinking at all — but they want *us* to think the way he does. The only reason he isn't on their payroll is why pay him if he's willing to do it for nothing?

“Info overload is relative to your skill level,” intones Alter. It's certainly relative to *his*. He bounces from technology to anthropology to history and back again like the atoms of the Newtonian billiard-ball universe that scientists, unlike Alter, no longer believe in. The breadth of his ignorance amazes, a wondering world can only, with Groucho Marx, ask: “Is there anything else you know absolutely nothing about?” If syndicalism is (as one wag put it) fascism minus the excitement, Alterism is empiricism minus the evidence. He sports the toga of reason without stating any reason for doing so. He expects us to take his rejection of faith on faith. He fiercely affirms that facts are facts without mentioning any.

Alter is much too upset to be articulate, but at least he's provided an enemies list — although, like Senator McCarthy, he would rather issue vague categorical denunciations than name names. High on the list are “primitivo-nostalgic” “anthro-romanticists” who are either also, or are giving aid and comfort to, “anti-authoritarians” of the “anarcho-left.” To the lay reader all these mysterious hyphenations are calculated to inspire a vague dread without communicating any information whom they refer to except dupes of the think tank social engineers and enemies of civilization. But why should the think tank social engineers want to destroy the civilization in which they flourish at the expense of most of the rest of us?

If by religion is meant reverence for something not understood, Alter is fervently religious. He mistakes science for codified knowledge (that was natural history, long since as defunct as phrenology). Science is a social practice with distinctive methods, not an accumulation of officially certified “facts.” There are no naked, extracontextual facts. Facts are always relative to a context. Scientific facts are relative to a theory or a paradigm (*i.e.*, to a formalized context). Are electrons particles or waves? Neither and both, according to Niels Bohr — it depends on where you are looking from and why. Are the postulates and theorems of Euclidean geometry “true”? They correspond very well to much of the physical universe, but Einstein found that Riemann's non-Euclidean geometry better described such crucial phenomena as gravitation and the deflection of light rays. Each geometry is internally consistent; each is inconsistent with the other. No conceivable fact or facts would resolve their discrepancy. As much as they would like to transcend the inconsistency, physicists have learned to live with the incommensurable theories of relativity and quantum physics because they both work (almost). Newtonian physics is still very serviceable inside the solar system, where there are still a few “facts” (like the precession of Mercury) not amenable to Einsteinian relativity, but the latter is definitely the theory of choice for application to the rest of the universe. To call the one true and the other false is like calling a Toyota true and a Model-T false.

Theories create facts — and theories destroy them. Science is simultaneously, and necessarily, progressive and regressive. Unlike Walter Alter, science privileges neither

direction. There is no passive, preexisting, “organised, patterned, predicted and graspable” universe out there awaiting our Promethean touch. Insofar as the Universe is orderly — which, for all we know, may not be all that far — *we make it so*. Not only in the obvious sense that we form families and build cities, ordering our own life-ways, but merely by the patterning power of perception, by which we resolve a welter of sense-data into a “table” where there are “really” only a multitude of tiny particles and mostly empty space.

Alter rages against *obnosis*, his ill-formed neologism for ignoring the obvious. But ignoring the obvious is “obviously” the precondition for science. As S.F.C. Milsom put it, “things that are obvious cannot be slightly wrong: like the movement of the sun, they can only be fundamentally wrong.” Obviously the sun circles the earth. Obviously the earth is flat. Obviously the table before me is solid, not, as atomic-science mystics claim, almost entirely empty space. Obviously particles cannot also be waves. Obviously human society is impossible without a state. Obviously hunter-gatherers work harder than contemporary wage-laborers. Obviously the death penalty deters crime. But nothing is more obvious, if anything is, than that all these propositions are false. Which is to say, they cannot qualify as “facts” within any framework which even their own proponents acknowledge as their own. Indeed, all the advocates (of such of these opinions as still have any) stridently affirm, like Alter, a positivist-empiricist framework in which their falsity is conspicuous.

So then — to get down to details — forward into the past. Alter rants against what he calls the “romanticist attachment to a ‘simpler,’ ‘purer’ existence in past times or among contemporary primitive or ‘Eastern’ societies.” Hold it right there. Nobody that I know of is conflating past or present primitive societies with “Eastern” societies (presumably the civilizations of China and India and their offshoots in Japan, Korea, Burma, Southeast Asia, Indonesia, etc.). These “Eastern” societies much more closely resemble the society — ours — which “anarcho-leftists” want to overthrow than they do any primitive society. Both feature the state, the market, class stratification and sacerdotally controlled religion, which are absent from all band (forager) societies and many tribal societies. If primitive and Eastern societies have common features of any importance to his argument (had he troubled to formulate one) Alter does not identify them.

For Alter it is a “crushing reality that the innate direction that any sentient culture will take to amplify its well-being will be to increase the application of tool-extensions.” Cultures are not “sentient”; that is to reify and mystify their nature. Nor do cultures necessarily have any “innate direction.” As an ex- (or crypto-) Marxist — he is a former (?) follower of Lyndon LaRouche in his Stalinist, “National Caucus of Labor Committees” phase — Alter has no excuse for not knowing this. Although Marx was most interested in a mode of production — capitalism — which, he argued, did have an innate direction, he also identified an “Asiatic mode of production” which did not; Karl Wittfogel elaborated on the insight in his *Oriental Despotism*. Our seer prognosticates that “if that increase stops, the culture will die.” This we know to be false.

If Alter is correct, for a society to regress to a simpler technology is inevitably suicidal. Anthropologists know better. For Alter it's an article of faith that agriculture is technologically superior to foraging. But the ancestors of the Plains Indians were sedentary or semisedentary agriculturists who abandoned that life-way because the arrival of the horse made possible (not necessary) the choice of a simpler hunting existence which they must have adjudged qualitatively superior. The Kpelle of Liberia refuse to switch from dry- to wet-cultivation of rice, their staple food, as economic development "experts" urge them to. The Kpelle are well aware that wet (irrigated) rice farming is much more productive than dry farming. But dry farming is conducted communally, with singing and feasting and drinking, in a way which wet farming cannot be — and it's much easier work at a healthier, more comfortable "work station." If their culture should "die" as a result of this eminently reasonable choice it will be murder, not suicide. If by progress Alter means exterminating people because we can and because they're different, he can take his progress and shove it. He defames science by defending it.

Even the history of Western civilization (the only one our ethnocentric futurist takes seriously) contradicts Alter's theory of technological will-to-power. For well over a thousand years, classical civilization flourished without any significant "application of tool extension." Even when Hellenistic or Roman science advanced, its technology usually did not. It created the steam engine, then forgot about the toy, as China (another counter-example to Alterism) invented gunpowder and used it to scare away demons — arguably its best use. Of course, ancient societies came to an end, but they all do: as Keynes put it, in the long run, we will all be dead.

And I have my suspicions about the phrase "tool extension." Isn't something to do with that advertised in the back of porn magazines?

Alter must be lying, not merely mistaken, when he reiterates the Hobbesian myth that "primitive life is short and brutal." He cannot possibly even be aware of the existence of those he tags as anthro-romanticists without knowing that they have demonstrated otherwise to the satisfaction of their fellow scientists. The word "primitive" is for many purposes — including this one — too vague and overinclusive to be useful. It might refer to anything from the few surviving hunter-gathering societies to the ethnic minority peasantry of modernizing Third World states (like the Indians of Mexico or Peru). Life expectancy is a case in point. Alter wants his readers to suppose that longevity is a function of techno-social complexity. It isn't, and it isn't the opposite either. As Richard Borshay Lee ascertained, the Kung San ("Bushmen") of Botswana have a population structure closer to that of the United States than to that of the typical Third World country with its peasant majority. Foragers' lives are not all that short. Only recently have the average lifespans in the privileged metropolis nations surpassed prehistoric rates.

As for whether the lives of primitives are "brutal," as compared to those of, say, Detroiters, that is obviously a moralistic, not a scientific, judgment. If brutality refers to the quality of life, foragers, as Marshall Sahlins demonstrated in "The Original

Affluent Society,” work much less and socialize and party much more than we moderns do. None of them take orders from an asshole boss or get up before noon or work a five-day week or — well, you get the idea.

Alter smugly observes that “damn few aboriginal societies are being created and lived in fully by those doing the praising [of them].” No shit. So what? These societies never were created; they evolved. The same industrial and capitalist forces which are extinguishing existing aboriginal societies place powerful obstacles to forming new ones. What we deplore is precisely what we have lost, including the skills to recreate it. Alter is just cheerleading for the pigs. Like I said, they’d pay him (but probably not very well) if he weren’t doing it for free.

Admittedly an occasional anthropologist and an occasional “anarcho-leftist” has in some respects romanticized primitive life at one time or another, but on nothing like the scale on which Alter falsifies the ethnographic record. Richard Borshay Lee and Marshall Sahlins today represent the conventional wisdom as regards hunter-gatherer societies. They don’t romanticize anything. They don’t have to. A romanticist would claim that the primitive society he or she studies is virtually free of conflict and violence, as did Elizabeth Marshall Thomas in her book on the San/Bushmen, *The Harmless People*. Lee’s later, more painstaking observations established *per capita* homicide rates for the San not much lower than from those of the contemporary United States. Sahlins made clear that the tradeoff for the leisurely, well-fed hunting-gathering life was not accumulating any property which could not be conveniently carried away. Whether this is any great sacrifice is a value judgment, not a scientific finding — a distinction to which Alter is as oblivious as any medieval monk.

About the only specific reference Alter makes is to Margaret Mead, “a semi-literate sectarian specializing in ‘doping the samples’ when they didn’t fit into her pre-existent doctrine” (never specified). Mead was poorly trained prior to her first fieldwork in Samoa, but to call the author of a number of well-written best-sellers “semi-literate” falls well short of even semi-literate, it’s just plain stupid. I’d say Alter was a semi-literate sectarian doping the facts except that he’s really a semi-literate sectarian ignoring the facts.

Mead’s major conclusions were that the Samoans were sexually liberal and that they were, relative to interwar Americans, more cooperative than competitive. Mead — the bisexual protege of the lesbian Ruth Benedict — may well have projected her own sexual liberalism onto the natives. But modern ethnographies (such as Robert Suggs’ *Mangaia*) as well as historical sources from Captain Cook forwards confirm that most Pacific island societies *really were* closer to the easygoing hedonistic idyll Mead thought she saw in Samoa than to some Hobbesian horrorshow. Alter rails against romanticism, subjectivity, mysticism — the usual suspects — but won’t look the *real*, regularly replicated facts about primitive society in the face. He’s in denial.

If Mead’s findings as to sexuality and maturation have been revised by subsequent fieldwork, her characterization of competition and cooperation in the societies she studied has not. By any standard, our modern (state-) capitalist society is what statis-

ticians call an outlier — a sport, a freak, a monster — at an extraordinary distance from most observations, the sort that pushes variance and variation far apart. There is no “double standard employing an extreme criticism against all bourgeoisie [sic], capitalist, spectacular, commodity factors” — the departure is only as extreme as the departure from community as it’s been experienced by most hominid societies for the last several million years. It’s as if Alter denounced a yardstick as prejudiced because it establishes that objects of three feet or more are longer than all those that are not. If this is science, give me mysticism or give me death.

Alter insinuates, without demonstrating, that Mead faked evidence. Even if she did, we know that many illustrious scientists, among them Galileo and Gregor Mendel, faked or fudged reports of their experiments to substantiate conclusions now universally accepted. Mendel, to make matters worse, was a Catholic monk, a “mystic” according to Alter’s demonology, and yet he founded the science of genetics. Alter, far from founding any science, gives no indication of even beginning to understand any of them.

The merits and demerits of Margaret Mead’s ethnography are less than peripheral to Alter’s polemic. It wasn’t Mead who discovered and reported that hunter-gatherers work a lot less than we do. There is something very off about a control freak who insists that ideas he cannot accept or understand are Fascist. I cannot denounce this kind of jerkoff opportunism too strongly. “Fascist” is not, as Alter supposes, an all-purpose epithet synonymous with “me no like.” I once wrote an essay, “Feminism as Fascism,” which occasioned a great deal of indignation, although it has held up only too well. But I didn’t mind that because I’d been careful and specific about identifying the precise parallels between Fascism and so-called (radical) feminism — about half a dozen. That’s half a dozen more analogies between feminism and Fascism than Alter identifies between Fascism and anarcho-leftism or primito-nostalgia. The only anarcho-leftists with any demonstrable affinities to Fascism (to which, in Italy, they provided many recruits) are the Syndicalists, a dwindling sect, the last anarchists to share Alter’s retrograde scientism. It’s Alter, not his enemies, who calls for “a guiding, cohesive body of knowledge and experience as a frame of reference” — just *one* frame of reference, mind you — for “diagrams and manuals,” for *marching orders*. There happen to be real-life Fascists in this imperfect world of ours. By trivializing the word, Alter (who is far from alone in this), purporting to oppose Fascists, in fact equips them with a cloaking device.

Artists, wails Walter, “don’t believe that technology is a good thing, intrinsically.” I don’t much care what artists believe, especially if Alter is typical of them, but their reported opinion does them credit. I’d have thought it *obnosis*, ignoring the obvious, to believe in technology “intrinsically,” not as the means to an end or ends it’s marketed as, but as some sort of be-all and end-all of no use to anybody. Art-for-art’s-sake is a debatable credo but at least it furnishes art which for some pleases by its beauty. Technology for its own sake makes no sense at all, no more than Dr. Frankenstein’s monster. If tech-for-tech’s sake isn’t the antithesis of reason, I don’t know reason from squat and I’d rather not.

The communist-anarchist hunter-gatherers (for that is what, to be precise, they are), past and present, are *important*. Not (necessarily) for their successful habitat-specific adaptations since these are, by definition, not generalizable. But because they demonstrate that life once was, that life can be, *radically different*. The point is not to recreate that way of life (although there may be some occasions to do that) but to appreciate that, if a life-way so utterly contradictory to ours is feasible, which indeed has a million-year track record, then maybe other life-ways contradictory to ours are feasible.

For a 21st century schizoid man of wealth and taste, Alter has an awfully retarded vocabulary. He assumes that babytalk babblewords like “good” and “evil” mean something more than “me like” and “me no like,” but if they do mean anything more to him he hasn’t distributed the surplus to the rest of us. He accuses his chosen enemies of “infantilism and anti-parental vengeance,” echoing the authoritarianism of Lenin (“*Left-Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*”) and Freud, respectively. A typical futurist — and the original Futurists *did* embrace Fascism — he’s about a century behind Heisenberg and Nietzsche and the rest of us. Moralism is retrograde. You want something? Don’t tell me you’re “right” and I’m “wrong,” I don’t care what God or Santa Claus likes, never mind if I’ve been naughty or nice. Just tell me what you want that I have and why I should give it to you. I can’t guarantee we’ll come to terms, but articulation succeeded by negotiation is the only possible way to settle a dispute without coercion. As Proudhon put it, “I want no laws, but I am ready to bargain.”

Alter clings to objective “physical reality” — matter in motion — with the same faith a child clutches his mother’s hand. And faith, for Alter and children of all ages, is always shadowed by fear. Alter is (to quote Clifford Geertz) “afraid reality is going to go away unless we believe very hard in it.” He’ll never experience an Oedipal crisis because he’ll never grow up that much. A wind-up world is the only kind he can understand. He thinks the solar system actually is an orrery. He has no tolerance for ambiguity, relativity, indeterminacy — no tolerance, in fact, for tolerance.

Alter seems to have learned nothing of science except some badly bumbled-up jargon. In denouncing “bad scientific method” and “intuition” in almost the same bad breath, he advertises his ignorance of the pluralism of scientific method. Even so resolute a positivist as Karl Popper distinguished the “context of justification,” which he thought entailed compliance with a rather rigid demonstrative orthodoxy, from the “context of discovery” where, as Paul Feyerabend gleefully observed, “anything goes.” Alter reveals how utterly out of it he is by a casual reference to “true methods of discovery.” *There are no true methods of discovery*, only useful ones. In principle, reading the Bible or dropping acid is as legitimate a practice in the context of discovery as is keeping up with the technical journals. Whether Archimedes actually gleaned inspiration from hopping in the tub or Newton from watching an apple fall is not important. What’s important is that these — any — triggers to creativity are possible and, if effective, desirable.

Intuition is important, not as an occult authoritative faculty, but as a source of hypotheses in all fields. And also of insights not yet, if ever, formalizable, but nonetheless meaningful and heuristic in the hermeneutic disciplines which rightfully refuse to concede that if they are not susceptible to quantification they are mystical. Many disciplines since admitted to the pantheon of science (such as biology, geology and economics) would have been aborted by this anachronistic dogma. “Consider the source” is what Alter calls “bad scientific method.” We hear much (too much) of the conflict between evolutionism and creationism. It takes only a nodding acquaintance with Western intellectual history to recognize that the theory of evolution is a secularization of the eschatology which distinguishes Christianity from other religious traditions. But having Christianity as its context of discovery is a very unscientific reason to reject evolution. Or, for that matter, to accept it.

Alter is not what he pretends to be, a paladin of reason assailing the irrationalist hordes. The only thing those on his enemies list have in common is that they’re on it. Ayn Rand, whose hysterical espousal of “reason” was Alterism without the pop science jargon, had a list of irrationalists including homosexuals, liberals, Christians, anti-Zionists, Marxists, abstract expressionists, hippies, technophobes, racists, and smokers of pot (but not tobacco). Alter’s list (surely incomplete) includes sado-masochists, New Agers, anthropologists, schizophrenics, anti-authoritarians, Christian Fundamentalists, think tank social engineers, Fascists, proto-Cubists ... Round up the unusual suspects. Alter’s just playing a naming-and-blaming game because he doesn’t get enough tool extensions.

“How many times a day do you really strike forward on important matters intuitively?” Well said — and as good a point as any to give this guy the hook. Riddle me this, Mr. or Ms. Reader: *How many times a day do you really strike forward on important matters AT ALL?* How many times a day do you “strike forward on important matters” — intuitively, ironically, intellectually, impulsively, impassively, or any damn way? Or do you find as day follows day that day follows day, and that’s about it? That the only “important matters” that affect you, if there even are any, are decided, if they even are, by somebody else? Have you noticed your lack of power to chart your own destiny? That your access to “virtual” reality increases in proportion as you distance yourself (a prudent move) from the real thing? That aside from working and paying, you are of absolutely no use to this society and can’t expect to be kept around after you can’t do either? And finally, does Walter Alter’s technophilic techno-capitalist caterwauling in any way help you to interpret the future, much less — and much more important — to change it?

Letters against Primitivism by Iain McKay

Green Anarchists celebration of terrorism against the general public

Dear *Anarchy*,

Reading your interview with John Conner (*Anarchy* no. 47) I saw that he states that Micah “succeed[ed] in getting a May 1998 LGSC speaking tour through Scotland cancelled.” In the interest of truth, I feel that I should point out that nothing of the kind actually happened. What *did* happen was that the meeting tour, which was being organised by the Scottish Anarchist Network (SAN), was postponed after Micah brought to our attention certain articles in *Green Anarchist* (namely the infamous “Irrationalists” article). I must stress this point as *Green Anarchist* has continually stated that we cancelled it at the order of Micah. Indeed, *Green Anarchist* went so far as to state that we Anarchists in Glasgow were “sheep,” following Micah’s decrees without question (anyone who knows the Scottish movement will know how far from reality such an assertion actually is). Ironically, the only people who did follow Micah was *Green Anarchist* themselves who took Micah’s wish as a SAN decision!

So why did we decide to postpone the meeting tour? Simply so we could discuss the issues Micah raised. Micah desired to have the tour cancelled, other comrades were not so sure. Unfortunately, the issue became moot as the tour was effectively cancelled by Green Anarchists assumption we were all sheep following Micah’s orders. One thing which we all did agree on was that the article in question, with its celebration of terrorism against the general public, had nothing to do with anarchism (and, indeed, humanity). Stating that murdering innocent people was the “right idea” suggests a deeply authoritarian position and one in direct opposition of the goals of anarchism — namely individual and working class self-liberation. Such a position, I would also argue, reflects the politics of Unabomber and, therefore, not anarchist. I quote from the manifesto *Industrial Society and Its Future*:

194. Probably the revolutionaries should even **avoid** assuming political power, whether by legal or illegal means, until the industrial system is stressed to the danger point and has proved itself to be a failure in the eyes of most people... the revolutionaries should not try to acquire political

power until the system has gotten itself into such a mess that any hardships will be seen as resulting from the failures of the industrial system itself and not from the policies of the revolutionaries. The revolution against technology will probably have to be a revolution by outsiders, a revolution from below and not from above.

In other words, the aims of “revolutionaries” is to “*acquire political power.*” This is may be revolutionary, but it is *not* anarchism. Anarchism, by definition, is against the acquiring of political power — it is for its destruction. Clearly this places the Unabomber outside the anarchist tradition and the anarchist movement, unless of course anarchism now includes those who seek political power (which makes the Trotskyites anarchists as they seek a “revolution from below” in which they assume political power). Perhaps this explains the earlier comment that:

193. The kind of revolution we have in mind will not necessarily involve an armed uprising against any government. It may or may not involve physical violence, but it will not be a *political* revolution. Its focus will be on technology and economics, not politics.

After all, if the Unabomber does seek “political power” then a revolution which had involved an uprising against “any” government could put the new government in a dangerous position. Having done it against the old bosses, they may just do it against the new ones. So it looks like Freedom (who insisted that Unabomber was not an anarchist) were right and Conner’s attempts to dismiss their claims misguided

Like all vanguardists, Unabomber downplays the importance of working class self-liberation. He states that:

189. Prior to that final struggle, the revolutionaries should not expect to have a majority of people on their side. History is made by active, determined minorities, not by the majority, which seldom has a clear and consistent idea of what it really wants. Until the time comes for the final push toward revolution, the task of revolutionaries will be less to win the shallow support of the majority than to build a small core of deeply committed people. As for the majority, it will be enough to make them aware of the existence of the new ideology and remind them of it frequently; though of course it will be desirable to get majority support to the extent that this can be done without weakening the core of seriously committed people.

Yes, the minorities with a “new ideology” who will lead the majority (after gaining their “support”, perhaps) to the new land... Well, I have heard that before and not from the mouths of anarchists. Yes, anarchists are (or at least should be) an “active, determined minority” but we are such in order to increase the influence of anarchist ideas and so produce a social movement which aims to transform society into something

better. Rather than get the “support” of others, we desire them to act for themselves, think for themselves and create their own future, for that is the only way an anarchist society can be created. We do not have a “new ideology” seeking to “acquire political power.” These comments by Unabomber indicate how far from anarchism he actually is. Rather than a popular movement against the state, his vision is of a vanguard seizing power even if they do not have the “support” of the majority of people. Democratic government at best, dictatorship at worse.

Given this dismissal of working class self-activity, it is not surprising that Unabomber argues that “revolutionaries” should “*promote social stress and instability in industrial society.*” After all, with the majority ignored until the “*final push*” (when they can help the new bosses “*acquire political power*” perhaps?) there is no real way to revolution. This, in turn, explains *Green Anarchist’s* support for terrorism — such acts do promote “*social stress and instability*” and so the revolution is promoted against the wishes of the majority, who, let us not forget, “*unthinking.*” Rather than an act of social revolt, the “revolution” will be the act of minorities who force the rest of society to be free (whether they subscribe to Unabomber’s ideas of a free society or not). The parallels to Leninism are clear, with the “*instability in industrial society*” replacing the inevitable collapse of capitalism as the catalyst to the new society. Rather than being a subjective revolt for a free society, the Unabomber revolution is a reaction to objective events which force people to his utopia whether they want to go or not. And, therefore, *Green Anarchist’s* support for terrorist acts — they may claim to be anarchists, but their politics drive them towards authoritarianism and vanguardism. After all, someone who claims that they would prefer “mass starvation” to “mass government” (i.e. existing society) hardly counts as a libertarian, if by libertarian we think of someone who supports liberty rather than an ideology (these words were said by a member of *Green Anarchist* at a London Anarchist Forum meeting last year). That someone who claims to be an anarchist could say should a thing is a disgrace — if liberty means millions starving to death, then is it surprising most people prefer government?

One last point. To state that “political anarchy has never existed outside of primitive societies” (as the interviewer of John Conner states) raises an interesting point. If primitive societies are the only viable form of anarchy (something that anarcho-primitives assert) then why are we living in a state-ridden, industrial capitalist system? If primitive societies are inherently anarchic, then how did archy develop in the first place? And what is there to stop the future primitive societies aimed at by anarcho-primitives going the same way?

Hopefully this letter will not be answered by the usual *Green Anarchist* tirade of insults they direct against people who disagree with them. Indeed, like Lenin they take a positive delight in insulting those who dare to question their politics. Perhaps by so doing they ensure that their politics are not looked into critically? After all, any one who does must be a “workerist” or “anarcho-leftist” or “anarcho-liberal” — and if not celebrating the murder of children by bombs as the “right idea” makes you an

“anarcho-leftist”, then I would sooner be an “anarcho-leftist” than a cheer-leader for terrorists.

Keep up the good work with *Anarchy*. I always enjoy reading it.
yours in solidarity
Iain

Bob Black and the primitivists

Dear *Anarchy*

I must admit to being perplexed where to start as both John Connor and Bob Black make so many points and claims. I will start with Black. Rest assured, Mr. Connor, I'll be back for you!

Black states that “an event which is ‘postponed’ and not rescheduled is cancelled.” As I said, the only people who thought it was cancelled was *GA* and so the point became moot. It is hard to organise a tour when one half thinks it has been cancelled and the other is horrified by the first's celebration of terrorism. The wave of insults and smears from *GA* made communication pointless. Black argues that “The Irrationalists” article “didn't celebrate the terrorism of despair.” It stated that the Aum cult and the Oklahoma bombers had “the right idea” — in other words, it explicitly *agreed* with that terrorism. Perhaps the “intellectual infirmity” Black insults “anarcho-leftists” with is actually a case of the pot calling the kettle black?

Black calls me a “censorist leftist” and that I cannot “understand a text may be significant to anarchists” even if it is not written by an anarchist. “That's where critique comes in” he enlightens us. Obviously Black has a different dictionary than myself, otherwise he would be aware that I presented a critique of the claim that the Unabomber is an anarchist plus a critique of his politics and theory of “revolution.” And how, exactly, am I “censorist leftist”? I am not a “leftist” but an anarchist. Moreover, did I state that the text should be banned? Or that anarchists should not read it? No, I did not. Indeed, I read it myself, found its politics somewhat authoritarian and saw their relevance to the politics of *GA* (which are not anarchist, if you ask me). Indeed, I quoted relevant parts of the text to justify my claims! Hardly a case of “censorship.” Black's passion for insults gets the better of his intellect.

He asserts that stating someone had the “right idea” is actually a “dramatic metaphor.” Bollocks. It is nothing of the kind. Here is the quote in question:

“The Oklahoma bombers had the right idea. The pity was that they did not blast any more government offices. Even so, they did all they could and now there are at least 200 government automatons that are no longer capable of oppression.

“The Tokyo sarin cult had the right idea. The pity was that in testing the gas a year prior to the attack, they gave themselves away. They were

not secretive enough. They had the technology to produce the gas but the method of delivery was ineffective. One day the groups will be totally secretive and their methods of fumigation will be completely effective.”

It is clearly stating that the Oklahoma bombing and the attempted massacre of Japanese commuters were correct. This is not “metaphor,” it is agreement. To argue otherwise is complete and utter nonsense.

Black seems to state that he thinks that the article is “idiotic.” Why? If it is simply a “dramatic metaphor” then why is it “idiotic”? Perhaps because it was clearly nothing of the kind? What *is* idiotic is to print such an honest account of your politics and expect no one to comment on them and express the obvious conclusion that they are not anarchist. In that sense Black is correct. Hence the difference between *Fifth Estate*’s printing of a silly article and *GA*’s printing of the “Irrationalists.” One was idiotic, the other stated that it was the “right idea” to try and gas commuters and actually blow up people. If Black cannot see the difference, he is truly lost to humanity. If he truly thinks my (and others) repulsion towards “The Irrationalists” article is simply because it “offends” people then I feel sorry for him.

Ironically, he (correctly) lambastes Chomsky and Bookchin for affirming “political power” and yet states that the Unabomber is “inconsistent” as regards anarchism. This is in spite of his manifesto clearly stating that “the revolutionaries” will “acquire political power” That is not “inconsistent,” it is a clear support for political power and for “revolutionaries” to take hold of it. Black’s hypocrisy is clear. He seems to have a problem understanding English (when it suits him). Support for terrorism becomes a “metaphor,” support for acquiring “political power” becomes “inconsistent” anarchism. He states that *GA* are “obviously” anarchist. When it comes to certain tendencies we can see that Black’s justly famous critical faculties are switched off and so there is cause to question what Black considers “obvious.”

Black states that my “parting shot” hits me right in the foot. Actually, it was serious question that I wanted answered. Black obviously judges me by his own standards. Of his replies, I would agree with number three — there is no guarantee that any form of anarchism will not degenerate into statism. We cannot predict the future and while I think anarchism will work I may be disappointed. Point One, however, begs the question. Why did the original primitive societies not see and counteract the degeneration into statism? They were surely as intelligent as the “future primitivists” will be. If they did not see the rise of statism, why should we expect the future primitivists to see it? Could not the very nature of primitive society contain the seeds of its own destruction?

Black ends by comparing me to a cloned sheep. How amusing. Do I wish to keep anarchism “respectable”? No, I wish to keep it revolutionary and anarchist in nature. Hence my critique of the Unabomber and *GA*. Shame that Black prefers to slander than to think. I do wish to “learn of” and “think through the anarchist implications of primitivism.” Hence my reading of the Unabomber’s manifesto, Watson’s *Beyond Bookchin*, and other works. It also informed my question which Black so clearly fails

to answer. Why am I a sheep in Black's eyes? Perhaps because I do not agree with him or *GA* and instead ask some questions about their ideas and politics? Surely not!

Now I turn to John Connor's letter. As pseudonyms go, I cannot help thinking that Tom O'Connor would be better as O'Connor's jokes were as bad as Connor's politics. I will ignore the usual silly claims that anarchists in Scotland are sheep, following our (*GA* appointed) shepherd. It seems clear that if you unquestioningly agree with *GA* then you are a freethinking, non-ideological bound revolutionary. If you question their politics or activities you are a sheep. Instead, I will concentrate on the new silly claims Connor voices.

He starts by stating I think *GA* are "Leninists." Nope, read the original letter. I stated there were "parallels" between *GA*'s politics and Leninism. He states I think *GA* are FC's "active, determined minority." Nope, read the original letter. I made no such claim. I stated that FC's ideas explains *GA*'s support for terrorist acts and that anarchists (a grouping I would exclude *GA* from) should be an "active, determined minority" but, obviously, not FC's one. Unfortunately, the rest of Connor's letter gets no better than its beginning. Nothing like starting a letter with obvious falsehoods to set the tone.

GA claim that "leafleting claimants about welfare reform" is "ritualistic political practice" and "is far more patronising, manipulative and futile" than *GA*'s work. Yes, informing people of what the state plans to inflict on them and urging them to resist and act for themselves *must* be "patronising, manipulative and futile" as *GA* disagrees with it. Fortunately, everyone else will see that it is, in fact, the opposite. It is treating people as intelligent individuals who can be convinced of certain things by presenting them with facts and arguments.

Connor states that I am "terrified, saying the resistance has to be approved by the 'majority'" and adds the slander that by "the majority" it is meant myself and "other SAN types." How false, banal and stupid. Firstly, where in my letter do I state that? Perhaps the little fact I made no such claim indicates why no supporting quotes are forthcoming? But, then again, Connor obviously knows I am an "anarcho-leftist" and so no evidence is required. Secondly, the twisted politics of *GA* are exposed by Connor's lies. I was arguing against the mass terrorism of the kind celebrated in "The Irrationalists" article (such as associated with the Oklahoma bombers and the Aum cult, both of which, let us not forget, had "the right idea" according to *GA*). Connor considers such actions as examples of "unmediated resistance" conducted "under conditions of extreme repression." He states that "The Irrationalists" article was a "discussion about dismantling" "Leviathanic structures." Two points. Firstly, it is clear that for *GA* you can only take part in this "discussion" if you agree with *GA* and think the Aum cult and Oklahoma Bombers had the "right idea." Otherwise you are slandered as a "leftist", "workerist" or whatever. Secondly, it is perfectly clear that Connor considers that these examples of "unmediated resistance" as relevant to the process of creating a new society. He states that I "libel" these acts as "terrorism against the general public" rather than seeing them, as Connor does, as the "activity" of "particular oppressed people

in their own immediate situations.” Let us not forget what the “activity” in question was, namely the blowing up of a government office and the attempted gassing of commuters. The insanity of Connor’s comments (and politics) is clear. It is obvious from his comments that nothing has changed in the last two years. *GA* is still celebrating such acts. I await *GA*’s defence of pogroms against Jews and an “un-terrified” account of the importance of the fascist nail-bomb attacks in London last year.

Apparently I have a “concern” for “legitimacy and representation” and that, therefore, I support “concentrating/transferring power rather than destroying it” and so I “fall” into the “typically Leftist role as ‘revolutionary policeman’ and retardant”! Where in my letter are such concerns voiced? Indeed, I explicitly called for the destruction of political power (“Anarchism, by definition, is against the acquiring of political power — it is for its destruction”) and indicate that it is the Unabomber who aims to acquire political power. Conner obviously has total contempt for the intelligence of *Anarchy*’s readership to misrepresent my letter so.

Apparently I repeat *Black Flag*’s “libel that *GA* ‘prefer “mass starvation” to “mass society”’ (what I actually wrote was “they would prefer ‘mass starvation’ to ‘mass government’ (i.e. existing society)”). Indeed, they present a lovely paranoid tale of how this “libel” came about. To set the matter straight, I did not “repeat” the *Black Flag* claim. I, in fact, stated what *I* heard, with my own ears, at the meeting in question. I can only offer as “proof” the room full of people who also heard this statement. Just to aid the memory of the *GA* member, I was the one with the Scottish accent. Perhaps a few more details will jog the memory? He will recall, I am sure, his mobile phone going off halfway through the meeting. And remember, perhaps, Donald Rooum’s question concerning the dangers of epidemics in a primitivist society? Or the wonderful answer in which the *GA* member informed us we need not worry about such occurrences as the groups would be so small and so widespread that disease would just wipe-out one group and not spread wide enough to be classed as an epidemic? Needless to say, our *GA* member did not bother to indicate how we go from our current population of six billion to these Hunter and Gatherer levels. Perhaps the excess population just “disappears” in a puff of (suitably enhanced) smoke? Or, perhaps, this is where the mass starvation comes in? I hope Connor answers these questions clearly, as it is his chance to set the record straight. Can six billion people survive in a primitivist world? If not, how is the appropriate population level reached?

So we discover *GA* yet again rewriting history. And they have the cheek to state **I** “play fast and loose with the truth”! Incredible!

As far as Connor’s assertion that “mass society” *causes* “mass starvation,” well, what can I say? Research suggests otherwise. The work of economist Amartya Sen indicates that class society and its property distributions and entitlements that create mass starvation. According to his work, famine occurs in spite of food being available. Indeed, food is usually exported out of the famine zone in order to make profits. Rather than “mass society” causing it, it is rather specific forms of society, class societies, with specific property relations, distributions and entitlements. If, for example, workers

owned and controlled the land and the means of production they used, then famines would not occur. Without private property, people would be able to produce to meet their needs. Which, by the way, indicates well how *GA*'s ever-so-radical "primitivist" politics obscures the real causes of starvation in modern society. It has nothing to do with "mass society" and a lot more to do with capitalists, the distribution of land and power and the economic system we live under. But such an analysis of the real causes of starvation is obscured by vague comments about "mass societies" having to be hierarchical. The capitalist class can rest easy — famines are not their fault, they are simply the inevitable result of "mass society."

Connor fails to answer any of my points and questions. Indeed, in answer to my question on the inherent anarchist nature of primitive society he mutters that it is a "boring" question, and "answered many times." He could at least point me to the relevant articles or books or, indeed, provide me with a summary of the answer, and so on. No, that would get in the way of the main purpose of his article, to insult and slander those who dare to disagree with his politics and point out their authoritarian core. So much for wanting to "clarify issues."

Connor ends his letter with some truly amazing paranoid speculation. He wonders if I am "really" Ian Heavens (indeed, he seems convinced of it). This has caused my friends and comrades no end of amusement. Well, I am myself and none other. How can I prove it? As well as comrades in Scotland, you could ask Freddie Baer, Chuck Munson (who should be familiar to *Anarchy* readers) and the numerous comrades on the anarchy and organise e-mail lists. Or, then again, ask Jason McQuinn who met me in Glasgow about 5 years ago when he was staying with a member of the *Here and Now* and *Counter Information* collectives. He will hopefully remember me (I remember asking about the "anarcho"-capitalists who I had recently come across on-line). If he does remember, he will confirm that I am from Glasgow and not, in fact, from England as Ian Heavens is. I hope he states so in *Anarchy* as it would be nice to stamp this particular paranoid delusion out before it fully joins the others in Connor's mind. Or, then again, ask the *GA* member who attended the London Anarchist Forum meeting on Murray Bookchin (but, given how hazy his memory is of that event, he may not remember who was there any more than what he said).

It is interesting that *GA* use the *Sunday Times* article about Ian Heavens. This article was slander, pure and simple. A piece of hack-work by a journalist Larry O'Hara stated had links with MI5 in his book *Turning up the Heat: MI5 after that cold war*. From this article they state Spunk Press "happily advertised bomb manuals." In reality, that claim was a clever piece of misinformation presented by the journalists. The article in fact pointed to a specific Spunk Press file. This file contained links anarchists would find of interest. These links included news-groups such as alt.society.anarchy and so on. These groups are totally open and anyone can post to them. The "bomb manuals" and other information the journalists were referring to appeared on these mailing groups, **not** Spunk Press. The way the journalists had written their smear article was extremely clever. It did not, in fact, tell a lie but it was so "economical with the truth" that anyone

without a basic understanding of the internet would be led to believe that Spunk Press stored “bomb manuals.” As intended. A half-truth became a total lie and one Connor swallowed.

This hack-work, intended to present an anarchist terror at the heart of the Internet, almost cost Ian Heavens his job (yes, like most of us, he is a wage slave). As it was, he had to drop out of Spunk Press and anarchist activism on the Internet to keep it (which was a great loss). If Connor knew anything about what actually happened with Ian Heavens rather than repeating the smears of the *Sunday Times* article, then they would know that Spunk Press does not “urge” terrorism of any form. I’m quite glad Connor has brought up the *Sunday Times* article. It shows how firm his grasp of the facts really is and how low he will swoop to slander those “sheep” who dare to question *GA*’s politics and activities. It also shows that he quite happily repeats the smears of spook-friendly journalists when it suits him. I thank him.

So, as requested by Connor, I have indicated why ACE and SAN “don’t disassociate themselves” from Spunk Press and those Connor thinks are its members. The answer is clear from my comments above — there is nothing to “disassociate” from. We, unlike Connor, do not take *Sunday Times* hack (and spook friendly) journalism at face value. We do not have to disassociate ourselves because the *Sunday Times* article (and Connor’s sheep-like repeating of it) is not true.

Perhaps Connor will come back and argue he knew all along the truth of that article and decided to lie in his letter to present an analogy with the treatment of *GA*. This is possible, if highly unlikely and highly dishonest. Sadly, the analogy falls as *GA* did publish “The Irrationalists” article while Ian Heavens and Spunk Press were set-up and smeared by the *Sunday Times*.

Apparently I “presumably” mean that by “Leninist” “an elitist ideologue ‘gang’ in the Camattian sense.” Strangely enough, I meant by “Leninism” (I do not even use the word “Leninist” in my letter) the ideas of Lenin and Bolshevism. Funny that, but then again Connor consistently asserts I mean something totally different from what I actually wrote. I also have no idea what “Camattian” means and so cannot mean it in that sense, assuming I did use the word, which I did not. However, this is all irrelevant as I did not say that *GA* were “Leninist.” I stated that the Unabombers politics had parallels with Leninism (“The parallels to Leninism are clear, with the “instability in industrial society” replacing the inevitable collapse of capitalism as the catalyst to the new society”). It is this parallel, looking to an objective rather than a subjective catalyst for revolution, that helps explain *GA*’s support for terrorist acts. As is clear from my letter, which Connor clearly misrepresents.

According to Connor I am a “hysterical” “Neoist-tainted workerist.” Also nice to know. It is also nice to see that Connor (and Black) dashed the hopes I expressed in my first letter. I had hoped that my letter would “not be answered by the usual *Green Anarchist* tirade of insults they direct against people who disagree with them. Indeed, like Lenin they take a positive delight in insulting those who dare to question their politics. Perhaps by so doing they ensure that their politics are not looked into critically?”

My hopes proved to be utopian. The level of Connor's response is no improvement. Indeed, he has included *Black Flag* into the diatribes and insults — perhaps the better to hide the politics of the debate beneath another layer of smears. Given that the *Black Flag* collective is claimed to be “Neoist-tainted workerists,” I have to assume that *GA* think everyone who disagrees with them are “Neoist” or “tainted” with it. Nice to know. Useful, though, to group all criticism under one banner, regardless of the facts. It muddies the water even more, as intended I am sure.

At least Connor's letter proves that *GA*'s basic politics have remained unchanged since “The Irrationalists” article. Black's comment that *GA* are not “celebrat[ing] the terrorism of despair” is refuted by Connor. They obviously do. Indeed, they consider such acts as praise-worthy, “the right idea,” part of the revolutionary process like strikes, occupations, and so on, indeed they are part of the same revolution in Connor's eyes. He states they are to be included with other acts of “liberation” which will “give the rest of us the opportunity to live autonomous, authentic lives too” (“the rest”, presumably, still alive after such “unmediated” actions). How can dead commuters, office workers and children “live autonomous, authentic lives”? Indeed, to call these acts what they actually are (acts of mass murder and terrorism) is to “libel” them. In Connor's eyes they are part of the “resistance.” He confirms the critique in my last letter. I thank him again.

He states that SAN acted to “anathematise and stifle the free speech of anti-fascists and anti-Statists.” How did we “stifle” and “anathematise” their free speech? Did at any stage we ban or censor their words? No, *GA*, then and now, still publish their paper, write their letters and so on. So how could SAN “stifle” them? Only by not organising the speaking tour. In that case SAN also “anathematise and stifle,” the IWW, the IWA, *Anarchy*, *Freedom*, *Black Flag*, and so on as we have not organised speaking tours for them either. Connor's definition of stifle seems strange. You apparently “stifle” free speech if you do not actively help someone spread their message! And do not forget that is why SAN postponed the speaking tour. We were not “manipulated by fascists and spooks.” We rather read an article they published which celebrated mass murder as “the right idea.” Connor's paranoid rants try to hide this fact under a deep layer of smears and insults but that remains the truth. Read that article, read how mass murder is “the right idea” (opps, being “hysterical” again!) and then wonder if our reaction was, rather, a human and libertarian response to it.

I have to say, in ending, that I am glad I wrote my letter. Connor's reply just exposes the nature of *GA*'s politics as well as their abusive and lying “debating” techniques. Rather than distancing himself from “The Irrationalists” article, Connor embraces it and still claims the terrorist acts of the likes of the Japanese Cultists and US fascists are examples of “unmediated resistance.” Looks like they still have the “right idea.” Nice to know. Rather than an “idiotic” article, as Black implies, it in fact represents the core of their politics. And that core is not anarchist, as I argued in my original letter.

I wish *Anarchy* all the best for the future!

yours in solidarity,
Iain

Bob Black, the Aum Cult and the Oklahoma Bomber

(letter to Anarchy)
Dear *Anarchy*

While I have much more important things to do, I will take the time to answer Bob Black's and Steve Booth's letters in *Anarchy* no. 51. I'm sure that no matter what I write, I will never convince either that their invented assumptions of myself or my politics are wrong. Still, the readers of *Anarchy* may find my comments of interest.

Bob Black claims that mass murder is "a tactic, not an idea." Interesting. So people who have tactics do not think about them? A tactic is an idea until such time as they do it, then it becomes an action. Clearly, Black is talking nonsense. He states he is "unable to imagine any ideas they [the Aum Cult and the Oklahoma bombers] might hold in common," which suggests a lack of imagination which is amazing. Perhaps the "idea" would be the tactics they were using? The ones praised in the "Irrationalists" article? No, surely not? Black is abusing the English language and the intelligence of the reader.

Bob argues that it would have been the "anarchist way of dealing with problems" to go ahead with the speaking tour and discuss face to face with *GA* the issues. Strange, then, that it was *GA*, not us, who decided to take our decision to postpone the tour as a cancellation and then attack us in their paper as "sheep," following our (*GA* appointed) leaders. And Black talks about "the shabby way [I] and my ilk treated the would be *Green Anarchist* visitors"! Yes, indeed, poor *GA*, having other anarchists hold them accountable for their politics! I wasn't aware that the anarchist way of dealing with problems was to simply switch off ones brain and not question the validity of decisions previously reached when new information appears.

I remember the meeting when the issue was first raised on whether to cancel the meeting or not and the decision to postpone it until such time as we could fully discuss the "Irrationalists" articles, the issues it raised and decide whether or not to continue with the tour. Next thing I see is *GA* writing in their paper that we had cancelled the meeting and that the Scottish Anarchists are all sheep (is that the anarchist way of dealing with problems?). Funny how a desire to think about *GA*'s politics and our response to them rather than mindlessly do what *GA* wanted equates with being sheep. But as I said in my previous letter, any independence of mind by other anarchists quickly results in them being labelled as "sheep" by *GA* and their supporters like Black.

It also seems strange that Black thinks that my letter was just a "painfully long defence" of what happened in Scotland so many years ago. Rather, as the reader would

soon see, the bulk of the letter was made up of a discussion of *GA*'s politics and a reply to the distortions of "John Connor" on my politics and who I was, distortions which I notice Black considers as not worthy of comment. Does he have so little respect for his readers that he feels he can rewrite history so? Sad, really, but I do get the impression that discussing their politics is the last thing Black or *GA* desire. Rather, we must take their word as to the "consistent" and "committed" nature of *GA*'s politics. Sorry, I gave up religion decades ago and I analyse what people say rather than accept it on faith.

It is interesting how Black portrays *GA* always as victims. Not only that, even when they advocate mass murder as the right idea, they are "more consistent and committed British anarchists" than people whose activities and politics Black probably knows nothing about. Sad, really, that Black has decided to show his ignorance of the Scottish anarchist movement.

Black's comment that mass murder was a "tactic" used by revolutionary anarchism during the Spanish Revolution suggests a desire to confuse the issue being discussed. Like *GA* defences of the "Irrationalists" article which equated the Aum cult and the Oklahoma Bombers with "Propaganda by Deed" anarchists, Black's pathetic analogy does damage not only to argument but also to the intelligence of the reader. If Emile Henry argued that "there are no innocent bourgeoisie", then Black and *GA* are arguing that there are no innocent people and so exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, are of equal worth as regards acts of "resistance." Apparently, there is no difference between the killing of fascists and pro-fascists by the militia columns immediately after a military coup and the planned gassing of commuters and the blowing up of office workers and children. Sad, really, that one of the best minds in the US anarchist movement comes up with such rubbish. Obviously the Durruti column would have had the "right idea" if they had just shot everyone who crossed their path.

I find it funny that Black thinks we have "ex-communicated" *GA* from the anarchist movement. Sorry, no, *GA* managed to do that very successfully by themselves. And, of course, *GA* never, ever "excommunicate" anyone (and neither does Black, he just calls them "anarcho-leftists" regardless of the facts). All this talk of "leftism" is definitely not an attempt to use guilt by association to marginalise other anarchists. No, of course not. But then again, it is easier to call someone a name than actually address their arguments — as authoritarians and authorities throughout history have known.

Black argues that "they had the right idea" was "a very poor choice of words on Steve's part." Looking at Steve's letter, published in the same issue of *Anarchy*, it's clear that they were no such thing. It must annoy Black that he claims one thing, and then a *GA* member blows his argument out the water in the very same letters page. First it was "Tom O'Connor," now it is Booth.

Booth states that I express "knee-jerk pacifist disagreement." How he knows this, I'm not sure. I discussed whether mass murder of workers was "the right idea" or not and, of course, whether it is consistent with libertarian politics. No mention of the

merits of non-violence as the only means of social change, but why let facts get in the way of a good rant?

He claims that the “Irrationalists” article was about “the possibility of armed struggle and armed resistance to totalitarianism.” He states that the article aimed at discussing the “shape of possible anarchist armed struggle in the future, and how such actions resemble” violent events “in the present.” Clearly, then, as the Aum Cult and the Oklahoma Bomber had the “right idea” then “anarchist” struggle “in the future” could follow this model. His attempts afterwards to distance himself from his original article fail as Booth, like Tom O’Connor before him, clearly thinks gassing commuters as a valid form of “resistance” (“resistance” to what, exactly? Working people? Are they the enemy?) and can be applied for libertarian ends (which makes you wonder how “libertarian” those ends could be, given the means).

He says that he wishes to provide an effective alternative for the “protest movements” which will make the “Irrationalists” irrelevant. Sorry, no, that does not work either as it still implies that actions like those of the Aum Cult and the Oklahoma Bomber can be considered part of the “resistance” movement. They are not — they are part of the problem and they share the same authoritarian basis as any state’s bombing campaign against civilians.

We can get an insight to Booth’s ideas from another of his articles (as posted on the internet at: www.insurgentdesire.org.uk/irrationalists.htm). There he argues that “there are ideas and motives behind an action, and there are methods. These two things are separate. Do we blame tools for the use to which they are put?” He stresses: “I say only a fool refuses to learn lessons about effectiveness from their worst enemies.” Needless to say, certain methods imply certain ideas and ends. The Bolshevik creation of a political police force (the Cheka) was very effective in ensuring the “success” of the Russian Revolution. It reflected Bolshevik ideas on the need for centralised power and party rule. It was *very* effective in ensuring the defence of Bolshevik power. Shame that it helped kill the revolution. Now, could there be an anarchist Cheka? Can this “tool” be effective for anything other than what it was designed for? Of course not.

Similarly for those whom Booth thought had the “right idea.” The ideas (“tactics,” “methods,” “tools”) in question were selected because they reflected the politics of the people who used it. They are not tools of liberation. That the actions were carried out by right wing authoritarians should come as no surprise as they reflected the anti-revolutionary nature of their creators. Moreover, they would remain so no matter the professed politics of the perpetrators (just as one-man management did not change its nature when it was inflicted on the Russian workers by the Bolsheviks rather than by the capitalists). But that should be obvious. Sadly, it is not for *GA*, which confirms my analysis of *GA*’s politics as fundamentally authoritarian. Such actions cannot in any way be part of any possible revolutionary strategy. To argue that they could be shows not only a lack of revolutionary and libertarian politics, but also a lack of common humanity.

Ironically, if we accept Booth's analysis at face value, we would have to admit that the tools used by the "Irrationalists," unlike every other, were simply neutral and could be used for liberation rather than oppression! Will *GA* start arguing that techniques, like tactics, are socially neutral? That tools do not reflect the ideas and interests of those who create and apply them nor shape those subject to them? That would be amusing...

Booth states that I "think anarchists who use armed struggle are not anarchists" and I am a "dogmatic pacifist." Strange, but considering that I did not discuss the question of violence nor armed struggle by anarchists, I would say that Booth's comments that I am "merely calling on *AJODA* readers to share [my] dogma" is really a case of the pot calling the kettle black! How can I all upon *AJODA* readers to share a "dogma" (namely "pacifism") which I do not, in fact, hold? Like Tom O'Connor's sad remarks in his letter as regards my politics, Booth's comments indicate how little *GA* are interested in little things like facts and evidence when they discuss other people and their ideas.

Also of interest is Booth's assertions that I use a "common technique" of "Neoists and Neoists fellow travellers" and am grouped together with "Micah/Tompsett etc." As I said in my last letter, the lumping together of all critics into one camp is a useful way of muddying the waters and so obscuring the real issues of the debate. And has Booth "answered" the concerns raised by his original article? Clearly not, as he can still think of these actions as being compatible with libertarian "resistance."

I also love the "this Iain character" comment, very funny! How dare other anarchists question him! Sorry, I had better name myself after a fictional character from a movie before I can discuss politics with (sorry, get labelled by) *GA*...

All in all, I'm not surprised by any of this. The ability of *GA* members to avoid the issues and instead invent the politics (and associations) of those who dare question their politics was proven by Tom O'Connor's rants two issues ago. Can I expect another diatribe about what I do not think next issue? Perhaps rather than make up the ideas I hold, they could actually address the issues concerning their politics I raise? But that would be too much like hard work, far better to smear than think.

yours in solidarity

Iain McKay
Glasgow

Support for Ted K

The Unabomblings: Communique

#1

#39 Autumn 1995

This is a message from the terrorist group FC.

We blew up Thomas Mosser last December because he was a Burston-Marsteller executive. Among other misdeeds, Burston-Marsteller [sic.] helped Exxon clean up its public image after the Exxon Valdes incident. But we attacked Burston-Marsteller less for its specific misdeed than on general principles. Burston-Marsteller is about the biggest organization in the public relations field. This means that its business is the development of techniques for manipulating people's attitudes. It was for this more than for its actions in specific cases that we sent a bomb to an executive of this company.

Some news reports have made the misleading statement that we have been attacking universities or scholars. We have nothing against universities or scholars as such. All the university people whom we have attacked have been specialists in technical fields. (We consider certain areas of applied psychology, such as behavior modification, to be technical fields.) We would not want anyone to think that we have any desire to hurt professors who study archaeology, history, literature or harmless stuff like that. The people we are out to get are the scientists and engineers, especially in critical fields like computers and genetics. As for the bomb planted in the [crossed out] Business School at the U. of Utah, that was a botched operation. We won't say how or why it was botched because we don't want to give the FBI any clues. No one was hurt by that bomb.

In our previous letter to you we called ourselves anarchists. Since "anarchist" is a vague word that has been applied to a variety of attitudes, further explanation is needed. We call ourselves anarchists because we would like, ideally, to break down all society into very small, completely autonomous units. Regrettably, we don't see any clear road to this goal, so we leave it to the indefinite future. Our more immediate goal, which we think may be attainable at some time during the next several decades, is the destruction of the worldwide industrial system. Through our bombings we hope to promote social instability in industrial society, propagate anti-industrial ideas and give encouragement to those who hate the industrial system.

The FBI has tried to portray these bombings as the work of an isolated nut. We won't waste our time arguing about whether we are nuts, but we certainly are not isolated. For security reasons we won't reveal the number of members of our group,

ARTICLES

THE UNABOMBINGS: COMMUNIQUE #1

**FC has warred on techno-industrialism since 1978 --
this is their 20th April 1995 statement to the *New
York Times***

This is a message from the terrorist group FC.

We blew up Thomas Mosser last December because he was a Burston-Marsteller executive. Among other misdeeds, Burston-Marsteller helped Exxon clean up its public image after the Exxon Valdez incident. But we attacked Burston-Marsteller less for its specific misdeeds than on general principles. Burston-Marsteller is about the biggest organization in the public relations field. This means that its business is the development of techniques for manipulating people's attitudes. It was for this more than for its actions in specific cases that we sent a bomb to an executive of this company.

Some news reports have made the misleading statement that we have been attacking universities or scholars. We have nothing against universities or scholars as such. All the university people whom we have attacked have been specialists in technical fields. (We consider certain areas of applied psychology, such as behaviour modification, to be technical fields.) We would not want anyone to think that we have any desire to hurt professors who study archaeology, history, literature or harmless stuff like that. The people we are out to get are the scientists and engineers, especially in critical fields like computers and genetics. As for the bomb planted in the Business School of the U. of Utah, that was a botched operation. We won't say how or why it was botched because we don't want to give the FBI any clues. No one was hurt by that bomb.

In our previous letter to you we called ourselves anarchists. Since "anarchist" is a vague word that has been applied to a variety of attitudes, further explanation is needed. We call ourselves anarchists because we would like, ideally, to break down all society into very small, completely autonomous units. Regrettably, we don't see any clear road to this goal, so we leave it to the indefinite future. Our more immediate goal, which we think may be attainable at some time during the next several decades, is the destruction of the worldwide industrial system. Through

our bombings we hope to promote social instability in industrial society, propagate anti-industrial ideas and give encouragement to those who hate the industrial system.

**We call ourselves anarchists as
we would like, ideally, to break
all society down into very small,
completely autonomous units**

The FBI has tried to portray these bombings as the work of an isolated nut. We won't waste our time arguing whether we are nuts, but we certainly are not isolated. For security reasons we won't reveal the number of members of our group, but anyone who will read the anarchist and radical environmentalist journals will see that opposition to the industrial-technological system is widespread and growing.

Why do we announce our goals only now, through [sic] we made our first bomb some seventeen years ago? Our early bombs were too ineffectual to attract much public attention or give encouragement to those who hate the system. We found by experience that gunpowder bombs, if small enough to be carried inconspicuously, were too feeble to do much damage, so we took a couple of years off to do some experimenting. We learned how to

make pipe bombs that were powerful enough, and we used these in a couple of successful bombings as well as in some unsuccessful ones.

[This section censored by FBI -- GA figures it details the construction of FC's devices for authentication purposes]

Since we no longer have to confine the explosive in a pipe, we are now free of limitations on the size and shape of our bombs. We are pretty sure we know how to increase the power of our explosives and reduce the number of

conditions are met? It will be to our advantage to keep our promise. We want to win acceptance for certain ideas. If we break our promise people will lose respect for us and so will be less likely to accept the ideas.

Our offer to desist from terrorism is subject to three qualifications. First: Our promise to desist will not take effect until all parts of our article or book have appeared in print. Second: If the authorities should succeed in tracking us down and an attempt is made to arrest any of us, or even to question us in connection with the bombings, we reserve the right to use violence. Third: We distinguish between terrorism and sabotage. By terrorism we mean actions motivated by a desire to influence the development of a society and intended to cause injury or death to human beings. By sabotage we mean similarly motivated actions intended to destroy property without injuring human beings. The promise we offer is to desist from terrorism. We reserve the right to engage in sabotage.

It may be just as well that failure of our early bombs discouraged us from making any public statements at that time. We were very young then and our thinking was crude. Over the years we have given as much attention to the development of our ideas as to the development of bombs, and we now have something serious to say. And we feel that just now the time is ripe for the presentation of anti-industrial ideas.

Please see to it that the answer to our offer is well publicizing in the media so that we won't miss it. Be sure to tell us where and how our material will be published and how long it will take to appear in print once we have sent in the manuscript. If the answer is satisfactory, we will finish typing the manuscript and send it to you. If the answer is unsatisfactory, we will start building our next bomb.

but anyone who will read the anarchist and radical environmentalist journals will see that opposition to the industrial-technological system is widespread and growing.

Why do we announce our [crossed out] goals only now, through we made our first bomb some seventeen years ago? Our early bombs were too ineffectual to attract much public attention or give encouragement to those who hate the system. We found by experience that gunpowder bombs, if small enough to be carried inconspicuously, were too feeble to do much damage, so we took a couple of years off to do some experimenting. We learned how to make pipe bombs that were powerful enough, and we used these in a couple of successful bombings as well as in some unsuccessful ones. Unfortunately we discovered that these bombs would not detonate consistently when made with three-quarter inch steel water pipe. They did seem to detonate consistently when made with massively reinforced one inch steel water pipe, but a bomb of this type made a long, heavy package, too conspicuous and suspicious looking for our liking.

So we went back to work, and after a long period of experimentation we developed a type of bomb that does not require a pipe, but is set off by a detonating cap that consists of chlorate explosive packed into a piece of small diameter copper tubing. (The detonating cap is a miniature pipe bomb.) We used bombs of this type to blow up the genetic engineer Charles Epstein and the computer specialist David Gelernter. We did use a chlorate pipe bomb to blow up Thomas Mosser because we happened to have a piece of light-weight aluminum pipe that was just right for the job. The Gelernter and Epstein bombings were not fatal, but the Mosser bombing was fatal even though a smaller amount of explosive was used. We think this was because the type of fragmentation material that we used in the Mosser bombing is more effective [crossed out] than what we've used previously.

Since we no longer have to confine the explosive in a pipe, we are now free of limitations on the size and shape of our bombs. We are pretty sure we know how to increase the power of our explosives and reduce the number of batteries needed to set them off. And, as we've just indicated, we think we now have more effective fragmentation material. So we expect to be able to pack deadly bombs into ever smaller, lighter and more harmless looking packages. On the other hand, we believe we will be able to make bombs much bigger than any we've made before. With a briefcase-full or a suitcase-full of explosives we should be able to blow out the walls of substantial buildings.

Clearly we are in a position to do a great deal of damage. And it doesn't appear that the FBI is going to catch us any time soon. The FBI is a joke.

The people who are pushing all this growth and progress garbage deserve to be severely punished. But our goal is less to punish them than to propagate ideas. Anyhow we are getting tired of making bombs. It's no fun having to spend all your evenings and weekends preparing dangerous mixtures, filing trigger mechanisms out of scraps of metal or searching the sierras for a place isolated enough to test a bomb. So we offer a bargain.

We have a long article, between 29,000 and 37,000 words, that we want to have published. If you can get it published according to our requirements we will permanently desist from terrorist activities. It must be published in the New York Times, Time or Newsweek, or in some other widely read, nationally distributed periodical. Because of its length we suppose it will have to be serialized. Alternatively, it can be published as a small book, but the book must be well publicized and made available at a moderate price in bookstores nationwide and in at least some places abroad. Whoever agrees to publish the material will have exclusive rights to reproduce it for a period of six months and will be welcome to any profits they may make from it. After six months from the first appearance of the article or book it must become public property, so that anyone can reproduce or publish it. (If material is serialized, first instalment becomes public property six months after appearance of first instalment, second instalment, etc.) We must have the right to publish in the New York Times, Time or Newsweek, each year for three years after the appearance of our article or book, three thousand words expanding or clarifying our material or rebutting criticisms of it.

The article will [crossed out] not explicitly advocate violence. There will be an unavoidable implication that we favor violence to the extent that it may be necessary, since we advocate eliminating industrial society and we ourselves have been using violence to that end. But the article will not advocate violence explicitly, nor will it propose the overthrow of the United States Government, nor will it contain obscenity or anything else that you would be likely to regard as unacceptable for publication.

How do you know that we will keep our promise to desist from terrorism if our conditions are met? It will be to our [crossed out] advantage to keep our promise. We want to win acceptance for certain ideas. If we break our promise people will lose respect for us and so will be less likely to accept the ideas.

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Free Ted!

#42 Summer 1996

FREE TED!

Stop the FBI frame-up of Ted Kaczynski

After 18 year of humiliating failure hunting the Unabomber, the FBI were relieved to announce to the worldwide media that they'd arrested Ted Kaczynski last Thursday, 5th April 1996.


Ted is a hermit whose lived alone in a mountain shack outside Lincoln, Montana, since 1971. He was so shy he found it difficult to talk to Lincoln residents when he got his weekly provisions from town, though he did manage to play pinocle with 84 year old Irene Preston. Townspeople can't believe he's the Unabomber.

The FBI acknowledge the unique craftsmanship of the Unabomber's devices -- even down to making his own screws -- but Kaczynski's cabin has no electricity and is lit by oil lamps, meaning he couldn't have used the precision power tools for such bomb-making. The Unabomber's a letter bomber but no Lincoln resident's ever seen Ted post a letter. Kaczynski's poor and got around on his rickety old pushbike or by thumbing lifts -- the FBI have the Unabomber jetting across Amerika.

The FBI says Kaczynski "matches the profile" but he's a decade or two older than they thought and from entirely the wrong background. They say he's been to town where the Unabomber struck but there's no evidence the Unabomber ever was -- he *posted* his devices. The *best* link the FBI has between Kaczynski and a Unabomber victim is that he applied for a job in Utah where a victim had fixed a computer eight years before! Such 'links' exist in only 10% of cases -- is this the best the FBI can do after interviewing 10,000+ people over almost two decades?

They say Kaczynski's soft cop brother found notes "ideologically similar" to *Industrial Society & Its Future* in his garden shed, but anti-tech ideas are common amongst US radicals. Kaczynski's mother was so sure the garden shed writings would exonerate him she urged the FBI to read them -- not knowing how desperate they were.

Ted "matches the profile" only because he preferred to live alone with Nature and so far has been too shocked by his experience to cry out against the terrible injustice visited upon him. The FBI present him as "mad", a "misfit", as he was conscientious enough to withdraw his cooperation from Amerikah society and because it makes it easier for them to get him executed as the serial killer of their idiotic personality profilers.



TED KACVZYNSKI, County Jail, Helena, Lewis & Clark County, Montana 59601, USA.

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...

Industrial-Technological Society Cannot Be Reformed

#42 Summer 1996

Mass organisation and the division of labour destroy freedom: extracts from the Unabomber's Industrial Society & Its Future

Restriction of Freedom is Unavoidable in Industrial Society

114. ... modern man is strapped down by a network of rules and regulations, and his fate depends on the actions of persons remote from him whose decisions he cannot influence. This is not accidental or a result of the arbitrariness of arrogant bureaucrats. It is necessary and inevitable in any technologically advanced society. The system HAS TO regulate human behavior closely in order to function. At work, people have to do what they are told to do, when they are told to do it and in the way they are told to do it, otherwise production would be thrown into chaos. Bureaucracies HAVE TO be run according to rigid rules. To allow any substantial personal discretion to lower-level bureaucrats would disrupt the system and lead to charges of unfairness due to differences in the way individual bureaucrats exercised their discretion. It is true that some restrictions on our freedom could be eliminated. but GENERALLY SPEAKING the regulation of our lives by large organizations is necessary for the functioning of industrial-technological society. The result is a sense of powerlessness on the part of the average person. It may be, however, that formal regulations will tend increasingly to be replaced by psychological tools that make us want to do what the system requires of us. (Propaganda, educational techniques, "mental health" programs, etc.)

115. The system HAS TO force people to behave in ways that are increasingly remote from the natural pattern of human behavior. For example, the system needs scientists, mathematicians and engineers. It can't function without them. So heavy pressure is put on children to excel in these fields. It isn't natural for an adolescent human being to spend the bulk of his time sitting at a desk absorbed in study. A normal adolescent wants to spend his time in active contact with the real world. Among primitive peoples the things that children are trained to do tend to be in reasonable harmony with natural human impulses. Among the American Indians, for example,

INDUSTRIAL-TECHNOLOGICAL

Mass organisation and the division of labour destroy freedom:

RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM IS UNAVOIDABLE IN INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

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115. The system HAS TO force people to behave in ways that are increasingly remote from the natural pattern of human behaviour. For example, the system needs scientists, mathematicians and engineers. It can't function without them. So heavy pressure is put on children to excel in these fields. It isn't natural for an adolescent human being to spend the bulk of his time sitting at a desk absorbed in study. A normal adolescent wants to spend his time in active contact with the real world. Among primitive peoples the things that children are trained to do are in natural harmony with natural outdoor pursuits -- just the sort of things that boys like. But in our society children are pushed into studying technical subjects, which most do grudgingly.

116. Because of the constant pressure that the system exerts to modify human behaviour, there is a gradual increase in the number of people who cannot or will not adjust to society's requirements: welfare leeches, youth-gang members, cultists, anti-government rebels, radical environmentalist saboteurs, dropouts and resisters of various kinds.

117. In any technologically advanced society the individual's fate MUST depend on decisions that he personally cannot influence to any great extent. A technological society cannot be broken down into small, autonomous communities, because production depends on the co-operation of very large numbers of people and machines. Such a society MUST be highly organized and decisions HAVE TO be made that affect very large numbers of people. When a decision affects, say, a million people, then each of the affected individuals has, on the average, only a one-millionth share in making the decision. What usually happens in practice is that decisions are made by public officials or corporate executives, or by technical specialists, but even when the public

votes on a decision the number of voters ordinarily is too large for the vote of any one individual to be significant. Thus most individuals are unable to influence measurably the major decisions that affect their lives. There is no conceivable way to remedy this in a technologically advanced society. The system tries to 'solve' this problem by using propaganda to make people WANT the decisions that have been made for them, but even if this 'solution' were completely successful in making people feel better, it would be demeaning.

118. Conservatives and some others advocate more "local autonomy". Local communities once did have autonomy, but such autonomy becomes less and less possible as local communities become more enmeshed with and dependent on large-scale systems like public utilities, computer networks, highway systems, the mass communications media, the modern health care system. Also operating against autonomy is the fact that technology applied in one location often affects people at other locations far away. Thus pesticide or chemical use near a creek may contaminate the water supply hundreds of miles downstream, and the Greenhouse Effect affects the whole world.

119. The system does not and cannot exist to satisfy human needs. Instead, it is human behaviour that has to be modified to fit the needs of the system. This has nothing to do with the political or social ideology that may pretend to guide the technological system. It is the fault of technology, because the system is guided not by ideology but by technical necessity. Of course the system does satisfy many human needs, but generally speaking it does this only to the extent that it is to the advantage of the system to do it. It is the needs of the system that are paramount, not those of the human being. For example, the system provides people with food because the system

couldn't function if everyone starved, it attends to people's psychological needs whenever it can CONVENIENTLY do so, because it couldn't function if too many people became depressed or rebellious. But the system, for good, solid, practical reasons, must exert constant pressure on people to mold their behaviour to the needs of the system. Too much waste accumulating? The government, the media, the education system, environmentalists, everyone inundates us with a mass of propaganda about recycling. Need more technical personnel? A chorus of voices exhorts kids to study science. No one ever stops to ask whether it is inhumane to force adolescents to spend the bulk of their time studying subjects most of them hate. When skilled workers are put out of a job by technical advances and have to undergo 'retraining', no one asks whether it is humiliating for them to be pushed around in this way. It is simply taken for granted that everyone must bow to technical necessity and for good reason: if human needs were put before technical necessity there would be economic problems, unemployment, shortages or worse. The concept of 'mental health' in our society is largely defined by the extent to which an individual behaves in accord with the needs of the system and does so without showing signs of stress.

120. Efforts to make room for a sense of purpose and for autonomy within the system are no better than a joke. For example, one company, instead of having each of its employees assemble only one section of a catalogue, had each assemble a whole catalogue, and this was supposed to give them a sense of purpose and achievement. Some companies have tried to give their employees more autonomy in their work, but for practical reasons this usually can be done only to a very limited extent, and in any case employees are never given autonomy as to ultimate goals -- their 'autonomous' efforts can never be directed towards goals they select personally, but only toward their employer's goals, such as the survival and growth of the company. Any company would soon go out of business if it permitted its employees to act otherwise. Similarly, in any enterprise within a socialist system, workers must direct their efforts towards the goals of the enterprise, otherwise the enterprise will not serve its purpose as part of the system. Once again, for purely technical reasons it is not possible for most individuals or small groups to have much autonomy in industrial society. Even the small-business owner commonly has only limited autonomy. Apart from the necessity of government regulation, he is restricted by the fact that he must fit into the economic system and conform to its requirements. For instance, when someone develops a new technology, the small-business person often has to use that technology whether he wants to or not, in order to remain competitive.

THE 'BAD' PARTS OF TECHNOLOGY CANNOT BE SEPERATED FROM THE 'GOOD' PARTS

121. A further reason why industrial society cannot be reformed in favour of freedom is that modern technology is a unified system in which all parts and dependent on one another. You can't get rid of the 'bad' parts of technology and retain only the 'good' parts. Take modern medicine, for example. Progress in medical science depends on progress in chemistry, physics, biology, computer science and other fields. Advanced medical treatments require expensive, high-tech equipment that can be made available only by a technologically progressive, economically rich society. Clearly you can't have much progress in medicine without the whole technological system and everything that goes with it.

122. Even if medical progress could be maintained without the rest of the technological system, it would by itself bring certain evils. Suppose for example that a cure for diabetes is discovered. People with a genetic tendency to diabetes will then be able to survive and reproduce as well as anyone else. Natural selection against genes for diabetes will cease, and such genes will spread throughout the population. (This may be occurring to some extent already, since diabetes, while not curable, can be controlled through the use of insulin). The same thing will happen with many other diseases susceptibility to which is affected by genetic degradation of the population. The only solution will be some sort of eugenics program or extensive genetic engineering of human beings, so that man in the future will no longer be a creation of nature, or of chance, or of God (depending on your religious or philosophical opinions), but a manufactured product.

123. If you think that big government interferes in your life too much NOW, just wait till the government starts regulating the genetic constitution of your children. Such regulation will inevitably follow the introduction of genetic engineering of human beings, because the consequences of unregulated genetic engineering would be disastrous.

124. The usual response to such concerns is to talk about 'medical ethics'. But a code of ethics would not swerve to protect freedom in the face of medical progress; it would only make masters worse. A code of ethics applicable to genetic engineering would be in effect a means of regulating the genetic constitution of human beings. Somebody (probably the upper-middle class, mostly) would decide that such and such applications of genetic engineering were 'ethical' and others were not, so that in effect they would be imposing their own values on the genetic constitution of the population at large. Even if a code of

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extracts from the Unabomber's *Industrial Society & Its Future*

ethics were chosen on a completely democratic basis, the majority would be imposing their own values on any minorities who might have a different idea of what constituted an 'ethical' use of genetic engineering. The only code of ethics that would truly protect freedom would be one that prohibited ANY genetic engineering of human beings, and you can be sure that no such code will ever be applied in a technological society, no code that reduced genetic engineering to a minor role could stand up for long, because the temptation presented by the immense power of biotechnology would be irresistible, especially since to the majority of people many of its applications will seem obviously and unequivocally good (eliminating physical and mental diseases, giving people the abilities they need to get along in today's world). Inevitably, genetic engineering will be used extensively, but only in ways consistent with the needs of the industrial-technological system.

TECHNOLOGY IS A MORE POWERFUL SOCIAL FORCE THAN THE ASPIRATION FOR FREEDOM

125. It is not possible to make a LASTING compromise between technology and freedom, because technology is by far the more powerful social force and continually encroaches on freedom through REPEATED compromises. Imagine the case of two neighbours, each of whom at the outset owns the same amount of land, but one of whom is more powerful than the other. The powerful one demands a piece of the other's land. The weak one refuses. The powerful one says "OK, let's compromise. Give me half of what I asked" The weak one has little choice but

to give in. Some time later the powerful neighbour demands another piece of land, again there is a compromise, and so forth. By forcing a long series of compromises on the weaker man, the powerful one eventually gets all of his land. So it goes in the conflict between technology and freedom.

126. Let us explain why technology is a more powerful social force than the aspiration for freedom.

127. Technological advance that appears not to threaten freedom often turns out to threaten it very seriously later on. For example, consider motorized transport. A walking man formerly could go where he pleased, go at his own pace without observing any traffic regulations, and was independent of technological support-systems. When motor vehicles were introduced they appeared to increase man's freedom. They took no freedom away from the walking man, no one had to have an automobile if he didn't want one, and anyone who did choose to buy an automobile could travel much faster than the walking man. But the introduction of motorized transport soon changed society in such a way as to restrict greatly man's freedom of locomotion. When automobiles became numerous, it became necessary to regulate their use extensively. In a car, especially in densely populated areas, one cannot just go where one likes at one's own pace. One's movement is governed by the flow of traffic and by various traffic laws. One is tied down by various obligations: license requirements, driver test, renewing registration, insurance, maintenance required for safety, monthly payments or purchase price. Moreover, the use of motorized transport is no longer optional. Since the introduction of

motorized transport the arrangement of our cities has changed in such a way that the majority of people no longer live within walking distance of their place of employment, shopping areas and recreational opportunities, so that they HAVE TO depend on the automobile for transportation. Or else they must use public transportation, in which case they have even less control over their own movement than when driving a car. Even the walker's freedom is now greatly restricted. In the city he continually has to stop and wait for traffic lights that are designed mainly to serve auto traffic. In the country, motor traffic makes it dangerous and unpleasant to walk along the highway. (Note the important point we have illustrated with the case of motorized transport: When a new item of technology is introduced as an option that an individual can accept or not as he chooses, it does not necessarily REMAIN optional. In many cases new technology changes society in such a way that people eventually find themselves FORCED to use it).

128. While technological progress AS A WHOLE continually narrows our sphere of freedom, each new technical advance CONSIDERED BY ITSELF appears to be desirable. Electricity, indoor plumbing, rapid long-distance communication ... how could one argue against any of these things, or against any other of the innumerable technical advances that have made modern society? It would have been absurd to resist the introduction of the telephone, for example. It offered many advantages and no disadvantages. Yet all these technical advances taken together have created a world in which the average man's fate is no longer in his own hands or in the hands of his neighbours and

friends, but in those of politicians, corporation executives and remote, anonymous technicians and bureaucrats whom he as an individual has no power to influence.

129. Another reason why technology is such a powerful social force is that, within the context of a given society, technological progress marches in only one direction; it can never be reversed. Once a technical innovation has been invented, people usually become dependent on it, unless it is replaced by some still more advanced innovation. Not only do people become dependent as individuals on a new item of technology but, even more, the system as a whole becomes dependent on it. (Imagine what would happen to the system today if computers, for example, were eliminated.) Thus the system can move in only one direction, towards greater technologization. Technology repeatedly forces freedom to take a step back -- short of the over-throw of the whole technological system.

130. Technology advances with great rapidity and threatens freedom at many different points at the same time (crowding, rules and regulations, increasing dependence of individuals on large organizations, propaganda and other psychological techniques, genetic engineering, invasion of privacy through surveillance devices and computers, etc) To hold back any ONE of the threats to freedom would require a long, difficult [= difficult?] social struggle. Those who want to protect freedom are overwhelmed by the sheer number of new attacks and the rapidity with which they develop,

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Continued from p. 11

hence they become apathetic and no longer resist. To fight each of the threats separately would be futile. Success can be hoped for only by fighting the technological system as a whole, but this is revolution, not reform.

131. Technicians (we use the term in the broad sense to describe all those who perform a specialized task that requires training) tend to be so involved in their work (their surrogate activity) that when a conflict arises between their technical work and freedom, they almost always decide in favour of their technical work. This is obvious in the case of scientists, but it also appears elsewhere: educators, humanitarian groups, conservation organizations do not hesitate to use propaganda or other psychological techniques to help them achieve their laudable ends. Corporations and government agencies, when they find it useful, do not hesitate to collect information about individuals without regard to their privacy. Law enforcement agencies are frequently inconvenienced by the constitutional rights of suspects and often of completely innocent persons, and they do whatever they can do legally (and sometimes illegally) to restrict or circumvent those rights. Most of these educators, government officials and law officers believe in freedom, privacy and constitutional rights, but when these conflict with their work, they usually feel that their work is more important.

132. It is well known that people generally work better and more

persistently when striving for a reward than when attempting to avoid a punishment or negative outcome. Scientists and technicians are motivated mainly by the rewards they get through their work. But those who oppose technological invasions of freedom are working to avoid a negative outcome, consequently there are a few who work persistently and well at this discouraging task. If reformers ever achieved a signal victory that seemed to set up a solid barrier against further erosion of freedom through technological progress, most would tend to relax and turn their attention to more agreeable pursuits. But the scientists would remain busy in their laboratories, and technology as it progresses would find ways, in spite of any barriers, to exert more and more control over individuals and make them always more dependent on the system.

133. No social arrangement, whether laws, institutions, customs or ethical codes, can provide permanent protection against technology. History shows that all social arrangements are transitory; they all change or break down eventually. But technological advances are permanent within the context of a given civilization. Suppose for example that it were possible to arrive at some social arrangement that would prevent genetic engineering from being applied to human beings, or prevent it from being applied in such a way as to threaten freedom and dignity. Still the technology would remain waiting. Sooner or later the social arrangement would break down. Probably sooner, given the pace of change in our society. Then genetic engineering would begin to invade our

sphere of freedom, and this invasion would be irreversible (should of a breakdown of technological civilization itself). Any illusions about achieving anything permanent through social arrangements should be dispelled by what is currently happening with environmental legislation. A few years ago it seemed that there were secure legal barriers preventing at least SOME of the worst forms of environmental degradation. A change in the political wind, and those barriers begin to crumble.

135. In paragraph 125 we used the analogy of a weak neighbour who is left destitute by a strong neighbour who takes all his land by forcing on him a series of compromises. But suppose now that the strong neighbour gets sick, so that he is unable to defend himself. The weak neighbour can force the strong one to give him his land back, or he can kill him. If he lets the strong man survive and oblige him to give his land back, he is a fool, because when the strong man gets well he will again take all the land for himself. The only sensible alternative for the weaker man is to kill the strong one while he has the chance. In the same way, while the industrial system is sick we must destroy it. If we compromise with it and let it recover from its sickness, it will eventually wipe out all of our freedom.

.....
REVOLUTION IS EASIER THAN REFORM

140. We hope we have convinced the reader that the system cannot be reformed in such a way as to reconcile freedom

with technology. The only way out is to dispense with the industrial-technological system altogether. This implies revolution, not necessarily an armed uprising, but certainly a radical and fundamental change in the nature of society.

141. People tend to assume that because a revolution involves a much greater change than reform does, it is more difficult to bring about than reform is. Actually, under certain circumstances revolution is much easier than reform.

The reason is that a revolutionary movement can inspire an intensity of commitment that a reform movement cannot inspire. A reform movement merely offers to solve a particular social problem. A revolutionary movement offers to solve all problems at one stroke and create a whole new world; it provides the kind of ideal for which people will take great risks and make great sacrifices. For this reason, it would be much easier to overthrow the whole technological system than to put effective, permanent restraints on the development of application of any one segment of technology, such as genetic engineering, but under suitable conditions large numbers of people may devote themselves passionately to a revolution against the industrial-technological system. As we noted in paragraph 132, reformers seeking to limit certain aspects of technology would be working to avoid a negative outcome. But revolutionaries work to gain a powerful reward -- fulfilment of their revolutionary vision -- and therefore work harder and more persistently than reformers do.

boys were trained in active outdoor pursuits—just the sort of things that boys like. But in our society children are pushed into studying technical subjects, which most do grudgingly.

116. Because of the constant pressure that the system exerts to modify human behavior, there is a gradual increase in the number of people who cannot or will not adjust to society's requirements: welfare leeches, youth-gang members, cultists, anti-government rebels, radical environmentalist saboteurs, dropouts and resisters of various kinds.

117. In any technologically advanced society the individual's fate **MUST** depend on decisions that he personally cannot influence to any great extent. A technological society cannot be broken down into small, autonomous communities, because production depends on the cooperation of very large numbers of people and machines. Such a society **MUST** be highly organized and decisions **HAVE TO** be made that affect very large numbers of people. When a decision affects, say, a million people, then each of the affected individuals has, on the average, only a one-millionth share in making the decision. What usually happens in practice is that decisions are made by public officials or corporation executives, or by technical specialists, but even when the public votes on a decision the number of voters ordinarily is too large for the vote of anyone individual to be significant. Thus most individuals are unable to influence measurably the major decisions that affect their lives. There is no conceivable way to remedy this in a technologically advanced society. The system tries to "solve" this problem by using propaganda to make people **WANT** the decisions that have been made for them, but even if this "solution" were completely successful in making people feel better, it would be demeaning.

118. Conservatives and some others advocate more "local autonomy." Local communities once did have autonomy, but such autonomy becomes less and less possible as local communities become more enmeshed with and dependent on large-scale systems like public utilities, computer networks, highway systems, the mass communications media and the modern health-care system. Also operating against autonomy is the fact that technology applied in one location often affects people at other locations far away. Thus pesticide or chemical use near a creek may contaminate the water supply hundreds of miles downstream, and the greenhouse effect affects the whole world.

119. The system does not and cannot exist to satisfy human needs. Instead, it is human behavior that has to be modified to fit the needs of the system. This has nothing to do with the political or social ideology that may pretend to guide the technological system. It is not the fault of capitalism and it is not the fault of socialism. It is the fault of technology, because the system is guided not by ideology but by technical necessity. Of course the system does satisfy many human needs, but generally speaking it does this only to the extent that it is to the advantage of the system to do it. It is the needs of the system that are paramount, not those of the human being. For example, the system provides people with food because the system couldn't function if everyone starved; it attends to people's psychological needs whenever it can **CONVENIENTLY**

do so, because it couldn't function if too many people became depressed or rebellious. But the system, for good, solid, practical reasons, must exert constant pressure on people to mold their behavior to the needs of the system. Too much waste accumulating? The government, the media, the educational system, environmentalists, everyone inundates us with a mass of propaganda about recycling. Need more technical personnel? A chorus of voices exhorts kids to study science. No one stops to ask whether it is inhumane to force adolescents to spend the bulk of their time studying subjects that most of them hate. When skilled workers are put out of a job by technical advances and have to undergo "retraining," no one asks whether it is humiliating for them to be pushed around in this way. It is simply taken for granted that everyone must bow to technical necessity. And for good reason: If human needs were put before technical necessity there would be economic problems, unemployment, shortages or worse. The concept of "mental health" in our society is defined largely by the extent to which an individual behaves in accord with the needs of the system and does so without showing signs of stress.

120. Efforts to make room for a sense of purpose and for autonomy within the system are no better than a joke. For example, one company, instead of having each of its employees assemble only one section of a catalogue, had each assemble a whole catalogue, and this was supposed to give them a sense of purpose and achievement. Some companies have tried to give their employees more autonomy in their work, but for practical reasons this usually can be done only to a very limited extent, and in any case employees are never given autonomy as to ultimate goals—their "autonomous" efforts can never be directed toward goals that they select personally, but only toward their employer's goals, such as the survival and growth of the company. Any company would soon go out of business if it permitted its employees to act otherwise. Similarly, in any enterprise within a socialist system, workers must direct their efforts toward the goals of the enterprise, otherwise the enterprise will not serve its purpose as part of the system. Once again, for purely technical reasons it is not possible for most individuals or small groups to have much autonomy in industrial society. Even the small-business owner commonly has only limited autonomy. Apart from the necessity of government regulation, he is restricted by the fact that he must fit into the economic system and conform to its requirements. For instance, when someone develops a new technology, the small-business person often has to use that technology whether he wants to or not, in order to remain competitive.

The "Bad" Parts of Technology Cannot Be Separated from the "Good" Parts

121. A further reason why industrial society cannot be reformed in favor of freedom is that modern technology is a unified system in which all parts are dependent on one

another. You can't get rid of the "bad" parts of technology and retain only the "good" parts. Take modern medicine, for example. Progress in medical science depends on progress in chemistry, physics, biology, computer science and other fields. Advanced medical treatments require expensive, high-tech equipment that can be made available only by a technologically progressive, economically rich society. Clearly you can't have much progress in medicine without the whole technological system and everything that goes with it.

122. Even if medical progress could be maintained without the rest of the technological system, it would by itself bring certain evils. Suppose for example that a cure for diabetes is discovered. People with a genetic tendency to diabetes will then be able to survive and reproduce as well as anyone else. Natural selection against genes for diabetes will cease and such genes will spread throughout the population. (This may be occurring to some extent already, since diabetes, while not curable, can be controlled through the use of insulin.) The same thing will happen with many other diseases susceptibility to which is affected by genetic factors (e.g., childhood cancer), resulting in massive genetic degradation of the population. The only solution will be some sort of eugenics program or extensive genetic engineering of human beings, so that man in the future will no longer be a creation of nature, or of chance, or of God (depending on your religious or philosophical opinions), but a manufactured product.

123. If you think that big government interferes in your life too much NOW, just wait till the government starts regulating the genetic constitution of your children. Such regulation will inevitably follow the introduction of genetic engineering of human beings, because the consequences of unregulated genetic engineering would be disastrous.

124. The usual response to such concerns is to talk about "medical ethics." But a code of ethics would not serve to protect freedom in the face of medical progress; it would only make matters worse. A code of ethics applicable to genetic engineering would be in effect a means of regulating the genetic constitution of human beings. Somebody (probably the upper middle class, mostly) would decide that such and such applications of genetic engineering were "ethical" and others were not, so that in effect they would be imposing their own values on the genetic constitution of the population at large. Even if a code of ethics were chosen on a completely democratic basis, the majority would be imposing their own values on any minorities who might have a different idea of what constituted an "ethical" use of genetic engineering. The only code of ethics that would truly protect freedom would be one that prohibited ANY genetic engineering of human beings, and you can be sure that no such code will ever be applied in a technological society. No code that reduced genetic engineering to a minor role could stand up for long, because the temptation presented by the immense power of biotechnology would be irresistible, especially since to the majority of people many of its applications will seem obviously and unequivocally good (eliminating physical and mental diseases, giving people the abilities they need to get along in today's world).

Inevitably, genetic engineering will be used extensively, but only in ways consistent with the needs of the industrial-technological system.

Technology is a More Powerful Social Force than the Aspiration for Freedom

125. It is not possible to make a LASTING compromise between technology and freedom, because technology is by far the more powerful social force and continually encroaches on freedom through REPEATED compromises. Imagine the case of two neighbors, each of whom at the outset owns the same amount of land, but one of whom is more powerful than the other. The powerful one demands a piece of the other's land. The weak one refuses. The powerful one says, "Okay, let's compromise. Give me half of what I asked." The weak one has little choice but to give in. Some time later the powerful neighbor demands another piece of land, again there is a compromise, and so forth. By forcing a long series of compromises on the weaker man, the powerful one eventually gets all of his land. So it goes in the conflict between technology and freedom.

126. Let us explain why technology is a more powerful social force than the aspiration for freedom.

127. A technological advance that appears not to threaten freedom often turns out to threaten it very seriously later on. For example, consider motorized transport. A walking man formerly could go where he pleased, go at his own pace without observing any traffic regulations, and was independent of technological support systems. When motor vehicles were introduced they appeared to increase man's freedom. They took no freedom away from the walking man, no one had to have an automobile if he didn't want one, and anyone who did choose to buy an automobile could travel much faster and farther than a walking man. But the introduction of motorized transport soon changed society in such a way as to restrict greatly man's freedom of locomotion. When automobiles became numerous, it became necessary to regulate their use extensively. In a car, especially in densely populated areas, one cannot just go where one likes at one's own pace; one's movement is governed by the flow of traffic and by various traffic laws. One is tied down by various obligations: license requirements, driver test, renewing registration, insurance, maintenance required for safety, monthly payments on purchase price. Moreover, the use of motorized transport is no longer optional. Since the introduction of motorized transport the arrangement of our cities has changed in such a way that the majority of people no longer live within walking distance of their place of employment, shopping areas and recreational opportunities, so that they HAVE TO depend on the automobile for transportation. Or else they must use public transportation, in which case they have even less control over their own movement than when driving a car. Even the walker's freedom is now greatly restricted. In the

city he continually has to stop to wait for traffic lights that are designed mainly to serve auto traffic. In the country, motor traffic makes it dangerous and unpleasant to walk along the highway. (Note this important point that we have just illustrated with the case of motorized transport: When a new item of technology is introduced as an option that an individual can accept or not as he chooses, it does not necessarily REMAIN optional. In many cases the new technology changes society in such a way that people eventually find themselves FORCED to use it.)

128. While technological progress AS A WHOLE continually narrows our sphere of freedom, each new technical advance CONSIDERED BY ITSELF appears to be desirable. Electricity, indoor plumbing, rapid long- distance communications...how could one argue against any of these things, or against any other of the innumerable technical advances that have made modern society? It would have been absurd to resist the introduction of the telephone, for example. It offered many advantages and no disadvantages. Yet, as we explained in paragraphs 59–76, all these technical advances taken together have created a world in which the average man's fate is no longer in his own hands or in the hands of his neighbors and friends, but in those of politicians, corporation executives and remote, anonymous technicians and bureaucrats whom he as an individual has no power to influence. The same process will continue in the future. Take genetic engineering, for example. Few people will resist the introduction of a genetic technique that eliminates a hereditary disease. It does no apparent harm and prevents much suffering. Yet a large number of genetic improvements taken together will make the human being into an engineered product rather than a free creation of chance (or of God, or whatever, depending on your religious beliefs).

129. Another reason why technology is such a powerful social force is that, within the context of a given society, technological progress marches in only one direction; it can never be reversed. Once a technical innovation has been introduced, people usually become dependent on it, so that they can never again do without it, unless it is replaced by some still more advanced innovation. Not only do people become dependent as individuals on a new item of technology, but, even more, the system as a whole becomes dependent on it. (Imagine what would happen to the system today if computers, for example, were eliminated.) Thus the system can move in only one direction, toward greater technologization. Technology repeatedly forces freedom to take a step back but technology can never take a step back—short of the overthrow of the whole technological system.

130. Technology advances with great rapidity and threatens freedom at many different points at the same time (crowding, rules and regulations, increasing dependence of individuals on large organizations, propaganda and other psychological techniques, genetic engineering, invasion of privacy through surveillance devices and computers, etc.). To hold back any ONE of the threats to freedom would require a long and difficult social struggle. Those who want to protect freedom are overwhelmed by the sheer number of new attacks and the rapidity with which they develop, hence they become apathetic and no longer resist. To fight each of the threats separately would be futile.

Success can be hoped for only by fighting the technological system as a whole; but that is revolution, not reform.

131. Technicians (we use this term in its broad sense to describe all those who perform a specialized task that requires training) tend to be so involved in their work (their surrogate activity) that when a conflict arises between their technical work and freedom, they almost always decide in favor of their technical work. This is obvious in the case of scientists, but it also appears elsewhere: Educators, humanitarian groups, conservation organizations do not hesitate to use propaganda^{3} or other psychological techniques to help them achieve their laudable ends. Corporations and government agencies, when they find it useful, do not hesitate to collect information about individuals without regard to their privacy. Law enforcement agencies are frequently inconvenienced by the constitutional rights of suspects and often of completely innocent persons, and they do whatever they can do legally (or sometimes illegally) to restrict or circumvent those rights. Most of these educators, government officials and law officers believe in freedom, privacy and constitutional rights, but when these conflict with their work, they usually feel that their work is more important.

132. It is well known that people generally work better and more persistently when striving for a reward than when attempting to avoid a punishment or negative outcome. Scientists and other technicians are motivated mainly by the rewards they get through their work. But those who oppose technological invasions of freedom are working to avoid a negative outcome, consequently there are few who work persistently and well at this discouraging task. If reformers ever achieved a signal victory that seemed to set up a solid barrier against further erosion of freedom through technical progress, most would tend to relax and turn their attention to more agreeable pursuits. But the scientists would remain busy in their laboratories, and technology as it progressed would find ways, in spite of any barriers, to exert more and more control over individuals and make them always more dependent on the system.

133. No social arrangements, whether laws, institutions, customs or ethical codes, can provide permanent protection against technology. History shows that all social arrangements are transitory; they all change or break down eventually. But technological advances are permanent within the context of a given civilization. Suppose for example that it were possible to arrive at some social arrangement that would prevent genetic engineering from being applied to human beings, or prevent it from being applied in such a way as to threaten freedom and dignity. Still, the technology would remain, waiting. Sooner or later the social arrangement would break down. Probably sooner, given the pace of change in our society. Then genetic engineering would begin to invade our sphere of freedom, and this invasion would be irreversible (short of a breakdown of technological civilization itself). Any illusions about achieving anything permanent through social arrangements should be dispelled by what is currently happening with environmental legislation. A few years ago it seemed that there were secure legal barriers preventing at least SOME of the worst forms of environmental degradation. A change in the political wind, and those barriers begin to crumble.

134. For all of the foregoing reasons, technology is a more powerful social force than the aspiration for freedom. But this statement requires an important qualification. It appears that during the next several decades the industrial-technological system will be undergoing severe stresses due to economic and environmental problems, and especially due to problems of human behavior (alienation, rebellion, hostility, a variety of social and psychological difficulties). We hope that the stresses through which the system is likely to pass will cause it to break down, or at least will weaken it sufficiently so that a revolution against it becomes possible. If such a revolution occurs and is successful, then at that particular moment the aspiration for freedom will have proved more powerful than technology.

135. In paragraph 125 we used an analogy of a weak neighbor who is left destitute by a strong neighbor who takes all his land by forcing on him a series of compromises. But suppose now that the strong neighbor gets sick, so that he is unable to defend himself. The weak neighbor can force the strong one to give him his land back, or he can kill him. If he lets the strong man survive and only forces him to give the land back, he is a fool, because when the strong man gets well he will again take all the land for himself. The only sensible alternative for the weaker man is to kill the strong one while he has the chance. In the same way, while the industrial system is sick we must destroy it. If we compromise with it and let it recover from its sickness, it will eventually wipe out all of our freedom.

Simpler Social Problems Have Proved Intractable

136. If anyone still imagines that it would be possible to reform the system in such a way as to protect freedom from technology, let him consider how clumsily and for the most part unsuccessfully our society has dealt with other social problems that are far more simple and straightforward. Among other things, the system has failed to stop environmental degradation, political corruption, drug trafficking or domestic abuse.

137. Take our environmental problems, for example. Here the conflict of values is straightforward: economic expedience now versus saving some of our natural resources for our grandchildren. But on this subject we get only a lot of blather and obfuscation from the people who have power, and nothing like a clear, consistent line of action, and we keep on piling up environmental problems that our grandchildren will have to live with. Attempts to resolve the environmental issue consist of struggles and compromises between different factions, some of which are ascendant at one moment, others at another moment. The line of struggle changes with the shifting currents of public opinion. This is not a rational process, nor is it one that is likely to lead to a timely and successful solution to the problem. Major social problems, if they get “solved” at all, are rarely or never solved through any rational, comprehensive plan. They just work themselves out through a process in which various competing groups pursuing their own (usually short-term) self-interest arrive (mainly by luck) at some

more or less stable *modus vivendi*. In fact, the principles we formulated in paragraphs 100–106 make it seem doubtful that rational, long-term social planning can EVER be successful.

138. Thus it is clear that the human race has at best a very limited capacity for solving even relatively straightforward social problems. How then is it going to solve the far more difficult and subtle problem of reconciling freedom with technology? Technology presents clear-cut material advantages, whereas freedom is an abstraction that means different things to different people, and its loss is easily obscured by propaganda and fancy talk.

139. And note this important difference: It is conceivable that our environmental problems (for example) may some day be settled through a rational, comprehensive plan, but if this happens it will be only because it is in the long-term interest of the system to solve these problems. But it is NOT in the interest of the system to preserve freedom or small-group autonomy. On the contrary, it is in the interest of the system to bring human behavior under control to the greatest possible extent. Thus, while practical considerations may eventually force the system to take a rational, prudent approach to environmental problems, equally practical considerations will force the system to regulate human behavior ever more closely (preferably by indirect means that will disguise the encroachment on freedom). This isn't just our opinion. Eminent social scientists (e.g., James Q. Wilson) have stressed the importance of "socializing" people more effectively.

Revolution is Easier than Reform

140. We hope we have convinced the reader that the system cannot be reformed in such a way as to reconcile freedom with technology. The only way out is to dispense with the industrial-technological system altogether. This implies revolution, not necessarily an armed uprising, but certainly a radical and fundamental change in the nature of society.

141. People tend to assume that because a revolution involves a much greater change than reform does, it is more difficult to bring about than reform is. Actually, under certain circumstances revolution is much easier than reform. The reason is that a revolutionary movement can inspire an intensity of commitment that a reform movement cannot inspire. A reform movement merely offers to solve a particular social problem. A revolutionary movement offers to solve all problems at one stroke and create a whole new world; it provides the kind of ideal for which people will take great risks and make great sacrifices. For this reason it would be much easier to overthrow the whole technological system than to put effective, permanent restraints on the development or application of anyone segment of technology, such as genetic engineering, for example. Not many people will devote themselves with single-minded passion to imposing and maintaining restraints on genetic engineering, but under suitable conditions

large numbers of people may devote themselves passionately to a revolution against the industrial-technological system. As we noted in paragraph 132, reformers seeking to limit certain aspects of technology would be working to avoid a negative outcome. But revolutionaries work to gain a powerful reward-fulfillment of their revolutionary vision-and therefore work harder and more persistently than reformers do.

Top Ten Reasons to Vote Unabomber

#42 Summer 1996

Lydia Eccles on your presidential write-in choice for '96

THE BOYS. Clinton, Gingrich, Powell, Perot, Forbes, Dole, Gramm, Lugar, Alexander, Dornan, Keyes, etc.

HE'S HOT! His favorability ratings may be low, but his name recognition is close to 100% ...

TOP TEN REASONS TO VOTE UNABOMBER

Lydia Eccles on your presidential write-in choice for '96

THE BOYS. Clinton, Gingrich, Powell, Perot, Forbes, Dole, Gramm, Lugar, Alexander, Dornan, Keyes, etc.

HE'S HOT! His favorability ratings may be low, but his name recognition is close to 100%. We won't need to hype him--he's already hyped. A Unabomber write-in campaign can surf the media wave. He's the perfect imposter to undermine the presidential election process as it unfolds, and turn the fraudulent election process against itself.

THE VISION THING. "The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race." Regardless of what you think of the Unabomber and his analysis, the right issues are finally raised. Can you even conceive of any legitimate candidacy, election, or debate which will allow the real questions to be put on the table? We need to dish them out before they cool off...They're giving an election, but we can crash it and have our own referendum on corpo-technocracy. If the Unabomber put a hairline crack in the myth of progress, we should apply a wedge now--the Unabomber's fifteen seconds are just about up. But an election lasts a year. An anti-technological rallying point only came into being because of the criminal chase. There's not going to be another opportunity.

CRASH THE PARTIES. The election offers a "choice" once all the real decisions have been made. On top of being an anti-republican vote, the Unabomber campaign is a counterfoil to faux "populist" outsider-insiders like business magnate Ross Perot and Gulf warrior Colin Powell (a.k.a. the military-industrial complex.) The third party "alternative" is designed to safely channel voter alienation into a centrist, media-sanctioned agenda and immunize the system against real change.

IF ELECTED HE WILL NOT SERVE. It's a nobody-for-president vote. He's not running, so this can be a bottom-up free-for-all campaign. Campaign literature, posters, sound bites, platforms, pranks, the rest: have it your way.

DON'T WASTE YOUR VOTE. The media's like a psychiatrist--and you can't NOT communicate in an election. If you boycott the polls, you'll be counted as apathetic, complacent, or still worse, contented. If you vote for the mainstream lesser of evils, who don't actually represent your views, you've affirmed the political system and buried your voice. Either way you've wasted your vote. To vote for the Unabomber is to vote and boycott at the same time. If nothing else, it's a vote against the election charade. It can be only seen as absolute protest, ridicule, or a "none-of-the-above" spurning of the political menu. You can cast an anarchistic vote you feel good about, and send the message that the presidential elections are a fraud. And you can still vote in local races and referendums where your vote counts for something.

VOTE AGAINST THE PROPAGANDA MACHINE. The Unabomber did an end run around the media monopoly, and published without editorial clearance. The Unabomber has, by the magnitude of his plan, exposed the media as a closed communications system, making it very clear--in case anyone hadn't noticed--that it's a communications war. Mass media are launched from a heavily-secured fortress. Other terrorists seek publicity as a means to other ends. The Unabomber used terrorism to gain publicity as an end in itself. Notice how the press seeks to channel interpretation of the Unabomber story, covering it as a serial-killer story of crime and insanity, while excluding consideration of the ideas themselves. They would have us believe that it would be disastrous if media weren't controlled from the top. Op-ed pages resounded with journalists lamenting, "Why didn't he have to get editorial approval? What if copy cats are aroused, crazies who actually want access to the media, rather than simply being passive target markets for political and commercial propaganda?" Imagine mass communications not subject to corporate control. People might say anything...even things not "fit to print". Exactly. When ABC Nightly News gets renamed Disney World, you'll cherish the memory of your Unabomber vote.

HE'S GOT THE CREDENTIALS. The Unabomber's use of violence should not disqualify him from consideration. His willingness and ability to effectively use violence to achieve strategic political goals merely demonstrate the essential qualifications to be president. After all, Colin Powell's ONLY qualification is his performance as an effective killer. No one's called him a serial killer, or said he craved attention. No running candidate has condemned the Gulf War genocide. This is a country that played war like a video game in a high-tech funhouse. We aren't even allowed information as to how many Iraqis, civilian or military, our tax dollars blew away. That Bill Clinton avoided the draft and hadn't killed was considered a lack of qualifications. Luckily he picked up points for presiding over numerous executions in his home state of Arkansas. Occupational deaths and diseases...Violence? Cancer deaths caused by toxins in the air, in food, and workplaces...Violence? A minimum wage that is half the poverty level, with the hunger, stress, disease and early death that ensue...Violence? The media just finished re-elaborating the rationale for bombing Hiroshima and Nagasaki...Violence? Terror? Anyone bringing up violence should put it all on the table, not just select attacks on the power structure. Anyone who can truly take a stand against violence in any form--and that would include the American Revolution--can say the Unabomber shouldn't be president on that basis. But he's not running anyway, and even a landslide wouldn't actually put him in office. That's the beauty of voting for a fugitive from the law.

ENTERTAINMENT VALUE. Watch your favorite TV pundits try to swallow, digest and regurgitate a Unabomber constituency. It's a message that can't be neutralized or explained away. The most minimal Unabomber returns would disrupt the usual discussion of false problems and false solutions (usually known as "reform".)

DON'T BLAME ME--I VOTED FOR THE UNABOMBER. You can sport your bumper sticker after the election...but not on a car!

The player who trespasses against the rules or ignores them is a "spoil sport". The spoil sport shatters the play-world itself. By withdrawing from the game, he reveals the relativity and fragility of the play world. He robs play of its illusions.

TO THE SPOILER BELONGS THE VICTORY

Free Ted!

#43_44 Autumn 1996

Unabomber suspect Ted Kaczynski was extradited to Sacramento, California. On 18th June 1996, he was charged with mail-bombing deforestation lobbyist Gilbert Murray, computer pusher Hugh Scrutton, ...

NEWS

FREE TED!



TED KACZYNSKI (X-REF 3165854), 8W401 SACRAMENTO COUNTY MAIN JAIL, 651 I STREET, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA CA 95814, USA

Unabomber suspect Ted Kaczynski was extradited to Sacramento, California. On 18th June 1996, he was charged with mail-bombing deforestation lobbyist Gilbert Murray, computer pusher Hugh Scrutton, genetic engineer Charles Epstein and

cybernetician David Geletner. Ted could be executed if convicted of these offences.

Ted is being framed by the FBI as they couldn't catch the *real* Unabomber for the last 18 years. The Feds admit the bomb that killed Murray was sent from Oakland, California, on 20th April 1994, in reaction to the Oklahoma City bombing, the previous day. With no TV or radio in his remote Montana shack, Ted wouldn't have even heard about the OK Bomb, let alone travelled $\frac{1}{2}$ way across the US to post a bomb in Oakland.

The Feds admit *they* wrote the 'death list' hyped by the media as found in Ted's cabin. How much more 'conclusive proof' have they planted?

For more info:

Ted Kaczynski Defence Campaign, BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX

Donations and letters of support for Ted via his lawyer:

Quin Denvir, 10th Floor, 801 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, USA

PRISONERS OF WAR

A number of eco-warriors have been jailed for their beliefs. Prisoner details change rapidly and may be out of date by the time you read GA.

If you'd like a prisoners list, send 50p + SAE to Earth Liberation Prisoners, Box 23, 5 High Street, Glastonbury, Somerset.

EARTH LIBERATION:

Helen Woodson (USA)
Milton Born With A Tooth (Canada)
Paul S (Holland)
Stuart Edwards (UK)
Ted Kaczynski (USA)

MOVE:

Charles Simms Africa (USA)

Gurj Ailja (UK)
Keith Mann (UK)
Michael Green (UK)
Mike Roberts (UK)
Mel Arnold (UK)
Rod Coronado (USA)
Dave Callander (UK)
Frank Kocera (Holland)
Eric van de Lann (Holland)

Fixed Ideas and Letter Bombs

#45_46 Spring 1997

Unfortunately, the response of american anarchists to the 'unabomber' (hereafter, FC) has mostly been one of knee-jerk disavowal verging on reactionary hysteria. It seems these anarchists fear for their good reputation by which they plan to convert the masses to anarchism So there has not yet been an actual critical response from an anarchist perspective to FC's tract *Industrial Society and its Future*. Since FC claim to be anarchists (defining this in terms of favouring self-determination for individuals and small groups over (the domination of large scale systems over our lives) and have involved themselves in doing something (whatever problems we have with their tactics), this non-response is absurd *Industrial Society & Its Future* is an attempt to deal with some significant questions often ignored or dealt with by sloganeering in the anarchist press FC's statement has *many* faults, often is shallow and inadequate to the challenge it is attempting to meet This stems from a lack of thorough social analysis, reliance on concepts which seem to come from pop psychology and adherence to fixed ideas (a fixed idea is a thought or idea that dominates the thinker, causing her to channel all thinking and analysis through that one idea, eg for the religious, god is a fixed idea, for the patriot the country). FC correctly sees that the industrialist domination, but miss the fact that complex social system which needs let's examine FC's theses.

Leftism: a Neurotic Response to a Psychotic Society (Fc's Theses 1-32)

FC's tract strangely begins with several pages critical of leftism Stringer still this criticism relies completely on psychology (and that of a rather crude pop[-] form) FC use this as a basis, later on, for a more general description of the psychology of people under the industrial system.

FC see leftism as having a psychological basis in 'feelings of inferiority' and 'over-socialisation'. Modern american leftism is certainly based in what Max Sinner called 'ragamuffinism and Nietzsche called 'ressentiment'' Some recent anarchist writings have referred to it as the 'ideology of victimisation' This ideology does seem to reflect and promote feelings of inferiority, but FC seems to be, unfamiliar with these ideas and adopt instead a methodology reminiscent of pop psychology in their critique Fortunately for FC, leftists are apparently so afraid of any sort of criticism, that they could only respond to FC's inadequate criticism with hysterical yammering.

FIXED IDEAS AND LETTER BOMBS

Formerly Feral Faun critiques FC's *Industrial Society & Its Future* as ideology

Unfortunately, the response of american anarchists to the 'unabomber' (hereafter, FC) has mostly been one of knee-jerk disavowal verging on reactionary hysteria. It seems these anarchists fear for their good reputation by which they plan to convert the masses to anarchism. So there has not yet been an actual critical response from an anarchist perspective to FC's tract *Industrial Society & Its Future*. Since FC claim to be anarchists (defining this in terms of favouring self-determination for individuals and small groups over the domination of large scale systems over our lives) and have involved themselves in doing something (whatever problems we have with their tactics), this non-response is absurd. *Industrial Society & Its Future* is an attempt to deal with some significant questions often ignored or dealt with by sloganeering in the anarchist press. FC's statement has many faults, often is shallow and inadequate to the challenge it is attempting to meet. This stems from a lack of thorough social analysis, reliance on concepts which seem to come from pop psychology and adherence to fixed ideas (a fixed idea is a thought or idea that dominates the thinker, causing her to channel all thinking and analysis through that one idea, eg. for the religious, god is a fixed idea, for the patriot, the country). FC correctly sees that the industrial technological system is a system of domination, but miss the fact that it is an integral part of a more complex social system which needs to be attacked in its totality. But let's examine FC's theses.

LEFTISM: A NEUROTIC RESPONSE TO A PSYCHOTIC SOCIETY (FC'S THESES 1-32)

FC's tract strangely begins with several pages critical of leftism. Stronger still, this criticism relies completely on psychology (and that of a rather crude 'pop' form). FC use this as a basis, later on, for a more general description of the psychology of people under the industrial system.

FC see leftism as having a psychological basis in "feelings of inferiority" and "oversocialisation". Modern american leftism is certainly based in what Max Stirner called "ragamuffinism" and Nietzsche called "resentment". Some recent anarchist writings have referred to it as the "ideology of victimism". This ideology does seem to reflect and promote feelings of inferiority, but FC seems to be unfamiliar with these ideas and adopt instead a methodology reminiscent of pop psychology in their critique. Fortunately for FC, leftists are apparently so afraid of any sort of criticism, that they could only respond to FC's inadequate criticism with hysterical yammering.

FC are correct in saying that most american leftists come from middle or upper-class backgrounds. But FC miss what may be the most significant aspects of this in terms of the psychology of leftism, namely, that many leftists believe that they are privileged, that they have an excess of social power, and they feel guilty about this. In a very christian, messianic manner, they "give themselves" to those who -- according to their ideology -- have received the short shrift from society. This guilt and secular christianist activism explain the leftist masochism, self-sacrifice and dogmatism quite well. Recognising the religiosity of leftism, we can see that it can be compassionate, morally based and hostile all at once -- just like christianity which compassionately and morally instituted pogroms,

inquisitions, wars and genocide against heretics and non-believers.

FC's attempts to interpret every aspect of the leftist's life in terms of a pop psychology inferiority complex severely weakens the argument. Leftists, like nearly everyone else in this society, lead very compartmentalised lives. I have known leftists who seem to 'like' the blues or world beat music because they imagine such music is a way to get in touch with the feelings of black or third world people. Thus to the extent that leftism affects the art preferences of the leftist, it does not seem to be in the direction of embracing defeat or irrationalism, but of trying 'to get in touch with' other cultures. This is absurd and merely reinforces the commodification of these cultures, but it does not, in itself, indicate inferiority feelings.

Certainly, leftists spend far too much time trying to prove the equality of oppressed groups and demanding that it be granted by the state, but this does not so much prove the inferiority feelings of leftists as their adherence to relying on authority. It is the leftist belief in a democratic social order -- which is to say, a structure of democratic authority -- which causes them to embrace victimistic ideology, an ideology which begs those in power to grant "equality", "rights", "justice", etc. This practise of constantly begging for what one wants (particularly when those wants have been transformed into abstractions which one can never see accomplished) inevitably makes one feel weak and incapable -- and so inferior. Leftist activists promote this form of radicalism because it guarantees their role within the present social structures. When women, gays, blacks, etc. start taking their lives as their own as individuals, it brings them into conflict equally with leftist ideologies and with society, precisely because they are no longer begging and so no longer need the leftists to beg for them.

FC's concept of "oversocialisation" also proves to be inadequate because it

depends on psychology rather than an analysis of the social role of the leftist. Leftism is a form of liberal democracy / humanist politics -- that is, it is part of the political system to which the rise of capitalism and the industrial system gave birth. So it is no surprise that leftists subscribe to the "liberty, equality, fraternity" which are the shibboleths of such politics. But the totality of the social system is far more complex and irrational than FC think. The real values of this system, the ones for which it sacrifices all others, can be summed up rather simplistically as follows: (1) the expansion of capital; (2) efficiency in production; (3) increasing social control in the daily lives of individuals to guarantee the first two. Beyond these fundamentals, the social system is quite irrational and full of contradictions. Thus, the social structure is both anti-racist and racist as each of these tendencies may under different circumstances better serve the above-mentioned values (and, of course, aspects of earlier social structures do not disappear overnight).

The same can be said about sexism / anti-sexism, violence / non-violence, war / peace, etc. Leftists are no more or less "oversocialized" than conservatives, moderates or most radicals. Leftists believe that the social system can be rationalised, that its contradictions can be removed without destroying the system as a whole. So they try to convince the authorities to abolish sexism, racism, violence, war -- without realising that, within this social system, these are a necessary part of the same mechanism of control of which anti-sexism, anti-racism, non-violence and peace are a part -- the one side needs the other, just as the right needs the left and vice versa.

I do not deny the neuroses of leftism as evidenced in its gullible masochism and moral stridency. But if we want to make an intelligent attack on the social system -- as FC apparently does -- we need to develop analyses of society and the left's role therein that go far deeper than FC's pop psychology.

FIXED IDEA #1: THE POWER PROCESS (FC'S THESES 33-98)

The first major fixed idea that dominates FC's thoughts is "the power process". This idea seems to form the basis of most of FC's analysis, and that's too bad because it's a flawed idea -- pop psychology reminiscent of 70's management strategies and self-help books. FC describes the power process: "Everyone needs to have goals whose attainment requires effort, and needs to succeed in attaining at least some of these goals". But do I need goals? No, I need or want specific things. Some effort is inherently involved in getting these things and, of course, I will be happier if I do get them and if I determine how I get them. But to transform this need for actual things into an abstract need for goals, effort and attainment which are simply words that can be used to describe how one gets what one needs, and then to

base an analysis of the present social system on this abstraction is absurd. I have goals, simply because I need or want specific things, but I do not need goals -- so I do not need a "power process".

The "power process" is a psychological model and, like all such models, springs from and is only useful within a specific social context. The "oedipus complex" was a model developed in Victorian Europe which worked well for explaining much of the sexual psychology of Victorian Europe. Ever time it has proved less and less useful and is now used only by die-hard Freudians. It has no applicability to ancient Romans, Hopi Indians, Mbuti pygmies, medieval English peasants, etc. The "power process", assuming it has any application outside of pop psychology, would also have to be understood in terms of a specific social context. FC's attempt to universalise it

which provided their basic needs is about one quarter of the amount of time spent by the average person in industrial society at work. In other words, primitive people got the things they wanted with less effort than most of us expended to get what we want. In fact, since there was no time schedule which they had to follow to perform these activities, so they could be done whenever one pleased (except in emergencies), it can be argued that primitive societies were societies of total "leisure". With the rise of agriculture and cities about 10,000 years ago, the new technological system doubled the amount of time that those who used it had to spend in meeting their basic needs and placed this activity on a strict seasonal time schedule -- this could be considered the origin of work. Industrial technology drastically increased both the amount of work time and the rigidity of scheduling necessary for work. So most

IF THE UNABOMBER PREVAILS
AND WE RETURN TO WILD NATURE...



CAN I STILL HAVE MY CARPHONE?

leads to a sloppy understanding of history and anthropology.

FC's anthropology is about 30 years behind the times. FC seem to assume that primitive people needed to spend most of their time and energy satisfying biological needs. It has been pretty well established that even in harsh environments, the amount of time primitive people spent in activities

people in our society find themselves so exhausted by activities not of their own making that in what little leisure time they have they often choose to vegetate through passive entertainment. This problem is *alienation*. FC are not completely unaware of this -- in our society people do not satisfy their biological needs AUTONOMOUSLY, but by functioning as parts of an immense social machine.

Alienation is not merely a psychological problem. Often the most alienated people are the most adjusted to their alienation. Alienation is the reality of a social system in which our lives, our activities and our interactions are not our own to create as we choose, but have been made for us in such a way that we become the property of society. The ways of fulfilling our needs and wants become very convoluted and indirect, like a Rubik's cube machine — but it isn't corny! I want food, shelter, a few things to give me pleasure. So I travel — by car or public transit (which have become another necessity) — to a place where I spend eight hours — not making my own food or shelter or playthings — but maybe shuffling papers or welding parts to parts or serving food to strangers or sitting in front of a computer processing information that means nothing to me. I do not do these things because they give me any pleasure — usually they are miserably tedious tasks. In themselves these tasks serve no purpose for me. They serve the purpose of the boss or corporation for which I do these tasks, and they serve the purposes of the social system — in other words, they serve purposes alien to me. What I get for giving up so much of my life to serve an alien cause is *money*. So after work, I have to go out to the shops with the money I got from working to get food, clothing and pleasure items I want — since it is as compulsory as a job, this shopping time should also be counted as work time — and I must pay rent to a land-lord or mortgage to a bank for shelter. In fact, with the exception of a few who refuse, most people sacrifice most of their lives to buy survival and a few plastic trinkets.

Here there is a goal, an effort of the most horrendous sort and the attainment of basic necessities — but there is no life, not one that is my own. The technological system is an essential part of this alienation but not the totality. A complex social system incorporating work, technology, capital, authority ideology (including religion) and so on, all of which are integrally intertwined, this is what turns our lives into mere resources for society. And it must be attacked in its *totality* by those of us who want to take back our lives.

FC's "power process" seems to me to have a meagre, pathetic view of the world as a constant struggle for survival. This may well indicate the meagre, stingy social context from which it springs — for the present era certainly is that. But such meagerness will never get us out of this mess. That will take something strong and lively, something so certain of its abundance that it has no fear of squandering. Stirner speaks of such a thing calling it one's "own right", the might of which one makes one's life one's own, and so comes to have an excess of life — and it is this, my life as my own, and not "the freedom to go through the power process", that I want.

FC's reliance on their fixed idea, the "power process", makes for very poor — and, in my opinion, dangerous — social analysis. I have already pointed out the fallacies this has caused in FC's understanding of primitive societies and the acquisition of necessities in industrial society. But FC take these fallacies further. We'll leave aside such minor absurdities as FC's attribution of a lack of interest in having children to a disruption of the "power process". The danger of FC's use of the "power process" as a basis for social analysis becomes evident when it is applied to science. For FC, science is *essentially* a surrogate activity. Scientists get involved in order to "go through the power process", and science is (emphases added)

obedient only to the psychological needs of the scientists and of the government officials, and

corporation executives who provide the funds for research.

If only it were that simple, but science is not just a surrogate activity to help a few people meet their psychological needs. Science is an integral part of the social system under which we live, an ideological and practical tool for the maintenance and expansion of that social system. It is *this* goal to which science is blindly obedient, and for the social system, science is not a surrogate activity, but a necessary component for its survival. Whatever psychological fulfillment science may provide to its practitioners is simply, like the paycheck, part of the bribe necessary to make people willing to serve the needs of society in this way.

FC are obviously aware of the systemic

CAUSE. As I will show, FC call for just such self-sacrifice, showing that the "power process" has nothing to do with making one's life one's own, but is a fixed idea to be served.

FC'S DESCRIPTION OF INDUSTRIAL-TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY (FC'S THESES 99-160)

Having laid the groundwork with the fixed idea of the "power process" FC now present their "analysis" (more a description) of industrial-technological society. FC introduce this part of their essay with five "principles of history". As with most radicals for whom "history" is a central concept, they refrain from defining it. I find the five principles to be useless abstractions. They are concerned with

inadequate and unconvincing in many ways. And it leads FC to propose a revolutionary strategy that is self-sacrificial and, furthermore, absurd.

FC'S FIXED IDEA #2: THE REVOLUTION AGAINST THE INDUSTRIAL-TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM (FC'S THESES 161-232)

I oppose not only industrial technology, but technology and civilisation in their totality. So why do I call FC's "revolution against industrial technology" a fixed idea? Because my opposition to civilisation is based on a recognition that civilisation as a system of social relationships makes my life and my activities alien to me, so that they are not my own, but are molds into which I am to try to fit. I would never willingly sacrifice myself for the

destruction of the industrial system, support agreements like NAFTA and GATT if they can make the system topheavy and so easier to push over, and have loads and loads of children because children of revolutionaries supposedly become revolutionaries (at least according to the genetic theories to which FC apparently subscribe). For FC, there is no social context in which these things arise and for which they occur — capitalism, technology, the state, the family — all are nothing for FC, only industrial technology and its destruction matter.

FC make an important point when they tell us that primitive people as *individuals* were actually much better able to take care of themselves than industrialised people who have allowed themselves to become dependent on an immense social system. The significance of this for me is that it means that, to a much greater extent than we can know, their lives were their own. But is it only industrial technology that ends this oneness? I have already pointed out that hunter-gatherers apparently pursued the activities necessary for survival without compulsion, except in emergency situations (eg droughts, severe storms), doing them when they felt like it — more for the joy of it than out of need. Individuals were constantly figuring ways of making these activities easier and more enjoyable, but these ways were not immense systems, but merely tools and methods that individuals could make and use for themselves. The rise of agriculture (not to be mistaken for small-scale gardening) was the introduction of a technological system. It created a compulsory seasonal schedule for the production of food. But agriculture did not rise in a vacuum. Archaeological evidence indicates that agriculture developed in conjunction with the rise of early cities. Cities may, in fact, have come first. There can be no doubt that a concept of exclusive (private or communal) property must have coincided with the development of agriculture. There is also evidence of a connection between religion and agriculture. The early cities already give evidence of structured hierarchies and a specialised warrior class which can rightly be called a state and its army. In other words, the technological system of agriculture arose as part of an integrated social system — what we call civilisation. This system, in its totality and through all of its structures (technology, the state, economy, religion, the family, work, exclusive property, etc.) took the lives of individuals from them and made these lives the property of society. John Zerzan has presented evidence in a number of his writings that this alienation began well before the rise of civilisation, but this system of social relationships called civilisation changed life qualitatively in ways that made alienation a central defining quality of life. The fatalism and religiosity that are so much a part of agricultural societies can be seen as an expression of this alienation. Peasants feel more as though things happen to them than that they do things. Industrial technology certainly made a further qualitative change in the nature of alienation. Though farmers are forced to comply with a time schedule rather than doing things in their own time, they still (in peasant cultures, not in agribusiness) are directly producing their food. In industrial society, the activities into which one is forced in order to earn survival are not even directly related to one's survival needs in any way. They have become completely alien. But once again, the technology is only *part* of an entire complex, integrated social system, *all* of which acts together to guarantee that we can only gain our survival by giving up our lives to the reproduction of the social system. Those of us who want our lives back must limit ourselves to

Civilisation as a system of social relationships makes my life and my activities alien to me, so that they are not my own, but are molds into which I am to try to fit. I try to destroy the system for myself as a way of taking back my life.

nature, at least of industrial technology (even though they don't make the connection to the social system as a whole), yet they are so fixated on their pop psychology concept of the "power process" that they develop tunnel vision and interpret everything through this faulty idea. So they end up lacking a clear analysis of society. This fixation on the "power process" causes FC to describe things as universal problems which are only problems within this present social context because of the necessary contradictions of this society. Thus, "transsexuality among American Indian tribes" was no problem, because the tribes in which it occurred accepted it without censure. If FC were to study sexual anthropology, they would discover that many sexual practices which are considered perverted by our society are practiced by many primitive people without the stigma of perversion and so were no problem. Such activities become problematic in this society because sexuality is most useful to it when repressed and promoted at the same time — transforming it into a hard-to-get commodity and into an identity. Thus, the problematic nature of sexuality stems not from a disruption of the "power process" as FC would have it, but from its commodification. Such separation of sexuality from life is rarely a problem in primitive cultures.

FC define "freedom" as "the opportunity to go through the power process." The only freedom I consider to be worth pursuing is that my life be my own to determine, that my interactions be my own to create, that my self-enjoyment be central to how I live my life. FC may try to claim that this is what the "power process" is, but their own use of the term proves otherwise. It is a fixed idea through which to interpret the world and which one should sacrifice oneself. The desire for self-determination and self-enjoyment will move me to fight for myself and possibly even to sacrifice some things, but I will sacrifice them to myself and will never sacrifice myself. But adherence to a fixed idea (such as the "power process") moves one to fight for the CAUSE, to sacrifice oneself to the

vast social trends and express only the most banal generalities about these trends. The only positive thing I have to say on it is that they would lead anyone who desires individual self-determination to conclude that they must destroy society itself. But FC use these "principles" as dogmas by which they interpret industrial society. Nonetheless, this is the best section of FC's essay. Their descriptions of this society are often accurate, though their interpretations are frequently shallow and poorly thought out because of their dependence on fixed ideas and dogma.

FC rightly recognise that the industrial-technological system is not compatible with self-determination, that it must, out of inherent necessity, regulate people's lives and that the level of regulation must increase as the system expands, but FC do not recognise that this is true of the system as an integrated whole — including its political, cultural and ideological institutions. The *whole* is beyond reform and revolt against the totality is necessary — which means that attacks against any part of the social system can be worthwhile as long as they are aimed at taking back one's life. In the same light, just as 'good' and 'bad' parts of technology cannot be separated, neither can 'good' and 'bad' parts of civilisation as a whole.

Throughout this section, FC describe many horrible aspects or potentials of industrial technology, but provides no social analysis, no recognition that there is an entire social context which creates this technology. One is left to wonder of FC think social context has any significance. Several times, they bring up their belief in the genetic basis of human behaviour as if it were proven fact. Stephen Jay Gould has effectively argued that this is an unproven hypothesis which does not explain human behaviour very well. In any case, I wonder if FC's reliance on psychological models might not stem from their adherence to geneticism. It certainly impoverishes FC's argument by causing them to ignore the social system of which technology is an integral part, making their argument

destruction of civilisation. Rather I try to destroy this system for myself as a way of taking back my life. For FC,

the destruction of [the industrial] system must be the revolutionaries' ONLY goal... no other goal can be allowed to compete with that one.

So I am to be second to the goal of destroying industrial technology. Having a goal for which one is willing to sacrifice oneself changes the nature of the battle against the social system. FC's strategies, aside from being frequently absurd, are also strategies on an immense scale. One aspect to convert a large number of people to their cause who will then be willing to participate in a unified revolution. — Since FC make comparisons to the French and Russian revolutions, it seems that this is their model for revolution, sufficiently modified for use against industrial technology. But both of these revolutions actual moved in the opposite direction to that which FC calls for. Each created modern states which made transition to an industrial system easier. I would argue that a unified revolution of the sort for which FC call can most likely only lead to the creation of a unified system, not to the destruction of one. If the goal is individual self-determination, then the struggle must start from the individual who united only as one chooses with whom one fights.

Those who have a cause with which to fight rather than fighting for themselves want converts. So FC recommend a method of propagandising which involves inventing an ideology of "Wild Nature vs. Industrial technology". This manipulative strategy hardly seems conducive to promoting individual (or small group) autonomy. FC's strategy seems to promote a large group dynamic where a few would lead and most would follow. If this did not seem mostly like FC's fantasy, I would find this part of FC's ideas detestable. But FC are explicit: the destruction of the industrial system must be the *top priority*. For this, we should be willing to support dictatorships if that will

FC's "only goal!" We have much more to destroy than the industrial system -- we have the whole civilisation to bring down and will attack it on all fronts, the state and its protectors (cops, the military, bureaucrats...), economy (capitalism, work, property rights and so on), technology, religion, education, the family, ideology... And we won't do this as a cause, but selfishly, because we want our lives back. I want to determine my own life, create my own activities and interactions for my own enjoyment. So any "revolution" that demands that I sacrifice myself for its cause is as much my enemy as the social system which demands the same of me. Only a revolution which attacks society in a way that allows individuals to take back their lives interests me, and such a revolution would grow out of the revolts of individuals against their own alienation, not from a mass programme.

FC's hatred of the technological system has my sympathy and agreement. But I vehemently reject their adherence to fixed ideas, particularly their dependence on a psychological model, the "power process", as a means of analysing the technological system. I wonder if this psychological conception of the problem is why FC, who say that the destruction of the industrial system is "the ONLY goal", has chosen to blow up technicians, researchers and other human servants of the machine rather than large-scale industrial facilities which are more essential parts of the industrial system. Don't get me wrong, everyone who has been attacked by FC has been working actively toward drastically increasing social control and destruction of wild places. The few deaths are no loss to me -- in fact, I smile, thinking "One less technician to control my life". But killing off technicians one by one seems like an extremely slow way to destroy the industrial system...

I have many problems with FC's ideas. Their lack of a clear social analysis and their adherence to fixed ideas prevent them from making a coherent and convincing critique out of their often accurate descriptions of industrial society. Furthermore, FC's fixed ideas channel the whole into an authoritarian and very self-sacrificial conception of

revolution. Nonetheless, FC has been doing something to fight the present social system. One may question their tactics, but those who do so from an anarchist armchair or from the position of typical, ineffective and unsatisfying radical activism had best direct equally probing questions at themselves.

AFTERWORD: SOME THOUGHTS ON VIOLENCE

While there has been little response at all to FC's essay, the reaction to their violence has come from nearly all sides. Even Tad Kepley's mostly sympathetic article in *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* #42 was tainted with moralisms regarding violence, in spite of Tad's claim to the contrary. Tad says:

The anti-authoritarian who makes use of violence... must be aware of the contradictions in destroying to create, in using violence in the hopes of creating a world without violence.

There are no contradictions in destroying to create -- Every act of creation involves destruction. When one makes a meal, one directly or indirectly kills or mutilates other living things; making a shelter will involve destruction of one form of thing to make another. But it is Tad's second phrase that is more relevant to this question. There certainly would be contradictions in using violence if what one wanted was a world without violence, but FC never claims to want a world without violence. FC want a world without a huge global system that destroys the autonomy of individuals and small groups. I also do not want a world without violence; I want a world in which individuals can create their own lives and interactions in accordance with their desires -- and, in such a world, conflict and, therefore, violence is inevitable. It is the state's monopoly on violence that I oppose, and when individuals use violence against the state (or any other aspect of the system of social control) and its tools, they are breaking that monopoly.

Tad Kepley and the critics of violence are wrong. Taking a life is *not* the ultimate act of domination. Forcing someone -- or hundreds, thousands, millions, billions -- into dependency on

a social system that bleeds their lives away to reproduce itself and in exchange for survival (in the worst cases, not even that) and possibly also a

Domination consists of forcing people to give away their life energy while they are living. Certainly, dominators (or dominating institutions) sometimes kill

removal" of such a person takes nothing away from me that I would want to keep. Because I am selfish, I will never willingly sacrifice myself, but I will gladly sacrifice anything or anyone that interferes with my ability to create my own life and interactions as I choose. 'Human community' is an abstraction. Real interactions and associations are those experienced by individuals -- either as self-determined creations or as impositions -- not the mystical connections which spring from such abstractions as 'humanity' or 'species being'. My interactions with cops, high-tech researchers in social control, state bureaucrats, capitalists, religious leaders or any other authority figure, no matter how indirect the interaction, is one in which I am imposed upon, one aimed at making my life alien from me. Such an interaction can only impoverish me. The death of any such a figure of authority, therefore, does not impoverish me and may well enrich me. Indeed, it can add a little brightness to my life, knowing that I have successfully managed to attack, in however small a way, the structures of authority -- even if that involves killing someone who has willingly chosen to be a bully-boy for authority. Certainly, it makes more sense tactically to attack targets of more significance than any individual can ever be in maintaining authority -- but such attacks on property also get condemned by those in power as "mindless terrorism". And they are equally condemned by those who prefer to do nothing but continually beg the state to, please, abolish itself and, in the meantime, be nicer to poor, sweet, harmless little anarchists.

I am not meaning to be overly harsh to Tad. His article at least shows some sympathy for FC's hatred of the technological system and avoids the reactionary hysteria found in *Slingshot* and numerous other anarchist periodicals. But in his assessment of violence, Tad seems to be kissing a bit too much pacifist ass. Destruction of a global social system will involve violence, and that violence would not be ironic or contradictory with its goal, it would be the unconstrained expression of the passion that those who are taking their lives back feel against the system that keeps them alienated.

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INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY AND ITS FUTURE



The Unabomber's Manifesto
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few trinkets and glass beads -- that is the ultimate act of domination. The killer lays no claim to the life of the victim until they kill them, and even then they lay no claim to the life but only to the ending of that life.

to enforce their power, but as the cliché says "the living envy the dead".

FC's targets are precisely people who choose, by their research or other work activities, to uphold and increase domination. The "absolute irrevocable

FC are correct in saying that most american leftists come from middle or upper-class backgrounds But FC miss what may be the most significant aspects of this in terms of the psychology of leftism namely, that many leftists believe that they are privileged, that they have an excess of social power, and they lied guilty about this. In a very Christum, messianic manner, they "give themselves" to those who - according to their ideology - have received the short schnft from society This guilt and secular chnstianist activism explain the leftist masochism, self-sacrifice and dogmatism quite well Recognising the religiosity of leftism, we can see that it can be compassionate, morally based *and* hostile all at once just like Christianity which compassionately and morally instituted pogroms, technological system is a system of it is an integral part of a more to be attacked in its totality But inquisitions. wars and genocide against heretics and non-believers.

FC's attempts to interpret every aspect of the leftist's life in terms of a pop psychology inferiority complex severely weakens the argument leftists, like nearly every one else in this society, lead very compartmentalised lives. I have known leftists who seem to like the blues or world beat music because they imagine such music is a way to get in touch with the feelings of black or third world people Thus to the extent that leftism affects the art preferences of the leftist*it does not seem to be in the direction of embracing defeat or irrationalism, but of trying to get in touch with other cultures this is absurd and merely reinforces the commodification of these cultures but it does not. in itself, indicate inferiority feelings.

Certainly, leftists spend far too much time trying to prove the equality of oppressed groups and demanding that it be granted by the state, but this does not so much prove the inferiority need to develop analyses of society and the left's role therein that go far deeper feelings of leftists as their adherence to relying on authority It is the leftist belief in a democratic social order — which is to say, a structure of democratic *authority* - which causes them to embrace vic t must to ideology, an ideology which *begs* those in power to *grant* equality', 'rights', 'justice', etc This practise of constantly begging for what one wants (particularly when those wants have been transformed into abstractions which one can never see accomplished) inevitably makes one feel weak and incapable — and so inferior. Leftist activists promote this form of radicalism because it guarantees their role within the present social structures When women, gays, blacks, etc., start taking their lives as their own as individuals, it brings them into conflict equally with leftist ideologues and with society, precisely because they are no longer *begging* and so no longer need like leftists to beg for them.

FC's concept of "oversocialism" also proves to be inadequate because it depends on psychology rather than an analysis of the social role of the leftist Leftism is a form of liberal democratic / humanist politics - that is, it is part of the political system to which the rise of capitalism and the industrial system gave birth So it is no surprise that leftists subscribe to the "liberty, equality, fraternity" which are the shibboleths of such politics But the totality of the social system is far more complex and irrational than FC think The real values of (his system, the ones for which it sacrifices all others, can be

summed up rather simplistically as follows (1) the expansion of capital; (2) efficiency in production. (3) increasing social control in the daily lives of individuals to guarantee the first two. Beyond these fundamentals, the social system is quite irrational and full of contradictions. Thus, the social structure is both anti-racist and racist as each of these tendencies may under different circumstances better serve the above-mentioned values (and, of course, aspects of earlier social structures do not disappear overnight). The same can be said about sexism / anti-sexism, violence / non-violence, war / peace, etc. Leftists are no more or less "over-socialized" than conservatives, moderates or most radicals. Leftists believe that the social system can be rationalised, that its contradictions can be removed without destroying the system as a whole. So they try to convince the authorities to abolish sexism, racism, violence, war - without realising that, within this social system, these are a necessary part of the same mechanism of control of which anti-sexism, anti-racism, non-violence and peace are a part - the one side needs the other, just as the night needs the day and vice versa.

I do not deny the neuroses of leftism as evidenced in its guilt, masochism and moral stencency. But if we want to make an intelligent attack on the social system - as FC apparently does - we than FCs pop psychology.

Fixed Idea #1: The Power Process (FC's Theses 33- 98)

The first major fixed idea that dominates FC's thoughts is 'the power process'. This idea seems to form the basis of most of FC's analysis, and that's too bad because it's a (lawful idea - pop psychology reminiscent of 70's management strategies and self-help books. FC describes the power process 'Everyone needs to have goals whose attainment requires effort, and needs to succeed in attaining at least some of these goals. But do I need goals? No, I need or want specific things. Some effort is inherently involved in getting these things and, of course, I will be happier if I do get them and if I determine how I get them. But to transform these needs for actual things into an abstract need for goals, effort and attainment which are simply words that can be used to describe how one gets what one needs, and then to base an analysis of the present social system on this abstraction is absurd. I *have* goals simply because I need or want specific things, but I do not *need* goals - so I do not *need* a 'power process'.

The 'power process' is a psychological model and, like all such models, springs from and is only useful within a specific social context. The 'oedipus complex' was a model developed in Victorian Europe which worked well for explaining much of the sexual psychology of Victorian Europe. Over time it has become less and less useful and is now used only by die-hard Freudians. It has no applicability to ancient Romans, Hopi Indians, Mbuti pygmies, medieval English justices, etc. The "power process" assuming it has any application outside of pop psychology would also have to be understood

in terms of a specific social context FC's attempt to universalise it leads to a sloppy understanding of history and anthropology.

FC's anthropology is about 30 years behind the times. FC seem to assume that primitive people needed to spend most of their time and energy satisfying biological needs. It has been pretty well established that even in harsh environments, the amount of time primitive people spent on activities which provided their basic needs is about one quarter of the amount of time spent by the average person in industrial society at work. In other words, primitive people got the things they wanted with less effort than most of us expend to get what we want. In fact since there was no time schedule which they had to follow to perform these activities, so they could be done whenever (in leisure time except in emergencies), it can be argued that primitive societies were societies of total leisure. With the use of agriculture and cities about 10,000 years ago, the new technological system doubled the amount of time that those who used it had to spend on meeting their basic needs and placed this activity on a strict seasonal time schedule — this could be considered the origin of work. Industrial technology drastically increased both the amount of work time and the rigidity of scheduling necessary for work. So most

(people in our society find themselves so exhausted by activities not of their own making that in what little leisure time they have they often choose to vegetate through passive entertainment. This problem is *alienation*. We are not completely unaware of this in our society people do not satisfy their biological needs AUTONOMOUSLY, but by functioning as parts of an immense social machine.

Alienation is not merely a psychological problem. Often the most alienated people are the most adjusted to their alienation. Alienation is the realm of a social system in which our lives, our activities and our interactions are not our own to create as we choose, but have been made for us in such a way that we become the property of society. The ways of fulfilling our needs and wants become very convoluted and indirect, like a Rube Goldberg machine — but it isn't comical. I want food, shelter, a few things that give me pleasure. So I travel — in car or public transit (which have become another necessity) — to a place where I spend eight hours — not making my own food, shelter or providing — in it maybe 'hulling papers or welding parts or serving food in a restaurant or sitting in front of a computer processing information that means nothing to me. I do not do these things because they give me any pleasure — usually they are miserably tedious tasks. In themselves these

Civilisation as a system of social relationships makes my life and my corporation for which I do (hard tasks) **alien to me, so that they are**

My social system - in other words me " "

My social system alien to me. What I get from giving up so much of my life to a cruel alien cause is money. So after work, I have to go out to the shops with the money I got from working to get clothing and pleasure items I want - since this is as compulsory as a job. This shopping time should also be considered as work time — and I must pay rent to a land-lord or mortgage to a bank for shelter. In fact, with the exception

of a few who refuse, most people sacrifice most of their lives to have survival and a few plastic trinkets. Here there is a goal, an effort of (the most horrendous sort and the attainment of basic necessities — but there is no life, not one that is my own.

The ideological system is an essential part of this alienation but not the totality. A complex social system incorporating work, technology, capital, authority, ideology (including religion) and so on, all of which are integrally mixed in this is what turns our lives into mere resources for society. And it must be attacked in its *totality* by those of us who want to take back our lives. FC's "power process seems to me to have a meagre, paltry view of the world as a constant struggle for survival. This may well indicate the meagre, stunted social context from which it springs — for the present era certainly is that. But such meagreness will never get us out of this mess. That will take something strong and lively, something so certain of its abundance that it has no fear of squaring itself. Stimer speaks of such a thing calling it one's "own might, the might of which one makes one's life one's own, and so come to have an excess of life — and it is this, my life as my own, and not a "the freedom to go through the power process" that I want.

FC's reliance on their fixed idea, the power process' makes for very (in my opinion dangerous — social unhappiness. I have already pointed out the fallacies this has caused in FC's understanding of primitive societies and the acquisition of necessities in industrial society. But I do take these fallacies further. We do leave aside such minor absurdities as FC's attitude of a lack of interest in having children (to a degree) of the power process. The danger of FC's use of the power process as a basis for social analysis becomes evident when it is applied to science. In FC science is *essentially* a utilitarian activity. Scientists get involved in order to "go through the power process." Science is an epiphenomenon added only to the psychological needs of the scientists and of their government officials and corporation executives who provide the funds for research.

If only it were that simple, but science is not just a surrogate activity to help a few people meet their psychological needs. Science is an integral part of the social system under which we live, an ideological and practical tool for the maintenance and expansion of that social system. It is *this* goal to which science is obedient, and for the sake of the system, science is not a surrogate activity, but a necessary component for its survival. Whatever psychological fulfillment science does provide to its practitioners is simply, like the paycheck part of the bribe system, to make people willing to serve the needs of society in this way.

FC are obviously aware of this system.

not my own, but are molds into which I am to try to fit. I try to destroy the system *for myself* as a way of taking back my life.

nature at least of industrial technology (even though they don't make the truth of the social system as a whole), yet (they are so fixated on their pop psychology concept of the power process that they develop tunnel vision and interpret everything through this faulty idea. So then end up lacking a clear analysis of society. This fixation is

the power process causes FC to describe ihmgs as universal problems which are only problems within this prczeni social context because of the necessary contradictions of this society Ihus. transexuahty among American the tribes m which it occured accepted it without censure If FC were to study sexual anthrojxjlogy they would discover that many sexual practise which are considered perverted by our society are pcastcticed by masny frumtivc people without the stigma of jiervcTxion and so were no problem Such aclivities l>ecome prHilcmauc in this society because sexuality is most useful to it when repressed and promoted at the same lime — transforming n into a hard-to-get commodity and into an identity Thus, the problematic nature of sexuality stems not from *a disruption of thr power process*’ as FC would have it, but from its commodificatHMi Such separahon of sexuality from life is rarely a problem in primitive cultures

FC define freedom^ as The opportunity t<» go through the power jxocexs ’ The only freedom I consider lo be worth pursuing is that my life he mv own to determine fruit nn interactions be my own to create, that rm iiclfienjuvmcni be central to liow I Ine my life FC may try to claim that (hi* is uh/it tlsc ’power *pfoyeM*” is. but (heir own use of the (erm proves otherwise It is a fixed idea through which to interpret the world and w hich one should sacrifice oneself The desire for self-determination and scif-cnjoymcni will move me to fight for inysclf and possibly even to sacrifice vane *ihtnys*. but J will sacrifice them *lo mysrlf* and will *never* sacrifice myself Itoi adherence to a fixed idea (such as the power process) moves one to tight for the CAUSE, to sacrifice *oneself to the*

CAUSE As I will show, EC call tor just such self-sacrifice, showing that the |x>wcr process’ lias nothing to do with making one’s life one’s own. but is a fixed idea to be served having laid the grvnuxiwork wiolh die fixed idea of the power process FC now present their “analysis’ (more a description) of industrial- (ccghnological socictv FC introduce this jwrt of their essay with fiovc principles ot histiry As with most radicals for whom “history ” is a central concept, they refrain from defining it I find the five principles to be useless abstractions Ihev arc concerned with vast social trends and express only the most banal generalities about these trends The only positivbe thing I have to say on il is that they would lead anyone who desires individual self-detcmunauon to concliyude that they musty destroy society itself But FC use these principles’ as logmas ny which ihev interpret induxtнал society

Nonetheless, this is the best section of FC s essay Their descriptions *of* this society are often accurate, though their interpretations are frquently shallow and poorly thopught out because of Ihor dqjendence on fixed ideas and dogma

FC rightly recognise that the industnal- technological system w .tot compatible with self-determination, dial it must, out of inhcreo! necessity, regulaste people s lives and thasi tlie level of regulation must increa.se as the system expands, but FC do not recognise that this is true exif the system as an integrated whole — including its political, cultural and ideological institutions. The *whole* is beyond reform and revolt against the totality is necessary - which means thast attacks against any part of the

social system can be worthwhile as long as they are aimed at taking back one's life. In the same light just as 'good' and 'bad' parts of technology cannot be separated, neither can 'good' and 'bad' parts of civilisation as a whole.

Through this section, FC describe many horrific aspects potential of industrial technology, but provides no social analysis, no recognition that there is an entire social context which creates this technology. One is left to wonder if FC think social context has any significance. Several times, they bring up their belief in the genetic basis of human behaviour as if it were proven fact. Stephen Jay Gould has effectively argued that this is an unproven hypothesis which does not explain human behaviour very well. In any case I wonder if FC's reliance on psychological models might not stem from their attachment to geneticism. It certainly impoverishes FC's argument by causing them to ignore the social system of which technology is an integral part making their argument inadequate and unconvincing in many ways. And it leads FC to propose a revolutionary strategy that is self-sacrificial and, furthermore, absurd.

FC's Fixed Idea #2: The Revolution Against the Industrial-Technological System (FC's Theses 161-232)

I oppose not the industrial technology, but technology and civilisation in their totality. So why do I call FC's revolution against industrial technology a fixed idea? Because my opposition to civilisation is based on a recognition that civilisation as a system of social relationships makes my life and my activities alien to me, so that they are not my own, but are molds into which I am to try to fit. I would never willingly sacrifice myself for the destruction of civilisation. Rather I try to destroy this system *for myself* as a way of taking back my life.

For FC the destruction of (the industrial) system must be the revolutionaries ONLY goal. No other goal can be allowed to compete with that one.

So I am to be second to the goal of destroying industrial technology. Having a goal for which one is willing to sacrifice oneself changes the nature of the battle against the social system. FC's strategies, aside from being frequently absurd, are also strategies on an immense scale. One almost gets the impression that FC expect to convert a large number of people to their cause who will then be willing to participate in a unified revolution. Since FC make comparisons to the French and Russian revolutions, it seems that this is their model for revolution, sufficiently modified for use against industrial technology. But both of these revolutions actually moved in the opposite direction to that which FC calls for. Each created modern states which made transition to an industrial system easier. I would argue that a unified revolution of the sort for which FC call can most likely only lead to the creation of a unified system, not to the

destruction of one If the goal is individual self-determination, then the struggle must start from the individual who united only us one chooses with whom one fights.

those who have a cause with which to fight rather than fighting for themselves want converts So FC recommend a method of propagandising which involves inventing an ideology of "Wild Nature vs Industrial technology" In a manipulative strategy hardly seems conducive to promoting individual (or small group) autonomy FC's strategy seems to promote a large group dynamic where a few would lead and most would follow If this did not seem mostly like FC's fantasy, I would find this part of FC's ideas detestable But FC are explicit that the destruction of the industrial system must be *the top priority* For this, we should be willing to support dictatorships if that will destabilise the industrial system, support agreements like NAFTA and GATT if they can mask the system top-heavy and so easier to push over, and have loads and loads of children because children of revolutionaries supposedly become revolutionaries (at least according to the genetic theories to which FC apparently subscribe), For FC, there is no social context in which these things arise and for which they occur — capitalism technology, the state, the family - all are nothing for FC. Only industrial technology and its destruction matter FC make an important point when they tell us that primitive people were *individuals* were actually much better able to take care of themselves than industrialised people who have allowed themselves to become dependent on an immense social system The significance of this for me is that it means (that to a much greater extent than we can know, their lives were their own But is it only industrial technology that ends this ownership? I have already pointed out that hunter-gatherers apparently pursued the activities necessary for survival without compulsion, except in emergency situations (e.g. droughts, severe storms), doing them when they felt like it — more for the joy of it than out of need Individuals were constantly figuring ways of making these activities easier and more enjoyable but these ways were not immense systems, but merely tools and methods that individuals could make and use for themselves The rise of agriculture (not to be mistaken for small-scale gardening) was the introduction of a technological system It created a compulsory seasonal schedule for the production of food But agriculture did not arise in a vacuum Archaeological evidence indicates that agriculture developed in conjunction with the rise of early cities Cities may, in fact, have come first There can be no doubt that a concept of exclusive (private or communal) property must have coincided with the development of agriculture There is also evidence of a connection between religion and agriculture The early cities already give evidence of structured hierarchies and a specialised warrior class which can rightly be called a state and its army In other words, the technological system of agriculture arose as part of an integrated social system - what we call civilisation This system, in its totality and through *all* of us structures (technology, the state economy, religion the family, work exclusive property .). took the lives of individuals from (them and made these lives the property of society John Zerzan has presented evidence in a number of his writings that this alienation began well before the rise of civilisation, but this system of social relations called civilisation changed life qualitatively in ways fruit

made alienation a central defining quality of life. The fatalism and religiosity that are so much a part of agricultural societies can be seen as an expression of this alienation. Peasants feel more as though things happen to them than that they do things. Industrial technology certainly made a further qualitative change in the nature of alienation. Though farmers are forced to comply with a time schedule rather than doing things in their own time, they still (in peasant cultures, rather than in agribusiness) are directly producing their food. In industrial society, the activities into which one is forced in order to earn survival are not even directly related to one's survival needs in any way. They have become complexly alien. But once again, the technology is only *part* of an entire complex, integrated social system, *all* of which acts together to guarantee that we can only gain our survival by giving up our lives to the reproduction of the social system. Those of us who want our lives back cannot limit ourselves to

FC's "only goal." We have much more to destroy than the industrial system — we have the whole civilisation to bring down and will attack it on all fronts, the state and its protectors (cops, the military, bureaucrats), economy (capitalism, work, property rights and so on), technology, religion, education, the family, ideology... And we won't do this as a cause, but selfishly, because we want our lives back. I want to determine my own life, create my own activities and interactions for my own enjoyment. So any "revolution" that demands that I sacrifice myself for its cause is as much my enemy as the social system which demands the same of me. Only a revolution which attacks society in a way that allows individuals to take back their lives interests me, and such a revolution would grow out of the revolts of individuals against their own alienation, not from a mass programme.

FC's hatred of the technological system has my sympathy and agreement. But I vehemently reject their adherence to fixed ideas, particularly their dependence on a psychological model, the "power process", as a means of analysing the technological system. I wonder if this psychological conception of the problem is why FC, who say that the destruction of the industrial system is "the ONLY goal", has chosen to blow up technicians, researchers and other human servants of the machine rather than large-scale industrial facilities which are more essential parts of the industrial system. Don't get me wrong, everyone who has been attacked by FC has been working actively toward drastically increasing social control and destruction of wild places. The few deaths are no loss to me — in fact, I smile, thinking "One less technician to control my life." But killing oil technicians one by one seems like an extremely slow way to destroy the industrial system.

I have many problems with FC's ideas. Their lack of a clear social analysis and their adherence to fixed ideas prevent them from making a coherent and convincing critique out of their often accurate descriptions of industrial society. Furthermore, FC's fixed ideas channel the whole into an authoritarian and even self-sacrificial conception of revolution. Nonetheless, FC has been doing something to fight the present social system. One may question their tactics, but those who do so from an anarchist armchair or

from the position of typical, ineffective and unsatisfying radical activism had best direct equally probing questions at themselves

Afterword: Some Thoughts on Violence

While there has been little response at all to FC's essay, the reaction to their violence has come from nearly all sides. Even Tad Kepley's mostly sympathetic article in *Anarchy. A Journal of Desire Armed* #42 was tainted with moralisms regarding violence, in spite of Tad's claim to the contrary. Tad says

The anti-authoritarian who makes use of violence ... must be aware of the contradictions in destroying to create, in using violence in the hopes of creating a world without violence

There are no contradictions in destroying to create — Every act of creation involves destruction. When one makes a meal, one directly or indirectly kills or mutilates other living things. Making a shelter will involve destruction of one form of thing to make another. But it is Tad's second phrase that is more relevant to this question. There certainly would be contradictions in using violence *if* what one wanted was a world without violence, but FC never claims to want a world without violence. FC wants a world without a huge global system that destroys the autonomy of individuals and small groups. I also do not want a world without violence. I want a world in which individuals can create their own lives and interactions in accordance with their desires — and, in such a world, conflict and therefore, violence is inevitable. It is the state's monopoly on violence that I oppose, and when individuals use violence against the state (or any other aspect of the system of social control) and its tools, they are breaking that monopoly.

Tad Kepley and the critics of violence are wrong. Taking a life is *not* the ultimate act of domination. Forcing someone — or hundreds, thousands, millions, billions — into dependency on a social system that bleeds their lives away to enrich itself and in exchange for survival (in the worst cases, not even that) and possibly also a few trinkets and glass beads — *that* is the ultimate act of domination. The killer lays no claim to the life of the victim until they kill them, and even then they lay no claim to the *life* but only to the ending of that life. Domination consists of forcing people to give away their life energy while they are living. Certainly, dominators (or dominating institutions) sometimes kill to enforce their power, but as the cliché says "the living envy the dead." FC's targets are precisely people who choose, by their research or other work activities, to uphold and increase domination. The "absolute irrevocable removal" of such a person takes nothing away from me that I would want to keep. Because I am selfish, I will never willingly sacrifice myself, but I will gladly sacrifice anything or anyone that interferes with my ability to create my own life and interactions as I choose. 'Human community' is an abstraction. Real interactions and associations are those experienced by individuals — either as self-determined creations or as impositions.

- not the mystical connections which spring from such abstractions as 'humanity' or 'species being'. My interactions with cops, high-Uxh researchers in social control, state bureaucrats, capitalists, religious leader* or any other authority figure, no matter how indirect the interaction, is one in which I am imposed upon, one aimed at making my life alien from me. Such an interaction can only impoverish me. The death of any such a figure of authority, therefore, does not impoverish me and may well enrich me. Indeed, it can add a little brightness to my life, knowing that I have successfully managed to attack, in however small a way, the structures of authority - even if that involves killing someone who has willingly chosen to be a bully-boy for authority. Certainly, it makes more sense tactically to attack targets of more significance than any individual can ever be in maintaining authority — but such attacks on property also get condemned by those in power as 'mindless terrorism'. And they are equally condemned by those who prefer to do nothing but continually beg the state to, please, abolish itself and, in the meantime, be nicer to poor, sweet, harmless little anarchists.

I am not meaning to be overly harsh to Tad. His article at least shows some sympathy for FC's hatred of the technological system and avoids the reactionary hysteria found in *Slingshot* and numerous other anarchist periodicals. Bui, in his assessment of violence, Tad seems to be kissing a bit too much pacifist ass. Destruction of a global social system will involve violence, and that violence would not be ironic or contradictory with its goal, it would be the uncontrived expression of the passion that those who are taking their lives back feel against the system that keeps them alienated.

Free Ted K

#49-50 Sep 1997

Former maths professor and Montana hermit Ted Kaczynski will be facing trial as the Unabomber in Sacramento, California, from 12th November 1992. His trial – which could last three months, will see whether FBI claims that he killed two technocrats and injured two others as a result of a 17 year long letter bombing campaign are lies.

We know for a fact that Ted K has been framed. It'd have been impossible for him to have heard about the Oklahoma City bombing, travelled from Lincoln, Montana, to Oakland California three states away by Greyhound bus, and then posted out a parcel bomb and three communiques there all on the 13th May 1995 as the FBI maintain. It's just physically impossible! ...

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We've still heard no definite word on



the death penalty, though 90% of respondents in a *New York Times* poll opposed Ted K's execution and all anarchists should as the State intend to execute Ted as *an anarchist*.

Donations to:

Ted Kaczynski c/o Quin Denvir, 10th Floor, 801 K Street, Sacramento CA95814, USA

Unapack, POB 120494, Boston MA 02112, USA

Concerning The Case of Theodore Kaczynski

#51 Mar 1998

THE UNABOMBER TRIAL

CONCERNING THE CASE OF THEODORE KACZYNSKI

A post-trial letter from the ex-Maths professor and Montana hermit framed as the Unabomber

Last 22nd January 1998, Ted Kaczynski was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole at Sacramento County Court, California. Against his will, his lawyers offered only mitigation instead of a proper defence and the judge presiding forced a 'guilty' verdict on Ted by refusing him permission to sack his lawyers. The excuse for all this was that Ted wasn't mentally compitent to instruct his lawyers—even though they were the only ones saying this—but the effect was to silence him in court. We now publish his four-page post-imprisonment letter, *Information Concerning the Case of Theodore J. Kaczynski, accused of being the Unabomber*, so you can judge for yourself: "Does this man really sound crazy?", "Does this man really sound like the Unabomber?", and "How can we silently stand by making no attempt to redress this gross injustice?"

"For a matter of months preceding the beginning of my trial on November 12, 1997, I had been aware that my attorneys wanted to use a defense that would be based on supposed evidence of mental impairment. However, my attorneys had led me to believe that I would have a considerable measure of control over the defense strategy, hence I was under the

impression that I would be able to limit the presentation of mental evidence to some items that at that time I thought might have some validity.

The first weeks of the trial were devoted to selection of a jury, a process that told me little about the defense that my attorneys planned to use. But in late November I discovered that my attorneys

had prepared a defense that would virtually portray me as insane, and that they were going to force this defense on me in spite of my bitter resistance to it.

For the present I will not review in detail what happened between late November, 1997 and January 22, 1998. Suffice it to say that the judge in my case, Garland E. Burrell, decided that my attorneys had the legal right to force their defense on me over my objections; that it was too late for me to replace my attorneys with a certain distinguished attorney who had offered to represent me and had stated his intention to use a defense not based on any supposed mental illness; and that it was too late for me to demand the right to act as my own attorney.

This put me in such a position that I had only one way left to prevent my attorneys from using false information to represent me to the world as insane: I agreed to plead guilty to the charges in exchange for withdrawal of the prosecution's request for the death penalty. I also had

to give up all right to appeal, which leaves me with a virtual certainty of spending my life in prison. I am not afraid of the death penalty, and I agreed to this bargain only to end the trial and thus prevent my attorneys from representing me as insane. It should be noted that the defense my attorneys had planned could not have led to my release; it was only intended to save me from the death penalty.

By concealing their intentions from me and discouraging me from finding another attorney before it was too late, my attorneys have done me very great harm: They have forced me to sacrifice my right to an appeal that might have led to my release; they have already made public the opinions of supposed experts who portray me as crazy; and they have caused me to lose my opportunity to be represented by a distinguished attorney who would have portrayed me in a very different light.

Perhaps I ought to hate my attorneys for what they have done to me, but I do not. Their motives were in no way malicious. They are essentially conventional people who are blind to some of the implications of this case, and they acted as they did because they subscribe to certain professional principles that they believe left them no alternative. These principles may seem rigid and even ruthless to a non-lawyer, but there is no doubt that my attorneys believe in them sincerely. Moreover, on a personal level my attorneys have treated me with great generosity and have performed many kindnesses for me. (But these can never compensate for the harm they have done me through their handling of my case.)

Recent events constitute a major defeat for me. But the end is not yet. More will be heard from me in the future.

Theodore J. Kaczynski
January 26, 1998

P.S. Feel free to publish this message".

A post-trial letter from the ex-Maths professor and Montana hermit framed as the Unabomber

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For the present I will not review in detail what happened between late November 1997 and January 22, 1998. Suffice it to say that the judge in my case, Garland E. Burell, decided that my attorneys had the legal right to force their defense on me over my objections; that it was too late for me to replace my attorneys with a certain distinguished attorney who had offered to represent me and had stated his intention to use a defense not based on any supposed mental illness; and that it was too late for me to demand the right to act as my own attorney.

This put me in such a position that I had only one way left to prevent my attorneys from using false information to represent me to the world as insane: I agreed to plead guilty to the charges in exchange for withdrawal of the prosecution's request for the death penalty. I also had to give up all right to appeal, which leaves me with a virtual certainty of spending my life in prison. I am not afraid of the death penalty, and I agreed to this bargain only to end the trial and thus prevent my attorneys from representing me as insane. It should be noted that the defense my attorneys had planned could not have led to my release; it was only intended to save me from the death penalty.

By concealing their intentions from me and discouraging me from finding another attorney before it was too late, my attorneys have done me very great harm: they have forced me to sacrifice my right to an appeal that might have led to my release; they have already made public the opinions of supposed experts who portray me as crazy; and they have caused me to lose my opportunity to be represented by a distinguished attorney who would have portrayed me in a very different light.

Perhaps I ought to hate my attorneys for what they have done to me, but I do not. Their motives were in no way malicious. They are essentially conventional people who are blind to some of the implications of this case, and they acted as they did because they subscribe to certain professional principles that they believe left them no alternative. These principles may seem rigid and even ruthless to a non-lawyer, but there is no doubt that my attorneys believe in them sincerely. Moreover, on a personal level my attorneys have treated me with great generosity and have performed many kindnesses for me. (But these can never compensate for the harm they have done me through their handling of my case.)

Recent events constitute a major defeat for me. But the end is not yet. More will be heard from me in the future.

Theodore J. Kaczynski

January 26, 1998

P.s. Feel free to publish this message.”

The Framing of Ted Kaczynski

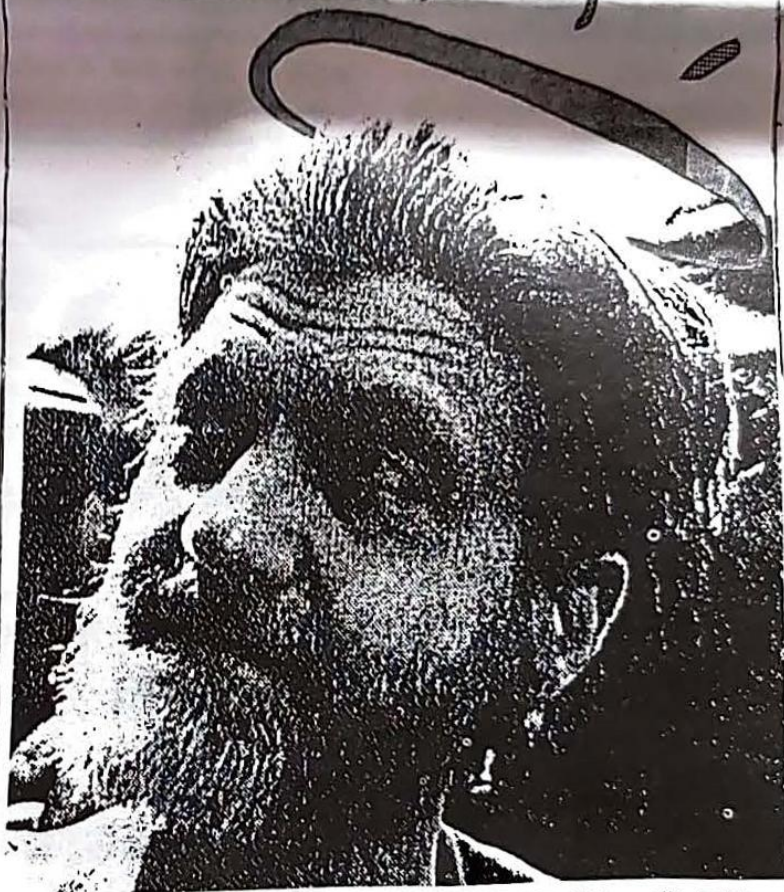
#51 Mar 1998

An hour-long video exposing how the Unabomber suspect was set up, only £5 from BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX.

Write letters of support to:

Ted Kaczynski (X-Ref 316854), ...

UNABOMBER?



THE FRAMING OF TED KACZYNSKI

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Ted Kaczynski [X-Ref 3165854], 8W401 Sacramento Main County Jail, 651 I Street, Sacramento, CA95814, USA

Emporia State

#56 Jun 1999

EMPORIA STATE

John Moore on the Crystal Palace and its aftermath

The Crystal Palace is Dostoevsky's crowning symbol for the barrenness of industrial civilization ... In the Crystal Palace everything will be provided, man's every desire will be satisfied, he will be insulated from pain—but the more he becomes the automaton consumer the more he will also suffer from excruciating boredom ... The Crystal Palace is the supreme economic manifestation of the utilitarian, liberal-rationalist philosophy: and it is the bourgeois paradise

JOHN CARROLL

The Crystal Palace burned down, of course, in 1936. But like a phoenix, or dragon's teeth sown in the earth, it sprang up everywhere as the shopping mall.

MAY 1998

Earth First! anniesacs complain that council plans to build 18 multiplex cinemas plus 1000 rooftop car parking spaces on the vacant site of the Crystal Palace break the understanding that further building on the site would 'reflect the style of the original Crystal Palace'.

Welcome to the Milton Keynes of the soul.

In the hothouse environment of the mall, designer label commodities hold their grand parade, showing off their trophies, their human conquests.

During previous centuries millions died due to a wasting disease called consumption; in the present century millions also die due to a wasting disease called consumption.

In the emporia state, production is concealed, energy congealed, eyes sealed, and hearts annealed.

inwardness. The elements and inclement weather conditions are banished, and the massed ranks of shops haughtily turn their backs on the hostile outside world. The chill wind gusting along the back alley should find no place here. And yet still the draught penetrates. For when shoppers look within they find a barren wasteland of commodities, and shiver as the wind howls through their empty souls.

Laughter is not permitted in the shopping mall, neither outbursts of joy nor corrosive mockery. Consumption is a serious business, and misery finds a ready counterfeit in solemnity.

Some women refer, only half-jokingly, to

the idea of 'retail therapy': shopping as consolation for the fact that domesticated life is shit. If you can't change yourself or your world, change your image, change your commodities.

Thirty years ago built-in obsolescence was condemned as a capitalist con; now both capital and consumers benefit from it. Capital maximises profit, consumers gain a pretext for consuming again and again.

DESIGNER LABELS

Identifying with capital, acquiring a corporate identity—even during leisure-time, labour's twin. Paying to act as a mobile advertisement and to extend

capital's empire to all time and space. An acceleration of capitalist fashion: a desire to connect with the increasingly elusive moment by purchasing a brand new commodity. 'Brand'—a term used for the branding of cattle as property, or human flesh for penal purposes; also indicates a stigma, as in the phrase 'the brand of Cain'. Ever murdered your kin? Ever feel you've been shopped?

THE MYTH OF POSTINDUSTRIALISM

We inhabit the factory and the factory inhabits us. The clothes we wear, the food we eat, the buildings in which we live, work and die, the books we read, the media we ingest, the ideas we think—all are factory produced. And yet chaos is everywhere. Even as I walk through the barren waste of the shopping centre, I look up and see the sun boiling, the clouds scudding by, a flock of birds veering across the sky—and I feel the exquisite pulses, flows and currents that also flow through my body.

THE CAPITALIST IMPERATIVE: ADAPT OR PERISH

A third alternative: rebel!

AUGUST 1998

shopping centre travel agency poster: 'Cut-price flights to the sun'.

SUMMER 1999

total eclipse.

The UK shopping centre encourages



SOME SAY the building of Sunnyside Mall, Chicago—the first in the city—where the young Ted Kaczynski (left) played as a child made him what he is today.

John Moore on the Crystal Palace and its aftermath

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— John Carroll

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Designer labels

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The myth of postindustrialism

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The capitalist imperative: adapt or perish

A third alternative: rebel!

August 1998

Shopping centre travel agency poster: 'Cut-price flights to the sun'.

Summer 1999

Total eclipse.

"I do not find it difficult to survive here"

#56 Jun 1999

ARTICLES

"I DO NOT FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SURVIVE HERE"

A letter from Ted Kaczynski on his imprisonment

Thank you for your letter of September 8. I don't know what press reports may have said about the ADX, but you should bear in mind that press reports very often are wildly inaccurate - as I learned from press reports about my own case.

I think it is inhuman to keep people locked up under any conditions, but beyond the mere fact of imprisonment I don't feel that the conditions here are bad as you seem to believe. I'll describe them briefly, but it must be understood that this description applies only to the part of the prison where the high-profile (that is, the famous) prisoners are kept. I know nothing about the rest of the prison.

The food is usually good, the prison is run in an orderly way and is kept reasonably clean and quiet. The warden is very conscientious, and he and other officials of the prison make the rounds of the cells frequently to ask prisoners if they have any questions or complaints.

My cell is about 2.4 meters by 3.6 meters in dimensions (this is only a guess, as I have no means of measuring) and contains a small concrete table, a concrete stool, a toilet, sink, shower stall, bed, and television set. I do not use the television set except to get the time or instructions about prison routine. My cell has one window to the outdoors. It cannot be opened. The dimensions of the pane are about 10 or 12 centimeters horizontally by 90 or 100 centimeters vertically. The view is not inspiring. The window looks onto a concrete exercise yard filled with wire-mesh cages, each about 3 meters by 5 meters. Into each cage a prisoner is put for the daily exercise period.

I am more fortunate in that I am usually allowed to exercise in an indoor recreation area, the dimensions of which I estimate at

about 4.6 by 8.2 meters, or about 15 by 27 feet. This is big enough for running. I run about 7 1/2 kilometers a day and spend the rest of the daily exercise time walking at a fast pace. The exercise period is given five times a week, Monday through Friday, and lasts, I think, between one and two hours. I have probably an average of about seven or eight hours of exercise each week. The rest of the time I am kept locked in my cell, as are the other prisoners.

For about two months after I was brought here, whenever I was not in my cell or in the recreation area (for example, when I was taken for a medical examination or a meeting with an attorney), my hands were closely chained to my waist and my feet were chained also, and I was kept chained that way throughout the medical examination or the attorney meeting. Now, however, when I am taken from my cell, my hands are placed in handcuffs behind my back but are not chained to my waist, and no chains are put on my feet. Also, when I am put in a visiting booth for a meeting with an attorney the handcuffs are removed. In the booth I am separated from the attorney by a pane of (presumably bullet-proof) glass.

There are two types of guards here, whom I call the "meanies" and the "normals". The meanies take an aggressive attitude with the prisoners; they tend to bark orders rather than speaking in an ordinary tone of voice. The normals behave and speak like normal people. I assume that the meanies

are trained to behave as they do in order to intimidate the prisoners and make them submissive.

When I was first brought here I was greeted by meanies, and for the first two months the guards I was in contact with included both meanies and normals. After the first couple of months I was, with the other high-profile prisoners, moved to a different row of cells, and where I am kept now all of the guards with whom I have regular contact are normals. In fact most of them are nice, friendly people. A few are women.

Prisoners are allowed to have books on almost any subject, and are allowed to send and receive mail. All letters that are sent or received, except correspondence with attorneys, are opened and read by the prison staff.

In social visits, that is, in visits by persons other than attorneys, the prisoner is kept separate from the visitor by a pane of glass that has no openings, and he talks with the visitor by means of a telephone. The prisoner is allowed social visits only by family members and persons with whom he had friendship prior to incarceration. I am estranged from my family (for obvious reasons) and had no close friends prior to incarceration. The few friends I did have live in Lincoln, Montana, and do not have the financial resources to visit me in Colorado. Thus, in practice, I am allowed no visitors other than attorneys. I have appealed this decision, but I am not optimistic about the outcome of the appeal.

I do not find it difficult to survive here. My life in the mountains of Montana accustomed me to solitude. But for some

prisoners not accustomed to solitude these conditions may be very difficult.

It is true that I have written a book, and I think I will be able to find a publisher for it.

I thank you for your offer of books or other assistance. At the moment I have no need to make use of your offer, as many

people have offered me books. However, I will keep your offer in mind and may take advantage of it in the future. I appreciate very much your interest in my case and the fact that you have taken the trouble to write to me.

Sincerely yours,
Theodore J. Kaczynski

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...

Ted K. Update

#56 Jun 1999

TED K. UPDATE

State-styled Unabomber Dr Kaczynski's trial in December 1997 was a farce. His lawyers kept him virtually *incommunicado* and ignored his instructions. When he tried to sack them, judge Burrell ruled he was too mentally incompetent to do so, but sane enough to face a capital charge. The trial never reached a jury. In a plea bargain Ted K had no input into, Burrell agreed to drop the death element of sentencing in exchange for perpetual imprisonment with no right of appeal.

Ted was then dispatched to Florence super-max, the most high security jail in Amerika, where he's so far been denied any visitors. He's been looking for a new lawyer to overturn the unconstitutional plea bargain. Ted's consistently refused to confirm or deny his innocence, saying he only accepted a guilty plea under impossible circumstances. Late last year he came close enough for the Feds to spread lies to the worldwide media about him chatting to OK bomber Tim McVeigh and the Islamicist who attacked World Trade Centre Towers (also held in Florence) in an attempt to discredit them all.



As this 'hopeful's now backed off, Ted's started to make political comment, publishing a letter in the *Earth First! Journal* calling for more radical splinters.

● **Letters of support to Ted Kaczynski [04475-046], US Pen - Admin Max Facility, PO Box 8500, Florence, Colorado 81226, USA.**

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Ted K Update

#57-58 Autumn 1999

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TED K UPDATE

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Ted wrote to correct the captioning of GA56's 'Emporia State' pic. He insists no supermarket was a formative influence on him as a child. After the BS his grassing brother and mother put out against him—exploited to the max by media and Feds—Ted's shy of any discussion of his formative influences as it shifts debate from political to personal questions.

He'd also like to say that—despite garbled press reports—he *is* on friendly terms with Timothy McVeigh and World Trade Centre bomber RamziYousef since meeting up with them in prison. He insists this doesn't imply support for their ideologies or crimes they're alleged to have committed and adds that McVeigh has been misrepresented by the media. Far from being a nutter and "neonazi racist", McVeigh gets on well with Afro-American prisoners. Make of this what you will - Ted sounds a trifle naive to us.

Ted Speaks

#57-58 Autumn 1999

This June, Ted Kaczynski-the State-styled 'Unabomber'-gave an unprecedented interview to an ex-EF! Journalista. Below is Ted's story which we publish jointly with *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*.

Kaczynski's story represents a parable:

Once upon a time there was a continent covered with beautiful pristine wilderness, where giant trees towered over lush mountainsides and rivers ran wild and free through deserts, where raptors soared and beavers labored at their pursuits and people lived in harmony with wild nature, accomplishing every task they needed to accomplish on a daily basis using only stones, bones and wood, walking gently on the Earth. Then came the explorers, conquerors, missionaries, soldiers, merchants and immigrants with their advanced technology, guns, and government. The wild life that had existed for millennia started dying, killed by a disease brought by alien versions of progress, arrogant visions of manifest destiny and a runaway utilitarian science.

In just 500 years, almost all the giant trees have been clear-cut and chemicals now poison the rivers; the eagle has faced extinction and the beaver's work has been supplanted by the Army Corps of Engineers. And how have the people fared? What one concludes is most likely dependent on how well one is faring economically, emotionally and physically in this competitive technological world and the level of privilege one is afforded by the system. But for those who feel a deep connection to, a love and longing for, the wilderness and the wildness that once was, for the millions now crowded in cities, poor and oppressed, unable to find a clear target for their rage because the system is virtually omnipotent, these people are not faring well. All around us, as a result of human greed and a lack of respect for all life, wild nature and Mother Earth's creatures are suffering. These beings are the victims of industrial society.

Cutting the bloody cord, that's what we feel, the delirious exhilaration of independence, a rebirth backward in time and into primeval liberty, into freedom in the most simple, literal, primitive meaning of the word, the only meaning that really counts. The freedom, for example, to commit murder

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My God! I'm thinking, what incredible shit we put up with most of our lives—the domestic routine, the stupid and useless and degrading jobs, the insufferable arrogance of elected officials, the crafty cheating and slimy advertising of the businessmen, the tedious wars in which we kill our buddies instead of our real enemies back home in the capital, the foul, diseased and hideous cities and towns we live in, the constant petty tyranny of the automatic washers, the automobiles and TV machines and telephones—! Ah Christ!... what intolerable garbage and what utterly useless crap we bury ourselves in day by day, while patiently enduring at the same time the creeping strangulation of the clean white collar and the rich but modest four-in-hand garrotte!

Such are my thoughts—you wouldn't call them thoughts would you?—such are my feelings, a mixture of revulsion and delight, as we float away on the river, leaving behind for a while all that we most heartily and joyfully detest. That's what the first taste of the wild does to a man, after having been too long penned up in the city. No wonder the Authorities are so anxious to smother the wilderness under asphalt and reservoirs. They know what they are doing. Play safe. Ski only in a clockwise direction. Let's all have fun together.

EDWARD ABBEY, *Desert Solitaire*, 1968

I read Edward Abbey in the mid-1980s and that was one of the things that gave me the idea that "yes, there are other people out there that have the same attitudes I do". I read *The Monkeywrench Gang*, I think it was. But what first motivated me wasn't anything I read. I just got mad seeing the machines ripping up the woods and so forth...

DR. THEODORE KACZYNSKI, in an interview with the *Earth First! Journal*, Admin Max Facility prison, Florence, Colorado, USA, June 1999.

Kaczynski's story represents a parable.

been wanting to say all along".

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Theodore Kaczynski developed a negative attitude towards the techno-industrial system very early in his life. It was in 1962, during his last year at Harvard, he explained, when he began feeling a sense of disillusionment with the system. And he says he felt quite alone.

Back in the 1960s there had been some critiques of technology, but as far as I know there weren't people who were against the technological system as such... It wasn't until 1971 or '72, shortly after I moved to Montana, that I read Jacques Ellul's book *The Technological Society*. This book is a masterpiece. I was very enthusiastic when I read it. I thought "look, this guy is saying things I have

says he began an intensive study of how to identify wild edible plants, track animals and replicate primitive technologies, approaching the task like the scholar he was.

Many years ago I used to read books like, for example, Ernest Thompson Seton's *Lives of Game Animals* to learn about animal behaviour. But after a certain point, after living in the woods for a while, I developed an aversion to reading any scientific accounts. In some sense reading what the professional biologists said about wildlife ruined or contaminated it for me. What began to matter to me was the knowledge I acquired about wildlife through personal experience.

Kaczynski spoke at length about the life he led in his small cabin with no electricity and no running water. It was this lifestyle and the actual cabin that his attorneys would use to try to call his sanity into question during his trial. It was a defence strategy that Kaczynski said naturally greatly offended him. We spoke about the particulars of his daily routine. He said proudly

I have quite a bit of experience identifying wild edible plants, it's certainly one of the most fulfilling activities that I know of, going out in the woods and looking for things that are good to eat. But the trouble with a place like Montana, how it differs from the Eastern forests, is that starchy plant foods are much less available. There are edible roots but they are generally very small ones and the distribution is limited. The best ones usually grow down in the lower areas which are agricultural areas, actually ranches, and the ranchers presumably don't want you digging up their meadows, so starchy foods were civilised foods. I bought flour, rice, corn meal, rolled oats, powdered milk and cooking oil.

Kaczynski lamented never being able to

of the system and become re-adapted to a different way of life, happiness is often something that you have right now.

He readily admits he committed quite a few acts of monkeywrenching during the 1970s, but there came a time when he decided to devote more energy into fighting against the system. He describes the catalyst:

The best place, to me, was the largest remnant of this plateau that dates from the tertiary age. It's kind of rolling country, not flat, and when you get to the edge of it you find these ravines that cut very steeply into cliff-like drop-offs and there was a waterfall there. It was about two days hike from my cabin. That was the best spot until the summer of 1983. That summer there were too many people around my cabin so I decided I needed some peace. I went back to the plateau and when I got there I found they had put a road right through the middle of it. [Pauses] You just can't imagine how upset I was. It was from that point on I decided that, rather than trying to acquire further wilderness skills, I would work on getting back at the system. Revenge. That wasn't the first time I ever did any monkeywrenching, but at that point, that sort of thing became a priority for me. I made a conscious effort to read things that were relevant to social issues, specifically the technological problem. For one thing, my concern was to try to understand how societies change, and for that purpose I read anthropology, history, a little bit of sociology and psychology, but mostly anthropology and history.

Kaczynski soon came to the conclusion that reformist strategies which merely called for 'fixing' the system were not enough, and he professed little confidence in the idea that a mass change in consciousness might someday be able to undermine the technological system.

I don't think it can be done. In part

What has to be done is not to try and convince or persuade the majority of people that we are right, as much as try to increase tensions in society to the point where things start to break down. To create a situation where people get uncomfortable enough that they're going to rebel.

accomplish three things to his satisfaction: building a crossbow that he could use for hunting, making a good pair of deerhide moccasins that would withstand the daily hikes he took on the rocky hillside, and learning how to make fire consistently without using matches. He says he kept very busy and was happy with his solitary life.

One thing I found when living in the woods was that you get so that you don't worry about the future, you don't worry about dying, if things are good right now you think "well, if I die next week, so what, things are good right now". I think it was Jane Austen who wrote in one of her novels that happiness is always something that you are anticipating in the future, not something that you have right now. This isn't always true. Perhaps it is true in civilisation, but when you get out

because of the human tendency, for most people, there are exceptions, to take the path of least resistance. They'll take the easy way out, and giving up your car, your television set, your electricity, is not the path of least resistance for most people. As I see it, I don't think there is any controlled or planned way in which we can dismantle the industrial system. I think that the only way we will get rid of it is if it breaks down and collapses. That's why I think the consequences will be something like the Russian Revolution, or circumstances we see in other places in the world today like the Balkans, Afghanistan, Rwanda. This does, I think, pose a dilemma for radicals who take a non-violent point of view. When things break down, there is going to be violence and this does raise a

question, I don't know if I exactly want to call it a moral question, but the point is that for those who realise the need to do away with the techno-industrial system, if you work for its collapse, in effect you are killing a lot of people. If it collapses, there aren't going to be any more spare parts or fuel for farm equipment, there won't be anymore pesticide or fertilizer on which modern agriculture is dependent. So there isn't going to be enough food to go around, so then what happens? This is something that, as far as I've read, I haven't seen any radicals facing up to.

At this point he was asking me, as a radical, to face up to this issue. I responded I didn't know the answer. He said neither did he, clasped his hands together and looked at me intently. His distinctly midwestern accent, speech patterns and the colloquialisms he used were so familiar and I thought about how much he reminded me of the professors I had as a student of anthropology, history and political philosophy in Ohio. I decided to relate to him the story of how one of my graduate advisors, Dr. Reznick, also a Harvard alumni, once posed the following question in a seminar on political legitimacy: Say a group of scientists asks for a meeting with the leading politicians in the country to discuss the introduction of a new invention. The scientists explain that the benefits of the technology are indisputable, that the invention will increase efficiency and make everyone's life easier. The only downside, they caution, is that to make it work, 40,000 innocent people will have to be killed each year. Would the politicians decide to adopt the new invention or not? The class was about to argue that such a proposal would be immediately rejected out-of-hand, then he casually remarked "We already have it—the automobile".

He had forced us to ponder how much death and innocent suffering our society endures as a result of our commitment to maintaining the technological system—a system we all are born into now and have no choice but to try and adapt to. Everyone can see the existing technological society is violent, oppressive and destructive, but what can we do?

The big problem is that people don't believe a revolution is possible, and it is not possible precisely because they do not believe it is possible. To a large extent I think the eco-anarchist movement is accomplishing a great deal, but I think they could do it better... The real revolutionaries should separate themselves from the reformers... And I think that it would be good if a conscious effort was being made to get as many people as possible introduced to the wilderness. In a general way, I think what has to be done is not to try and convince or persuade the majority of people that we are right, as much as try to increase tensions in society to the point where things start to break down. To create a situation where people get uncomfortable enough that they're going to rebel. So the question is how do you increase those tensions? I don't know.

Kaczynski wanted to talk about every aspect of the techno-industrial system in detail, and further, about why and how we should be working towards bringing about its demise. It was a subject we had both given a lot of thought to. We discussed direct action and its limits of political ideologies. But by far the most interesting discussions revolved around our views about the superiority of wild life and wild nature.

Towards the end of the interview, Kaczynski related a poignant story about the close relationship he had developed with the snowshoe rabbit. "This is kind of personal," he begins by saying, and I ask if he wants me to turn off the tape. He says "no, I can tell you about it", and laughs.

While I was living in the woods I sort of invented some gods for myself. Not that I believed in these things intellectually. But these were ideas that sort of corresponded with some of the feelings I had. I think

the first one I invented was Grandfather Rabbit. You know the snowshoe rabbits were my main source of meat during the winters. I had to spend a lot of time

Jane Austen ... wrote in one of her novels that happiness is always something that you are anticipating in the future, not something that you have right now. This isn't always true. Perhaps it is true in civilisation, but when you get out of the system and become readapted to a different way of life, happiness is often something that you have right now.

and then the tracks disappear. I invented a myth for myself that this was the Grandfather Rabbit, the grandfather who was responsible for the existence of all other rabbits. He was able to disappear, that is why you couldn't catch him and why you would never see him... Every time I shot a snowshoe rabbit, I would always say "thank you Grandfather Rabbit". After a while I acquired an urge to draw snowshoe rabbits, I sort of got involved with them to the extent that they would occupy a great deal of my thought. I actually did have a wooden object that, among other things, I carved a snowshoe rabbit in. I planned to do a better one, just for the snowshoe rabbits, but I never did get it done. There was another that I sometimes called the will o' the wisp or the wings of the morning. That's when you go out into the hills in the morning and you feel drawn to go on and on and on and on, then you are following the wisp. That was another god that I invented for myself.

So Ted Kaczynski, living out in the wilderness, like generations of prehistoric peoples before him, had innocently rediscovered the forest's gods. I wondered if he felt that these gods had forsaken him now as he sat facing life in prison with no more freedom, no more connection to the wild, nothing left of that life that was so important to him except for his sincere love of nature, his love of knowledge and his commitment to the revolutionary project of hastening the collapse of the techno-industrial system. I asked if he was afraid of losing his mind, if the circumstances he found himself in now would break his spirit? He answered:

No, what worries me is that I might in a sense adapt to this environment and come to be comfortable here and not resent it anymore. And I am afraid that as the years go by that I may forget, I may begin to lose my memories of the mountains and the woods and that's what really worries me, that I might lose those memories, and lose that sense of contact with wild nature in general. But I am afraid they are going to break my spirit.

And finally he offered the following advice to green anarchists who share his critique of the technological system and want to hasten the collapse of, as Edward Abbey put it, "the Earth-destroying juggernaut of industrial civilisation":

Never lose hope, be persistent and stubborn and never give up. There are many instances in history where apparent losers suddenly turn out to be winners unexpectedly, so you should never conclude all hope is lost.

• See p. 5 for Ted's prison address - letters of support much appreciated.

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learning what they do and following their tracks all around before I could get close enough to shoot them. Sometimes you would track a rabbit around and around

THE END OF HUMANITY? / Continued from p. 26

research or the sort of elitist desocialising 'bothouse' learning that guarantees future generations of highly educated moral imbeciles [Walmley and Margolis' *Hot House People*]. Equally, it can be controlled by chemical or electronic means [Armen Victorian's *Mind Controllers*]. Here the words of the Socialist Patients Collective are still relevant today [*Turn Illness Into A Weapon*, p. xi].

Take the medical, map and see your brain colonized and governed by names (and by the correlated medical methods) like Parkinson, Alzheimer, Bleuler and so on, your stomach by Billroth, your neck with the thyroid gland by Basedow, your muscles and your (perhaps so-called hysteroid) behaviour by Charcot and Freud and associate what Marxists have taken down about imperialism - yet far away from a so-called free market, an imperialism done all around the transplant banks now.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Even more dangerous are attempts to create artificial intelligence. Cybernetics is, in essence, the science of control and as Taylorism ('scientific management') is its noteworthy precursor, that hardly bodes well for our future humanity. Consciousness is seen as just information processing, just as genetic material is in some quarters. Kevin Warwick [*March of the Machines*, chap 1] says this can only be modelled to insect level now, but equally ex-*Whole Earth Review* editor Kevin Kelly [*Out of Control*, p. 56] says the insect level cracked the evolutionary question of complexity in the natural world:

When the iron paw of Brooks's six-legged Genghis hunts for a place to grip, I see not workers relieved of robotic jobs, but joyful baby squirms of a new organism.

Warwick further notes that using neural networks modelled from the brain, Japanese scientists have already developed a robot as smart as a cat. He accepts that it won't have cat-like or human-like intelligence, but equally if it does its job, who cares? Just as human learning has become more artificial, so machine learning has become more human. Warwick's 'seven dwarf' robots communicate their experiences and so learn together, the whole greater than its parts. Also, the greater the numbers involved, the faster all learn, including learning to act together in a swarm-like manner (see a 'useful' application of chaos theory). Hype-meister Kelly sees this autonomy and loss of human control as liberatory, but he forgets the machines might learn what we don't want them to know. Warwick is more realistic, predicting robots more intelligent than humans in the next 50 years' and, as intelligence is why humanity currently dominates Nature, so these out-of-control, interlinked, artificially intelligent machines will come to dominate us. By this stage, we'll be so dependant on them for the basis of life that a takeover could hardly be

effectively opposed.

Warwick's *March of the Machines* opens with a chapter painting the grimmest picture of 2050, humans retained as livestock / slaves just because they can reach into awkward spots the robots can't, altered electronically, neurologically and hormonally to make resistance unthinkable. This is the same man who had himself implanted with microchips so he could be tracked round his lab at Reading University and interact with electronics there, an intensification of surveillance that paves a road to a hell for all of us he has already imagined.

The *Terminator* scenario is at the back of even Kelly's mind, though his suggestion is that there will be no war between humans and machines as, by 2050, we will have followed 'cyborg' Warwick's example and will all be half-machine implants by then anyway. Maybe as much as half-human, too...?

NANOTECH CORNUCOPIA

A lot of the techniques above came out of the Macy conferences of the late-1950s and get closed to policy-makers through a complex around MIT, Los Alamos, etc.

Another product of this 'hot house' was Richard Feynman's 1960 paper, 'There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom' which called for the sort of miniaturisation that laid the way open for modern computing and potentially AI. Eric Drexler, a member of MIT's Space Habitat Study Group, expanded on this with his seminal 1986 work on nanotechnology, *Engines of Creation*, his personal answer to the Club of Rome's *Limits to Growth*. No, he didn't suggest we miniaturise the human race so the resources go round that bit further (no doubt someone at MIT will!), he suggested molecular-sized machines which will be able to transform one thing into another in best alchemical fashion, waste into steak, dress into diamonds. An infinitely malleable Nature is very much the dream of genetic engineers - taken a step or two further. Using the most apocalyptic language, Drexler predicts "an end to poverty, disease and death - within our lifetimes" [Ed Regis's *Nano*, chap. 16]. At last - when they finally manage to get it off the drawing board - humanity will be completely unrestrained by stubborn Nature, though the 'grey goo' mentioned elsewhere in this issue might be a problem...

To achieve this, Drexler looks to protein synthesis as a first step in making the nanomachine molecules, in fact as pre-nano machines, so the circle turns back to genetic again (ie engineering DNA to engineer the proteins). This, in turn, will radically upgrade computers. Equipped with switches the size of single atoms, all current computer memory could be crammed into a space occupied by a medium-sized table. Matter would also become 'smarter', one nanotech enthusiast even suggesting a "utility fog" that could summon anything you wished for out of thin air [Regis, p. 220].

The Fog can act as a generalized

infrastructure for society at large. Fog City need have no permanent buildings of concrete, no roads of asphalt, no cars, trucks or buses. It can look like a park or forest, or if the population was sufficiently whimsical, ancient Rome one day and Emerald City the next.

Its lethal uses have no doubt also already occurred to non-Californian readers, and so the need for its use to be restricted to an all-powerful technocratic few. There's more - even futurologist Alvin Toffler could hardly suggest we'd cope with the 'future shock' of such the Moorcockian malleable of such an artificial environment, and Drexler concedes the nanobots learning in a swarm-like way and having a 10¹¹ prospect of error, mutating or even reproducing sexually in consequence.

This is a big risk, given that he sees the universe filled with them. Part of his rejection of natural limits is space travel so the *prima materia* of all other worlds can be artificialised, not just Earth's. Not the bother of designing compact, viable interstellar ecosystems as Biosphere 2 [Kelly, chaps 8-9] to facilitate this for him, just a matter of redesigning people so they don't need air, gravity, etc and can eat moon dust or methane on arrival.

One vision of post-nano "sunset humanity" is of people choosing whatever body forms they desired ("monster penises and dump truck, four-wheel drive bodies") but another is equally sad, a failure of imagination leading to the continuation of boredom and business-as-usual, a "Sunday afternoon in the American suburbs" [Regis, chap. 16] like the opening scenes of *Blue Velvet*.

WHOSE FUTURE?

We're inclined to agree with Jacques Ellul and FC's *Industrial Society & Its Future*: whatever technical innovations are made 'for the good of society' actually only concentrate power more and more into the hands of the few, intensifying production and control and making us less and less human. As you've seen, our view is that this will accelerate the artificial to the point that humanity will disappear entirely - and that point could well be within our (extended?) lifetime.

It may sound old-fashioned to talk about values, but an ethic to prevent the piecemeal imposition of this future on us is needed - and exists. Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* points out an older, more humane structuring of the universe that recognised humanity wasn't the pinnacle of Creation, and took its recognition of human limits to the point of regarding mining as an assault of the body of Mother Earth. Fundamental to anarcho-primitivist analysis is the idea of origins and the intrinsically human - a necessarily bulwark against extropian 'chaos', actually technocracy's bid for omnipotence.

• Send your contributions to BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX before mid-February 2000.

and get away with it scot-free, with no other burden than the jaunty halo of conscience.

My God! I'm thinking, what incredible shit we put up with most of our lives — the domestic routine, the stupid and useless and degrading jobs, the insufferable arrogance of elected officials, the crafty cheating and the slimy advertising of the businessmen, the tedious wars in which we kill our buddies instead of our real enemies back home in the capital, the foul, diseased and hideous cities and towns we live in, the constant petty tyranny of the automatic washers, the automobiles and TV machines and telephones! ah Christ!,... what intolerable garbage and what utterly useless crap we bury ourselves in day by day, while patiently enduring at the same time the creeping strangulation of the clean white collar and the rich but modest four-in-hand garrote!

Such are my thoughts — you wouldn't call them thoughts would you? — such are my feelings, a mixture of revulsion and delight, as we float away on the river, leaving behind for a while all that we most heartily and joyfully detest. That's what the first taste of the wild does to a man, after having been penned up for too long in the city. No wonder the Authorities are so anxious to smother the wilderness under asphalt and reservoirs. They know what they are doing. Play safe. Ski only in a clockwise direction. Let's all have fun together.

— Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*, 1968

“I read Edward Abbey in mid-eighties and that was one of the things that gave me the idea that, ‘yeah, there are other people out there that have the same attitudes that I do.’ I read *The Monkeywrench Gang*, I think it was. But what first motivated me wasn't anything I read. I just got mad seeing the machines ripping up the woods and so forth...”

— Dr. Theodore Kaczynski, in an interview with the *Earth First! Journal*, Administrative Maximum Facility Prison, Florence, Colorado, USA, June 1999.

Theodore Kaczynski developed a negative attitude toward the techno-industrial system very early in his life. It was in 1962, during his last year at Harvard, he explained, when he began feeling a sense of disillusionment with the system. And he says he felt quite alone. “Back in the sixties there had been some critiques of technology, but as far as I knew there weren't people who were against the technological system as-such... It wasn't until 1971 or 72, shortly after I moved to Montana, that I read Jaques Ellul's book, *The Technological Society*.” The book is a masterpiece. I was very enthusiastic when I read it. I thought, ‘look, this guy is saying things I have been wanting to say all along.’”

Why, I asked, did he personally come to be against technology? His immediate response was, “Why do you think? It reduces people to gears in a machine, it takes away our autonomy and our freedom.” But there was obviously more to it than that. Along with the rage he felt against the machine, his words revealed an obvious love for a very special place in the wilds of Montana. He became most animated, spoke most passionately, while relating stories about the mountain life he created there and then sought to defend against the encroachment of the system. “The honest truth is that I am not really politically oriented. I would have really rather just be living out in the woods. If nobody had started cutting roads through there and cutting the trees down and come buzzing around in helicopters and snowmobiles I would still just be living there and the rest of the world could just take care of itself. I got involved in political issues because I was driven to it, so to speak. I’m not really inclined in that direction.”

Kaczynski moved in a cabin that he built himself near Lincoln, Montana in 1971. His first decade there he concentrated on acquiring the primitive skills that would allow him to live autonomously in the wild. He explained that the urge to do this had been a part of his psyche since childhood. “Unquestionably there is no doubt that the reason I dropped out of the technological system is because I had read about other ways of life, in particular that of primitive peoples. When I was about eleven I remember going to the little local library in Evergreen Park, Illinois. They had a series of books published by the Smithsonian Institute that addressed various areas of science. Among other things, I read about anthropology in a book on human prehistory. I found it fascinating. After reading a few more books on the subject of Neanderthal man and so forth, I had this itch to read more. I started asking myself why and I came to the realization that what I really wanted was not to read another book, but that I just wanted to live that way.”

Kaczynski says he began an intensive study of how to identify wild edible plants, track animals and replicate primitive technologies, approaching the task like the scholar he was. “Many years ago I used to read books like, for example, Ernest Thompson Seton’s “Lives of Game Animals” to learn about animal behavior. But after a certain point, after living in the woods for a while, I developed an aversion to reading any scientific accounts. In some sense reading what the professional biologists said about wildlife ruined or contaminated it for me. What began to matter to me was the knowledge I acquired about wildlife through personal experience.

Kaczynski spoke at length about the life he led in his small cabin with no electricity and no running water. It was this lifestyle and the actual cabin that his attorneys would use to try to call his sanity into question during his trial. It was a defense strategy that Kaczynski said naturally greatly offended him. We spoke about the particulars of his daily routine. “I have quite a bit of experience identifying wild edible plants,” he said proudly, “it’s certainly one of the most fulfilling activities that I know of, going out in the woods and looking for things that are good to eat. But the trouble with a place like Montana, how it differs from the Eastern forests, is that starchy plant foods are much less available. There are edible roots but they are generally very small ones and

the distribution is limited. The best ones usually grow down in the lower areas which are agricultural areas, actually ranches, and the ranchers presumably don't want you digging up their meadows, so starchy foods were civilized foods. I bought flour, rice, corn meal, rolled oats, powdered milk and cooking oil."

Kaczynski lamented never being able to accomplish three things to his satisfaction: building a crossbow that he could use for hunting, making a good pair of deerhide moccasins that would withstand the daily hikes he took on the rocky hillsides, and learning how to make fire consistently without using matches. He says he kept very busy and was happy with his solitary life. "One thing I found when living in the woods was that you get so that you don't worry about the future, you don't worry about dying, if things are good right now you think, 'well, if I die next week, so that, things are good right now.' I think it was Jane Austen who wrote in one of her novels that happiness is always something that you are anticipating in the future, not something that you have right now. This isn't always true. Perhaps it is true in civilization, but when you get out of the system and become re-adapted to a different way of life, happiness is often something that you have right now."

He readily admits he committed quite a few acts of monkeywrenching during the seventies, but there came a time when he decided to devote more energy into fighting against the system. He describes the catalyst:

"The best place, to me, was the largest remnant of this plateau that dates from the tertiary age. It's kind of rolling country, not flat, and when you get to the edge of it you find these ravines that cut very steeply in to cliff-like drop-offs and there was even a waterfall there. It was about a two days hike from my cabin. That was the best spot until the summer of 1983. That summer there were too many people around my cabin so I decided I needed some peace. I went back to the plateau and when I got there I found they had put a road right through the middle of it" His voice trails off; he pauses, then continues, "You just can't imagine how upset I was. It was from that point on I decided that, rather than trying to acquire further wilderness skills, I would work on getting back at the system. Revenge. That wasn't the first time I ever did any monkeywrenching, but at that point, that sort of thing became a priority for me... I made a conscious effort to read things that were relevant to social issues, specifically the technological problem. For one thing, my concern was to understand how societies change, and for that purpose I read anthropology, history, a little bit of sociology and psychology, but mostly anthropology and history."

Kaczynski soon came to the conclusion that reformist strategies that merely called for "fixing" the system were not enough, and he professed little confidence in the idea that a mass change in consciousness might someday be able to undermine the technological system. "I don't think it can be done. In part because of the human tendency, for most people, there are exceptions, to take the path of least resistance. They'll take the easy way out, and giving up your car, your television set, your electricity, is not the path of least resistance for most people. As I see it, I don't think there is any controlled or planned way in which we can dismantle the industrial system. I think that the only

way we will get rid of it is if it breaks down and collapses. That's why I think the consequences will be something like the Russian Revolution, or circumstances like we see in other places in the world today like the Balkans, Afghanistan, Rwanda. This does, I think, pose a dilemma for radicals who take a non-violent point of view. When things break down, there is going to be violence and this does raise a question, I don't know if I exactly want to call it a moral question, but the point is that for those who realize the need to do away with the techno-industrial system, if you work for its collapse, in effect you are killing a lot of people. If it collapses, there is going to be social disorder, there is going to be starvation, there aren't going to be any more spare parts or fuel for farm equipment, there won't be any more pesticide or fertilizer on which modern agriculture is dependent. So there isn't going to be enough food to go around, so then what happens? This is something that, as far as I've read, I haven't seen any radicals facing up to.

At this point he was asking me, as a radical, to face up to this issue. I responded I didn't know the answer. He said neither did he, clasped his hands together and looked at me intently. His distinctly Midwestern accent, speech pattern, and the colloquialisms he used were so familiar and I thought about how much he reminded me of the professors I had as a student of anthropology, history and political philosophy in Ohio. I decided to relate to him the story of how one of my graduate advisors, Dr. Resnick, also a Harvard alumni, once posed the following question in a seminar on political legitimacy: Say a group of scientists asks for a meeting with the leading politicians in the country to discuss the introduction of a new invention. The scientists explain that the benefits of the technology are indisputable, that the invention will increase efficiency and make everyone's life easier. The only down side, they caution, is that for it to work, forty-thousand innocent people will have to be killed each year. Would the politicians decide to adopt the new invention or not? The class was about to argue that such a proposal would be immediately rejected out of hand, then he casually remarked, "We already have it — the automobile." He had forced us to ponder how much death and innocent suffering our society endures as a result of our commitment to maintaining the technological system — a system we all are born into now and have no choice but to try and adapt to. Everyone can see the existing technological society is violent, oppressive and destructive, but what can we do?

"The big problem is that people don't believe a revolution is possible, and it is not possible precisely because they do not believe it is possible. To a large extent I think the eco-anarchist movement is accomplishing a great deal, but I think they could do it better... The real revolutionaries should separate themselves from the reformers... And I think that it would be good if a conscious effort was being made to get as many people as possible introduced to the wilderness. In a general way, I think what has to be done is not to try and convince or persuade the majority of people that we are right, as much as try to increase tensions in society to the point where things start to break down. To create a situation where people get uncomfortable enough that they're going to rebel. So the question is how do you increase those tensions? I don't know."

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“This is kind of personal,” he begins by saying, and I ask if he wants me to turn off the tape. He says “no, I can tell you about it. While I was living in the woods I sort of invented some gods for myself” and he laughs. “Not that I believed in these things intellectually, but they were ideas that sort of corresponded with some of the feelings I had. I think the first one I invented was Grandfather Rabbit. You know the snowshoe rabbits were my main source of meat during the winters. I had spent a lot of time learning what they do and following their tracks all around before I could get close enough to shoot them. Sometimes you would track a rabbit around and around and then the tracks disappear. You can’t figure out where that rabbit went and lose the trail. I invented a myth for myself, that this was the Grandfather Rabbit, the grandfather who was responsible for the existence of all other rabbits. He was able to disappear, that is why you couldn’t catch him and why you would never see him... Every time I shot a snowshoe rabbit, I would always say ‘thank you Grandfather Rabbit.’ After a while I acquired an urge to draw snowshoe rabbits. I sort of got involved with them to the extent that they would occupy a great deal of my thought. I actually did have a wooden object that, among other things, I carved a snowshoe rabbit in. I planned to do a better one, just for the snowshoe rabbits, but I never did get it done. There was another one that I sometimes called the Will ‘o the Wisp, or the wings of the morning. That’s when you go out in to the hills in the morning and you just feel drawn to go on and on and on and on, then you are following the wisp. That was another god that I invented for myself.”

So Ted Kaczynski, living out in the wilderness, like generations of prehistoric peoples before him, had innocently rediscovered the forest’s gods. I wondered if he felt that those gods had forsaken him now as he sat facing life in prison with no more freedom, no more connection to the wild, nothing left of that life that was so important to him except for his sincere love of nature, his love of knowledge and his commitment to the revolutionary project of hastening the collapse of the techno-industrial system. I asked if he was afraid of losing his mind, if the circumstances he found himself in now would break his spirit? He answered, “No, what worries me is that I might in a sense adapt to this environment and come to be comfortable here and not resent it anymore. And I am afraid that as the years go by that I may forget, I may begin to lose my memories of the mountains and the woods and that’s what really worries me, that I might lose those memories, and lose that sense of contact with wild nature in general. But I am not afraid they are going to break my spirit.” And he offered the following advice to green anarchists who share his critique of the technological system

and want to hasten the collapse of, as Edward Abbey put it, “the destroying juggernaut of industrial civilization”: “Never lose hope, be persistent and stubborn and never give up. There are many instances in history where apparent losers suddenly turn out to be winners unexpectedly, so you should never conclude all hope is lost.”

Statement from Ted Kaczynski

#59 Mar 2000

Dear GA,

Beau Freidlander is publishing my book, *Truth versus Lies*, and he has been generously helpful to me in various ways, for example, by providing me with money to cover my mailing costs. ...

STATEMENT FROM TED KACZYNSKI

Dear G.A.,

Beau Freidlander is publishing my book, Truth versus Lies, and he has been generously helpful to me in various ways, for example, by providing me with money to cover my mailing costs.

*I can't ask Mr Friedlander to publish my book merely as an act of charity. It is his prerogative to make a profit on *Truth versus Lies*, and, consequently, to publicize the book by the means that publishers normally use for that purpose.*

However, I want to make it clear that Mr Friedlander has not asked for my approval of any publicity efforts that he has undertaken. In fact, I know very little about what he is doing in the way of publicity.

Moreover, Mr Friedlander is not my personal spokesman. Any opinions that he may express are his own, and I do not necessarily endorse them.

*Theodore John Kaczynski
September 26, 1999*

Friends of Ted Kaczynski

#59 Mar 2000

Ted's expose of the lies told about him by his family and the mainstream media, *Truth versus Lies*, has been awaiting publication by Context Books for the last year. One reason for this delay is that Ted's grassing brother David is not allowing Ted to use letters he wrote proving David's a liar.

FRIENDS OF TED KACZYNSKI

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Part of the publicity campaign for *Truth v Lies* was an interview Context arranged with Mark Dunbar for publication in Tina Brown's NYC-based *Talk* magazine for \$20,000. Brown demanded stuff even mildly critical of David Kaczynski be cut as she's linked to the Disney Corporation, planning to make 'shy, retiring' David the lead role in their forthcoming film about the Unabomber case - so much for his dubious claim not to be a public figure! Dunbar refused to make the cuts Brown demanded and his interview was then published in

Time, presumably for more than \$20,000.

Ironically, they could have had G458-59's 'Ted Speaks' interview published over a fortnight earlier, free and @nti-copyright, but prison censor Blake Davies lied that we were *selling* it, so Ted refused to authenticate it. The *Boston Globe* accepted other routes of authentication, but still didn't run the whole text. Maybe others were more timid because our piece sympathetically discussed Ted's politics and lifestyle rather than the FBI / mass media 'soap opera' about Ted's relationship with the Kaczynski family. Proof, yet again, of the worthlessness and docility of the mainstream.

Context Books were covering the bulk of Ted's mailing costs. Now they aren't, he's having trouble affording to write to all his supporters outside prison. 'Friends of Ted Kaczynski' has been formed so you can support this anarchist political prisoner. Just 30c will cover the cost of a letter out!

Donations clearly marked 'Friends of Ted Kaczynski' to:

PO Box 11331, Eugene, OR 97440, USA
or BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX, UK

preferably in well-hidden cash dollars. If you donate by cheque, leave payee blank.

Friends of Ted Kaczynski

#60-61 Jun 2000

Arrested in 1995 as the Unabomber, Amerika's Most Wanted, and accused of a 17 year-long anti-tech mail bombing campaign that left genetic engineers, cyberneticians, timber lobbyists and others dead and injured, Ted was sentenced to life without parole after a farcical trial in Sacramento, California, in 1998.

Ted is now held in Florence supermax, notorious across Amerika. Denied visits from nearly everyone he wants to see, Ted's only real contact with the Outside is by mail. His publisher Context Books, used to cover Ted's mailing costs but his deal with them fell through.

Please make your donations to support an anarchist political prisoner

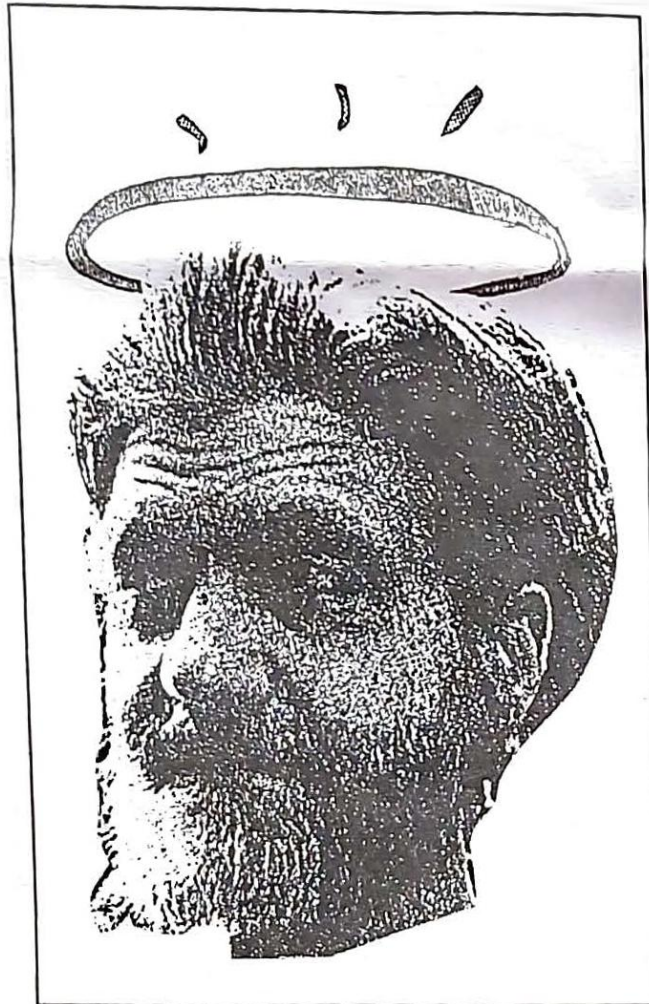
A letter can cost as little as 36c

Ted Kaczynski, P.O.B 8500, ...

Lydia Eccles, P.O.B ...

Green Anarchist, BCM 1715, London WCIN 3XX, UK

Donations preferably in dollars and well-concealed cash. Clearly mark your donation 'Friends of Ted Kaczynski' and leave cheques 'Payee' blank. Donations straight to Ted should be by international money orders (IMO) and quote his prisoner number, 04475-046.



FRIENDS OF TED KACZYNSKI

Arrested in 1995 as the Unabomber, Amerika's Most Wanted, and accused of a 17 year-long anti-tech mail bombing campaign that left genetic engineers, cyberneticians, timber lobbyists and others dead and injured, Ted was sentenced to life without parole after a farcical trial in Sacramento, California, in 1998.

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PLEASE MAKE YOUR DONATION TO SUPPORT AN ANARCHIST POLITICAL PRISONER

A letter can cost as little as 36¢

TED KACZYNSKI, P.O.B 8500, FLORENCE, CO 81226, USA

LYDIA ECCLES, P.O.B 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112, USA

GREEN ANARCHIST, BCM 1715, LONDON WC1N 3XX, UK

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Editorial #1

SB #63 Jun 2001

Rogers, dated April 9, 2001, and addressed to "Dear All." In it Paul writes, "Ted Kaczynski is happy to use Penthouse to put his politics across uncensored..." This is false.

Letter from Ted Kaczynski, April 26th.

ment, and other...
future worth having.

...or that it wouldn't be a total...

...groups like the Green Party, the wider...
...ital even if he did. Under Steve's editorship, GA has no

In keeping with his politician-like dishonesty generally nowadays, the reason Steve gives for his split is bogus. As one whose own novels feature mutilation, rape, adultery and abject sexual frustration, Steve can hardly object to Penthouse's more restrained porno offerings. Ted Kaczynski is happy to use Penthouse to put his politics across uncensored to a mainstream audience even though Theresa Kintz won't now be doing the interviewing thanks to Steve's shit-stirring and, of course, they never paid her a cent for facilitating any of this either. Egged on by others for petty personal reasons, Steve's hostility to Theresa is because he thinks her a state asset or the agent of the American equivalent of Searchlight...
...talked to her in publi...
...ago (as he told...
...too a few days later...

Paul's announcement 9th April

In terms of domestic finances at this end, things are looking up with Theresa going part-time and receiving a \$3,750 cheque from Penthouse despite cussed Ted giving the interview to someone else (probably his ever-faithful correspondent in Lincoln, Joy), so she should be able to pay her fees this year after all. We're treating this as a 'finders fee' for creating the initial conditions for the interview rather than a clerical error on Penthouse's part.

Paul Rogers' letter dated 10th January 2001

Editorial #2

SB #63 Jun 2001

Green Anarchist, 9 Ash Avenue, Galgate, Lancaster, LA2 0NP, UK

To get right to the point, yes, *GA* has split. On 5th April 2001 I wrote to subscribers and various groups explaining that it is necessary to distance myself from the ethically wrong, self-negating and politically suicidal activities of Theresa Kintz and Paul Rogers. I wish to repudiate their exploitative, recuperationist and careerist acceptance of \$3750 from *Penthouse* magazine as payment for (an in the end abortive, unpublished) interview with Ted Kaczynski. I for one do not wish to be part of any *Penthouse* pyramid of patronage.

Between 1st June 2000 (issue 60-61) and 2nd March 2001, when I brought *GA62* out, publications-wise *GA* was all but defunct. Claiming that he was unable to continue publishing *GA*, on 5th December 2000, Paul Rogers handed over the editorship of *GA* to myself. Since November 1999 onwards, Paul has become more and more impossible to work with. Many of you will know of his track record of heavy and unnecessary criticism of other groups (eg Earth First!) and he has also frequently attacked his erstwhile comrades in print. In 1998, he broke with one of the former Gandalf prisoners, Noel Molland, and published the booklet *Grassy Noel*. More recently, Paul broke with Saxon Wood, (also jailed), publishing a leaflet 'Caveat Emptor' attacking Saxon's US based *Green Anarchy* newspaper. In November 2000, Paul broke with Larry O'Hara. Now, not liking the direction I want to take the magazine, he has broken with myself.

The circulation of leaflets critical of myself comes as no surprise, nor does Paul's threat to bring out another version of *GA*. Many of you will know that on 9th April, Paul sent out a leaflet denying they had received \$3750 from *Penthouse*, directly contradicting a statement he had made in his 10th January (dated) letter to myself. On top of this, he also falsely claimed that Ted Kaczynski approved of the *Penthouse* deal, prompting Ted K to write to me on April 26th denying this. (excerpted copies of these are reproduced elsewhere here)

There are other aspects to this matter, which perhaps are better discussed later and elsewhere. While all this will no doubt bring great joy to the state and to political opponents of *GA*, I do not see it this way at all. I apologise to you all for having had to waste so much space in this mag dealing with this matter. However with time, things change. Wounds heal and our perspectives improve. This little local difficulty is nowhere near so important as what happens to the wider protest movement. As you can see from the many reports and articles in the rest of this magazine, the reviews; but also, more importantly from your own experience, our movement continues to grow and flourish. There is a wider appreciation of what is really needed to change things for the better, and a greater willingness to work for it. Things are moving our way, and the state is definitely in retreat. Somewhere inside all this, people can see the empty Primitivist ideology for what it is, there is now scope to grow beyond it and move on. Some people are moving into community based projects. We have to get out of the ghetto and reach across to ordinary people. Without their help, we can change very little. I hope that the new turn in *Green Anarchist* will be able to reflect this, and continue to push forwards a positive, democratic, open ecological politics. With your help, I feel confident that it shall. Please continue to subscribe, and encourage your friends to do so....

Steve Booth

Steve Booth - editor *Green Anarchist* magazine

To get right to the point, yes, GA has split. ...

Comrades of Kaczynski Summer Solstice Communique

#64-65 Jun 2001

... Ted Kaczynski is an example of a modern hunter-gatherer. Although never able to live entirely off the system (he spent something like \$200 or less a year on food, staples and supplies such as matches, excluding money spent on actions), Kaczynski is living proof that the civilised can make huge strides in attempting to go feral. ...

... As Comrades of Kaczynski, we remain in solidarity with every crack in every piece of concrete. We hope to spread similar cracks in the collective consciousness enforced by the Powers-That-Be, whether those powers are reformist / leftist / liberal groups trying to contain and control revolt or police officers ordering us back onto the sidewalks, off corporate lawns and eventually into jail cells and early graves. Any enemy of freedom and wildness is our enemy. No one is perfect, and in this light, we support all of our comrades both in physical prisons and in the mental prisons we are constantly breaking out of. The transition from theory to practice is a sloppy one, but one that Kaczynski made and made effectively. This civilisation is most definitely collapsing, and all of us who love the wild are going to push this fucker over the edge.

No regrets in the war for the wild, bring on the fuckin; ruckus.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY WHY SHOULD ANARCHISTS SUPPORT TED KACZYNSKI AND SMASH CIVILISATION?

Comrades of Kaczynski Summer Solstice communique 2001

And all of this did not appear from nowhere. The roads, the cars, the traffic lights, the skyscrapers, the computers could not exist if, every day, the lives of millions were not eaten by the factories. Machines control their daily activities, determining their movements, eating up their time, to produce more machines. Their only respite comes when the machines which control them break down—or when they break them down. Then for a moment, they are not machines. Don't tell me technology is neutral—I'm not blind enough to buy that one!

Can't you see? Each little machine—each car, each computer, each factory, each worker—is not a separate entity, a mere individual tool. NO! They are all cogs in one vast machine, the machine of social reproduction—and if we let them be, we too are cogs, the gears that manufacture society. Will you be a mere cog, a gear, a tool of social order?

**TO HELL WITH THE SOCIAL ORDER
AND ITS PHYSICAL BODY: TECHNOLOGY!**

**NED LUDD WAS RIGHT! THE MACHINE IS THE ENEMY!
SMASH IT TO POWDER WITHOUT A GRAIN OF MERCY!!!!**

And from the dust, a billion flowers bloom

VENOMOUS BUTTERFLY PUBLICATIONS

Anthropologists study modern hunter-gatherer tribes to experience an approximation of how pre-civilised people may have lived. Obviously, the lives of people that existed before civilisation would have been quite different than any that remain now. But by comparing physical evidence of what occurred in the past with the way tribes live today, we know for sure that life was qualitatively different than the lives we experience in cities and towns in so-called developed nations.

So different were our wild predecessors that we humans today can only imagine what life would have been like. Borrowing from the field of anthropology in combination with an analysis of our own unmediated experiences (both in wild areas and in our rural struggle against Power and those who uphold it), radicals and anti-civilisation advocates posit that humans have lived, and hence are capable of living, egalitarian, free and wild lives. Ways of life that are today only abstractions of thought.

Fragments of ecosystems that once covered the planet are now labeled 'wilderness', the 'wild' and so on. This labeling and sequestering of the bits and pieces of the previous diverse, chaotic and wild existence has become necessary both because so little remains and because humans fantasize that they are living off something other than the natural world. There are those of us who refuse the illusion of labeling, and recognize wilderness as a guide through the deceptions of civilisation. The quest to find ways of experiencing the world outside the birth-work/consume-die routine can be cathartic. When stripping down the conditioning, it soon becomes axiomatic that in order for anything wild to remain on Earth, the institutions, ideas and paradigms of civilisation must be destroyed.

As Fredy Perlman discussed in *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan*, when people struggled against civilisations, they would destroy without pause the artwork, emblems, technologies and symbols that represented the civilised. They didn't want it. They preferred and animal way of life had nothing to do with that artificial world. A million dollar vase would be no different to them than a one-dollar clay pot. This is not because the rebels were barbaric, stupid or in modern terminology, 'criminally insane'. This antipathy towards civilised symbols and tools demonstrates that no set of values is universal. The people who attacked civilisation in the past (and there were many) held different values. Values of life, wild, relaxation and mutual respect and co-operation. Words such as 'free'

And everyone knows that you can't drink water from a stream without getting a bad case of diarrhea.

What can we do while we are so reliant on civilisation for our very survival? To destroy civilisation we to destroy ourselves, as we know them. So we must learn to live in ways that resemble the ways of our wild ancestors and their modern counterparts. We must live in cities and towns in ways that resemble the ways of our wild ancestors and their modern counterparts. We must live in cities and towns in ways that approximate hunting and gathering. We must also struggle to negate and destroy the institutions and infrastructure that let us waste to the wild. As we start to live in a wilder manner, our level of intimacy with the chaos of nature will be heightened and our passion to preserve the wild against the prevailing order will grow as well.

Following this logic, inspiration can be found in people who transcend theory and demonstrate in practice the ways of modern hunter-gatherers. It is no longer just live, with nearly every corner of the planet molested by civilised hands. We

can make large strides in attempting to get local food networks as they are always more local and impractical than the theory that attempts to describe it. Modern hunter-gatherers differ greatly from their ancestors, evolution has allowed the entire planet and because of this, even the weather is changing in every part of the world. It is no longer a question of whether or not people take part in civilisation but a demand to conform to some of it through conforming to work, trade, progress et al is no less than the extermination of all life. There is no way to walk away from the civilised world without first destroying it. What will replace it is simply the chance for wild seeds to again set down their roots.

The question remains why support Ted Kaczynski? Another question first - can we deny that there is a war going on against the wild? Some call Ted a murderer. Those of us who work, pay taxes, or rely at all on the current war-mongering system for sustenance are guilty of far worse. The difference between the two is that Kaczynski took the matter into his own hands that we leave up to

cover millions of animals and plants with a single hand? Could you doze even a single hand in that horrible black gear? Would you be capable of mending a factory where children work, complete hours for average pay, creating strange conditions such as cancer in your lifetime? Would you, if given the choice, clear out the billions of acres of forest that once blanketed the planet?

If we are incapable of voluntarily performing each of these tasks, in addition to many more, then what business do we have consuming the bounty produced by them? For it is these very acts that maintain the status quo. Ted Kaczynski was not some cold-hearted killer. Governments bombing people left and right are cold-hearted killers, corporations who dump toxins into every last wild and poor area of the Earth are the cold-hearted killers. Even worse are those that defend this deadly combination of Power and technology, those who celebrate the fruits of civilisation while perpetuating the demise of life. Kaczynski took responsibility. He went to the woods, lived as far from civilisation as possible and tried to stop the machine from advancing any further. Can we blame him for finally holding a few of us accountable for our actions? Anyone who does not choose to challenge the everyday activities of civilisation is choosing to uphold the reigns of domination. By not supporting Ted Kaczynski (and all other anarchist prisoners of war, regardless of what the State has accused them of and how they have been presented to us by the State's propaganda machine, the media), we are endorsing the existence of prisons and laws. By not fighting against this order and breaking away from it as far as possible, we are saying it's OK that no one takes responsibility for the destruction of the planet. Unless we begin to live with as much respect as possible for living beings and the environments that sustain them, we will remain blind to the blatant oppression of everything free and spontaneous.

The time is ripe for getting rid of this decaying social order once and for all. We know the planet cannot sustain a total civilised way of life, and even if technology somehow makes it possible, the results would not be worth experiencing. Our fight is for the wild, and we will not stop until everything wild is free and everything domesticated has the chance to go feral. As Comrades of Kaczynski, we remain in solidarity with every attack in every piece of concrete. We hope to spread similar cracks in the collective consciousness enforced by the Powers-That-Be, whether those powers are reformist / leftist / liberal groups trying to contain and control revolt or police officers ordering us back onto the sidewalks, off corporate lawns and eventually into jail cells and early graves. Any enemy of freedom and wildness is our enemy. One is perfect, and in this light, we support all of our comrades both in physical prisons and in the mental prisons we are constantly breaking out of. The transition from theory to practice is a slippery one, but one that Kaczynski made and made effectively. This civilisation is most definitely collapsing, and all of us who love the wild are going to push this fucker over the edge. No regrets in the war for the wild, bring on the fuckin' rickus.



AGAINST THE WILD: Ted Kaczynski's 1995 arrest

must live simply off the endless garbage of Progress while we smash the physical manifestations of civilisation: jails, our workplaces, the property of Earth destroyers and the people who enforce the way of machines over life (we are generous in calling them 'people', as the defenders of civilised illusion have become property - merely things to uphold the dictates of civilisation).

Ted Kaczynski is an example of a modern hunter-gatherer. Although never able to live entirely off the system (he spent something like \$200 or less a year on food staples and supplies such as matches, excluding money spent on actions), Kaczynski is living proof that the civilised

others to exact T. When Ted left his prestigious teaching position at Berkeley, he stated that he "didn't want to teach mathematics to people who would use it to destroy the environment", taking responsibility for his part in upholding the system. We are the eaters of meat who are too afraid to kill an animal to survive - we all live off and benefit from this system of death and decay, but most of us would never be able to exact the amount of destruction of life civilisation requires.

Ask yourself: could you from the helm of the White House give commands to drop bombs on refugees and cities full of unsuspecting people? Could you personally

He Tried To Save Us by Comrades of Kaczynski

#64-65 Jun 2001

Pamphlets

He Tried To Save Us by Comrades of Kaczynski. Price from Anarchists Anonymous Distro, P.O.Box 580444 MPLS, MN 55458, USA.

This 80-page compilation of selected pieces by or about Ted Kaczynski (convicted of the Unabombings in 1998) includes his 'Morality and Revolution' from GA 60-61, pictures of Ted's cabin under lock and key as evidence for his trial in a USAF hangar, and the original Postal Inspection Service wanted poster. Aside from Ted's rather obviously polemical short story 'Ship of Fools' (first published in *Off*) and his 1971 essay (which his grassing brother claimed 'resembled' the Freedom Club manifesto, *Industrial Society & Its Future* despite its reformist conclusions), none of this material features on the *very* out-of-date and rubbishy main website regarding Ted K and the Unabomber case - not even John Zerzan's 'Whose Unabomber?', which has been around since 1995.

The complete intro, with its "one person can affect tremendous change" tone, demonstrates the Comrades of Kaczynski's revolutionary credentials. Surprisingly then, relatively liberal discussion of the legal aspects of the case are most interesting - Michael Mello and the *New Yorker* author showing up the disgusting way Ted's lawyers acted at trial—denying him counsel of his choice, keeping him in the dark about outside media coverage and even supressing defence campaigns before final ...

PAMPHLETS



HE TRIED TO SAVE US BY
COMRADES OF KACZYNSKI
PRICE FROM ANARCHISTS
ANONYMOUS DISTRO, P.O. BOX
580444 MPLS, MN 55458, USA.

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A critique of his ideas & actions.



A text dump on Green Anarchist

Wikipedia, Black Flag #215, Green Anarchist Journal & Insurgent Desire

www.thetedkarchive.com