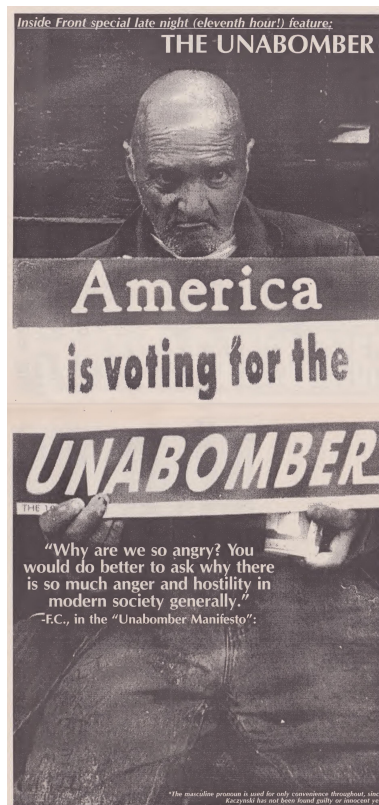


Inside Front special late night (eleventh hour!) feature: The Unabomber



August, 1997

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As participants in the hardcore punk community, our connection to the Unabomber should be obvious. We share the same basic dissatisfaction with our society, with the way things are, and we share a willingness to do *something* about this dissatisfaction (whether it be playing in punk bands or sending bombs to lobbyists for industries that would clearcut our forests) rather than merely wallow in it..

Whether or not we agree with the Unabomber's *means* should be secondary. The media has focused all attention on the acts of violence he* had to use to *get* their attention, and has done everything in their power to not only dismiss or belittle the ideas he had to offer once he could not be ignored, but to demonize him personally by presenting him as a mere serial killer rather than a political activist with goals. This should come as no surprise, since the ideas in the manifesto attack the same system that the media itself is dependent upon for existence. And despite that, even the New York Times was forced to refer to him as a "genius" (on page one of the Sunday paper in late May '96).

In the punk community, and the counterculture in general, we have permitted the media to keep our focus on his means rather than on the subjects his actions brought up. Rather than saying "We may not agree with sending bombs, but his actions show that people really *are* dissatisfied, and that it will only get worse if we do not start to think about these issues," we all moved as fast as we could to disavow any connection to the Unabomber at all. Nearly every anarchist or other left wing publication published articles distancing themselves from him, angry perhaps that his actions might make their cause seem less soft and cuddly to the American public. Even _Maximum Rock and Roll_'s book reviewer criticized the Manifesto in the same way that the mainstream media had (it looked to me like he copied his review right out of Newsweek) and suggested that instead of using it as an impetus to get out and act against the status quo, we should stay home and just read more books.

The fact is, the American public didn't even know about these issues that we are so concerned about until the Unabomber brought publicity to them by any means necessary. We don't have anything to lose if the Unabomber's actions demonize us and other anti-establishment groups in the eyes of the public, because we simply weren't in the eyes of the public before. [I'll grant that some superficial media attention has been given to hardcore as a superficial youth trend, but the fundamental question of whether our society should be overhauled has *NOT* been on the tip of everyone's tongue.] Rather than trying to distance ourselves from his means, we should use the immense publicity that his campaign against our modern society has generated to bring more questions forward, to get people to really think about their lives and whether they can imagine a world better than this one. Each of us in the counterculture should use this chance to come forward and discuss the topics that the Unabomber has brought up with others, to try to increase awareness all around. We should see the Unabomber as a human being who dared to go to any lengths to get his message across, in these times of complete media blackout on *any* individual voice, let alone the individual voice of dissent.

This is particularly relevant now because the trial of Ted Kaczynski, a man accused of being the Unabomber, is approaching. This trial will focus public attention on the question of whether our modern, technological, consumer society really promotes human happiness. We should each us this opportunity to address these issues and get people thinking about them, and not be frightened into silence and submission by the media's attempts to portray all who are dissatisfied as failures or madmen. The more people come forward to say that this situation is unbearable, the less we who feel this way we seem crazy, and the more possible it will be for others to admit their own discomfort and join out struggle. Let's use this chance to make the flaws of our society visible, and to start to do something to change them!

The Unabomber A Hero For Our Time

by Nadia C. — originally published in Icarus Was Right #3

Pop quiz: what is it called when one of the finest minds of a generation picks a few individuals who are personally involved in the destruction of the environment (a timber-industry lobbyist) or of the attention span and reasoning ability of tens of thousands of Americans (an advertising executive), and kills or maims them in the pursuit of finding a voice for his concerns about social issues... concerns that otherwise would be heard by very few? Clearly, it is murder.

And what is it called when a nation of overweight barbers and underpaid clerks, of lazy unemployed middle class intellectuals and talk-show-educated housewives, of cowardly fast-food-chin managers and racist sorority girls, conspires to execute this murderer in the name of protecting the glorious status quo from his obviously deranged "mad bombings"?

The death penalty. And rightly applied, too, in defense of the right of forest clear-cutters and professional liars to continue bending our world to their vision without the danger of being molested by those who prefer redwood forests to Quik-Marts and sonnets to detergent slogans.

Seriously, and rhetoric aside, what is the difference between the two situations? In one case, a single person evaluates his situation and decides upon a course of action he feels is right. In the other case, millions of people, who are not very used to making up their minds by themselves, feel strong enough all together to strike out blindly against an individual who does not remain within their boundaries of acceptable behavior.

Now, our gentle and moderate reader would no doubt like to object that it is not fear of the free-standing individual that prompts the outcry against this terrorist, but moral indignation—for he has taken "innocent" life in his quest to have his ideas heard, and that is wrong in every situation.

But this nation of petty imbeciles is not regularly outraged about the taking of innocent life: as long as it fits within the parameters of the status quo, they don't care at all.

How many more people than the Unabomber have tobacco companies maimed and killed, by using advertising to addict them at a very young and uninformed age to an extremely harmful drug? How about the companies that advertise and sell cheap liquor in impoverished neighborhoods filled with alcoholics? How many citizens of third world nations have suffered and died at the hands of governments supported by such corporations as Pepsi Co., or even by the U.S. government itself? And how much animal life is destroyed thoughtlessly every year, every day in death camp factory farms... or in ecological destruction brought about by such companies as Exxon (our reader will remember the Valdez) or McDonalds (one of the better known destroyers of the rainforest)? No one is particularly concerned about these abuses of “innocent” life.

And indeed, it is harder to be, for they are institutionalized within the social and economic system... “normal.” Besides, it is hard to figure out who exactly is responsible for them, for they are the results of the workings of complicated bureaucracies.

On the other hand, when one individual attempts to make his criticism of these destructive systems heard by the only really effective means, it is easy to pick him out and string him up. And our hypocritical outrage about his wrongdoings compared those of our own social institutions shows that it is his ability to act upon his own conclusions that truly shocks and frightens us most of all.

Our fear of the Unabomber as a freely acting individual shows in the attempts our media has made to demonize him. Details of his life, such as his academic achievements and his ability to live a Thoreauan self-sufficient existence, that would normally occasion praise, are now used to demonstrate that he is a maladjusted freak. Random and unimportant details of his life, similar to details of any of our lives, such as failed love affairs and childhood illnesses, are used to explain his “insane behavior.” In speaking thus, the press suggests that there is no question at all that his actions were the result of insanity, pulling away in terror from the very thought that he might be just as rational as they. Newspapers print the most arbitrary and disconnected excerpts of his manifesto that they can combine, and they describe the manifesto as being random and disconnected—they even describe it as “ramblings” with a straight face, despite the well-known short attention span of today’s media.

But it is not necessary that we accept the media’s typical over-simplification of the case. The Unabomber’s manifesto has, as a result of his efforts, been published and widely distributed. We can all read it for ourselves, not just in disconnected excerpts, but in its entirety, and decide for ourselves what we think of his ideas.

Do not be frightened by the Unabomber’s willingness to stand out from the crowds and take whatever actions he believes are necessary to achieve his goals. In a civilization so stricken with mindless submission to social norms and irrational rules his example should be refreshing rather than horrifying; for his worst crimes are no worse than ours, in being citizens of this nation... and his greatest deeds as a dedicated and intelligent individual far outshine those of most of our heroes, who are for the most part basketball players and cookie-cutter pop musicians anyway.

At least, given the chance as we are, we should read his manifesto and come to our own conclusions, rather than allowing the press and popular opinion/paranoia to decide for us.

[Untitled]

One group that has attracted my interest because of their light-hearted and creative presentation of serious issues is the Unapack. Their “Unabomber for President” campaign attained a great deal of attention in a number of different circles. I’ve included some of their material here, along with some perspectives on the Unabomber issue from other sources.

Of course if we work together we can accomplish more than we can separately. One group that is organizing right now to achieve the goals proposed by this feature is a new version of the Unapack which will focus on using the trial to challenge the myth that everyone is content in today’s world. If you are willing to share your perspectives or volunteer your creative efforts and energy, or you are just interested in more information, feel free to contact them at: Unapack, P.O. Box 12094, Boston, MA 02112 Some of the staff of Inside Front might be involved in this and other projects, so you can contact us about this too. You can also obtain copies of the Unabomber Manifesto from our address (no cost, just send a donation for postage), in order to read about his particular take on modern life and its shortcomings.

Take a chance with us

This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

—The Unabomber

Come on, baby, take a chance with us...

—The Doors, “The End”

The publishing of the Unabomber’s manifesto in the Washington Post was an extraordinary event, and any honest examination of the subsequent press coverage reveals a simple but important truth: the Unabomber hit a nerve. Even Time Magazine, surely a symbol of corporate control, was seen quoting the Unabomber at length, and supporting many of his observations. Industrial society HAS been a disaster for the human race, and people ARE humiliated and degraded by the technologies they’ve created.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign is about revealing the resignation that people feel, the deep conviction that they are utterly helpless, that they have no

choice but to join the parade, that their fates are determined by forces far beyond their control. Isn't Dilbert really just an expression of resignation, of passive aggression? How many people secretly hate their jobs, and subvert their bosses in countless subtle ways? Reveal that resignation, and it will turn to resentment and rightful anger.

The Unabomber Presidential Write-In Campaign is a serious election effort that aims to totally undermine the election process itself, by exposing the media's exclusion of all meaningful debate about the nature and direction of our daily lives. The useless charade of choosing between identical wings of the pro-business party, the Demicans and Republicrats, is the pale ghost of democracy in a mass society so vast and powerful and ruthless that it can only be controlled by machines. When people are angry enough to vote for the Unabomber, the media will have no choice but to deliver the message, even if it means death for the messenger. Votes for the Unabomber can't be rationalized or mediated or explained away. They are an expression of rage, not apathy, of utter "contempt for the brutality and indifference of our supposedly 'civilized' society.

Four hundred years ago, our suburbs and office parks were wilderness, forest and plains, mountains and rivers, teeming with an unimaginable diversity of life. Industrial society crushed out that diversity, and replaced it with monoculture: mile after mile of corn fields, each plant a genetically perfect copy, identical houses and cars in endless rows, one size fits all, even people standardized and stacked on top of one another like cans of beer. What native society ever built factory farms, or robotic slaughterhouses? What makes us so different from our veal cows, force-fed and chained to their pens, unable to take a single step? Who were the real savages? A vote for the Unabomber is a vote for the The Unabomber Presidential Write-Campaign wants to channel people's anger constructively, by directing it against the most obvious symbol of mass society and corporate control: the MEDIA, whose primary function is to maintain NORMALCY at all costs. Nothing, not rain or snow, not floods or drought, not terrorist bombings or even full-scale war can be allowed to disrupt the well- organized hive of worker bees, driving to work, slurping down their coffee and donuts, clean, smiling, happy, well- dressed bees, buzzing in conference rooms and cubicles, lining up in shopping malls to spend the money they've sacrificed so much for on fashionable trinkets and food neatly wrapped in plastic. The media are the band that keep the troops marching forward, no matter how many comrades fall, crossing off the Hallmark holidays, on chaos of freedom, a vote for Wild Nature dare to join die barbarians at the gates.

**We are the veal
UNABOMBER
FOR
PRESIDENT**

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BOSTON, MA 02112
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Chris Korda — UNAPACK

Top Ten Reasons To Write-In Unabomber For President In 1996

All you have to lose in the Political Illusion
Lydia Eccles

1. **THE ALTERNATIVES.** Clinton, Dole, Buchanan. Moderate republican, right-wing republican, or Fascist? You have the right to vote right. And the right to silence. But isn't it incriminating?
2. **HE'S HOT.** His favorability ratings may be low, but his name recognition is close to 100%. We don't need to hype him — he's already hyped. A Unabomber write-in campaign surfs the media wave. (And the trial may be The Big One.) He's the perfect imposter to undermine the presidential election process as it unfolds, and turn the fraudulent election process against itself.
3. **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're crashing it and having our own referendum on corpo-technocracy. If the Unabomber put a hairline crack in the myth of progress, we are applying a wedge, and we'll pound on it right up to election day. An anti-technological rallying point was born of a criminal chase with high entertainment value. Is there going to be another opportunity to declare your independence from Western Civilization?
4. **WATTING FOR PEROT?** 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.

5. **IF ELECTED HE WILL NOT SERVE.** So it's a nobody for president vote. He's not running, so it's a bottom-up free-for-all campaign. Campaign literature, posters, sound bytes, platforms, pranks, the rest: have it your way.
6. **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 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 anarchist 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.
7. **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 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 waged a guerrilla campaign to communicate 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.
8. **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 dodged the draft almost disqualified him.

Luckily he picked up points for presiding over executions in his home state of Arkansas, including the execution of a retarded man. Dole's war experience gave him the right stuff... 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? Tenor? 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. The beauty of voting for an ineligible candidate is that personality issues are moot. We're voting Un- abomber, not Kaczinski, although Ted may turn out to be Thoreau with a bomb, engaging in military disobedience. And give a little credit to an ex-teacher who may have recruited the FBI to Anarchy 101 and assigned a required reading list of subculture rants.

9. **ENTERTAINMENT VALUE.** Watch your favorite TV pundits try to swallow, digest and regurgitate a Unabomber constituency. It's a message that can only be censored — not neutralized, coopted or explained away. The most minimal Unabomber returns will disrupt the usual discussion of false problems and false solutions (usually known as "reform").
10. **DON'T BLAME ME — I VOTED FOR THE UNABOMBER.** You can sport your bumper sticker after the election.(but not on a car). But only if we don't win.

Reprinted from SNUFF IT #3, The Journal of The Church of Euthenasia. Send \$2.00 for a sample issue to: The Church of Euthanasia, PO Box 261; Somerville, MA 02143. e-mail: coe@net.com.com

www.xnvirolink.org/ogrs/coe/
www.paranoia.com/unapack/

"I see in the eyes of Ted Kaczynski a sorrow reflecting what we have lost. A profound magnitude of loss, consisting of growing personal desolation, the disappearance of community, the destruction of the natural world. It really is this devastating, and getting worse every day.

DON'T  EXPLODE!

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

UNAPACK, PO 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112 WWW.PARANOIA.COM/UNAPACK/

Just undo it.

All you have to lose is the political illusion.

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

UNAPACK, PO 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112 WWW.PARANOIA.COM/UNAPACK/

It's useless, even harmful, for man to think.

**5,000 CHANNELS
IS NOT ENOUGH!**

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

UNAPACK, PO 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112 WWW.PARANOIA.COM/UNAPACK/

Your participation is neither necessary nor expected.

REFUSE

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

UNAPACK, PO 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112 WWW.PARANOIA.COM/UNAPACK/

SMILE! *You're under surveillance.*



**If you're not paranoid,
you're insane.**

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

UNAPACK, PO 120494, BOSTON, MA 02112 WWW.PARANOIA.COM/UNAPACK/

The robots are getting restless...

How's YOUR standard living?

WRITE-IN
PRES

UNABOMBER  96

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Kaczynski's betrayal (and of course his "guilt" is unproved) at the hands of his own brother reminds Us that pacifism, in its smug cowardice, is always, at base, the defender of what is.

But the machine has not yet eradicated all resistance, all capacity to think against the grain. In the Unabomber we can see the courage and honor of one who would not buy into this fraudulent society, who would not buy into the 'dominion of technology. One who fought the brave new world order with pen and sword."

—Helena Sandovar, National Park Service, Denali Park, Alaska

The Ted K Archive

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August, 1997

Inside Front: International Journal of Hardcore Punk and Anarchist Action, Issue
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