could be certain about what it excluded from the realm of possibility: community, diversity, love and freedom, for starters. Just in the last few days, someone found a note in the newspapers that computer experts have coined the word "servoprotein" to refer to human beings such as programmers and technicians who work on the computers. This little bit of news demonstrates with frightening transparency that we will either recreate a natural and human world or perpetuate a world of machines which renders us superfluous by transforming us finally in "servoprotein."

This is our challenge: to renew our humanity or lose it entirely to this behemoth which we have created and which has become the measure of all things. As E.M. Cioran has written, ". . . everything is virtue that leads us to live against the strain of our civilization, that invites us to compromise and sabotage its progress." We will either find a way out of the technological wilderness or we will lose ourselves in it.[1]

* * *

This is the introduction to *Fifth Estate* #306, which includes the first version of "Against the Megamachine" by T. Fulano, "Marxism, Anarchism and the Roots of the New Totalitarianism" by George Bradford, "Indigenism & Its Enemies" by P. Solis, "'The Snowmobile Revolution' — Technological Invasion" (unsigned), and "Community, Primitive Society and the State" by Bob Brubaker. All except Bob Brubaker are actually pen names for David Watson.

RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: This article is unsigned but David Watson has confirmed that he wrote it. In our opinion, *Fifth Estate* #306 represents the emergence of a fully-formed primitivist perspective. This came after years of discussions regarding the role of organization, technology and radical change — but also a couple years before John Zerzan starts publishing his "Origins" essays.

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #306 (vol. 15, no. 5), July 1981, p 3.

Various Authors

The Origins of Primitivism (1977–1988)

2010

Introduction to 'Fifth Estate' #306 (1981)

"When I pronounce the word civilization, I spit." — Gauguin

We are all trapped within the technological labyrinth, and at its center awaits our annihilation. We have already lost more than we can imagine to civilization's insatiable hunger for power and uniformity. We live in the shadow of an enormous edifice, a monstrosity which teeters and threatens to collapse upon us in a moment. We sing, make love, struggle and despair amid its decomposing limbs. But the smell of decomposition is general. We are in eclipse; the human spirit is moribund.

Urban civilization is a vast junkyard. Everything from the cells of our bodies to the planets is contaminated by its poisons and excreta. To resist it seems incoherent and hopeless. But the flaming trajectory of progress is what is truly mad, because its false optimism conceals a vicious cynicism and despair at the possibility of life. Realizing that all is lost, this consciousness surrenders to the momentum: after all, this is the Machine Age, and there is no room for human beings in a world of automata.

When we began this issue, frustrated with the lack of clarity which characterized the previous discussions, we had in mind to say something definitive about technology. We spent most of May and June in the library under fluorescent lights going through the endless literature on the subject. Besides being made vengefully aware of the contradictions involved in our activities, we learned that we were at least correct to trust our instincts and our visceral loathing for this technological desert and its obliteration of the human and natural universe. Everywhere we turned we found more horrors, more corruption, more decay and a greater urgency to somehow resist its conquest. Everything started to come under question, every commonplace of this civilization and its instruments, its way of life. If we learned that we could not necessarily foresee all of the implications of a geometrically expanding technological system, we

terms of cost-efficiency, or "pragmatically," is to expect him to allow himself to be infected with the categories of capital.

He must speak the question which confronts us all in his own, specific way; it is this very cultural diversity, this symphony of voices which describes the world we desire. The future does not lie in any single homogenous vision any more than it could be the result of a political program. To think it does is to repeat the fatal error which constitutes civilization.[1]

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RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: The article is unsigned but David Waston has confirmed that he is the author.

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #304, December 31, 1980, p 7. Introduction to "On the Future of the Earth" by Russell Means.

Contents

spread (including Indians), and which has been resisted everywhere, by the Luddites and framebreakers in England, by peasants and proletarians in Russia, Spain, and elsewhere in Europe, by mestizos in revolutionary Mexico and by so-called primitive people everywhere.

The problem of capital began and spread from Europe: the Europeans were its primary victims, and their cultural traditions and their communities were destroyed by the land enclosures, mines and factories. Perhaps the problem really begins with a separation of spirit and matter, but that doesn't begin in Europe, but somewhere in the Judeo-Christian desert, or perhaps in Sumer, or Babylon. And a critique of those societies would imply a similar critique of all societies characterized by the "Asiatic mode of production," under which a bureaucratic, priestly or military caste is maintained through taxes and forced labor, which would include the ancient Amer-indian civilizations in Mexico and Peru.

Ultimately, we are not interested in arguing these points with Means, because we agree with him where it is important: that "development . . . means total, permanent destruction," that Marxism is the "same old song," and that there can be "another way." Where he uses the terminology "European culture" we prefer to say culture of capital, since non-Europeans have acculturated to this despiritualization of the world, to this cleavage of spirit and matter, and Europeans have also resisted it.

The fact is, we have *all* been changed, and we are all threatened with extinction. We must all sift through the experiences of millennia, find our way out of the technological labyrinth, and create a new culture which reaches into the traditional culture of our remotest past, and into our most utopian possibilities for a human community of the future.

There will be those who see the more human aspects of Russell Means' talk — its apparent simplicity, its spirituality, its intransigence, its "impracticality" — as flaws, and who will argue against its generalizations from a rationalist, "realistic" point of view. We are not in the least interested in these criticisms, since we agree with Means that "Rationality is a curse since it can cause humans to forget the natural order of things." Rationalism is part of the problem; we must begin to trust our dreams. Expecting Means to think in

the functions of art and culture, workers' organization and self-organization, the existence and function of classes and other questions. We don't claim to have resolved these fundamental problems, but we have headed in a general direction of rejection of the presuppositions of this society in all its forms, East and West, of rejection of (modern, industrial, at least) technology and of civilization and the so-called historical progress posited by the Enlightenment thinkers, bourgeois liberalism and Marxism.

We have, in some ways, come to see the revolutionary upheavals of the past few hundred years less as projects by political visionaries carrying out a new social program than as forms of resistance by masses of people to maintain community and solidarity in the face of the onslaught of capital. We came to distrust the "political visionaries" as revolutionary leaders, as well as the humanist codes that they mouthed to construct their Republics and their Five Year Plans, and to trust the instincts and the desperation of the little communities that have fought to preserve a way of life which they saw as being destroyed by industrialism and massification.

Means comes from one of these little communities, and so has seen the tail-end of that process at work in a lifetime, through the experiences of his grandparents, parents and his own generation; only the process which his family must have witnessed compressed into a hundred years or so took *thousands* of years elsewhere, this leap from the Paleolithic into modern American capitalism. His point of view is important, because it is a voice, like our own, orphaned in the technological wilderness into which humanity has wandered, and it sounds like our own voices, it reveals our bitterness, our rage, our ambivalences, too, perhaps. But it is also a voice that sounds distant, mythic, like the warbling of a fabulous, alluring bird which sang to us in a dream of our childhood and which we had forgotten but which we can never forget. It still has a sense of place, of a history tied to the land, of a spirit residing in all of nature, of the wisdom which comes in dreams.

We think when Means speaks of "European culture," that he is not describing the culture of the European peoples in their totality, but the culture of capital, which began as a characterological flaw within the European, but which infects human beings wherever it has

"Against Civilization: Introduction to Russell Means" (1980)

The following text is a talk given by Russell Means at the Black Hills International Survival Gathering held last July at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The gathering was attended by groups which spanned the spectrum from local Indians and farmers, to Marxist-Leninists politicos, Sierra Club activists, Greenpeace, anti-power-line activists, to "alternative technology" entrepreneurs.

The U.S. government and the energy corporations have designated the Black Hills, or *Paha Sapa*, the sacred hills of the Lakota people, as a "National Sacrifice Area," slated for "terminal development." What this "terminal development" (a term both redundant, *all* development being terminal for humanity, and also reminiscent of terminal *cancer*) means concretely is rendering the entire area uninhabitable with coal gasification plants, high voltage power lines and nuclear reactors (having a potential "life" of thirty-five years) in order to supply energy to the Burger Kings, police stations, disco parlors and office buildings of urban civilization, which is equivalent to saying that the sacred hills of the plains Indians are to be converted into *capital*.

We were struck immediately by the similarities in the conclusions that Russell Means has reached and our own, in particular, in relation to the question of technology and a critique of Marxism. Means is starting from a set of experiences quite different from our own. We are all urban, European in background, and came out of the experience of the "counter-culture" and leftism in one way or another. Means comes from a set of traditions which was whole, organically related to its environment and which resisted capitalist civilization as recently as two or three generations ago.

We have been speaking as orphans and fragments, searching for roots and a tradition of resistance to civilization anywhere we can find them. We have embarked upon an adventure which began first of all with the criticism of all of our former presuppositions, that is, of Marxism and anarchism, technological progress, modern society,

In the modern epoch it is the marxists who are the leading exponents of taking current technology as a starting point for their vision of the future — a future which, when brought into being, has *always* produced nightmare police states. Reduced to its most basic elements, discussions about the future sensibly should be predicated on what we desire *socially* and from that determine what technology is possible. All of us desire central heating, flush toilets, and electric lighting, but not at the expense of our humanity. Maybe they are all possible together, but maybe not.

A discussion generated by Sahlins' article will hopefully begin to bring some of these questions into focus. We welcome reader remarks on the issue.[1]

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RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: This article is unsigned but Peter Werbe has confirmed that he is the author.

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[1]   from *Fifth Estate* #298 (vol. 14, no. 3), June 19, 1979, p 6.

David Watson: Introduction to the Origins of Primitivism Set (2010)

One thing I would say and may have already said in my books *Beyond Bookchin* and *Against the Megamachine* and my essay "Swamp Fever, Primitivism and the 'Ideological Vortex': Farewell to All That" is that I am not opposed at all to some kind of reasoned primitivism. I just distrust all "isms," and in the case of much of self-proclaimed anarcho-primitivism, the insights of a primitivist view (for example, to be found in Stanley Diamond's *In Search of the Primitive, The Old Ways,* much anthropological literature, and the writings and testimonies of native peoples) has become a simplistic, dogmatic, and sometimes fascistic response to problems that demand instead our humanity, compassion, and humility.

I admire so-called primitive or original and tribal societies and believe they offer profound answers to what it means to be human, particularly in the present crisis in world industrial capitalist civilization. They don't have all the answers, and there is no way they can be fully reproduced, but we need to pay attention to all our ancestors, and to the great traditions — primitive, archaic, and modern — in our evolutionary experience. I think Gary Snyder's *Practice of the Wild* one of the most powerful expressions of respect for primitive and archaic traditions, and search for a synthesis of ancient and modern, today, and I recommend it emphatically for its wisdom, beautiful writing, erudition, sense of humor, humility, and humanity.

I must confess that I am pessimistic about our capacity to save ourselves and the complex web of planetary life we know with any insight or political outlook, but I don't see any reason to give up, and I admire and try to find ways to support those who continue to seek answers and to fight back. Caring about and responding to the crisis in a humane way is one of the few things remaining that keep us human.

I may look at this later and want to modify (or clarify) what and how I am saying this, but it is largely how I have felt about these matters since the days when we were first exploring and debating

these ideas. I am grateful to Dylan Smith and Radical Archives and everyone else who did the hard work to make these texts available.

David Watson,
September 2010

are willing to accompany this mystical view of human affairs with a religious certainty, you are left with a staggering amount of sacrifices for absolutely nothing other than the reproduction of the dominant society.

Civilization has been aptly described as a "bloody sword" and when its mounting victims are measured against its reward for the survivors, it's difficult to make a case for it. The "high standard" of living argument as Civilization's justification always attempts to disguise the fact that the benefits of any given epoch are always enjoyed by a few at the expense of the many and usually for only short periods of time. Other than those expectations the daily misery experienced by most people is coupled with calamities of such magnitude that they become difficult to comprehend. The physical carnage alone is so vast — 100 million dead in ten thousand years of warfare (please compute the yearly average), tens of millions dead from diseases directly attributable to excessive population densities, millions more dead and injured in "accidents" from machinery (millions dead from car accidents alone), starvation as well as explosions, mine disasters, chemical mishaps, etc. — as to define the epoch of organized society as one steeped in blood. Also, there is an upward curve of both technological development and slaughter, and technological development and oppression: they are inextricably linked.

Let us anticipate the critics who would accuse us of wanting to go "back to the caves" or of mere posturing on our part — i.e., enjoying the comforts of civilization all the whole being its hardiest critics. We are not posing the Stone Age as a model for our Utopia nor are we suggesting a return to gathering and hunting as a means for our livelihood. Rather, an investigation into pre-civilized modes combats the notion that humans have always lived with alarm clocks and factories. It assails the prevalent amnesia which the species exhibits as to its origins and the varieties of social association which existed for tens of thousands of years before the rise of the state. It announces that work has not always been the touchstone of human existence and that cities and factories did not always blight the terrain. It asserts that there was a time when people lived in harmony with each other and with their natural surroundings, both of which they knew intimately.

band living marked by extremely low levels of technology, stable populations, and group members highly integrated into the most intimate details of the ecosphere which they inhabited? What features caused these nomadic bands of gatherers and hunters to become the domesticated "citizens" of emerging nation states, their life's purpose altered dramatically to the filling of state coffers, becoming cannon-fodder for a suddenly universal state of warfare and consumers of ideology which made them less, rather than more, able to understand their lives and the social relationships around them.

To move technology to the centerpiece of this equation, as we do, meets with resistance from almost every quarter. Yet even the simplest technological development has been part of a continuing process of separation from the world which first bore and succored our emerging species to a situation where now we stand at the apex of that separation as strangers on our own planet, divorced completely from the world about us. Rather than possessing the skills, knowledge and craft which allowed for 5,000,000 years of human evolution, today, we depend almost exclusively upon experts and officials to feed, clothe, govern and perform every function once carried out by individuals themselves.

The links between technology, Civilization and domination appear almost immediately upon examination. The most dramatic technological development in human history was the Neolithic Revolution, the shirt from Stone Age gathering and hunting economies (the Paleolith), to a mode of production based upon fixed populations involved in agriculture and capable of producing an expropriable surplus. This innovation of farming as a means of subsistence guaranteed a population which was easily subjected to an ideology of domination containing the mass social and psychological drive needed to obliterate all of the past desire to be wild and free, replacing it with the desire for subservience.

Marxists see this civilizing process as "progressive" — the myth-imbued dynamic which is supposed to eventually result in socialism — so that every horror, every deprivation is vindicated as a necessary step toward a utopian future in which every slave, every serf, every wage worker becomes part of a continuum which will eventually free humanity. The problem with this perspective is that unless you

The First Primitivist Essay: "Gary Snyder Asks: Poetry or Machines? Back to the Stone Age" (1977)

"The Politics of Ethnopoetics" in **The Old Ways, Six Essays,** *Gary Snyder, City Lights Books, San Francisco, 40077 "(Reckoning roughly from the earliest cave paintings)", 96 pp.*

Ever since the dawn of industrial capitalism 200 years ago, a succession of philosophers, poets, social scientists, and mystics have written on the decline of the species since leaving the "state of nature" and entering the modern epoch. Hence, it could be charged, that there is little that is new in this book and much that has been heard from sources whose nostalgia for the days of yore is of a short lasting duration broken by a return to the middle-class life that spawns such ideas.

Almost all radical thought from Marxism through to anarchist thinkers like Murray Bookchin in his *Post-Scarcity Anarchism* take as a *pre-condition* for revolutionary change the continuing development of our productive capacity and view any reversal of the process as reactionary. However, just as we would never allow the conservatism of the ruling ideas to govern the direction of our thinking, neither should we allow what formerly passed as radical ideas to have a similar restraining effect.

Civilization is The Culprit

The value then of the book under consideration is that Snyder calls into question basic assumptions of modern society and very directly indicts the whole edifice of civilization as the culprit in the predicament humans have gotten themselves into.

What is being directly confronted is the concept of progress itself. The history of the species has always been taught to us as the

history of progress — out of the oceans, out of the caves, onto the fields, into the factories, etc. — without ever really stopping to ask what was the yardstick being used that identified cave dwellers as unfortunate, while seeing the wage workers of Europe and North America as blessed. Nobody ever turned, looked at each group and said, "Gee, are they happy?"

People seem to have the capacity to simultaneously hold a positive notion of civilization and progress while compartmentalizing the knowledge that contact with the modern world by thriving and happy pre-industrial people has always led to their immiseration and extermination. Why is there not the realization that the same process occurred to our forebears as well and we are just their domesticated descendants who can be satisfied with camping in the wilderness for two weeks a year as a substitute for the life our species once led?

To Snyder (after Levi-Strauss and Sahlins), the species began its decline at the end of the Paleolithic Age when hunting and gathering ceased to be the dominant form of sustenance and was replaced by the agriculturally-based Neolithic Age. With the ability to produce large surpluses through stored crops, the centralized state, the patriarchal family and class structure emerged, first only on a small section of the planet involving a limited number of people, but that process now nears completion after eight thousand years of "civilization" with the final destruction at hand of the remaining Stone Age cultures still lingering in the hinterlands of Brazil, Australia and the Philippines.

The decline comes about as the form of human association changes. In an unpublished manuscript, Gerry Winstanley makes the point, "Once a group of people came to rely on agriculture completely, and forgot how to live by hunting and gathering, they could no longer run away en masse into the wilderness to escape slavery." Hence, the State becomes permanent. Or as Snyder writes,

"Society providing buffers and protection of an increasingly complicated order so that as it became larger in scope and populations larger in size, it protected individuals from those demands for speed, skill, knowledge, and intelligence that were common in the Upper Paleolithic. The personal direct contact with the natural

"Searching for the Culprit" (1979)

Introduction to "The Original Affluent Society": Searching for the Culprit

"Without government life is nasty, brutish and short."
— Thomas Hobbes

Every person gazing even casually at the sordid history of government realizes that the Hobbesian dictum is nonsense and, in fact, just the opposite is true: *with* government, humanity has thusly had its life defined. Viewing the organized political state as the culprit in human affairs for the presence of universal misery is standard fare for the anarchist and libertarian tradition and as a theory is not without merit as far as it goes. Certainly, other attempts historically to locate the culprit in evil spirits, the Devil, human nature or even capitalism, are much more shortsighted as they fail to deliver an explanation of the daily mechanism though which people have been subjugated during the epoch of Civilization.

The appearance on the planet of the political state as well as social classes, private property, the patriarchy and the like are the *apparatuses* of domination, but the larger framework in which they all appear, the reigning code, that of Civilization itself, is usually taken for granted and only recently has come under critical scrutiny.

The essay by Marshall Sahlins reprinted on the following page undertakes such an examination through the mirror of the societies which immediately preceded establishment of Civilization. The willingness to indict the entire edifice of Civilization as being responsible for the long history of human misery is one that parts company with all existing social theory and opens the way for a larger examination of the entire human experience on the planet, not just that of the last ten thousand years. Although Sahlins' subject matter is limited by design, it immediately suggests many other questions.

For instance, what brought about in such a relatively short period of time the epochal changes that discarded 50 millennia of small-

world required of hunters and gatherers — men and women both — a tremendous continual awareness."

The quick answer, "Well, who doesn't want to be safe from tigers," misses entirely what also that "safety" brings — a domesticated species that has all of its affairs that were once handled directly now mediated by the State and commodity relationships so that it seems perfectly natural and reasonable that all aspects of what we do with both our labor and leisure time, where we live and how we live are chosen for us with humans figuring in the equation only as an afterthought.

Rapacious Dangers of the State

Safety from the elements was "won" (a dubious victory) only at the expense of being now exposed to the rapacious dangers of the State and, most importantly, the loss of community with its concept of "place" and definition for the species. Missing those elements, articulated through song, dance, myth and poetry and accepting instead, a society of mediation, is what Camatte calls the "wandering of humanity."

Snyder knows his anthropology and his ecology, but seems to be influenced by Marxists in those fields even though he realizes their limitations. He states, "Marxists, granted the precision of their critique on most points, often have a hard time thinking clearly about primitive cultures, and the usual tendency is to assume that they should become civilized." Snyder sees this as a flaw rather than realizing what he has stated puts him into direct opposition with the Marxist project.

As a part of the intellectual development of the bourgeois era, Marxism contains all of its assumptions including the one mentioned by Snyder. To Marx and Engels people were not even human until they entered class society and to them (including their modern epigones like Evelyn Reed in *Women's Evolution*) the destruction of primitive communism is a *positive and progressive thing*, just as the development of capitalism is positive, all

enveloped in the mystical view of progress that along this continuum will be created a wonderful world out of the stuff that heretofore has created mostly misery.

Drive Toward Monoculture

Again there is never the central evaluation of the effect all of this progress of the last 8,000 years has had on the planet and its inhabitants. Snyder contends that it has been a disaster, and one that is increasing in its intensity with civilization's drive toward worldwide monoculture. The tendency *away* from species-diversity makes our lives extremely precarious since we have become totally dependent upon the continuous smooth functioning of a highly centralized political and technical apparatus. Yet, all of this is built into both the capitalist and Marxist view of the world. Although none of us are willing to relinquish the comforts of modern life, if we take as our starting point the technology created in the modern epoch, we will be sure to continue its social forms as well. At some point there has to be a sorting out of what we want in terms of human relationships and only then think about what is possible technologically.

People in the Upper Paleolithic era worked only about 15 hours a week according to Marshall Sahlins in his *Stone Age Economics* and never tried to maximize production or produce a surplus apparently preferring to spend more of their time in play, dance, song and magic. That choice of preferences is gone from our epoch where the work-a-day world has been steadily increasing in time spent since that "primitive" era. Are those the choices then? — machines or song and poetry? It's not entirely clear, except that for certain, the former has obliterated the latter where ever it has touched the folk and people always mirror what is at the center of their society — in ours it's the machine.

Snyder says the "politics of ethnopoetics" is seeing what "industrial technological civilization is doing to the earth," but none of this should be taken as a call to return to the caves of our ancestors (the only way that will be done is Gen. Curtis LeMay-style). It means to stop accepting the planet as we find it, to reinhabit it

last holdouts as well. Nothing, at this moment, announces itself as a way to regain our humanity, but if we truly have "nothing to say," we are as lost as those we have so vividly described. If we have only momentarily lost our voice, we had better find it.[2]

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RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: This article is unsigned but Peter Werbe has confirmed that he is the author.

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[2] from *Fifth Estate* #297 (Vol. 14, No. 2), April 18, 1979, pp 4–5, 20.

Language of Resistance

To even think about creating a social infrastructure of rebellion, a language of resistance has to be maintained and nurtured. Total control of the language is a primary goal of all ruling apparatuses as social power ultimately is the ability to define the social code and have the administrative control to make it act accordingly. Without us taking a hold of the language to make meaningful examinations of the current state of human affairs and a firm (although generalized; no programs please) vision, we will soon see an erosion of human communication to the point where we will suffer a total inability to be understood.

As it is, the destruction of language is progressing at a rapid rate along the lines of an odd variant of Newspeak. In Orwell's *1984*, language was purposely being reduced by the Party to continually eliminate words and phrases from speech with the end of eventually eradicating proscribed concepts from human intelligence. Almost the reverse process is at work within this culture, so that all language is permissible and produced at such a torrent that a banalization and equalization takes place making words totally lacking in any emotive force.

Orwell's frightening image of the Thought Police watching everyone through ubiquitous TV monitors has been reversed now to where everyone willingly watches the Thought Police on TV and remains just as compliant as desired by *1984*'s Party. As the prime source of values for the dominant code (having replaced mass education) television allows and, in fact, encourages an appearance of immense diversity but actually reduces all language and concepts to equals — entertainment to be passively consumed (what did the SLA do in the Nielsens' ratings?).

It's difficult not to end abruptly as all of the foregoing has been so inadequate and incomplete, but a larger, extensive investigation properly occupies many pages not possible here. Suffice it to say we are faced with a real, not simply theoretical, question of our survival as humans in the face of the destruction of the individual as a historical subject. Unless some dramatic undertaking reverses this, there is no reason to think that this process will not include the

as free humans, and to re-define ourselves through our song and poetry.

Snyder ends thusly, "Such poetries will be created by us as we reinhabit this land with people who know they belong to it . . . The poems will leap put past the automobiles and TV sets of today into the vastness of the Milky Way (visible only when the electricity is turned down) . . . These poesies to come will help us learn to be people of knowledge in this universe in community with other people — non-humans included — brothers and sisters.

This is a vision of survival and revolution.[1]

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RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: Steve Millet has identified this as the first primitivist article to appear in *Fifth Estate*. It is unsigned, but Peter Werbe has confirmed that he wrote it.

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #286 (vol. 12, no. 10), September 1977, p 4.

wayside like last year's platform shoes. But gone with them are the last remaining private moments and transcendental properties these institutions embraced, albeit in the most flawed of forms. In fact, it was for these very qualities that they could command such allegiance over so long a period no matter how grotesque they appear from the outside. The desire for blood and tribal connections, a longing to be immersed in something larger than one's own life, seems almost at the level of instincts. All of it, even the ugly forms, have been disposed of.

This new mode of rule — a soft authoritarianism (no cops needed except for the flip-outs) — leaves people with no intense, internal belief structure, just an imposed external, cool one, passively absorbed from capital and its culture.

Still, this is not to say that all is tranquil in Flatland. It's difficult to believe that people have been so robotized that they still don't possess a volatileness born of the desire for belief in something meaningful and that is one's own; for a life of intensity; for something that interconnects one human with another. And there are malfunctions among the manipulated.

On the level of personal disintegration, statistics of mental illness, skyrocketing tranquilizer usage, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc., announce in dramatic fashion a socially and individually immiserated population. Also, spasmodic minority uprisings, youth revolts, wildcat strikes and random violence suggest all is not well for the totally administered society.

Yet all of these "aberrations" will remain at the level of personalized disorders or collective tantrums easily brought back under control unless a self-conscious conception of both what the revolt is against and what we have for a personal and collective vision of our future emerges. Without these exceptions which, above all, *carry a confidence in ourselves* we confront the massive culture of domination with empty hands.

the statistics of social disintegration — high divorce rate, destruction of traditional communities, frequent moving, the average of persons in a living unit slipping below two, increasing social rootlessness, the seeming universal disaster of achieving gratifying personal relationships — eventually lead to the creation of the monad — the individual unit of society, reduced from the tribe to clan to extended family to nuclear family to the lone human: easily manageable, completely domesticated to capital, who experiences a world of things only through mediated activity, e.g. wage work and the consumption of commodities, spectacles and entertainment.

The smiling, well-dressed and coiffed face from the disco or condominium is the face of the future, who only thinks and acts in terms that are programmed into him/her. After the final fragmentation of what formerly was interconnected human activity comes, in Adorno's words, the totally administered society. Without humans linked together through ancient forms of association, capital and the administrative state move in to fill in the gaps. It raises children, cares for the blind and infirm, counsels the anxious, cures the sick, protects the harassed, puts out fires and picks up garbage, and so totally takes command of the processes of life that were once organized informally that if the individual were asked for alternative possibilities, most likely none would be forthcoming as everything has or will become a question of complex administering. No one will love being administered, but without extensive patterns and traditions of self-activity/self-help, there will be no other choices. (No one will even have memory of anything different.)

In the United States the process of the new domination seems complete — vestiges of the nuclear family, religion, patriotism, ethnicity and the like remain, and from time to time raise their forces in valiant but doomed rearguard actions, but all of these domains of privilege and irrationality no longer serve the function they once did. With the pervasiveness of television capable of instilling instant values in people, the family and religion seem hopelessly inflexible, irrelevant and condemned by all that is "modern." The patriotic love of country or one's ethnic group seems at best sentimental in a period when U.S. multi-national corporations owe their allegiance nowhere and have larger GNS's than many nations. So all of it is dumped by the

"Technology & the State: An Introduction" (1978)

Perhaps the most insidious aspect of modern, centralized technology, even more than its pervasiveness, is its *complete acceptance* in almost all quarters as an integral part of the human experience (and among so-called "revolutionaries" as a prerequisite for a change to a humane society).

Humanoids and humans have spent the vast portion of our time on the planet with little or no technology and only in the last 10,000 years or so (an infinitesimal portion of our existence) has the rise of mechanical and technological improvements begun to affect us and the other species with which we share the planet. The capacity for innovation and invention seemed almost innate in humans once the first rudimentary developments of prehistoric times became widespread. The first inventions were employed as a means to improve what was often a harsh and dangerous existence, but they immediately put us on the road on which we currently find ourselves.

The simple but monumental development of stone weapons increased the available food supply for humans, but at the same time gave to one species the ability to obliterate others, which, in fact was accomplished in several cases.

The most important technological leap in history was the innovation of agriculture, which led to a complete redefinition of the human experience and altered people from a condition of wildness to one of domestication. As the system of agriculture began to predominate, humans became rooted to a fixed geographic region — and for the first time — could produce a surplus of goods. It was within this social setting that the most significant social institution in history emerged — the vertical bureaucratic hierarchy — and its expression in class society and the political state.

Since that epoch 10,000 years ago, both technology and the political rule of the State have snowballed to the extent that they now stand in the position of dominating all of human existence. Their development has continued unaltered since that period irrespective of

the particular type of political rule or mode of production in a given era, to the point where human existence on the planet is threatened by both.

All of us want electric lights and indoor plumbing, but not the simultaneous developments of the hydrogen bomb and the pollution of the air which has been developed along with the conveniences of life. But the fact remains that we have both and it may be quite possible that one could not have been created without the other, so in tandem are the military machines of the State and the major inventions of the modern epoch. The two articles below detail the Frankenstein syndrome inherent in technology at the service of the State. Rudy Perkins describes how the development of nuclear power is tied directly into nuclear weaponry; and in the following piece, Duke Skywatcher demonstrates that Star Wars' technology is not fantasy, but that contemporary Darth Vaders are planning bigger and better wars for us all the time — this time in space.

Though neither presents alternatives, neither could be expected to since a thorough analysis of the development and function of technology has yet to be made. However, if the term "revolution" is not simply to be a codeword for the next batch of political rulers, we have to begin an investigation of all of the elements of our lives and be prepared, if need be, to make fundamental alterations in any of them rather than accept the givens of that which oppresses us.[1]

* * *

RADICAL ARCHIVES NOTE: The article is unsigned but Peter Werbe has confirmed that he is the author.

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #290 (Vol. 13. #2), March 2, 1978, p 7. This is the introduction to "The State and Nuclear Power" by Rudy Perkins and "The Arms Race of the Future Is Now: Star Wars?" by Duke Skywatcher.

working class, or jobs for some blacks and women, has always meant an extension and affirmation of a society that is resilient enough to understand viscerally, even if its reigning lieutenants always don't, that if people come knocking hard enough, they have to be let in.

And once inside, it's not so much that they get "bought off" in the popular sense, but they suffer from the same malaise that all of those that have been inside all along suffer from — social vertigo if you look up or down you get dizzy, so best to embrace what is.

Eventually, all forms if domination operational on the terrain of capital become subject to demands for equality and eventually the culture of domination begins to bend at its most odious points, but only when a particular institution can be relinquished due to antiquation or replacement. For instance, the code concerns itself naught with who administers, a capitalist class or socialist bureaucrats, blacks or whites, men or women, as long as its administration is assured. Or, the work ethic — long thought to be a lynchpin of our society, but now a cultural lag hanging on from an era when sacrifice to the job was necessary for the period of the early accumulation of capital in the 19th Century — has been replaced by an ethic of consumption which doesn't care whether you love or hate your job, whether you buy new homes and cars or backpacks and dope paraphernalia, just as long as you keep buying.

Consumption and Passivity

And buy we do, all of us, if for no other reason than to attempt to compensate for the lack of generalized gratification and the collapsing state of our personal lives. Consumption and passive reception of spectacles have become the signature of our era to the point where even the popular culture reflects the wide-spread alienation and contemporary anguish. But the current gush of pop approaches to the malaise fails to comprehend what the total process is bringing about.

What we are faced with at this time is the final shattering of all forms of human association that at once precisely defined us as human beings for eons (a collective and reciprocal sociability [sic]) and at the same time gave us sustenance outside of official society. All

inhabit. A quick look at the period just preceding that decade of activism and transition should serve to make the point.

The matrix of values that appeared to be at the heart of the American century at its apex (1945–1960) — nationalism, rabid anti-communism, the family, pride of job, neighborhood and ethnic loyalty, etc. — suddenly came under attack, and with the onslaught of the sixties, disappeared just as suddenly as determinant concepts, and were easily replaced in the popular imagination with new and more "modern" ones.

What becomes ever more clear is that the rule of capital continues through its material mode of production and is capable of erecting codes of domination into a cultural and political superstructure dependent upon the needs of a given epoch. The entrenched and on-going processes of the circulation of capital continue whether or not there is a specific class of men in control in the form of a bourgeoisie, whether an authoritarian family exists or not (Reich not withstanding) or whether the society cloaks its activities in the mystifications of democracy, fascism or state communism.

Bourgeois Revolutions

The social process developing today is in a large part the final (or perhaps more cautiously, the current) phase of the bourgeois revolutions that began 300 years ago and are still in a dynamic form today regardless of what ignorant leftists say. Concomitant with the establishment of the rule of capital, these revolutions brought about the political and ethical demand for the eradication of privilege. Beginning with an assault on the hereditary power of the aristocracy, the battlelines within capital have always been toward a leveling of society — to end the domination of one class over another, one race over the other, and within our personal lives, the domination of men over women and the destruction of the authority of the patriarchal family.

None of these are sham battles; all of the aforegoing were genuine struggles (and are; the battles for those reforms not being yet won). Each victory, however, whether it is decent wages for a section of the

John & Paula Zerzan vs The Fifth Estate Staff: "FE Criticized and Our Response" (1978)

To the Fifth Estate:

The letter from "Kirk Johnson" (March 2, 1978 FE), which equated Fifth Estate's practice of running a profit-making book service (to support itself) with Search & Destroy's record company ads (for the same end), makes public a discussion that has been private for too long.

That the opening of this critique — which really began with FE's important remarks on Black Rose Books' capitalist procedures — finally arrives via a spokesman for Search and Destroy is a sad irony. S&D is a completely uncritical promo rag which hopes to be accepted by what it sees as the latest fad, punk rock. Done anonymously, it (characteristically) helped organize a recent two-day benefit for the UMW strike, this piece of liberal/leftist reformism easily coexisting next to censored interviews and ads for rip-off night clubs.

But what of FE, to us the only critical publication in North America? Ammunition Books fulfills exactly the same function as do S&D's ads. In neither case do the publishers wish to give their own money to their projects. Likewise, as with S&D's complete public anonymity, FE's articles are presented almost entirely unsigned or accompanied by clever pseudonyms. Is anyone's life really involved, or are both enterprises just separate hobbies, just words on a page?

With Search & Destroy, despite a tiny sprinkling of "radical" verbiage — a highly insulting pretension — one would not really expect any quality, any radical break, in the first place. With Fifth Estate one expects a great deal more; why, then, the chilling similarities?

It seems that one factor is FE's enthusiasm for the ideas of Camatte. C., of course, sees the world as completely domesticated, where virtually no activity can do other than reinforce the totality of capital,

where the only thing revolutionary is the revolution itself. Behind this outlook, one's answer to criticism is that since no project can be revolutionary, why be too concerned with its details?

It is precisely this kind of cynicism (whether or not C. is its sole inspiration) which leads to such deathly separations between FE's radical language and the daily lives of its creators. Camatte writes of the totality of the revolution required to break the hold of capital — and is a tidy little professor, living as any other bourgeois. It's arguable that some of the FE "staff" hold jobs which provide the most active forms of service to the commodity and the state.

The Sex Pistols — despite the rousing excellence of so much of their music — are seen by some as revolutionaries, as they line the pockets of Warner Bros. and show nihilist spontaneity as just one more product to buy and sell. Jay Kinney, resident FE cartoonist, advertises his reformist comic books everywhere and currently four pages of his cartoons appear in Playboy. Content aside, can anyone doubt that this approach can amount to anything more than making the truth just another moment of the lie of this life?

As for ourselves? Our Upshot efforts (flyers, posters, etc.) have always been paid for by us and we have only once ever sold anything. (*Breakdown*, which was almost completely given away; a few sold for 25 cents.) We adopted the name Upshot in So. Calif. in 1973 for "security" reasons; now, fortunately, our identities are an open secret. We now have separate living spaces, in an effort to attack our exclusivism.

Our attempts toward a radical break, however limited, are at least no cynical gesture. If that kind of falsity sets in, we hope we'll know to quit.

John and Paula Zerzan
San Francisco

FE Replies

Dear John & Paula:

Culture of Capital

And what has been happening is the total collapse of the social infrastructure[1] of rebellion which had been created during the 'sixties (flawed as it may have been), leaving all of us individuals to face the staggering cultural might of the administrative state. Without structures of resistance in which to organize collective projects and our own lives as rebels, capital steps in to organize our energy around wage work and other activity ordained by official society.

Again, with all of its serious (and perhaps fatal) flaws, the culture and politics of the 'sixties were an attempt to back away from institutionalized boredom and official amorality and to pose lives based on a code of high morality, face-to-face interaction and self-activity.

Its collapse, however, provided the breathtaking space needed for a society under sharp attack. Capital quickly recuperated what the defeated forces had advocated and transformed an increasingly unworkable mode of rule into a new variant of domination accompanied by a culture vaguely shaped on the radical forms it imitated. (Women, blacks and youth were taken into the middle levels of political rule, the concerns of ecology, equal rights, and peace are enunciated by those in power, rock and roll and casual dress became the accepted fashion, etc.)

These transmogrified values and ideals in their congealed and matured form now appear as independent of their radical origins and present themselves in the popular media as cliches about the "Me Generation" in which victory has been achieved and nothing remains but to enjoy life through consumerism. Still, this banalization represents more than what appears on the surface; they are the popular expressions of fundamentally different ways in which we live our lives, and conceive of ourselves and the world which we

1   The admittedly stiff and academic term "social infrastructure" should in no way be construed as a desire for any formal organization of "revolutionaries." It is used here as a synonym for community which has been a buzz-word for so long as to almost have become devoid of its intended meaning. A radical infrastructure would/could include an informal network of people involved in projects, self-activity, living arrangements, etc., occupying a definable geographical space and whose inhabitants subscribe to values and activity which place them in opposition to this society.

Capital and Domestication

Even in our marxist and leftist days we knew something hideous and inhuman was afoot in a society dominated by capital. Since entering a stage in our thinking when those theories of domination began to stretch ever backwards to encompass the entire breadth of what we call civilization, we have become even more aware of what has been done to the species since emerging from the jungles and the savannas into *history*. All the while stating that the configurations of domination have become increasingly pernicious and have accelerated tremendously within the epoch of capital, we, again, have stood (or so we thought) ahistorically aside, possessed of the foolish assumption that those who look thoughtfully at the processes of society (and who note them down in a systematic manner) are somehow themselves exempt from the results which affect everyone else.

A good case in point is when we first came across the reinvigorated marxist concept of the "real domination of capital." Its appeal to us lay, of course, in its seeming validity although many have been critical of it because of its apparent "pessimism" — if capital dominates all institutions, modes of thought, the culture, it would follow that no resistance, let alone destruction of capital's domination, appears possible. Well, that's what it would men, we smugly said, contending that our small project kept us at least partially out of the path of the Juggernaut we were describing. And to some extent projects and personal resistance and collective activity do keep you out from under the wheels, but not for long if those activities are diminishing rather than expanding and linking up with the activity of others. Without specific forms of resistance, and (even more importantly) a community of resistance, we are left awash in the same currents which are sweeping over everyone else whether there is an awareness of what is happening or not.

It increasingly seems that almost every aspect of the Fifth Estate is a double-edged sword with every positive feature of our project having a corresponding drawback — you've hit on several. Before we answer your specific points, we would like to put our efforts into a context that raises the larger contradictions inherent in the form of media we have chosen as a project.

Once communication leaves the level of one-to-one communication, media begins to increase in complexity and in its ability to command authority and to render passive its receptors running up the ladder from leaflets to newspapers and radios to the final and most complex (and compelling) form — television. Most every receptor realizes at one level of consciousness or another that mass communication deals with authority — the ability of a few to define reality for the many — and more respect is given a form the more it appears to contain the authority of rulers or would-be rulers.

The extent to which the Fifth Estate may numb people rather than stimulate thinking, or begin to loom as a product of political or literary experts, certainly is regrettable, but it is the reaction we often get and while we may not desire it, we should realize it comes with the terrain. At the FE we scrupulously separate our content from the daily capitalist papers or from the 101 leftist publications taking Lenin's advice to begin party activity with the publication of a newspaper. The problem lies in that although the content of each differs, the form utilized by all three is identical and often is responded to in an identical manner — by submission to the authority that it carries.

Another problem area defined by our choice of taking on a large project with a regularly appearing publication demands that we undertake activities that are indistinguishable from those of any other small business operating a newspaper such as all sort of record keeping, office hours, etc.

However, we continue this project knowing full well its contradictions for several reasons: 1) Within the small community in which it circulates, the Fifth Estate has had an impact on the ideas and perspectives regarding the revolutionary project it addresses itself to which probably could not have been achieved through a less complex form, such as leaflets; 2) it has forced the contributors to continually

re-think our lives and to attempt to make some sense of the world in which we live; 3) it is activity whose major definitions remain outside of capital (labor and creativity for joy rather than wages) and which becomes part of what defines us as individuals unwilling to have our lives completely configured by capital.

Now to your specific objections: When we took over the Fifth Estate from its commercial managers in June 1975 we had no real ideas of how we were going to finance this paper and began Ammunition Books out of an enthusiasm for the literature and our desire to get it out to others — since much of it was difficult or impossible to obtain — not as a revenue producing venture. We have always acknowledged its commercial nature, but two important things stand out in the Fifth Estate's relationship to Ammunition Books: 1) Unlike Black Rose Books, a business is not at the center of our activity and; 2) we feel there is still importance to the literature we are distributing. The problem we had with Black Rose is that they were willing to parade themselves as revolutionaries *because* of their business activity whereas we have no such illusions.

Also, when we took on the Fifth Estate its pages had been swamped with ads for cigarettes, x-rated movies, albums and head shops. Feeling ads to be the voice of capital we immediately decided to no longer accept commercial ads, although co-op ads remained. The ads Search & Destroy accepts are determined solely by a media buyer's order; we offer books for sale usually that we feel are worthwhile and have often dropped books from our catalog after our perspectives have changed (for instance, Marx or Murray Bookchin's *Post-Scarcity Anarchy*).

The Fifth Estate has a relatively large budget for a small libertarian project, again left over from the days of its commercial operation. Our expenses include rent on a fairly spacious office which also houses the bookstore, a printing bill which is often over $200, phone and other utilities, etc. This comes out to about $500 per month — certainly nothing that could be financed through out of pocket contributions — and necessitates that profits from Ammunition Books go into the paper to subsidize what is not made up by subscriptions, street sales, and sustainers.

much of our activity is almost identical — work, sports, consumption of entertainment, etc.

One of the ways we try to show that we haven't entirely bought capital's program on such a wholesale level is through projects like the Fifth Estate, but communication on any level presupposes receptors. So, perhaps the problem isn't so much with us not having anything to say as a problem of what we have to say becoming understood by an ever decreasing number of people. Most of us still continue to get excited upon hearing plans for new projects or when we are confronted with new ideas, and each new abuse by authority still makes us bristle, but previously all of that emotional energy appeared to be part of a larger dynamic that contained the desire and the possibility for a revolutionary transformation and was seen similarly by those around us.

Now we get the distinct impression that at best we are conceived of as having a slightly arcane hobby ("politics," and weird politics at that) and at worst are thought to be quite rude and self-righteous for continuing to evoke a set of values stemming from activity already long exhausted. If, in the midst of a polite conversation that has oscillated between cooking, running and movies, one of us should happen to inject something such as you might find in the pages of the FE, everyone else sort of drifts off, hopes you will finish soon and returns to what was under discussion previously.

No one has yet kicked us out of their house, since much of what we are saying contains recognizable buzz-words like "capitalism," "domination," "critique" (seemingly prima facie evidence that something important must be being said), but given the reception and lack of response, there is progressively less willingness on our part to even say those things. By this silence, we find ourselves, too, becoming agents of recuperation: conformists.

Lest this all be seen as just us crying the blues about not being recognized as hot-shot politicos any longer, some exploration of what is happening in the contemporary scene to all of us should be attempted.

rise to it was in a severe eclipse by 1974–75 as was the newspaper itself when we first began to function with it, first as the Eat the Rich Gang and then as the staff. It was evident to us at that time that we were in a period of declining political activity and disintegrating forms of rebellion which had typified the aforegoing period. Yet we were bright with enthusiasm about our new project, and the host of recently discovered ideas we had just come across — such as situationsim, anarchism, and council communism — animated us all the more.

We felt we were the inheritors of the 'sixties but now armed with a much more potent formula for revolution than the statist and authoritarian muck which had been previously carried. Ultimately, we thought we were at the beginning of things, not at their end.

We were soon dispossessed of that optimism as the disintegration continued and now, almost at the 'eighties, any continuity with that previous period has been broken. All that was "The Movement" seems now only fit subject matter for TV specials, leaving us back at ground zero suddenly truncated from our past or any tradition of rebellion.

Invasion of the Body Snatchers

This appears as most striking when witnessing the travels of many of our former comrades and FE staffers who drifted out of a movement which called for world revolution and "total assault on the culture" and into the prescribed pursuits of middle and working class America. Many of them have embraced the world of professions, business and conventional politics with such an uncanny vigor that we are led to suspect that a sort of "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" syndrome has occurred with the vital, lively bodies of our friends being inhabited by lifeless aliens leaving only a slightly recognizable outer shell.

Of course, our ultimate concern isn't so much with them as with ourselves, because it becomes harder and harder to distinguish our lives from theirs. Our *ideas*, we continually assert, are different, but

It is easy to recognize this argument as similar to Black Rose's rationalizations about their activity and no one realizes the impact of dictates of a small business operation more than those of us who do the clerking each day. Again, we deal with (or rationalize, if you prefer) the negative aspects of our project by telling ourselves that the scope of it allows us to expand our dimensions so we are in touch with people all over the world, including the two of you in San Francisco. We've established close relationships with many people who we've contacted though the paper and this has created for us a feeling of community which allows us to at least ignore the most glaring of the contradictions we have mentioned.

Regarding articles with a lack of signature: many of us feel that to continually sign articles in the same journal over an extended period of time reinforces the bourgeois category of specialist — the writer. (Although all of our names do appear in the staff box each issue.) No one "knows" you through the mere appending of a name at the end of an article, but rather people begin to have their critical faculties reduced when they are confronted with a known name such as a Dolgoff, Bookchin or Castoriadis or some other luminary. It also serves to disguise the immense amount of labor that others put into a page of the Fifth Estate other than its writing (such as editing, re-write, type-setting, camera work, lay-out, proofreading and finally the always hidden wage workers who do the printing and distribution of the paper).

We don't really know what you mean about us holding jobs that are in "service to the commodity and the state." Most of us hold jobs that are part-time in a variety of fields, none of them much more obnoxious than the employment you hold at a library, John. We don't do so out of a commitment to an abstract principle against wage work as much as that we hate to give up our time to deadening labor for capital and we prefer the lifestyle that goes with living on the margins of this society. When there are those of us who take full-time positions for one reason or another, it's not a question of "selling-out" or anything like that, but of us having our lives immiserated for that period of time.

Although we welcome (and even solicited) this discussion, we are somewhat disturbed by what appears to be your moralistic tone. We

would be the first to admit that there is a separation between our daily lives and the critiques we espouse. In fact, it is through making those critiques that the cleavage becomes most evident. The whole question of how to live a "revolutionary" life within a system of domination other than being an outlaw is one all of us have discussed and debated endlessly. It was not through Camatte, but through a desire for honesty that we have ceased to call either our project or ourselves "revolutionary." To do so appears to us to be just another leftist pretension to justify life within this society. The concept that revolution only occurs at the point at which capitalist relations are overturned (which hardly originated with Camatte) serves the function of, rather than making us cynical, raising the ante of what we must do to justifiably call ourselves revolutionary.

We too have been continually questioning what our lives are all about and we know you have, as your letter indicates, as well. We are not convinced that moves to reduce exclusivity will do more than announce another recuperation of capital (the ultimate fragmenting of society into single units), but perhaps your experimenting is more that we are presently doing.

The demise of Fifth Estate will not come about through our failure to meet an always elusive set of revolutionary standards, but rather through a failure of imagination. Any discussion of whether to cease publication always revolves around a decrease in our creative thinking and not in our inability to satisfy a sense of "self-revolutionariness." We too often let the joy of our project become the drudgery that is propelled by the demands of "produce the next issue." When we all decide that the paper is running us rather than the other way around will be when you have heard the last of us.

The Fifth Estate Staff
(A clever pseudonym)[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #291 (Vol. 13 No. 3), April 30, 1978, pp 5, 10.

"On Having Nothing to Say" (1979)

The long delay between this issue and the last one published at the end of January resulted from our being confronted by a bout of cerebral paralysis which left us feeling empty of words and ideas. We mostly articulated this feeling to one another by stating rather aimlessly that perhaps "we no longer had anything to say," which carried with it the vague suggestion that maybe we should even close up shop.

It's not that we were bereft of the concepts or desires that had motivated us in the past, but rather that we wanted to continue to meet the criteria we have somewhat rigorously always demanded of ourselves. We've always felt that if we aren't involved in continually turning over new ground and challenging our old assumptions, maybe we should pack it in and leave the propaganda work and political glad-handing to others.

In fairness to ourselves, however, we should state that the last two issues seemed quite decent to us and met at least part of the criteria just mentioned. Hence it would be easy to see these current doldrums as just episodic, since we have published some real stinkers in the past without ever having come to the conclusion that we had run entirely out of steam. What is different at this juncture, is that we have reached a critical period; one which we are just beginning to realize has been developing for a long time.

Even while we were describing history we failed to recognize our role in the contemporary process of creating it in a period when it would have been crucial for us to have done so. The beginnings of what we are now faced with trace back to the origins of our project long before the involvement of the current staff.

New Left Origins

For most of its existence (beginning in 1965) the Fifth Estate was a quintessentially New Left publication, but the period which gave

syndicalists who argue that modern technology can be employed to "serve the interests of the workers" are deluding themselves, and are in actuality capitulating to the authoritarian Marxists. Engels is correct — the megamachine is a totality which can only function by way of domination. The megamachine, like the factory which is its bowels and microcosm, as Murray Bookchin has written, "is a school for hierarchy, for obedience and command, not for a liberatory revolution. It reproduces the servility of the proletariat and undermines its selfhood and its capacity to transcend need."

Global Network of Cybernetic Planning

A couple of examples among many from anarchists and various libertarian communists will suffice to demonstrate that many people do not understand the foundations of the modern forces of domination and hence, are incapable of opposing them. In a recent publication put out by a group of people loosely associated with the Union of Concerned Commies (UCC) in the San Francisco Bay Area, "Processed World," Tom Athanasiou uses the completely Marxist argument that technological progress "will never be created by a system so paralyzed by its need for profit and centralized control" to back up his claims that "there is nothing inherently bad about computer technology," and that "the ease with which computers are used as instruments of social control cannot be allowed to obscure their liberatory potential."

Athanasiou and other people around the UCC have defended high technology in general and computers in particular, identifying the new information technologies as a precondition for a decentralized, autonomous society. But their formulations reveal them to be unconscious mouthpieces of the new technological totalitarianism. Liberatory intentions aside, they argue for a world in which the universal circulation of money and commodities is replaced by the universal circulation of information and commodities, in which the global corporate economy is transcended by a global network of cybernetic planning, a world still based upon factory production — in other words, a new development of capital. Athanasiou argues as a

David Watson: "Against the Megamachine" (1981–1985/1997)

"Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind . . . To change to industrialism is to court disaster. The present distress is undoubtedly insufferable. Pauperism must go. But industrialism is no remedy . . ." — Gandhi

How do we begin to discuss something as immense and pervasive as technology? It means to describe the totality of modern civilization — not only its massive industrial vistas, its structural apparatus; not only its hierarchy of command and specialization, the imprint of this apparatus on human relations; not only the "humble objects," which "in their aggregate . . . have shaken our mode of living to its very roots," as Siegfried Giedion has written; but also in that internalized country of our thoughts, dreams and desires, in the way we consciously and unconsciously see ourselves and our world.

Questioning technology seems incoherent in the modern world because, invisible and ubiquitous, it defines our terrain, our idea of reason. You cannot "get rid of technology," you cannot "destroy all machines"; we are dependent upon them for our survival. In any case, the story goes, technology has always been with us. When an ape pries termites out of a tree with a twig, that, too, is supposed to be technology. Everything changes, and yet stays the same. Plugging into a computer is no more than an improvement on prying termites out of bark. Therefore, one is expected never to discuss technology as a totality but only specific styles or components of technology, which are to be embraced or discarded according to the criteria of the technological religion: efficiency, velocity, compatibility with the entirety of the aggregate.

No one denies that different modes of life existed; but they have been, or are rapidly being, forgotten. Hence the idea they must have been defective, backward, underdeveloped, and eventually surpassed by progress. You can't "go back," "return to the past" — *"you can't stop progress."* When mercantile capitalism emerged, the individualistic,

entrepreneurial spirit was thought the essence of human nature. Even non-western and indigenous societies came to be judged mere preparatory stages of modern market society. As mechanization took command, humanity was seen fundamentally as the "tool user," *Homo faber*. So ingrained was this notion of human nature that when the paleolithic cave paintings at Altamira were discovered in 1879, archaeologists considered them a hoax; Ice Age hunters would have had neither the leisure (due to the "struggle for existence") nor the mental capacity (since sophistication is demonstrated first of all by complex technical apparatus) to create such graceful, visually sophisticated art.

Taking the part for the whole — ignoring the complex languages, symbolic exchange, rituals, and dreamwork of diverse peoples, while fetishizing their technics — this ruling idea continues to see all cultural evolution as only a series of advances in technical activities. There is never any suspicion of qualitative difference; the mathematics, techniques, and technical implements of early peoples are seen only as incipient versions of modern cybernetics, rational mastery, and industrial apparatus.

Technology is a way of life

To define technology as any and every technical endeavor or artifact, to think of it as the means by which human beings do everything from picking fruit to firing missiles into space, is to render the word meaningless. This ideology can make no sense of the dramatic changes that have occurred in life; it conceals the fact that technology has become a way of life, a specific kind of society. It assumes that a society in which nearly every sphere of human endeavor is shaped by technology is essentially the same as a society with a limited, balanced technics embedded in the larger constellation of life.

Just as capital has been reductively confused with industrial apparatus and accumulated wealth, when it is more importantly a set of social relations, so has technology been reduced to the image of machines and tools, when it, too, has become a complex of social

development of the most accurate methods of work and in the introduction of the best systems of audibility and control, etc.", but also the tradition of Engels, who writes in his essay *On Authority*, that industrial technology by definition demands subordination to command, to the "despotism" of the automatic machinery "independent of all social organization," to "the necessity of authority, and of imperious authority at that..." "Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry," Engels argues, "is tantamount to wanting to abolish industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel."

State Is Only One Structural Element

Not only are authority and hierarchy central to the operation of the factory, but the factory system as a whole, and the concomitant systematization of labor and social differentiation, demand the maintenance and expansion of another instrument: that of the state. Jacques Ellul writes, "The individual is not by himself rational enough to accept what is necessary to the machines. He rebels too easily. He requires an agency to constrain him, and the state had to play this role — but the state now could not be the incoherent, powerless, and arbitrary state of tradition. It had to be an effective state, equal to the functioning of the economic regime and in control of everything..." This is the socialist state that the Marxists clamor for, the "coherent state" to use Ellul's words, which attempts to coordinate the entire apparatus within one body.

Anarchists and libertarian communists have traditionally opposed authoritarian Marxism from the perspective of anti-authoritarianism and anti-statism. But the state is only one structural element — albeit an integral one — in a totality which is the bureaucratic-technological megamachine. Opposing the state while at the same time defending technology or remaining indifferent to it is comparable to opposing the police force while saying nothing about the military. They are part of a unitary whole.

The modern means of production are inherently centralized, authoritarian, bureaucratic and compartmentalized. Anarchists and

insufficient time to realize their investments, but a state socialist machine would be able to give free play to technology and science and follow them wherever they led into the future.

For the Marxist epigones, technology is the instrument of liberation for the proletariat. Lenin, for example, who defined socialism as workers' soviets plus electrification, saw little difference in the overall contours and goals of socialist and private capitalist societies, writing in 1917, "Socialism is merely state-capitalist monopoly which is made to serve the interests of the whole people."

Dzherman M. Gvaishiani, a recent deputy chairman of the USSR Committee for Science and Technology, agrees, claiming, "Even though the function of organizing combined labor emerged on the basis of capitalist production, it is conditioned not by the specific features of that system, but by the basic objective features of large-scale social production in general." (Quoted in *Technology and Communist Culture*, edited by Frederic J. Fleron, Jr., Praeger Publishers, 1977). To Gvishiani, who is interested in the question of scientific management of the production process and the work force, Capitalism in the west has played an "historically progressive" role, contradictorily combining "refined exploitation of the working people with the latest achievements in the field of organization and management, which reflect the demands of large-scale machine production."

These methods cannot fully develop under capitalism; in contrast, the socialist system "removes all obstacles," and "creates the most favourable objective conditions" not only for the advancement of science and technology in general, but specifically in the field of management: "Under socialism the social aspect of management does not oppose the organizational and technical aspects, but forms its basis and promotes its success," he writes. "Socialist production relations engender qualitatively new, consistently progressive management methods, corresponding to the requirements of accelerated economic development."

Gvishiani is not simply following the tradition of Lenin, who saw in Taylorism and time management (as he saw in all "advances" of capitalism) "the refined bestiality of bourgeois exploitation [combined] with a series of the most valuable achievements in . . . the

relations — a "web of instrumentality," and thus a qualitatively different form of domination. Technology is capital, the triumph of the inorganic — humanity separated from its tools and universally dependent upon the technological apparatus. It is the regimentation and mechanization of life, the universal proletarianization of humanity and the destruction of community. It is not simply machines, not even mechanization or regimentation alone. As Lewis Mumford pointed out in *Technics and Civilization*, these phenomena are not new in history; "what is new is the fact that these functions have been projected and embodied in organized forms which dominate every aspect of our existence." (Thus critics of technology are commonly accused of being opposed to tools, when in reality modern industrial technology destroyed human-scale tools, and in this way degraded human labor.)

The constellation of terms related to the Greek root *techne* (meaning art, craft or skill) has changed over time. Words such as *technique*, *technics*, and *technology* tend to overlap in meaning. They are not static, universal, neutral terms, as a simple dictionary definition might suggest; they reflect actual social relations as well as a process of historical development.

In his *Autonomous Technology: Technics-out-of-Control as a Theme in Political Thought*, Langdon Winner observes that the once limited, specific meaning of the word *technology* as "a 'practical art,' 'the study of the practical arts,' or 'the practical arts collectively,'" has in the twentieth century come to refer to an unprecedented, diverse array of phenomena. The word now "has expanded rapidly in both its denotative and connotative meanings" to mean "tools, instruments, machines, organizations, methods, techniques, systems, and the totality of these and similar things in our experience" — a shift in meaning that can be traced chronologically through successive dictionary definitions.

There is no clean division between what constitutes technique (which in its earliest usage in French meant generally a certain manner of doing something, a method of procedure), a technics which is limited and culture-bound, and a technological system which tends to swallow up every activity of society. A provisional definition of terms might be useful, describing *-technique* as that procedural

instrumentality or manner in which something is done, whether spontaneous, or methodical, which is shared by all human societies but which is not necessarily identical in its motives or its role in those societies; *technics* as technical operations or the ensemble of such operations using tools or machines — again, not necessarily identical from society to society, and not necessarily either methodical or spontaneous; and *technology* as the rationalization or science of techniques, an idea close to the dictionary definitions — the geometric linking together, systematization and universalization of technical instrumentality and applied science within society. This last definition underscores technology's emergence as a system, hence as an autonomous power and social body. While such definitions may not be perfect, they make it possible to explore better the complex nature of the technological phenomenon and modern civilization's intrinsically technological codes.

A certain procedural instrumentality is shared by a painter applying paint to a canvas (or cave wall), a farmer planting seeds, and an electronics technician testing the strength of some metal in a nuclear device. That doesn't make the character of their activities identical. As Jacques Ellul observes in *The Technological Society*, "It is not . . . the intrinsic characteristics of techniques which reveal whether there have been real changes, but the characteristics of the relation between the technical phenomenon and society." Ellul uses the French word *technique* in a way which overlaps with the use of "technics" and "technology" in this essay, and which he defines as "the totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency (for a given stage of development) in every field of human activity."

Whereas previously limited, diversified, local technics bore the stamp of the culture and the individuals from which they emerged, technology now changes all local and individual conditions to its own image. It is gradually creating a single, vast, homogenous technological civilization which smashes down "every Chinese wall," and generating a dispossessed, atomized and de-skilled human subject more and more identical from Greenland to Taiwan.

own benefit at the expense of the great majority. The problem was that the new modern mode of production had not reached full maturity; when it did, the oppressive conditions of capitalism, according to Engels, would be "swept away by the full development of the modern productive forces."

In fact, it is the contention that bourgeois capitalism fettered the means of production and their free development that became the central criticism of capitalism by Marx and Engels and later by their epigones. After all, if the machines and the industrial system were fundamental to the oppression and dispossession of the human being, they were also destined to be the key to liberation.

"It took both time and experience," wrote Marx in *Capital*, "before the work people learned to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they were used." The forces of production would be too much for bourgeois society; bourgeois property forms would become a fetter on their development and would be destroyed in a crisis of overproduction, in which the conditions of bourgeois society would show themselves to be "too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them."

Capitalism stands in the way of technological progress because it subordinated the latter to the imperative of profit. Communist politicians and communist regimes have argued that by doing away with private property forms, technical progress would become the goal of all social efforts. As Engels wrote in *Anti-Duhring*, when the forces of society were discerned and scientifically enumerated, they would be transformed "from demoniac masters into willing servants." "The capitalist mode of appropriation," he wrote in the same passage, ". . . will thereby be replaced by the mode of appropriation of the products based on the nature of modern means of production themselves. . . ."

In other words, the impediments imposed upon technology by profits and private enterprise, the "anarchy in production," to use a favorite term of Marxists, would give way under the scientific socialist regime to technological automatism. Technical automatism tends to destroy private capitalist ventures, since they would have

all cultural creation to a mere reflection of "material practice," seeing humanity's relation to the world in almost crude, naturalistic images as a struggle to conquer nature. The complex mythical structures of ancient communities were seen as infantile attempts to realize and intervene in natural processes, which could ultimately be superseded by scientific instrumental rationality.

Like other aspects of scientist ideology which grew out of that ever-so-bourgeois of centuries, Marx's vision delineated human experience into neat, philosophical "stages of development," each bounded and characterized by its particular "mode of production," and all leading irrevocably toward the universalization which capital would create, and finally, to its "dialectical negation" — socialism. As Marx put it himself, *De te fabula narratur* — that is, the "advanced" societies represented the destiny, with minor divergences, of the "barbarian, pre-capitalist" societies. Progress demanded that the ancient communities be uprooted and the old ways of life destroyed; the imperative of the developing "mode of production" burst the fetters of the old societies, but this time motion would undermine the bourgoisie, "the first to show what man's activity can bring about," and usher in the socialist paradise.

This bloody, painful process is "material progress" to the historical materialists, and in the eyes of these bourgeois intellectuals, industrialization was an inevitable "stage" on the road to socialist destiny. The worker had first to lose his tools, the farmer his land, and become mere appendages of the machine in order to ultimately become its masters. Even the earliest class divisions could be justified by virtue of the fact that they destroyed the former "backward conditions of scarcity," and laid the foundations for progress. Progress would destroy the "infantile" myths and strip the world of its halos and its mystifications. It would urbanize the countryside, centralize production, and rescue people from the "idiocy of rural life."

Machines the Key to Liberation

It wasn't the new massified, industrial technology which was oppressive, only the manner in which the bourgeoisie used it for its

A world of means

The wide diversity of primal and archaic societies is evidence that though these societies can be said to share a basic level or repertoire of techniques and tools (containers, horticultural and gathering techniques, food preparation, weaving, etc.), each manifestation is unique, independent, culture-bound, kinship bound. Neither technique in general nor specific technical activities or objects entirely determines how these societies live.

"Because we judge in modern terms," argues Ellul, "we believe that production and consumption coincided with the whole of life." But in traditional societies "technique was applied only in certain narrow, limited areas . . . Even in activities we consider technical, it was not always that aspect which was uppermost. In the achievement of a small economic goal, for example, the technical effort became secondary to the pleasure of gathering together . . . The activity of sustaining social relations and human contacts predominated over the technical scheme of things and the obligation to work, which were secondary causes." Technical activity played a role in these societies, he argues, "but it had none of the characteristics of instrumental technique. Everything varied from man to man according to his gifts, whereas technique in the modern sense seeks to eliminate such variability."

As society changed, the notion of applied science emerged as a central motivating value, along with an unquestioning allegiance to quantification, time-keeping, progressive mechanization and ever increasing, ever accelerating production — reflecting not simply a change in technical means but an entire new world of meaning and means. The accompanying religious impulse — the worship of technical prowess, the fascination with technical magic linked to the crude, materialist pragmatism of efficiency of means — tended to conceal the meaning of technology as a system. Ellul: "The techniques which result from applied science date from the eighteenth century and characterize our own civilization. The new factor is that the multiplicity of these techniques has caused them literally to change their character. Certainly, they derive from old principles and appear to be the fruit of normal and logical evolution. However,

they no longer represent the same phenomenon. In fact technique has taken substance, has become a reality in itself. It is no longer merely a means and an intermediary. It is an object in itself, an independent reality with which we must reckon."

According to the official religion, technology, rooted in a universal and innate human identity, is paradoxically somehow no more than a simple tool or technique like all previous tools and techniques, a static object which we can manipulate like a hammer. But society has become more and more the sum of its own technical organization (notwithstanding the dysfunctional imbalances which are the residues of the collapse of archaic societies and of uneven development). People have lost their traditional techniques and become dependent upon an apparatus: mass production produces masses. Technology is not a tool but an environment — a totality of means enclosing us in its automatism of need, production and exponential development.

As Langdon Winner argues, "Shielded by the conviction that technology is neutral and tool-like, a whole new order is built piecemeal, step by step, with the parts and pieces linked together in novel ways — without the slightest public awareness or opportunity to dispute the character of the changes underway." What results is a form of social organization — an interconnection and stratification of tasks and authoritarian command necessitated by the enormity and complexity of the modern technological system in all of its activities. Winner observes, "The direction of governance flows from the technical conditions to people and their social arrangements, not the other way around. What we find, then, is not a tool waiting passively to be used but a technical ensemble that demands routinized behavior."

No single machine, no specific aspect of technology is solely responsible for this transformation. Rather, as Ellul puts it, it is the "convergence . . . of a plurality, not of techniques, but of systems or complexes of techniques. The result is an operational totalitarianism; no longer is any part of man free and independent of these techniques." A process of synergism, a "necessary linking together of techniques," eventually encompasses the whole system. One realm of technology combines with another to create whole new systems

George Bradford: "Marxism, Anarchism and the Roots of the New Totalitarianism" (1981)

Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground — what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labor?

Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Here as everywhere else, we must distinguish between the increased productiveness due to the development of the social process of production, and that due to the capitalist exploitation of that process.

Marx, *Capital*

For us communists, builders of the most advanced society in the history of mankind, scientific-technological progress is one of the main ways of speeding up the plans of the party regarding the transformation of nature.

Leonid Brezhnev, 1968

As Jacques Camatte wrote in *The Wandering of Humanity*, Marx's work "seems largely to be the authentic consciousness of the capitalistic mode of production." Indeed, Marx's thought matured during the apogee of the vogue of nineteenth century scientific positivism, and reflected that religion of industrial progress both in its exaltation of scientific rationalism and its notion of material progress based on mechanization and industry. Like other positivist schemata of its time, "scientific socialism" operated by way of a deterministic materialism which saw human nature as productivist and which reduced

at a rapid rate. The many previously unanticipated "spin-off" developments, for example in fields like cybernetics and genetics, make this description of synergy clear.

A depopulated world of matter and motion

Technology has replaced the natural landscape with the dead, suffocating surfaces of a modern technopolis, a cemetery of "bounded horizons and reduced dimensions." Space has undergone an "inverse revolution." Time, too, since the rise in the use of the weight-driven clock, is bounded and quantified. "The clock, not the steam engine," writes Lewis Mumford in *Technics and Civilization*, "is the key machine of the modern industrial age." With the clock, "Time took on the character of an enclosed space."

The quantification of knowledge and experience takes place on several levels — in the rise of standardized weights and measures, which accompanies the rise of the centralized state; in the spread of clocks and time-keeping; in the "romanticism of numbers," which accompanies the rise of the money economy and its abstract symbols of wealth; in the new scientific methods foreseen by Galileo, confining the physical sciences to the so-called "primary qualities" of size, shape, quantity and motion; and in the methods of capitalist book-keeping and the reduction of everything to exchange value. "The power that was science and the power that was money," writes Mumford, "were, in the final analysis, the same kind of power: the power of abstraction, measurement, quantification."

"But the first effect of this advance in clarity and sobriety of thought," he continues, "was to devaluate every department of experience except that which lent itself to mathematical investigation . . . With this gain in accuracy went a deformation of experience as a whole. The instruments of science were helpless in the realm of qualities. The qualitative was reduced to the subjective: the subjective was dismissed as unreal, and the unseen and unmeasurable non-existent . . . What was left was the bare, depopulated world of matter and motion: a wasteland."

Did new technologies and time-keeping spur early capitalist mercantilism, or was the reverse the case? In fact, technical growth and capitalism went hand in hand, bringing about the technological civilization of today. This system expands both by the impulse of economic accumulation and by the mechanization and "rationalization" of all life according to normative, technical criteria. Both processes reduce a complex of human activities to a series of quantifiable procedures. Neither formal, juridical ownership of the apparatus, nor the characteristics of specific machinery or particular materials used in production, is determinative. Rather, modern urban-industrial civilization is a socially regimented network of people and machines — an industrialized production-commodity culture which tends toward the absolute destruction of local communities and technics, and the penetration of the megatechnic system into every aspect of life.

Ellul writes, "When André Leroi-Gourhan tabulates the efficiency of Zulu swords and arrows in term of the most up-to-date knowledge of weaponry, he is doing work that is obviously different from that of the swordsmith of Bechuanaland who created the form of the sword. The swordsmith's choice of form was unconscious and spontaneous; although it can now be justified by numerical calculations, such calculations had no place whatsoever in the technical operation he performed." Technology transforms swordmaking into a more efficient, more rationalized industrial process (or dispenses with it altogether for more "advanced" modes), and all the swordsmiths into factory hands.

In the factory we see the process of mechanization at its height. Siegfried Giedion comments in *Mechanization Takes Command*, "Mechanization could not become a reality in the age of guilds. But social institutions change as soon as the orientation changes. The guilds became obsolete as soon as the rationalistic view became dominant and moved continually toward utilitarian goals. This was the predestined hour for mechanization." Similarly, Murray Bookchin argues in *Toward an Ecological Society*, "Of the technical changes that separate our own era form past ones, no single 'device' was more important than . . . the simple process of rationalizing labor into an industrial engine for the production of commodities. Machinery, in the conventional sense of the term, heightened this process

newly devised technological systems meant to fix or replace the old. "This I would propose not as a solution in itself," he writes, "but as a method of inquiry." In this way we could investigate dependency and the pathways to autonomy and self-sufficiency. Such an "epistemological luddism," to use Winner's term, could help us to break up the structures of daily life, and to take meaning back from the meaning-manufacturing apparatus of the mass media, renew a human discourse based on community, solidarity and reciprocity, and destroy the universal deference to machines, experts and information. Otherwise, we face either machine-induced cataclysm or mutilation beyond recognition of the human spirit. For human beings, the practical result will be the same.

For now, let us attend to first things first — by considering the possibility of a conscious break with urban-industrial civilization, a break which does not attempt to return to prior modes of refusal (which would be impossible anyway), but which surpasses them by elaborating its own, at the far limits of a modernity already in decay. We begin by annunciating the possibility of such a decision — a very small step, but we begin where we can. A new culture can arise from that small step, from our first awkward acts of refusal to become mere instruments. Of course, such a culture wouldn't be entirely new, but would derive its strength from an old yet contemporary wisdom, as ancient and as contemporary as the Delaware prophet and the Chinese philosopher Chuangtse, who said: "Whoever uses machines does all his work like a machine. He who does his work like a machine grows a heart like a machine, and he who carries the heart of a machine in his breast loses his simplicity. It is not that I do not know of such things; I am ashamed to use them." When we begin listening to the heart, we will be ashamed to use such things, or to be used by them.

(1981-1985/1997)[1]

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[1] from David Watson, *Against the Megamachine* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1997), pp 117–145.

greatly, but the systematic rationalization of labor in ever-specialized tasks totally demolished the technical structure of self-managed societies and ultimately of workmanship, the self-hood of the economic realm . . . The distinction between artisan and worker hardly requires elucidation. But two significant facts stand out that turn the transformation from craft to factory into a social and characterological disaster. The first fact is the dehumanization of the worker into a mass being; the second is the worker's reduction into a hierarchical being." (The process was hardly "simple," but Bookchin's description of the emerging factory suggests the possibility of critiquing technology without opposing tools or technics altogether.)

Technology is not "neutral"

The common notion of technology's "neutrality" does not recognize that all tools have powerful symbolic content, are suggestive models for thought and action which affect their users. More importantly, the idea of neutrality fails to see that massification and accelerated, synergistic integration of technology would engender corresponding human structures and modes of thought and experience. Culture and technology interact dynamically, each spurring transformations in the other.

Technology is not neutral because it brings with it its own rationality and method of being used. A network of computers or a steel mill cannot be used variously like a simple tool; one must use them as they are designed, and in coordinated combination with a network of complex support processes without which their operation is impossible. But design and interrelated dependencies bring manifold unforeseen results; every development in technology, even technical development which seeks to curb deleterious technological effects, brings with it other unpredictable, sometimes even more disastrous effects. The automobile, for example, was seen as simply a replacement for the horse and carriage, but mass production techniques combined with Ford's new conception of mass distribution gave the automobile a significance no one could foresee. Ford's revolution actually came at the end of a long period of technical preparation.

Mass assembly line production and interchangeability of parts dated back to the end of the eighteenth century; by the end of the nineteenth century the process of mechanization was relatively stabilized, and produced a rise in expectations (reflected in the popularity of the great international expositions on industry) which created the terrain for the automobile's enthusiastic reception as an object of mass consumption. The expanding role of the state was also critical, since it was only the state which would have the means to create a national automobile transportation system.

The automobile is thus hardly a tool; it is the totality of the system (and culture) of production and consumption which it implies: a *way of life.* Its use alone makes its own demands apart from the necessities inherent in production. Nor could a highway system be considered a neutral instrument; it is a form of technical giantism and massification. Considering the automobile, who can deny that technology creates its own inertia, its own direction, its own cultural milieu? Think how this one invention transformed our world, our thoughts, images, dreams, forms of association in just a few generations. It has uprooted communities, undermined farmlands, contributed to vast changes in our dietary habits, shifted our values, contaminated our sexual lives, polluted our air both in its manufacture and use, and created a generalized ritual of sacrifice on the assembly line and on the road.

But the automobile is only one invention, if a key one, of thousands. Who would have thought that within just a few decades of the invention of television millions of human beings would spend more time in from of the cathode ray tube than in almost any other waking activity, deriving their very sense of reality from it? Who would have thought that the world would become a radioactive nightmare "wired for destruction" within a few years of the Manhattan Project? And who can say what emergent technologies have in store for us?

In this light, it is much more important to analyze the distinctions between, say a spear and a missile, than to concentrate on their common traits. It is important to ask *what kind of society they reflect — and help to bring about.* In the first case we see a hand tool made locally with a specific, unique and limited technique, and that technique embedded in a culture. Each tool is unique and reflects

not only naturalize and prolong the original causes of the disaster, they tend to aggravate it further. To decline to join the chorus is to seek "easy answers."

True, there are no easy answers. But we can at least begin by questioning the idea of technology as sacred and irrevocable, and start looking at the world once more with human eyes and articulating its promise in human terms. We must begin to envision the radical deconstruction of mass society.

Toward an epistemological luddism

I recognize the contradictions in even publishing this essay. I am not sure how to move beyond the code; in order to do so, with tremendous ambivalence and doubt, I partake in it in a limited, awkward, conditional way. It is an act of desperation. Perhaps to some degree it is a question of orientation; I think it fair to distinguish between using established technical means to communicate out of pragmatic necessity, and volunteering to help construct the latest means. We need the courage to explore a process of change in our thinking and practice — to learn how we might become less dependent on machines, less linked to "world communications," not more.

Of course, one can't wish mass society away; a simplistic, monolithic response to the daunting technical problems confronting us, added to the social crisis we are experiencing, would be pointless and impossible. But it is the technological system which offers "easy answers" — starting with unquestioning surrender to whatever sorcery it dishes up next. We *can* respond without accepting its terms. We can swim against capital's current. Abolishing mass technics means *learning to live in a different way* — something societies have done in the past, and which they can learn to do again. We have to nurture trust, not in experts, but in our own innate capacity to find our way.

In *Autonomous Technology*, Langdon Winner suggests that a possible way to halt the decaying juggernaut would be to begin dismantling problematic technological structures and to refuse to repair systems that are breaking down. This would also imply rejecting

In *The Conquest of Nature: Technology and Its Consequences*, R.J. Forbes argues that while "it is possible to see a tendency in the political-technological combination to take on a gestalt of its own and to follow its own 'laws,'" we should rely on "the inner faith of the men who make the basic inventions." That scientific-technological rationality must finally rely on an undemonstrated faith in its ability to harness demons it wantonly unleashes — a faith in technicians already completely enclosed in their organizations and practices — is an irony lost on Forbes. We have relied on their "inner faith" for too long; even their best intentions work against us.

"There are no easy answers," announces an oil company advertisement. "Without question, we must find more oil. And we must learn to use the oil we have more efficiently. So where do we start?" *Without question* — such propaganda promotes the anxiety that we are trapped in technology, with no way out. Better to follow the program to the end. An IBM ad says, "Most of us can't help feeling nostalgic for an earlier, simpler era when most of life's dealings were face-to-face. But chaos would surely result if we tried to conduct all of our dealings that way today. There are just too many of us. We are too mobile. The things we do are too complex — and the pace of life is too fast."

A technological culture and its demands serve to justify the technology which imposes them. Those who doubt are cranks, while the calm, reasoned logic of military strategists, technical experts, bureaucrats and scientists is passed off as wisdom. Thus, during the 1979 partial meltdown at Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, at the moment in which it was unclear what was going to happen to the bubble in the reactor container, a typical headline read, "Experts optimistic." Aren't they always? "Without question, we must find more oil," and create more energy, mine more minerals, cut more trees, build more roads and factories, cultivate more land, computerize more schools, accumulate more information . . . If we accept the premises, we are stuck with the conclusions. In the end, technology is legitimated by its search for solutions to the very destruction it has caused. What is to be done with chemical and nuclear wastes, ruined soils and contaminated seas? Here the technicians insist, "You need us." But their "solutions"

the individuality of its user or maker. In the latter case we see an entire social hierarchy, with an extremely complex division of labor. In such an alienated, compartmentalized, instrumental system, each functioning member is isolated by complex social and procedural opacity, and thus blind to the overall process and its results.

In the first case the creator works directly with the materials, which is to say, in nature. In the second case, the worker is alienated from the materials of nature. Nature is not only depleted and destroyed by exploitation and objectification, by the inevitable destruction to be unleashed by the instrument, but, as Ellul observes, "by the very establishment of technology as man's milieu." In the case of the spear, human limits are implied (though human beings could choose to organize themselves as a machine to do greater destruction, as they did in the ancient state military machines). In the case of the missile, however, the organization of human beings as a machine, as a network of production and destruction, is fundamental to what is produced, and the only limit implied is that attained with the ultimate annihilation of the human race by its technology. If there is an underlying perversity in all instruments of violence or war, whether primitive or technological, we can see that in the former the kind of war which takes places is a limited, personal, sporadic activity, which, along with peace-making, gift exchange and intermarriage, is a moment in a network of reciprocity tending toward the resolution of conflicts. The missile production — which *begins* at the point where community dissolves and the military phalanx is first organized — is an unlimited, depersonalized, institutional system which now magnifies human destructiveness to the point of omnicide.

The convergence of social hierarchies and their ever more powerful and all-encompassing tools renders the distinction between capital and technology at least problematic. Both terms are metaphors — partial descriptions which represent the modern organization of life. The state is an apparatus of administrative technique which cannot be separated from the corporate organizations of centralized, technological hierarchy. Economic planning and the market are submerged in technique, technique in both bureaucratic planning and the chaos of the market. Technological automatism and remote

control, standardization and mass propaganda are leaving classical bourgeois society behind; it has therefore become crucial to look at the nature of the mass society which only mass technics could have generated.

The myth of a technology separate from its use assumes that means are simply instruments — factories, supertankers, computer networks, mass agrosystems — and not that *universe of means*: the daily activities of the people who participate in these systems. It fails to understand that such ubiquitous means themselves eventually become ends, requiring their inevitable characterological internalization in human beings — in other words, that human beings must obey and thus become the slaves of their mechanical slaves. As Lewis Mumford warned in *The Pentagon of Power*, "It is the system itself that, once set up, gives orders." This "self-inflicted impotence" is "the other side of 'total control.'"

Technology — systematized, "rationalized" mass technics — is more than the sum of its parts; this totality undermines human independence, community and freedom, creating mass beings who are creatures of the universal apparatus, standardized subjects who derive their meaning from the gigantic networks of "mass communication": a one-way barrage of mystification and control. Even those ostensibly directing the machines are themselves its creatures, each one isolated in a compartment of the giant, opaque hive, so such "control" is ambiguous. The conspiratorial notion of "technocracy" is inadequate, if not entirely outmoded. The blind, centrifugal complexity of the system defies conscious control, coming more and more to resemble a locomotive with no throttle hurtling toward an abyss.

A fundamental mutation has occurred

It is now a familiar truism that modern technologies diversify experience. But mechanization has in many ways narrowed our horizons by standardizing our cultures into a global techno-mono-culture. This is evident in the mechanization of agriculture, one example being the cultivation of fruit trees. As Giedion points out, "The influence of mechanization . . . leads to standardization of the

Technology out of control

Devouring the otherness of the past has not saved modern civilization from deepening crisis. The civilization that promised to abolish all previous forms of irrationality has created a suicidal, trip-wire, exterminist system. Technological runaway is evident; we do not know if we will be destroyed altogether in some technologically induced eco-spasm, or transmuted into an unrecognizable entity shaped by genetic, cybernetic and pharmacological techniques. The managerial notion of "technology assessment" by which technocrats try to rationalize technological growth is comparable to attempting to stop a car careening out of control by referring to the driver's manual. Technology's efficiency is inefficient, its engineering obtuse and myopic.

The highly divided, centrifugal nature of the technical-bureaucratic apparatus undermines its own planning, making it chaotic. Each technical sector pursues its own ends separate from the totality, while each bureaucracy and corporate pyramid, each rival racket, pursues its own narrow social interest. There is never enough information to make proper decisions; the megamachine's complicated, multiple inputs undermine its own controls and methods. A computer coughs in some air-conditioned sanctum, and thousands, perhaps millions, die. Knowledge is undermined by its own over-rationalization, quantification and accumulation, just as bread is negated by its own standardization. Who can truly say, for example, that they are in control of nuclear technology? Meanwhile the system speeds along at an ever faster pace.

Even defenders of technology admit that it tends to move beyond human control. Most counter that technology is not the problem, but rather humanity's inability to "master" itself. But humanity has always grappled with its darker side; how could complex techniques and dependence on enormously complicated, dangerous technological systems make the psychic and social challenge easier? Even the question of "self-mastery" becomes problematic in the face of the changes wrought in human character by technology. What will define humanity in a hundred years if technology holds sway?

one example), it was not the defects in indigenous North American societies that caused them to be undermined by European mercantile civilization, but (at least in part) their *virtues*. Their gift economy, Jennings writes, made it impossible for them to understand or conform to European business practices. Their culture allowed them to become traders, but they could never become capitalists. "[I]n a sense one can say that the Indians universally failed to acquire capital because they did not want it."

The indigenous refusal of economic relations — neither wholly rational nor irrational, neither wholly conscious nor unconscious, but a dialectical interaction between these polarities — parallels the ancient Greeks' refusal of technology. Their notions of life were utterly foreign to the economic-instrumental obsession by which modern civilization measures all things. And in the case of the Indians, because of the overwhelming power of the invaders, they succumbed — as societies, cultures, languages, innumerable subsistence skills and subtle ecological relationships continue to crumble. Thus in a sense the luddites remain the contemporaries of ranchers in Minnesota who felled power line pylons built across their land in the 1970s, and the anti-development, anti-toxics and anti-nuclear movements that have flourished at the end of the twentieth century. The Delaware Prophet is the contemporary of the Waimiri Atroari people in Brazil, who consistently fought invasions by missionaries, Indian agents, and road-building crews in the 1960s and 1970s, and of Indians in Quebec fighting the Canadian government for their lands since the increase of oil and gas exploration there.

In Quebec, a Montagnais Indian, speaking for all, testified, "Our way of life is being taken away from us." The Montagnais had been "promised that with houses and schools and clinics and welfare we could be happy." But the promise was not fulfilled. "Now we know it was all lies. We were happier when we lived in tents." No cheerful bromide about the ultimate benefits of progress can respond adequately to this somber recognition.

fruit into new varieties . . . We have seen an orchard of 42,000 Macintosh trees; and the apples were so uniform that they might have been stamped out by machine."

Such standardization was not always the case. Giedion mentions a noted landscape architect of the first half of the nineteenth century who lists 186 varieties of apple and 233 varieties of pear for planting by arborists, and who for the keeper of a small orchard recommends thirty different kinds of apple "to ripen in succession." He adds, "the large red apple, which attracts the customer's eye, is especially favored, and bred less for bouquet than for a resistant skin and stamina in transit. The flavor is neutralized, deliberately, it would seem." Giedion's example seems quaint today as transnational corporations maneuver to take control of world seed and genetic material, and a multitude of localized varieties are replaced by agricultural monoculture.

With modern communications technology, another fundamental mutation has occurred or is occurring. The media have usurped reality itself. After Jorge Luis Borges, Jean Baudrillard takes as his metaphor for this state of affairs the fable of a map "so detailed that it ends up covering the territory." Whereas with the decline of the Empire comes the deterioration of the map, tattered but still discernible in some remote places, "this fable has come full circle for us," writes Baudrillard, "and if we were to revive the fable today, it would be the territory whose shreds are slowly rotting across the map. It is the real, and not the map, whose vestiges subsist here and there, in the deserts which are no longer those of the Empire, but our own." (*Simulations*)

Since the emergence of mechanization, with the invention of the telegraph perhaps as a representative point of departure, communication has been degraded from a multifaceted, ambivalent, contextually unique and reciprocal relationship between human beings to an abstract, repetitive and homogenized "message" passing between a unilateral transmitter and a passive receiver. It is this one-dimensional transmission which is the starting point of the mass media and computers. The simulated, ostensibly "interactive" response that such technology allows has little or nothing in common with genuine human communication.

But the discourse has shifted — reality has come to resemble this model. As Ellul remarks in *The Technological System*, "It is the technological coherence that now makes up the social coherence." Previously the forces of domination were never able to gain hegemony over all of society; people maintained forms of solidarity and communal discourse which resisted and excluded power (village, religious and neighborhood communities, proletarian culture, bohemianism, for example, which continue to exist in pockets only in extremely attenuated form). The preeminence of technology, particularly meaning-creating "communication" technology, changes this, and all of human intercourse tends to be restructured along the lines of this petrified information and its communication. Seven hundred and fifty million people now watch the same televised sporting event one evening and spend the next day talking about it.

According to the disciplines of mechanization, the exponentially expanding volume of artistic, intellectual, and scientific production — of films, recordings, books, magazines, gadgets, scientific discoveries, art, web sites, all of it — implies that subtle human values and a plenitude of meaning and well-being are accumulating at a tremendous rate, that we can now experience life more rapidly, in greater depth, and at a greater range. As a journalist comments, "If the average person can have access to information that would fill the Library of Congress or can control as much computing power as a university has today, why should he be shallower than before?" (Paul Delany, "Socrates, Foust, Univac," *New York Times Book Review*, March 18, 1984) Electronic communications are even said to enhance human values based on family, community and culture. Writes Marshall McLuhan in *The Medium is the Message*: "Our new environment compels commitment and participation. We have become irrevocably involved with, and responsible for, each other."

Of course, such computer power is not available in any significant way to most people. But this is secondary. More importantly, two realities — human meaning and mediatization, the territory and the map — are incommensurable, and cannot long coexist. The media undermine and destroy meaning by simulating it. We are no longer merely victims of a powerful, centralized media; we are that and more. We are in a sense becoming the media. Baudrillard writes

in elaborating our own response to these fundamental questions. At a minimum, they make it reasonable for us to challenge the next wave, and the next, and the next — something the ideologies of scientism and progress have little prepared us to do.

If some tend to look to previous modes of life for insights into the changes brought about by modern technology and possible alternatives to it, others dismiss the insights of tribal and traditional societies altogether by bringing up those societies' injustices, conflicts and practices incomprehensible to us. No society is perfect, and all have conflicts. Yet modernization has in fact superseded few age-old problems; for the most part it has suppressed without resolving them, intensified them, or replaced them with even greater ones.

Traditional societies might have resolved their own injustices or done so through interaction with others without causing vast harm to deeply rooted subsistence patterns; after all, ancient injustices have social and ethical bases and are not a function of the relative level of technical development. But modernizing missionaries have for the most part only succeeded in bursting traditional societies and laying the basis for dependency on mass technics. In the end the natives are "converted" to democracy, or to socialism, at the point of a gun. When the process is completed — no democracy, no socialism, and no natives. The impulse to dissect and improve small, idiosyncratic, subsistence societies, to turn them into modern, secular, industrial nation-states — be it from the optic of universal (western) reason, or the dialectic, or "historical necessity" — results in monocultural conquest and integration into global industrial capitalism.

The related dogma that "underdeveloped" societies were in any case fatally flawed, and therefore poised to succumb not only derives its strength from a pervasive sense of powerlessness to preserve former modes of life and communities, no matter what their merits; it also provides ongoing justification for the obliteration of small societies still coming into contact with urban-industrial expansion. It is a species of blaming the victim. But their demise is more readily explained by the technical, economic and military might of the invading civilization and its power to impose relations of dependence. As Francis Jennings observes in *The Invasion of America* (to provide

workpeople learnt to distinguish between machinery and its employment by capital, and to direct their attacks, not against the material instruments of production, but against the mode in which they are used." (*Capital*) But despite the historical justifications of marxist and capitalist alike, both the mode and the increasingly ubiquitous machinery managed in time to domesticate the "workpeople" even further, transforming them as a class into an integral component of industrialism.

Perhaps they should have been good marxists and gone willingly into the satanic mills with the idea of developing these "means of production" to inherit them later, but their own practical wisdom told them otherwise. As E.P. Thompson writes in his classic study, *The Making of the English Working Class*, "despite all the homilies . . . (then and subsequently) as to the beneficial consequences" of industrialization — "arguments which, in any case, the Luddites were intelligent enough to weigh in their minds for themselves — the machine-breakers, and not the tract-writers, made the most realistic assessment of the short-term effects . . . The later history of the stockingers and cotton-weavers [two crafts destroyed by industrialization] provides scarcely more evidence for the 'progressive' view of the advantages of the breakdown of custom and of restrictive practices. . ."

Thompson is correct in assessing the basic rational practicality of the luddites, who resisted so fiercely because they had a clear understanding of their immediate prospects. But it's clearer now that they also anticipated, as well as anyone could in their time and place, the eventual, tragic demise not only of vernacular and village society but of the classical workers movement itself, along with its urban context — to be replaced by an atomized servitude completely subject to the centrifugal logic and the pernicious whims of contemporary urban-industrial, market-dominated, mass society. The romantic reaction against mechanization and industrialism has also been maligned, and must be reappraised and reaffirmed in light of what has come since. No one, in any case, seriously argues a literal return to the life of ancient Greeks or eighteenth century Indians. But the Greek emphasis on harmony, balance and moderation, and the Indians' stubborn desire to resist dependence, are worthy models

in *Simulations* that we are "doomed not to invasion, to pressure, to violence and to blackmail by the media and the models, but to their induction, to their infiltration, to their illegible violence." In such a world, choice is not much different from switching tv channels. The formative experience of using information will tend to be the same everywhere.

A person participates in this structure by parroting the code. Only the Machine, the Master's Voice, actually speaks. The parasite must finally consume its host, the model be imposed once and for all. When computer enthusiasts brag that communications technology has increased the density of human contact, they turn the world on its head, describing an artificial world in which human contact has no density at all. Individuality itself becomes a commodity or function, manufactured and programmed by the system. One participates in mass society the way a computer relay participates in the machine; the option remains to malfunction, but even rebellion tends to be shaped by the forms technology imposes. This is the individuality toward which computerized life drifts: a narcissistic, privatized, passive-aggressive, alienated rage, engaging in a sado-masochistic play far removed from the consequences of its unfocused, destructive impulses.

Meaning has been reshaped

Information, now emerging as a new form of capital and wealth, is central to the new "hyperreality." While the demand for information, the "democratic" distribution of "facts" is the battle cry of those outsiders who struggle to recapture the machinery of media from the centralized institutions of power, it is at least in part the nature of the fact — and finally of masses of facts transmitted on a mass scale as information — which lies behind the problem of the media.

Not that facts have no reality at all, but they have no intrinsic relation to anything: they are weightless. The fact is a selection, hence an exclusion. Its simplification mutilates a subtle reality which refuses to be efficiently packaged. One set of facts confronts another, orchestrated as propaganda and advertising. The fact achieves its

ultimate manifestation in trivia and in statistics, to which society is now addicted. Ellul writes in *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, "Excessive data do not enlighten the reader or listener, they drown him." People are "caught in a web of facts." Whatever specific message is transmitted by the media, the central code is affirmed: meaning must be designed and delivered. "Everywhere," writes Ellul in language evocative of Orwell or Wilhelm Reich, "we find men who pronounce as highly personal truths what they have read in the papers only an hour before . . . ." The result is an amputated being — "nothing except what propaganda has taught him."

The information in which industrial capitalism trades is not neutral; *meaning itself has been reshaped.* The scope of thought is bounded by the computer and its clarity can only be of a certain kind — what a fluorescent lamp is, say, to the entire light spectrum. Rather than increasing choices, the technology imposes its own limited range of choice, and with it the diminishing capacity to recognize the difference. (Thus a person staring at a computer screen is thought to be engaged in an activity as valuable as, even perhaps superior to, walking in the woods or gardening. Both are thought to be gathering or making use of "information.")

Equally naive is the idea that the "information field" is a contested terrain. The field itself is in reality a web of abstract, instrumentalized social relations in which information expands through alienated human activity, just as the system of value reproduces itself through the false reciprocity of commodity exchange. It therefore constitutes subtle relations of domination. Be they critics or promoters, most writers on technology see this information field as an emerging *environment of human discourse.*

Even the desire to transform society through "democratic" access and "rational" selection tends to be colonized as a media message, one competing set of facts among many. In a world dominated by loudspeakers, where political action is reduced to the pulling of lever A or lever B, nuance is lost. In the media, what moves the receiver is not so much truth, or nuance, or ambivalence, but technique. And technique is the domain of power, gravitating naturally toward established ideology — the domain of simulated meaning. Real meaning — irreducible to a broadcast — disintegrates under such an onslaught.

is unstoppable and its weird mix of mastery and submission, is little more than an accumulation of unsubstantiated platitudes — the general theory of this world, its logic in a popular form, its moral sanction, its universal ground for consolation and justification. As technological optimism erodes, its defenders invoke a caricature of the Enlightenment to ward off the evil spirits of unsanctioned "irrationality."

Yet what modern ideology stigmatizes as irrational might be better thought of as *an alternative rationality or reason.* In the eighteenth century, a Delaware Indian who came to be known as the Delaware Prophet, and whose influence on the Indians who fought with Pontiac during the uprising in 1763 is documented in Howard Peckham's *Pontiac and the Indian Uprising*, "decried the baneful influence of all white men because it had brought the Indians to their present unhappy plight. He was an evangelist, a revivalist, preaching a new religion. He was trying to change the personal habits of the Indians in order to free them from imported vices and make them entirely self-dependent. He gave his hearers faith and hope that they could live without the manufactures of the white men."

This critic of technology wasn't worrying about possible future effects of the manufactured products bestowed by traders on his people, he was announcing the *actual* decline of native communal solidarity and independence. Pontiac quoted the Delaware Prophet to his followers in April 1763 as saying, "I know that those whom ye call the children of your Great Father supply your needs, but if ye were not evil, as ye are, ye could surely do without them. Ye could live as ye did live before knowing them . . . Did ye not live by the bow and arrow? Ye had no need of gun or powder, or anything else, and nevertheless ye caught animals to live upon and to dress yourself with their skins . . ."

"Primitive fears"

Such insights, and particularly any reference to them now, are usually dismissed as romantic nostalgia. "It took time and experience," writes that well-known devotee of industrialism, Marx, "before the

It doesn't occur to these publicists that curbing technology might itself be an innovative strategy of human imagination and spirit. But to doubt the ideology of scientific progress does not necessarily signify abandoning science altogether. Nor does a scientifically sophisticated outlook automatically endorse technological development. As another possibility, Ellul points to the ancient Greeks. Though they were technically and scientifically sophisticated, the Greeks

> were suspicious of technical activity because it represented an aspect of brute force and implied a want of moderation . . . In Greece a conscious effort was made to economize on means and to reduce the sphere of influence of technique. No one sought to apply scientific thought technically, because scientific thought corresponded to a conception of life, to wisdom. The great preoccupation of the Greeks was balance, harmony and moderation; hence, they fiercely resisted the unrestrained force inherent in technique, and rejected it because of its potentialities.

One could argue that the convenience of slavery explains the anti-technological and anti-utilitarian attitudes of the Greeks. While slavery as a system was certainly related — among a multitude of factors — to the low regard in Greek culture for manual labor and the lack of utilitarian values among its elites, to reduce a cultural outlook to a single factor is absurd. One could just as easily claim that the philosophical quest, the notion of tragedy, and other cultural aspects were the results of slavery. But slavery has existed in many societies and cultures, including the expanding industrial civilization of the United States. That the Greeks could have a scientific outlook without a technological-utilitarian basis proves, rather, that such a conception of life is possible, and therefore a science without slavery and without mass technics is also possible.

Defenders of scientific rationality usually paint themselves in Voltairian hues, but it is they who rely in outmoded formulas which no longer (and perhaps never did) correspond to reality. The contemporary scientism of the great majority, with its mantra that progress

As Nazi leader Goebbels remarked, "We do not talk to say something, but to obtain a certain effect." People predisposed to accept such counterfeit as reality will follow the lead of the organization with the biggest and best loudspeakers, or succumb, resigned, to the suspicion that nothing can be knowable, and nothing can be done.

The media: capital's global village

The alienated being who is the target of Goebbels' machinery can now most of all be found in front of a television set — that reality-conjuring apparatus which is the centerpiece of every modern household, the emblem of and key to universality from Shanghai to Brooklyn. Everywhere people now receive television's simulated meaning, which everywhere duplicates and undermines, and finally colonizes what was formerly human meaning in all its culture-bound manifestations.

People and events captured by communications media, and especially by television, lose what Walter Benjamin called their aura, their internal, intersubjective vitality, the specificity and autonomous significance of the experience — in a sense, their spirit. Only the external aspects of the event can be conveyed by communications media, not meaning or experiential context. In his useful book, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, Jerry Mander describes how nature is rendered boring and two-dimensional by television, how subtle expressions of emotions become incoherent — for example, how the ceremonies of a group of tribal people, or their subtle motives for protecting a sacred place, are lost when captured by the camera and embedded in a context of televised images.

Although television, through its illusion if immediacy and transparency, seems to represent the most glaringly destructive example of the media, the same can be said of all other forms. The cinema, for example, generates social meaning through the so-called content of the film (as manipulation) and through the act of film-going itself (as alienation) — a spectacularized social interaction mediated by technology. In a movie theater, modern isolation is transposed by the passive reception of images into the false collectivity of the

theater audience (which can also be said of modern mass sporting events). As in modern social life itself, like all media, film-going is "a social relation mediated by images," as Guy Debord described modern spectacular society in *The Society of the Spectacle.* (Nowadays the sheer *quantity* of films, the act of frequent film-viewing, either on videos or in movie theaters, also has its troubling effect on human sensibilities.)

But it is no longer a question of the loss of aura in art and drama. Modes of being are expanded and imploded by their constant surveillance. Today one can experience emotions and drama every day for the price of a ticket. But how can these emotions and human values resist trivialization and ironic inversion when they are not grounded in anything but the mechanical transmission of images exchanged as a commodity? When hundreds of media outlets provide any image, any titillation, any pseudo-experience to the point of utter boredom? We surveil ourselves, luridly, as on a screen.

And isn't it also obvious that electronic media works best at duplicating high contrast, rapid, superficial and fragmentary images — which is precisely why the new cultural milieu is overwhelmingly dominated by rapid channel-switching, frenetic computer games, the speed of machines, violence and weapons, and the hard-edged, indifferent nihilism of a degraded, artificial environment? The technofascist style prevalent today, with its fascination with machines, force and speed, works well in the media, until there is no separation between brutalization by power and an internalized, "self-managed" brutalization.

A sky reminds us of a film; witnessing the death of a human being finds meaning in a media episode, replete with musical score. An irreal experience becomes our measure of the real: the circle is completed. The formation of subjectivity, once the result of complex interaction between human beings participating in a symbolic order, has been replaced by media. Some argue that this makes us free to create our own reality — a naive surrender to the solipsism of a mirrored cage. Rather, we are becoming machine-like, more and more determined by technological necessities beyond our control. We now make our covenant with commodities, demand miracles of computers, see our world through a manufactured lens rather than

Where the discourse is curtailed to less than a shadow, so too are human beings. Only the circuitry acts; human response is suffocated.

Technology refused

Skepticism toward progress is typically dismissed as dangerous, atavistic and irrational. In *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering*, one professional apologist for technology, Samuel C. Florman, writes, "[F]rightened and dismayed by the unfolding of the human drama in our time, yearning for simple solutions where there can be none, and refusing to acknowledge that the true source or our problems is nothing other than the irrepressible human will," people who express luddite worries "have deluded themselves with the doctrine of anti-technology." The increasing popularity of such views, he insists, "adds the dangers inherent in self deception to all of the other dangers we already face."

While indirectly acknowledging the significant dangers of mass technics, Florman apparently feels that declining technological optimism is responsible for technology's ravages, rather than being a symptom or consequence of them. The "other dangers we already face" — dangers which of course are in no way to be blamed on technology — are simply the result of "the type of creature man is." Of course, the "type of creature man is" has made this dangerous technology. Furthermore, Florman's reasoning coincides with the attitudes and interests of this society's political, corporate and military elites. "So fast do times change, because of technology," intones a United Technologies advertisement, "that some people, disoriented by the pace, express yearning for simpler times. They'd like to turn back the technological clock. But longing for the primitive is utter folly. It is fantasy. Life was no simpler for early people than it is for us. Actually, it was far crueler. Turning backward would not expunge any of today's problems. With technological development curtailed, the problems would fester even as the means for solving them were blunted. To curb technology would be to squelch innovation, stifle imagination, and cap the human spirit."

behind a "humane" cloak — this time not religious salvation, nor simply progress or democracy, but the conquest of disease and famine. To challenge this further manifestation of progress, according to the ruling paradigm, is to oppose curing disease, to turn away from the hungry. Once again only technology and its promise — a totally administered world — can supposedly save us. And once more, it all makes "perfect sense" because it corresponds to the operational configurations of the culture as a whole.

If engineered genetic material corresponds to the silicon photograph, a proper response might be learned from Crazy Horse, the Oglala mystic of whom no photograph was ever taken, who answered requests to photograph him by saying, "My friend, why should you wish to shorten my life by taking from me my shadow?" Now all our shadows are in grave danger from more ferocious "soul catchers," sorcerers and golem-manufacturers, ready to unleash a final paroxysm of plagues.

Or is the ultimate plague a nuclear war? Modern technological development has always been embedded most deeply in expanding war and competing war machines. As propagandists lull us to sleep with promises of cybernetic technotopia, other technicians study readouts for their attack scenarios. Ultimately, it makes no difference whether a final war (or series of wars) is initiated by system errors or by the system's proper functioning; these two possible modalities of the machinery represent its entire range. No computer warns of impending annihilation — the life force is not, and cannot be programmed into them. And just as human society is tending to be reduced to the circulation of reified information, so is it falling under the sway of a bureaucratic apparatus which has turned the "unthinkable" — nuclear megacide, ecological collapse — into business-as-usual. No human considerations influence its imperative or momentum; no dramatic descriptions of the consequences of its unremarkable, everyday acts appear in the readouts. No passion moves the technicians from their course. As the archetypical nuclear bureaucrat Herman Kahn once wrote (in *Thinking the Unthinkable*), "To mention such things [as nuclear holocaust] may be important. To dwell on them is morbid, and gets in the way of the information."

the mind's eye. One eye blinds the other — they are incommensurable. I think of a photograph I saw once of a New Guinea tribesman in traditional dress, taking a photograph with an instamatic camera. What is he becoming, if not another cloned copy of what we are all becoming?

The fact that everyone may someday get "access" to media, that we have all to some degree or another become carriers of media, could be the final logic of centralization spinning out of orbit — the final reduction of the prisoners to the realization that, yes, they truly *do* love Big Brother. Or the realization that nature does not exist but is only what we arbitrarily decide to organize, or that we do not experience a place until we have the photograph. The age of the *genuine imitation*. The paleolithic cave walls are redone to protect the originals which themselves are shut forever — these imitations are "authentic," of course, but the spirit of the cave has fled. Even the copies will inevitably become historical artifacts to be preserved; this is "art," do you have your ticket, sir? There is no aura. For an aboriginal tribal person, the mountain speaks, and a communication is established. For the tourist, it is domesticated, desiccated — a dead image for the photo album.

Though print media are being eclipsed by television and computers, they now function similarly, with their spurious claim to "objectivity," their mutilating process of selection and editing, their automatic reinforcement of the status quo, their absolute accumulation. The greater the scope, the more frequent the publication, the more newspapers and magazines in particular impose their model of fragmented, ideologized reality. While the corporate (and in some places the state) press functions as part of a Big Lie apparatus, it distorts the information it transmits both in the content and in the context in which it presents it. Newspaper-reading and addiction to news in general have become another version of the imperial circus, a kind of illiteracy which makes people as much the creatures of rumor and manipulation (through advertising and public relations) as they were prior to modernization and the rise of a public education system which was supposed to make informed citizens of them. In fact, as the techniques and scope of media have expanded, people have tended to become more manipulated than ever.

Ellul writes, "Let us not say: 'If one gave them good things to read . . . if these people received a better education . . .' Such an argument has no validity because things just are not that way. Let us not say, either: 'This is only the first stage'; in France, the first stage was reached half a century ago, and we still are very far from attaining the second . . . Actually, the most obvious result of primary education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was to make the individual susceptible to propaganda."

But how do people confront centralized power, with its machinery of deceit, without resorting to media? Even those who oppose totalitarianism need to marshal information to spread their ideas, win and inform their allies. Yet people's capacity to resist the structures of domination is undermined by the overall effect of media. Can we possibly defeat the empire in a penny-ante game of facts when a single pronouncement by that media image called a "President" — say, this week's enemy nation is "terrorist" and must be destroyed — drowns out the truth? If people can be moved to resist domination only by means of mass media, if they can only be directed to resist as they are now to obey, what can this portend for human freedom? The "global village" is capital's village; it is antithetical to any genuine village, community or communication.

A revolution in human response

Technology transmutes our experience — won't it also result in undermining our very organism, rather than continually improving upon it, as it promises? In a wisecracking, hucksterish tone, one celebratory popularization of the new technologies, *The Techno/Peasant Survival Manual*, describes an electrode helmet hooked up to a microcomputer capable of analyzing and measuring the activity of the human brain, "studying its electrical output in units of 500 milliseconds . . . With this ability to quantify human thought, the technocrats are not only learning how we think, they are in the process of challenging our very definitions of intelligence."

Of course, computers say little or nothing about how people think, because human thought is not quantifiable or reducible to computer

Only the circuitry acts

Nowhere do we see this possibility more clearly than in the emerging biotechnology, the latest frontier for capital, which reduces the natural world to a single monolithic "logic" — capital's logic of accumulation and control. As Baudrillard puts it in *Simulations*, "that delirious illusion of uniting the world under the aegis of a single principle" unites totalitarianism and the "fascination of the biological . . . From a capitalist-productivist society to a neo-capitalist cybernetic order that aims now at total control. This is the mutation for which the biological theorization of the code prepares to ground."

"We must think of the media as if they were . . . a sort of genetic code which controls the mutation of the real into the hyperreal," writes Baudrillard. The destruction of meaning in the media foreshadows the cannibalization by capital of the sources of life itself. The "operational configuration," "the correct strategic model," are the same: life defined by information, information as "genetic code," no longer necessarily "centralized" but molecular, no longer exactly imposed but implanted — a "genesis of simulacra," as in photography, in which the original, with its human aura, its peculiar irreducibility to this technocratic-rationalist model, vanishes — or is vanquished.

In another context, Frederick Turner (not to be confused with the author of *Beyond Geography*) writes in what can only be described as a techno-spiritualist/fascist manifesto ("Technology and the Future of the Imagination," *Harper's*, November 1984), that "our silicon photograph [or circuit] doesn't merely represent something; it does what it is a photograph of — in a sense it is a miraculous picture, like that of Our Lady of Guadalupe: it not only depicts, but does; it is not just a representation, but reality; it is not just a piece of knowledge, but a piece of being; it is not just epistemology but ontology."

What the Great Chain of Being was for medieval society, and the clock-like universe for the mechanical-industrial revolution, the genetic code, the molecular cell, and the clone or simulacrum are for the Brave New World looming today. The invasion by capital into the fundamental structures of life can only result in dangerous homogenization in the service of "total control," and, inevitably, the collapse of complex life systems on this planet. Once more the enemy hides

How taste was adulterated, how "ancient instincts were warped," cannot be easily explained. Again, what is important is not a specific moment in the transformation of techniques, nor that specific forms of technology were employed, but the overall process of massification by which simple, organic activities are wrested from the community and the household and appropriated by the megamachine. Bread is the product of a large cycle beginning with the planting of wheat. Mechanization invades every sector of the organic and undermines it, forever altering the structure of agriculture, of the farmer, of food. Not only is bread undermined by mechanization; the farmer is driven from the land. Giedeion asks, "Does the changing farmer reflect, but more conspicuously, a process that is everywhere at work? . . . Does the transformation into wandering unemployed of people who for centuries had tilled the soil correspond to what is happening in each of us?"

The Diagram Group gushes, "Technology . . . will change the quality, if not the nature, of everything. Your job and your worklife will not be the same. Your home will not be the same. Your thoughts will not be the same . . . We are talking about an increase in the rate of innovation unprecedented in human history, what some scientists are now calling spiral evolution." Says Robert Jastrow, Director of NASA's Goddard Space Institute: "In another 15 years or so we will see the computer as an emergent form of life."

Over a hundred years ago, Samuel Butler expressed the same idea as satire in his ironical utopian novel *Erewhon*, lampooning the positivist popularization of Darwinism and the widespread belief that mechanization would usher in paradise, and suggesting that the theory of evolution was also applicable to machines. "It appears to us that we are creating our own successors," he wrote. "We are daily adding to the beauty and delicacy of their physical organization; we are daily giving them greater power and supplying by all sorts of ingenious contrivances that self-regulating, self-acting power which will be to them what intellect has been to the human race." No longer does Butler's humor seem so humorous or far-fetched. What begins as farce ends in tragedy. Perhaps humanity will find itself even further reduced from being a mere appendage to the machine to a hindrance.

operations. What *is* happening is that fundamental attitudes are changing, and with them, a definition of something the technocratic structure cannot really comprehend without transmuting its very nature. New communications environments socialize people in ways far different from age-old customs and modes in which they once learned to think, feel and behave like human beings; thus, technological structures are "revolutionizing" human response by forcing life to conform to the parameters of the machines. This quantification will reshape thought, which is potentially mutable; it will become "true" by force, as the railroad became more true than the buffalo, and the sheep enclosure more true than the commons.

Even the shape of the child's developing brain is said to be changing. Children were formerly socialized through conversation in an intimate milieu; now, in the typical family living room with its television shrine, the areas of the child's brain once stimulated by conversation are increasingly developed by passively consuming the visually exciting (but kinesthetically debilitating or distorting) images of tv and video games. No one can say exactly what this means, though at a minimum, increased hyper-activity and decreased attention span may be two consequences. (Instead of urging caution, the education philosopher I heard relate this disturbing story went on to propose *more* computer- and video-based "interactive" technology in schools to teach this changing child.)

What can conform to the computer, what can be transmitted by the technology, will remain; what cannot will vanish. That which remains will also be transformed by its isolation from that which is eliminated, and we will be changed irrevocably in the process. As language is reshaped, language will reshape everyday life. Certain modes of thinking will simply atrophy and disappear, like rare, specialized species of birds. Later generations will not miss what they never had; the domain of language and meaning will be the domain of the screen. History will be the history on the screens; any subtlety, any memory which does not fit will be undecipherable, incoherent.

Our total dependence on technology parallels our dependence on the political state. New technologies, "interfaced" with the technical-bureaucratic, nuclear-cybernetic police state, are creating a qualitatively new form of domination. We are only a step away from

the universal computerized identification system. Technology is already preparing the ground for more pervasive forms of control than simple data files on individuals. As forms of control such as total computerization, polygraph tests, psychological conditioning, subliminal suggestion, and electronic and video eavesdropping become part of the given environment, they will be perceived as natural as superhighways and shopping malls are today.

But while there is reason for concern about computerized threats to privacy, a deepening privatization, with a computerized television in every room as its apotheosis, makes police almost superfluous. Eventually computer technology may have no need of the methods it employs today. According to Lewis M. Branscomb, Vice President and Chief Scientist of IBM, the "ultimate computer" will be biological, patterned on DNA and cultivated in a petri dish. "If such a computer could be integrated with memory of comparable speed and compactness, implanted inside the skull and interfaced with the brain," the Diagram Group authors of *The Techno/Peasant Survival Manual* enthuse, "human beings would have more computing power than exists in the world today." Genetic engineering, cloning, integrating the human brain into cybernetic systems — is there any doubt that these developments will render human beings obsolete just as industrial technology undermined earlier human communities? There may be no longer any need to monitor an anarchic, unruly mass, since all the controls will be built in from the start. The "irrational" aspects of culture, of love, of death will be suppressed.

Mechanization penetrates every province

If technology is effective in creating, directly or indirectly, ever more powerful modes of domination in its wake, it is not nearly as successful when used to curb its own development and the conflicts, devastations and crises which ensue. It suppresses "irrationality," which then takes its revenge in the greater irrationalities of mass technics. (One can only imagine what manner of disaster would follow an absurd attempt to "interface" a computer with a human brain.) According to the technocrats, technology can be curbed and made

to serve human needs through "technology assessment." "Futurist" Alvin Toffler (*futurist* being a euphemism for high-paid consulting huckster) argues, for example, that it is "sometimes possible to test new technology in limited areas, among limited groups, studying its secondary impacts before releasing it for diffusion."

Toffler's reification of technology into a simple system used in an isolated area, at the discretion of experts and managers, fails to understand how technology transforms the environment, and most importantly, how it is already trapped within its own procedural inertia. Clearly, the new technologies appearing everywhere simultaneously cannot be isolated to study their effects — the effects of the whole system must be taken into account, not the laboratory effects of an isolated component. Laboratory experiments on a given geographical area or social group performed by a powerful bureaucratic hierarchy of technicians and managers are themselves technology and carry its social implications within them.

Discussing the mechanization of bread baking, Giedeon shows how technology, becoming trapped within its own instrumentality and centered on the hyperrationality of procedure, not only shifts an activity beyond the control of individuals, but ultimately undermines the very ends it started out to accomplish. He asks, how did bread, which was successfully produced locally and on a small scale, succumb to large mechanization? More importantly, how was it that public taste was altered regarding the nature of the "stuff of life," which had changed little over the course of centuries, and which "among foodstuffs . . . has always held a status bordering on the symbolic"?

Mechanization began to penetrate every province of life after 1900, including agriculture and food. Since technology demands increasing outlays and sophisticated machinery, new modes of distribution and consumption are devised which eclipse the local baker. Massification demands uniformity, but uniformity undermines bread. "The complicated machinery of full mechanization has altered its structure and converted it into a body that is neither bread nor cake, but something half-way between the two. Whatever new enrichments can be devised, nothing can really help as long as this sweetish softness continues to haunt its structure."

matter of course that the "vicious forces" of this society, the military, corporate and governmental structures will be "thoroughly dismantled." "From now on," he effuses, "people would work, study, create, travel and share their lives because they wanted to, for themselves and for others."

This last statement sounds uncannily similar to any number of Leninist descriptions of socialism after the mystical "withering away of the state." But the fact is that we cannot dismantle the corporate, military and statist structures without dismantling technology, without smashing the megamachine. East and West, the technical, scientific and political-corporate-military bureaucracies make up a unified and integrated system.

Massified technology, production and distribution remove the power of individuals and communities to determine their own destiny and places it in the hands of an apparatus. It is not a question of "evil men," but the totality of a system. Technology (and particularly the complex, expertise-dominated computer technology so dear to the UCC) is inherently a bureaucratic system that must separate itself from society as a whole in order to manipulate the infinite amount of information constantly fed into it, with which it — or perhaps the machine itself, in which case it will only carry out the machine's directives — will make planning decisions.

High Tech Incompatible With Freedom

Athanasiou mystifies technology in the same way that Trotskyists mystify social relations in the Soviet Union, isolating certain idealized perspectives of it from its historical reality. His defense of technology can only exist, as Camatte has described Marxism, as a polemic with reality. The technocrats-out-of-power of the UCC are fascinated with high technology; one can only suspect that they aspire to become its technical commissars. Their assurance that their vision of technology is compatible with freedom are as convincing as similar claims of Marxists who believe that state power can be made to serve humanity. But the truth is, as Eugene Schwartz wrote

in his book *Overskill*, "Cybernetics is for automata, and the planned society is the prelude to the universal concentration camp."

The notion that the state can be demolished while the technological apparatus of capital remains intact is founded on the fallacy perpetrated by Marx and disseminated by his disciples that "In themselves these means of production are as little capital as gold and silver are in themselves money," Naturally capital is more than just technology, but *it is also the technology and the human relations it creates.* No such apparatus could appear out of nothing; it presupposes relations of hierarchy and domination irrespective of the formal and juridical property forms. Capital can do without the bourgeoisie, as the USSR has demonstrated quite effectively. But it cannot exist without technology.

Anarchists who oppose the state and ignore technology have no means to counter Marxists; they result in being merely another variation of leftism. A recent article in *Open Road*, for example, "Video Dearth," lists the many physical horrors caused by video display technology and cathode ray tubes (cancer from low-level radiation, cataracts and fetus damage, to name a few), only to conclude, "But the fight is not against the technology. The fight is to make the machines work for us, not for our employers. VDT's (video display terminals) have the potential to make clerical jobs more interesting and less repetitive . . . The Solution to the problems currently presented by the VDT's clearly lies in worker control." ("Video Dearth, Rachel Sherban, *Open Road, Spring-Summer 1981*).

This argument which assumes some safe level of radiation, is not only merely a step away from the Maoist defense of "socialist fallout," it also takes for granted a society based upon technology, and not only technology, but a society which will still have a need for office work! Even if the destructive physical effects of the cathode ray tube could be eliminated, it is the nature of technology as a set of social acts, and not just the isolated product, which makes freedom impossible.

Bakunin foresaw the kind of society that the Marxists struggle to achieve, writing, "When all other classes have exhausted themselves, the State then becomes the patrimony of the bureaucratic class and then falls — or if you will, rises — to the position of a machine." The

which left its nomadic and wild status for one of sedentary domination. This newspaper, as well, has long affirmed the validity of hunter-gatherer society as one in which humans were better able to act out a balanced relationship to nature and each other than in state societies which have followed.

Still, even among those who share a common hatred for this society and the desire for a new one some take issue with John's conclusions and with some of his individual contentions; they will have their say in the next issue.

In the meantime, we should realize that while reading this essay that all of the social sciences are highly ideologized with archeology perhaps being the foremost among them due to the scantiness and ambiguity of available evidence. For instance, the right-wing paleontologist Adrey could find a crushed skull and contend from that the confirmation of the Hobbsian dictum that life before the state was "nasty, brutish and short." However, his findings are also used contradictorily to support the notion that *modern* violence — particular interstate violence- — is an extension of an inherent human quality.

Similarly, the more liberal Leakeys discovered Paleolithic era burial sites and concluded that prehistory was based on cooperative and caring values with the implication that it has been the modern world which has twisted basic human traits, and the species retains the capacity to return to them. Our acceptance of one interpretation or another depends mostly on our view of contemporary society, which is why I like the Leakey story better than Adrey's. So, while reading what follows, perhaps think, what story do you *want* to be told, and maybe it will provoke you to act in terms of it.

— E.B. Maple[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #329 (vol. 23, no. 2), Summer 1988, p 17.

maddening methodology of formulaic speculation and eclecticism; one that almost forces those who resist his conclusions to begin their own work on the subject under question.

John will allow nothing of this world to be taken for granted nor to be part of a new one, producing a revolutionary nihilism which many find hard to swallow. His vision in a world in which language, art, time, number and agriculture have disappeared led one friend who read his manuscript to charge that "Zerzan wants to return to the womb." Maybe so, but it would be back to the womb of the planet in a distant epoch where perhaps an earlier species of humans communicated intuitively, gratification was instantaneous, and joy the character of existence — this before we bit into the apple of knowledge and began our descent into the "terror of history," as Frederick Turner puts it.

John's desire to shed the pain of modern consciousness and all of its institutions is understandable in a frightening and miserable world, but his approach in writing has led some to question whether it is critical theory they are confronting or sheer, unrealizable utopianism and psychic escapism. I am not sure whether such a distinction has to be made at a point where all we have to sustain ourselves is the stuff of our dreams. The value of John's ongoing investigations is contained within his intransigent insistence that nothing be free of critical examination, even if it is those qualities that some would contend make us human (we should remember that marxists insist that it is *work* which separates us from the animals). His fear that our desires will be corralled into a blind canyon by what society dictates as possible *at this time* is justifiable. When an authentic revolutionary movement is created, perhaps than it will then begin to shape what a new world will look like, but at this point no speculation should be spurned.

In many ways, as he indicates, John is not telling a new story in his present essay. The era of the dawn of agriculture has always been seen by historians as the epochal watershed which produced the basis for civilization. Points of departure come over the affirmation of the Neolithic Age by bourgeois and marxist theorists (who view it within their mystified social schema as a "progressive stage" of history) and those who see it as John does, as a *defeat* for humanity

anarchist and libertarian communists who fixate on the political apparatus and fail to see the roots of this new totalitarianism in the modern massified technological and bureaucratic system, are merely promoting a flabby brand of Marxism, and will contribute to the edification of the new state — technological despotism, just as surely as will the Marxists who openly proclaim it.

It is not enough to oppose the forms of oppression which characterize the past — capital is already rendering them obsolete. The great challenge that we face is to discern the new forms which domination is taking and aim our struggle against them. To fail to do so is to remain the perpetual victims of the future.

— George Bradford[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #306 (vol. 15, no. 5), July 1981, pp 9–10, 23.

E.B. Maple: Introduction to John Zerzan's "Agriculture" essay (1988)

Almost *all* John Zerzan essays feature accompanying introductions in which the word most frequently used to describe his method and conclusions is "provocative" (see, for instance, *Anarchy*, Summer 1987). Some may think this only an ugly little term meant to distance a publication from the wild assertions that John so often makes in his writings ("wild", by the way, is a word which I know he will not take as a pejorative). Realistically though, provocative accurately describes what is the common reaction to reading a Zerzan article — you are provoked, to anger or to thought.

Anger because he states everything with such a sense of certitude even when it does not seem entirely plausible to do so, i.e. liberation is impossible without the dissolution of agriculture, language is the original separation, etc. Indeed, a web of these certainties have come to form a chinese puzzle foundation for his view of alienation and domination leaving his partisans and detractors arguing about how well it all hangs together. John sees the human collapse from our original paradisial state beginning when language, time, number and art entered human consciousness which then formed the basis of agriculture, itself the institutionalization of those earlier forms of separation.

But John provokes anger also because he steps on toes — he says you can't hide from the leviathan of civilization with the expressiveness of words or the exquisiteness of art, for they are part of the body of leviathan.

However, whether one agrees with his assertions or not, John also provokes his readers to think; witness the substantive replies which have appeared in these pages alongside his previous essays (see *FEs*, Summer 1983, "Time, the First Lie of Social Life;" Fall 1983, "Responses on Time;" Winter 1984, "Language — Origin and Meaning;" Summer 1985, "Number — Its Origin and Evolution;" and Fall 1986 "The Case Against Art" available from us at 75¢ each). He means to examine *everything*, but only on his terms — a sometimes

Bob Brubaker: "Community, Primitive Society and the State" (1981)

Introduction

Primitive culture, Marshall Sahlins has argued, is not fetishized utility. "The practical function of (primitive) institutions," he tells us, "is never adequate to explain their cultural structure . . . People employ customs and categories to organize their lives within local schemes of interpretation, thus giving uses to material circumstances which cultural comparison will show, are never the only ones possible." Consequently, diversity is the rule in the primitive world, as much because of the multifarious systems of meaning and interpretations peoples employ to constitute their worlds, as because of the varying climates and landscapes in which they are situated.

It follows that history cannot be summarized in the manner of Marx, as merely "the production by men of their material life." The "struggle for existence," so called, does not determine the cultural forms of primitive society. The notion that production and culture are separate spheres (or separable analytically), with the mode of production as (ultimately) determinant, dies once one accepts the interpretations of ethnographic evidence offered by Sahlins, Pierre Clastres, Jean Baudrillard, and Stanley Diamond.

This essay is intended to open up discussion about what constitutes *community* by examining societies worthy of the term. In a time when the last vestiges of the primitive are being rooted out and destroyed, an elementary self-education about what is being lost is crucial. A part of ourselves, a possible mode of human being, is being irrevocably lost.

The very concept of what community is has virtually disappeared, if we are to judge by the pronouncements of Marxists and anarchotechnocrats, whose vision is of life organized around a vast nexus

of production and consumption. A world of difference is not anticipated by the visionaries of perfected technology, but is the province only of those whose hatred of abstract order is tempered by a longing for community, diversity, and the human scale.

It is necessary to take seriously Stanley Diamond's "search for the primitive," understood as an exploration and elaboration of a "pre-civilized cross-cultural human potential," and employed as a standard by which to criticize civilized existence. This search is not an effort to idealize a primitive "golden age" to which we can return. What it entails, rather, is the identification of subtle human attributes which have been lost amid the cacophonies of civilization, and an assessment of their possible relevance to our lives.

Primitive society presents an alternate mode of living, in which community — "spinning kaleidoscopically on its axis" (to use Diamond's metaphor) — provides a context where people can realize themselves as individuals, and where social institutions do not escape the intentionality of the collectivity. Though primitive community is the focus of this essay, we will not limit our search to this realm. It is likely that the link between viable community and the revolutionary impulse is close. In the future issues if the paper, we hope to look at other examples of human community in its resistance to authoritarian social relations.

The Myth of Primitive Society

Life prior to civilization was, according to Hobbes' well-known assertion, "nasty, brutish, and short." Clastres in *Society Against the State*, points out that this assumption of primitive scarcity runs as a thread through both the chronicles of early explorers and the work of modern researchers, and this despite the frequent condemnation of the Savages by European explorers as "lazy" and indifferent to work, lying about and smoking in their hammocks all day long. But clearly one cannot have it both ways: either subsistence was a full-time occupation or the primitives did not live under the duress of a "struggle" against nature for survival.

Language: John Zerzan on George Bradford on John Zerzan (1984)

Dear FE,
Neither the simple abuse by Ratticus nor the extended commentary by George Bradford seemed to me to engage the two most basic points or arguments of "Language: Origin and Meaning" (Winter '84), namely that language is the model of ideology and that it derives from earliest division of labor. Thus they rejected the piece while failing to deal with the essentials referred to by its title, an odd tack possibly reflecting on my craftsmanship as its author.

To evoke the world as it encountered what are perhaps the original viruses of alienation (time, language) and to ask whether they are inevitable is to wonder whether we can supersede a condition in which anguish and repression have been with us so very long.

The old question, 'where did we go wrong?' challenges us to aim our critical inquiry far enough back, into prehistory. If part of the progression is something like time, language, art, myth, religion, private property, the state, can we refuse only the latter two or three of these inventions and find this adequate to solve the long, deepening neurosis called civilization?

The madness of today and our desperation within it may be helping us to see how profound the sickness has been, the easier perhaps to raise questions as to how deep the healing must go.

John Zerzan,
Eugene, OR[1]

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[1] letter to *Fifth Estate* #316 (v19, #1), spring 1984, p 2.

The myth of primitive scarcity is "the judgement decreed by our economy," writes Sahlins in *Stone Age Economics*. It is the result of a projection of the processes of political economy onto all of history, and assumes the universality of such concepts as scarcity, needs, and production, which are applicable to our society but not to the primitive past. It takes for granted the inferiority of primitive tools as compared with modern technology. "Having equipped the hunter with the bourgeois impulses and paleolithic tools, we judge his situation hopeless in advance. Yet scarcity is not an intrinsic property of technical means. It is a relation between means and ends."

It has been convincingly demonstrated that the assumption of primitive scarcity is seriously amiss. Hunter-gatherer communities were in fact "the first affluent societies." Sahlins sees the hunter-gatherers on a sort of "Zen road to affluence" whereby their wants are scarce, and their means, in relation are plentiful. Sahlins refers to the hunter-gatherer as "uneconomic man," who, not driven by artificial scarcity, is precisely the opposite of *homo economicus*. Recent ethnographic evidence regarding all types of primitive societies demonstrates that, whether nomad hunters or sedentary agriculturalists, primitive peoples spend an average of less than four hours a day in normal work activities. Their leisurely, and successful, acquisition of food belies the notion of subsistence at near starvation levels. Concomitant with the successful securing of nourishment and comfort is a marked aversion to work; Clastres argues that the refusal of work is a distinguishing feature of primitive society in general. This assertion is confirmed, for example, by Lizot's experience with the Yanomami: "The Yanomami's contempt for work and their disinterest in technological progress per se is beyond question."

Technics and Primitive Communities

The presumed technological inferiority of the primitives provides the explanation for their supposed inability to break away from the constant pursuit of nourishment. Clastres, however, suggests that there is no reason to impute technological inferiority to primitive

technics. Noting the fine quality, inventiveness, and efficiency of primitive tools, Clastres holds that, relative to their environment, they were quite adequate to the task of meeting the community's needs.

In reality, technics played a relatively minor role in the makeup of primitive communities, a fact which has become obscured with the decisive role technics has assumed in modern civilization. The image of the human being as a "tool-making animal," perhaps understandable as a misreading of the archaeological record due to the predominance of tools as artifacts, is an exaggeration of a characteristic only secondary to human development.

The two-fold character of primitive technics — its adequacy (or appropriateness) to its environment, and its relative insignificance in terms of the constitution of primitive society — point to its fundamental quality: primitive technics is simply a modality of human being. The cultural system of primitive society excludes the possibility of a mode of production, of an attempt at a proliferation of goods through a project of labor. It attributes a meaning to sharing, reciprocity, and the destruction of the surplus which makes acquisitive accumulation an inconceivable act. In every case, primitive societies organize the practical functions of culture by such an attribution of meaning: "For the primitives, eating, drinking and living are first of all acts that are exchanged: if they are not exchanged, they do not occur." (Jean Baudrillard, *The Mirror of Production*).

Production, technics, the economic: these are not "limited" in some principled sense by primitive society. They simply do not exist as autonomous activities, directed toward a fantasized end called "progress". Meaning is situated in the present; time itself is fundamentally meaningful: its cycles provide order and stability to life. Only in civilization does time become history, and the future an ever-receding goal without purpose.

The importance of a system of meanings and interpretations to the constitution of primitive society is suggested by Lewis Mumford's discussion of the development of language. Mumford reasons that the complex development of language was prior and indispensable to the maturing of other human capacities and possibilities. Only within the larger, shared context provided by language could these

— George Bradford
Chas de Semide, Portugal

John Zerzan replies: *My conjecture/dream/hypothesis is certainly in no way definitive; I realize that no one, certainly including me, has even adequately defined objective time. I have tried to discuss or at least imagine a world without it and to assemble a few points for discussion around its genesis. This has evoked conservative fears in some, it seems to me, and a consequent defense of time, in the shape of its projected reform.*

Rather than write a long-winded defense of particulars of the essay — or of faults in the arguments against it — let's just leave it to whatever readers to consider for themselves.[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #314 (vol 18, #3) Fall 1983, pp 7–8.

state-time, leviathan-time, in our lives, to return time to its natural, limited place in our lives, to abolish its regime. But we have been scarred by history — and we cannot deny the scars. We cannot abolish the Fall, we carry it with us, and we cannot fantasize escaping its consequences. They, too, are a part of our universe. John said as much by quoting Goethe: "Only he who has experienced history can judge it."

It is understandable that the desire for freedom presses not only against the constraints imposed upon us by modern civilization, but against the very limits of the human organism, against the natural conditions of life. Baudelaire's poem "The Enemy" reflects such a protest against nature:

" — Oh sorrow! Oh sorrow! Time easts my life.
And the obscure Enemy who knaws our hearts
From the blood we lose grows and fortifies himself!

For Baudelaire, as for modernity, freedom is an unquenchable thirst which yearns to burst all limits. But this yearning is just as much the motor by which capital ravages the present to colonize the future, thus extirpating any possibilities for us to renew and to deepen the sources of life. Only a recognition of organic human limits can save us from the unlimited expansion of capital. By maintaining our ambivalence towards history as both the source of our agony and the possible key to our release, we may find a way to renew that duality between the eternal present of no-time and the necessity for temporal, purposeful activities to maintain human continuity. I think that it will allow us to deepen our discourse, prevent it from becoming monolithic.

There is no "first cause," and therefore no single and unambiguous solution to the problem. No matter what, we should not let our questioning become transformed into an attempt, whether through zeal or through desperation, to impose totalizing, one-dimensional answers. Perhaps in this way we can begin truly to confront the enemy which lies within all of us as it does within our culture, and thereby encounter the concrete, practical resolution to our wanderings and renew the sources of paradise, the "dream-time."

have meaning. The original purpose of language, according to Mumford, "was not to convey specific information but to enable primitive man to infuse every part of his experience with significance and to cope with the mystery of his own existence . . . By his command of words he increasingly embraced every aspect of life and gave it significance as part of larger whole he retained in his mind." For Mumford, "the pursuit of significance crowns every other human achievement." (*The Myth of the Machine*).

The development of language and the pursuit of significance," one should emphasize, was a shared, collective experience. Language enabled people to create a common universe of meaning. Without the signifying activity of language, which invested objects, actions, and human emotions with meaning, human society could never have developed. Culture, to be precise, revolves around language.

Sharing, reciprocity, and the gift are the "dialogue" carried on by the members of primitive communities in order to ensure social continuity. Language and culture merge through this dialogue, which in its nature excludes the discourse of a separate power. The exchange of meanings through language is extended to include the exchange of meaningful objects. The gift, charged with meaning, is thus understandable primarily as a symbolic, not a practical phenomenon.

Reciprocity and Primitive Society

Whether as direct sharing, kinship dues, or exchange, reciprocity is at the heart of primitive society. This reciprocal relationship has a directly political aspect, as Clastres points out in his discussion of the role of primitive chiefs. Far from being a being a despot the chief, in Clastres' view, is a "prisoner" of the community. By his obligation to be generous and in his appointed capacity as "peacemaker," the chief ensures the maintenance of the reciprocal bond. His obligation to the law of exchange ensures that a separate power will not arise in society.

In his discussion of Hawaiian tribal society, Sahlins describes the consequences for those chiefs who would violate the norms of reciprocity. In this society, the chieftainship has begun to distance

itself from the people. Tyrannical chiefs, who confiscated people's goods and made too great a demand on their labor, were often put to death after an uprising by the outraged community. "The chiefly toll on the household economy," Sahlins writes, "had a moral limit consistent with the kinship configuration. Up to a point it was the chief's due, but beyond that, high-handedness." There was a real danger that the norms of reciprocity might be overturned and the kings obtain a real power over the community, and this the people would not allow. Sahlins summarizes the situation thus attained, saying "If Hawaiian society discovered limits to its ability to augment production and polity, this threshold which it had reached but could not cross was the boundary of primitive society itself."

Michael Taussig looks at the persistence of reciprocal relationships in pre-capitalist communities existing today. In his *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*, Taussig discusses the curious belief held by peasants and laborers in present-day southwestern Colombia, that the accumulation of money is unnatural, being a contract with the devil. It is considered such, writes Taussig, because it is "the most horrendous distortion of the principle of reciprocity" on which pre-capitalist society is based. Taussig sees the devil as an apt symbol of the pain and havoc brought by the plantations and mines. But it also shows that the people see the economy in personal, not commodity terms. Accustomed to the old ways in which the "economic" is merely a component of culture, they see as diabolic its emergence as an autonomous power set against them. Their beliefs are part of an attempt to preserve ancient cultural values which spell out a personalistic, reciprocal relationship among people, as opposed to the abstract, "detached," institutional relationships fostered by capitalism.

The dissolution of the reciprocal relationship between people and chief allows for a qualitatively changed situation to arise. A separate power over society, relations of command and obedience, the "mysterious emergence — irreversible, fatal to primitive societies — of the thing we know by the name of the State" (Clastres), describe the new era.

The newly-formed state power directs itself at the kinship bond. In several "proto-states" cited by Stanley Diamond (in his *In Search of*

this way that were able to begin the process all over again on a new, more death-dealing plateau. (Also, ironically, it is in this respect which John's notion of spatialization makes perfect sense.)

It is possible that it would also be in the interests of capital to unambiguously annul time and history within the context of "timeless," memoryless technical universe — a utopian panopticon, the history of its crimes dissolved by computers, drugs and psychological technique. And thought it is necessary to be against the process of history (which is the process of the rise and conquest of the state), it seems equally necessary for us now to maintain a certain ambivalence towards that history as contested terrain. For history is the labyrinth in which we have become lost, and the minotaur which devours us. But it is also in a sense our only thread leading us back to the entrance and our only way out. Hence, the call to "dissolve" technological civilization (consider the alchemical implications of such as phrase!) by annulling time and history is not so much wrong to people seeking a way out of the technological mire and renew community, as it is incoherent. It is a proposal to resist not only technology but even technics; not only mass society but society; not only standardized, monolithic, stratified language but poetic, vernacular, convivial language; not only official history but memory; not only time domination but the awareness of the cycles of life; not only alienation from nature but our uniqueness, our consciousness as human subjects, in relation to it.

And it *is* also erroneous, for in spite of all the resistance to history, if we could annul it, dissolve it, what would keep up from repeating the same mistakes as before? Only memory, only by facing history. We cannot afford to annul it, we must confront it — in this way bring an end to this cycle. As novelist Milan Kundera has written, "the struggle of man (and woman!) against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

Civilization cannot be dissolved. If it could, what would prevent the spreading cultural and biological entropy it has set in motion (or at least aggravated to an unprecedented degree) from overwhelming us in the moment of our timeless "ecstasy"? It has to be dismantled, and that is, to our misfortune but unavoidably, a uniquely historical task. It is necessary to resist the imposition of abstract, mechanized

in our own period. The use of psychedelic drugs, such situationist slogans as "Quick!" on the walls of Paris in 1968, and an increasingly widespread anxiety and desperation on the part of people, and their inability to accept the ideology of the Glorious Future, in the face of our sense of acceleration towards the abyss are also evidence.

Desperation Is Only a Sign of Crisis

I think that he confuses the crisis with what he perceives as its imminent resolution, something he has done elsewhere. In his essay, "The Promise of the '80s", for example, he associated random, individual (and mob) acts of nihilism, violence and despair with the coming revolution. The fact that institutional legitimacy is in disarray was evidence enough that people were preparing to contest the rule of capital. This was also the picture he drew of late nineteenth century society, which he compared to our own period, in his article on the origins of World War I. But it is my feeling that he missed the implications of his own study: that such desperation is only a sign of crisis — posing a tremendous problem, but not its supersession by autonomous revolt. In the case of World War I, it was capital which provided the release of the pent up energies and desires bursting the seams of capitalist society. A period of widespread disaffection gave way in a trumpet blast to mass mobilization and mechanization for trench warfare and unparalleled slaughter. The avenue is no less a possibility today, except that the violence, like the level of crisis and disaffection, will be that much greater.

Capital, too, is "revolution": capital strains against time and history, against the weight of the ages as it drags in its wake. Capital, too, tends to move toward "dissolving" history. Just as John tends to confuse the signals of crisis with those of autonomous rebellion, he blurs the possibilities of a human, libertarian resolution of our alienation with that of capital's strategy. Ironic as it may seem, the European conquests of the world were carried out by people attempting to annul time and their history: it was capital's solution to the cultural crisis in late medieval Europe for people to "flee time," exchanging it for the open, "empty" spaces of the colonial world. In

the Primitive), the transition from primitive kinship-based communities to a class-structured polity brings about a situation in which law and custom exist side-by-side. Diamond quotes a Vietnamese saying still popular: "The customs of the village are stronger than the laws of the emperor." The state must undermine such sentiments. The rule of law is aimed at individuals, attempting to divert their "loyalty" from the reciprocal norms of the kinship group to the laws of the state. The isolation of the individual, precondition of the growth of law, was recognized by Plato, who in *The Republic* recommended that children be taken from their parents and raised by the state.

According to Diamond, the goal of the state can be reduced to a single, complex imperative: the imposition of the census-tax-conscription system. The establishment of this complex is the negation of the kinship system and its reciprocal values. As Clastres puts it: "In primitive society — essentially an egalitarian society — men control their activity, control the circulation of the products of that activity: they act only on their own behalf, even though the law of exchange mediates the direct relation of man to his product. Everything is thrown into confusion, therefore, when the activity of production is diverted from its initial goal, when instead of producing for himself, primitive man also produces for others, without exchange and without reciprocity." At this point, where the "egalitarian rule of exchange ceases to constitute the 'civil code' of society," it becomes possible to speak of labor.

With the inauguration of a project of labor a breach is opened which permits the autonomization of an economic/technical sphere such as exists today. The primitive refusal of work is overcome by conscripted labor; the "expressive musical movements of primitive communal work groups…where work is sacred — a sport, a dance, a celebration, a thing-in-itself" (Diamond), is abandoned. Work takes on the character of a compulsive means, becoming for the first time alienated labor.

Authoritarian and Democratic Technics

The organization of labor by the state involves the development of a new kind of organizational and technical apparatus — what

Mumford calls the "megamachine" — which structures society as a vast labor machine. This authoritarian technics of the state, argues Mumford, has recurrently existed side-by-side with what he calls a democratic technics. Authoritarian technics is large-scale, system oriented, and inherently unstable, reflecting the grandiose schemes of the state. Democratic technics, by "resting mainly on human skill and animal energy, but always, even when employing machines, remaining under the active direction of the craftsman and farmer," reflects its origins in primitive society, where the community is the master of technics, which thus cannot become the instrument of an autonomous power.

Mumford writes that "this democratic technics has underpinned and firmly supported every historical culture until our own day." (This brings to mind the Luddites, whose small-scale technics and autonomous values were in distinct opposition to the authoritarian social relations of the factory towns).

Mumford tells us that the authoritarian technics first appeared around the fourth millennium B.C., in a new configuration of technical invention, scientific observation and centralized political control. This new technology meant the creation of huge labor, military and bureaucratic armies, where people were specialized, standardized, replaceable, interdependent parts. However, Mumford stresses, the democratic economy of the agricultural village resisted incorporation into the new authoritarian system.

As long as agriculture employed 90 percent of the population, authoritarian technics was confined largely to the cities. Only with the forcing of the bulk of the agrarian population from the land into the burgeoning factory towns at the beginning of industrial capitalism did they come under the sway of authoritarian technics. This marks a new, more complete suppression of pre-capitalist communities and their associated value systems, and the final ascendancy of the state-economic-technical complex.

The development of capitalism disrupts, and eventually empties communities of their content. Technology rushes in to fill the gap, in an endless spiral in which each disruption of community causes the confusion and dissociation necessary for a new, more pervasive

its conflicts and limitations, this consciousness of selfhood before a marvelous and terrible universe, reflects a desire also to return to the womb. Understandable in its attractiveness (hence the myths), but impossible.

Primitive peoples, though rituals and myths, reproduce the no-time as a living reality. By recognizing "this dual mystery, wherein the timeless and the temporal are the same," they neither suppress existence within organic time nor the dream-time, "the realm that is seen again in dream and shown forth in the rites." Because primitives live in cyclic, organic time, and because they can revive this timelessness in moments of ceremony and ecstasy, they can live more in the immediate present, to fully experience their world. They know, like the zen devotee, to eat when they are hungry and sleep when they are tired. But they also engage in purposeful, planned, temporal activities. An example of such zen-like, duality is to be found, among other human activities, in gardening, which combines the sensuous pleasure of the immediate moment with an understanding that what takes place today will bear fruit in the future.

Human life if it is to maintain continuity, cannot be timeless, without a past and a future, and ecstasy by definition cannot exist in contrast to the rather more mundane activities of the rest of life. Actually, it is modern capitalism, with its fetishized promise of instant gratification, eternal youth, and soma-induced paradise, which wrecks such duality and therefore ecstasy. Or, rather, it colonizes, counterfeits true ecstasy in its technical hubris against nature. Freedom demands that the duality and its ambivalence not be suppressed, but maintained. To desire to return to prehuman existence is to abandon freedom and to abandon our very human nature.

Just as the first two points complemented and flowed into one another, the last two are also interconnected. John's estimation of the character of the present day is linked to his view of our prospects. He believes that since the late Middle Ages, there has never been such a strong wave of resistance against time as there is today. What is his evidence? He points to the "articulation" of the anti-time impulse in the "quickening movement" before World War I, for example, and likewise to the acceleration of time and the pace of modernity

Hence it is rather significant that John also points to the earliest stages of infancy as an indication of no-time. In that sphere, there is no conflict, no trauma, no separation; the womb is a microcosm of the universe in our prehuman animalhood, unalienated and un-mediated nature. But as alienation begins in John's view in early infancy for the child, it seems inevitable that the same "mythological event" of separation will take place in the early emergence of human consciousness. For the primitive, nature issues from a womb, the great Mother. As Campbell observes,

> "The state of the child in the womb is one of bliss, actionless bliss, and this state may be compared to the beatitude visualized as paradise. In the womb, the child is unaware of the alternation of night and day, or of any of the images of temporality. It should not be surprising, therefore, if the metaphors used to represent eternity suggest, to those trained in the symbolism of the infantile unconsciousness, retreat to the womb."

But separation becomes a precondition for growth, for knowledge. This individual, now separated from nature, develops an ambivalent relationship to her. The earliest traumas are presented here. Mother, no longer a blissful total environment, becomes alternately a pro-tectress and a threat. Separation from the breast begins to take the "shape of time." So it is even more interesting that mother goddesses take the form of this protectoress/threat. "The Hindu mother-god-dess Kali," Campbell notes, a variant of a widely diffused archetypal cannibal-mother, and who as the "Black One" is the personification of "all-consuming time," is represented with her long tongue lolling to lick up the lives and blood of her children. She is the very pattern of the saw that eats her farrow, the cannibal ogress: life itself, the universe, which sends forth beings only to consume them." She is the goddess of food and abundance, birth and fecundity, yet death, too, the terror of time — a duality which reflects not an oppressive alienation, but the human condition. I have always enjoyed the FE's (only partially) tongue-in-cheek, provocative cry, 'Back to the Stone Age!' But to try to supersede the boundaries of this life-death duality, this consciousness which realizes its own subjectivity, with all of

disruption. The desire for community remains alive, however, and the struggle against technology is the struggle for its renewal.[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #306 (Vol. 15, No. 5), July 1981, pp 18–19.

existence of social life. But since morality is an inescapable fact of biological existence, this myth must be considered a metaphor. Could the dream-time, as Lewis Mumford has suggested with a different emphasis, be a reference to an actual period of human development — a prehuman and premythological experience *before the emergence of a consciousness of death, an the most fundamental temporal cycles of life?*

Campbell writes that such myths "belong rather to the world of the planters than to the shamanistically dominated hunting sphere." But consciousness of death — and hence of time — must have been present in the ritual burials (which also imply a developed, mythological mind) of *Homo neanderthalensis*, who dates as early as 200,000 — 75,000 B.C. To discuss a long human epoch characterized by no-time previous to this is to create a creature who never existed and to hearken back to a prehuman, preconscious form of life. The realization that death, the early awareness of the cycles of women's menstruation and the changing of the moon, of animal mating seasons, of taking refuge at nightfall from predatory animals, of the rhythms of music and dance, all come within, or make up elements of the time-consciousness which emerges along with what we consider to be the human being and human society.

The primitive peoples haven't imagined such a prehuman existence. They seem to be aware of its reality, translating a "genetic memory" so to speak, oh this prehuman life. The gradual fall into time to which John refers is perhaps the gradual birth of human self-consciousness and culture. For the primitive reality, the memory of that long epoch beforehand remains a living presence. And why shouldn't it be? We recapitulate our entire evolutionary development from one cell to a fully reaware human being in the process of gestation and birth. The salt in our blood has been considered a vestige of our origins in the sea. The myth of the no-time is perhaps a metaphor repeating this reality, an innate recognition not only of our one-celled origins, before "birth" and "death," before human "minding" and the recognition of our uniqueness and specificity before the universe. It is at the same time, correspondingly, a memory of the womb.

John refuses to admit such as distinction, attempting rather to speculate on the existence of a prior, non-alienated "no-time." Though he attempts to plumb the bottomless "well of the past" in his search, he fails to produce a single, known human society which experiences this no-time, pointed to only what he claims are its vestiges — all examples of a primitive, vernacular, organic time — in the Tiv, Nuer and Hopi. These peoples, too, have experienced this gradual Fall from a timeless paradise. His no-time is presently nowhere.

Nevertheless, there is something very provocative in his thesis. I think that he has intuited what many of these primitive societies recognize in their myths and rituals — the existence of a previous epoch of timeless, animal oneness with nature. It is certainly worth looking at this through the perspective of the primitive people who are the least removed from it, and here Campbell's book provides just such a perspective.

"In a mythologically oriented primitive society," he writes, "every aspect of life and the world is linked organically to the pivotal insight rendered in the mythology and ritual of [the gods]. Those pre-sexual, pre-mortal ancestral beings of the mythological narrative lived by the idyl of the beginning, an age when all things were innocent in the destiny of life in time. But there occurred in that age an event, the 'mythological event' *par excellence*, which brought to an end its timeless way of being and effected a transformation of all things. Whereupon, death and sex came into the world as the basic correlates of temporality." In this timeless world — Eden in the linear, historical time-bound Judeo-Christian tradition; the *alcheringa* or "dream-time" of the Australian aboriginal Aranda — "there was neither birth nor death but a dreamlike state of essentially timeless being."

Myth of an Original No-time in Primitive Societies

The myths of many, if not all, primitive peoples, refer to this original realm of no-time, a separate, remote realm which is also a continual presence alongside the temporal, birth-and-death bound

"Defeated Spirit?" — John Zerzan to 'Fifth Estate' (1981)

To the Editors:
The latest issue, containing much excellent analysis of our techno-morass and its processes, nonetheless has bothered me.

The absence of a connection between the critique and its use is the most troublesome feature. From the articles I have a persistent sense of the too-remote, the academic; that of a profound indictment minus any everyday applications.

Aside from some very visionary-sounding phrases, the only concrete references to a radical anti-technology approach were calls for "a defense of every little commodity," which strikes me as merely reformist, and for a "critical sociology," which could suggest, of course, a retention of specialization of even the university!

To me the technology critique is the first coherent, contemporary attack on no less than every mediation and representation in social life, and therefore exhilarating. But it is not so far for the FE authors: "We are in eclipse; the human spirit is moribund," says the introduction to the last issue.

This defeated spirit tends to inform the paper, and renders the goal of liberation an impossible (or even cynical) idea to the "Paleolithic Liberation Organization" which produces it. The depth of misery is laid out for all to see — only there's really zero hope for breaking what we can so clearly understand. Thus, the critique remains a banality: everyone can know it and no one can win. Perfect example is quoting Jacques Ellul at great length — Ellul who is equally known as *lay Catholic theologian* as for his (trenchant) ideas about the "Technological Society."

As the situationists used to counsel, "Nihilists! One more effort if you would be revolutionaries."

**Not in eclipse,
not even close,**

John Zerzan
Newport, OR[1]

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to the appropriateness of Bergson's contention rather than any limitations. By following such a line of reasoning, he blurs the important distinctions which lie behind the not only primitive communities and statified empires, but the unique significance of the influx of time-domination in more recent history with the emergence of clock time along with mechanization, the standardization of languages and the writing of grammars, capitalist bookkeeping, standardization and universalization of weights and measures, ship-building treatises, experimental science, the geographic explorations and conquests of early modernity.

Even under ancient state societies, we can assume that except in the most extreme cases (such as the Aztecs) time regulation, like megatechnics and the state (all part of the same phenomenon) represented a relatively minor, sporadic (though at times catastrophic) element in the life of most people. But what began with this modern rise of mechanized, economic time domination is a development in which abstract, regulated time comes to penetrate every aspect of life. Now nearly everyone wears a wristwatch and lives by the clock. Soon clocks will be implanted directly into the brain along with microcomputers and the process will be complete. Vernacular, seasonal, agricultural, cyclic time has given way to linear, imperial, mechanized, totalitarian state time, economic time (time is money). Natural cycles have been burst by the technological, time-centered, power-centered universe of capital.

The distinction between the two forms of time is succinctly expressed by Jacques Ellul in *The Technological Society*. Before the advent of the public clock tower, he writes, "time had been measured by life's needs and events. . . the time man guided himself by corresponded to nature's time; it was material and concrete. It became abstract. . . when it was divided into hours, minutes and seconds. Little by little this mechanical kind of time, with its knife-edge divisions, penetrated, along with machinery, into human life." After the appearance of private clocks, "life itself was measured by the machine; its organic functions obeyed the mechanical. Eating, working and sleeping were at the beck and call of machinery. Time, which had been the measure of organic sequences, was broken and dissociated."

John refers in another qualification to the "regulation of time" as the predicate of civilization. I would agree — but the qualification here is crucial. After all, time didn't create these priestly elites, though it was one of their central techniques and obsessions. Ultimately, it wasn't the *awareness* of time on the part of the planters that led to their enslavement and immiseration, but their willingness to be dominated by it and by those who declared themselves (by force of arms) to be its representatives. There is a pathology at work here which is more fundamental than the emergence of the awareness of natural and astronomical styles.

(Correspondingly, not even the physical equations of an Einstein make atomic bombs inevitable. Given the enormous capacities of human "minding," mathematical languages and intellectual discoveries such as atomic theory were in a sense inevitable. What leads to bomb building and state terror is not a concept of atomism — if so we are lost — but the willingness of mass men molded by a massified culture to obey the commands of priestly elites and create the megastructures which make such horrors possible.)

There is a difference between the regulation of time (which implies regulation of human beings *within* time — what would it mean to regulate "self-existent time" apart from the activities of human beings?) and consciousness of time. In fact, throughout this article, one senses (and Brubaker has aptly shown this to be) the possibility of different forms of time — his example of the Pawnee, for whom "life had a rhythm but not a progression," comes to mind. (One thinks of Jorge Luis Borges' elegant description of music as that "most docile form of time" — probably a very early form, too.) And even foraging has its cycles and seasons, its best times of day.

At The Beck And Call of Machinery

Bergson's view, that "a qualitative sense of time, of lived experience or *duree*, requires a resistance to formalized, spatialized time" (*Note* that it is *time* here which is *spatialized!*) is judged "limited" by John. But he never shows the limitations — his article mostly attests

Marcus Graham on 'Fifth Estate', Anarchism, Technology & Bookchin (1981)

FE View Not New...

To the Fifth Estate:
The "Against the Megamachine" article in the July 1980 Fifth Estate ought to influence pro-machine marxists, anarchists and anarcho-syndicalists in realizing the Frankenstein that the scientists have created.

George Bradford's essay, "On Marxism, Anarchism and the Roots of the New Totalitarianism," in particular deals with this phrase most effectively. Bradford correctly points out that although anarchists are opposed to "authoritarian Marxism," they have failed to realize what the technological megamachine implies.

Nevertheless, not all anarchists have followed Peter Kropotkin's pro-machine position. In the weekly anarchist "Road to Freedom" (1924–1939), in an article entitled "Man's Liberation," appearing July 1925, this writer stated in part: "Man created machines. Machines that were to lessen man's toil. But alas! The machine has increased the wealth of the idlers and brought misery to the many.... What is even worse, the machine has destroyed man's joy of artisan creation. Man merely became a spook of the very machine that he himself created."

I think the future will prove that Kropotkin, from an anarchist point of view, has, in accepting thus the machine, made one of the greatest errors. Such an attitude was perfectly logical for the Marxian school of thought, but certainly not for the anarchist. In reality, man will never be able to master the machine without the sacrifice of endangering human life.

Kropotkin's pro-machine position received a new impetus when Murray Bookchin came out in favor of the machine under the alluring title *Toward a Liberatory Technology* in "Anarchos" issues 2 & 3, 1968–69. In a reply, "Questioning the Premises" of Bookchin which appeared in the October 1971 issue of the *Match!* of Tucson, Arizona, I wrote: "Technology rests on the basic principle of centralized authority, as its technique shows in every move that it makes. Anarchism, on the other hand, rests on the very opposite basic principle of decentralization. Whether by intent or not, Bookchin is correct when using the words 'socialist ideal,' since Marxism fits into technology as into a perfect glove. But when he implies that technology is related or conducive to the building of an Anarchist society, he is totally wrong."

It is indeed good to find Bookchin changing his position by now as quoted by Bradford in his article.

Last but not least, the Fifth Estate, although not calling itself an anarchist publication, is nevertheless considered as such by "The Anarchist Review" of England, anarchist groups and individuals who materially support it — for the reason of its most consistent anti-authoritarian reaction towards every political and social question.

Marcus Graham
Los Gatos CA[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #307 (vol. 15. no. 6), Nov. 19, 1981, p 2.

Civilization As A Matrix of Domination

Later on, he implies that agriculture is to blame — at least for "formal time concepts" (which he never distinguishes from "self-existent time," an example of the article's vagueness), which came with the emergence of agriculture. Here he indirectly suggests that agriculture is also a possible candidate for the role of the "first cause" of the Curse, even at one point mentioning foraging as a possible basis for pre-historic no-time. In any case, with the Neolithic Revolution, it is downhill all the way to state civilization, with its priests, supported by agricultural surplus, measuring time and tracing the movement of the sky.

Here John certainly focuses on something of significance, the central role of time management to priestly and kingly domination in the ancient megamachines. But nowhere can we see time as a first cause leading to the entirety of the nightmare. Civilization, fully emerged, is infinitely more complex. Rather than a mechanistic relationship between time and its allegedly subsequent response of "spatialization" (a term first used by Bergson, I believe, in a much different way than by Zeran), space (territory and its conquest, the specific form of its temples, ziggurats, and cities) and time (astronomical and dynastic cycles, planting cycles) seem to be part of a *matrix* of domination. I would recommend Lewis Mumford's first volume of *The Myth of the Machine, Technics and Human Development* as an excellent and insightful intuition of the rise of the "mutation" of the institution of kingship and state society; likewise Joseph Campbell's flawed by helpful book, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology*, to describe that ancient state to which Zerzan refers.

As Campbell describes it, time, and conformity to a compulsive, mathematical time-obsession, are central to ancient totalitarian societies. But it is also clear that such complex systems of domination would have emerged out of more than a knowledge of time, of the timely cycles of agriculture and the movement of the stars. Conversely, time and temporal consciousness would not be enough to explain the complexities of Sumerian state religion. There is much more here! We reduce it at our own (critical) peril.

danses macabres. We tend to think of time when we think of death. But I plan to return to this question later.)

Perhaps we should all follow Brubaker's advice to consider the article an impressionistic survey of sorts, get the footnotes and go over for ourselves the fascinating material that Zerzan has collated. And though I fully agree with Brubaker's criticism, I would like to add my own two cents (or two minutes if you like) to the discussion. The mass of quotes and the occasional vagueness of their presentation make it impossible to respond to everything, but I should like to focus on four major areas which I think are problematic.

First of all his claim that "self-existent time" is the "first lie of social life" preceding or causing all others. Secondly, his notion of an opposition between timeless no-time and time, rather than distinguishing different forms of perception of time. Thirdly, his claims that we are presently experiencing the greatest "pressure to dissolve history and the rule of time . . . since the Middle Ages, [and] before that, since the Neolithic Revolution [a "time-bound" academic conversation which I am beginning to question] establishing agriculture." And lastly, his perception of our prospects today to overthrow this time-centered civilization. I think that they are interconnected and that their consideration will flow best in this order.

According to a tautological introduction by John, time, like nature, "did not exist before the individual became separate from it." Nor, one would guess, could the individual have existed either, if we are to accept this syllogism. But it is this primary alienation which constitutes "the Fall." That "time" emerged, before "Nature" or "the individual," is nowhere demonstrated, only insisted. This Fall — beginning to appear "in the shape of time," is followed by "many of tens of thousands of years of resistance" before "its definitive victory, its conversion into prehistory" can take place. He gives no clue as to what constituted this prehistoric resistance. Nor does he hint when these tens of thousands of years passed. (We could assume that he is talking about the 30,000 years prior to Mesopotamian civilization, which would mean that time emerged with some of the earliest evidences of human culture and society. In any case, the resistance, like the primary character of time, is never demonstrated, only insisted.)

Chris Dugan & John Zerzan: "More Debate on Technology: Does FE View Mean 'War on Big Brother?'" (1982)

DOES FE VIEW MEAN "WAR OR BIG BROTHER?

Dear Fifth Estate:

The cover graphic of the mushroom cloud with the word WAR! in seven centimeter lettering across the front struck me as highly appropriate for the Fifth Estate (See FE Nov. 19, 1981). It would seem to me that a worldwide nuclear war would surely be a progressive step towards "Paleolithic Liberation." In all your polemics against technology and in your point by point rebuttals to pro-tech arguments you never seem to deal with the sort of question I am inclined to raise. Namely, how do you expect 4 billion people to sustain themselves on the planet in a hunter gatherer mode of production?

The population of the planet in paleolithic times was a mere fraction of one percent of the present population. This was true for a reason; human beings needed to live within the carrying capacity of the environment. There is an optimal level in the ratio of the number of human beings to a given ecosystem for a given mode of production. I would suggest that the development of agriculture, the state, classes and technology has been a long term process of intensification of production in response to rising population pressures. With each new innovation (i.e. semi-nomadic agriculture to sedentary rainfall agriculture to irrigation agriculture, etc.) the carrying capacity of the environment is increased making further population expansion possible which leads to eventual depletions and pressure towards still more intensified production strategies.

With the development of newer modes of production for larger populations there have been various trade-offs. These have included the development of despotic bureaucracies such as the techno-managerial elite which solidified itself permanently as a class in China around 500 BC in control of the elaborate irrigation system which developed there in response to the food demands of a rising population. Although there have been "revolutions" and conquests by foreign invaders throughout China's history, the region has always been ruled by a bureaucratic ruling class and continues to this day. Other trade-offs have included longer working hours and greater and greater degrees of alienation.

The Fifth Estate makes its strongest theoretical contributions in its analysis of alienation, dehumanized mechanized labor and the techno-wasteland culture. I find myself agreeing with practically all of your arguments while agreeing with virtually none of your conclusions. There can be no denying the role that technology, especially centralized heavy industrial production, has had in degrading the spontaneity and creativity of the human spirit in favor of a homogenized, docile workforce of obedient order-takers. To assert that this is an inevitable result of technology in any form misses the point entirely, though.

The factory as a force for social control did not develop though some sort of process inherent in technology itself, it was developed deliberately by capitalists in their efforts to secure greater control over the workforce. I would direct your attention to John Zerzan's "Industrialization and Domestication (see FE April 1976) for a closer look at the late 18th and early 19th century class struggles I am referring to. The modern factory was developed, in part, as a weapon of the capitalist class in the class struggle.

Virtually all technology in history has developed within a class matrix of one sort or another. Yet you seem to regard technology as being an independent force with an intrinsic mad logic all its own and unconnected to any sort of class analysis. I am not arguing that technology in its present form will be liberating and non-alienating if only the "good guys" take it over from the "bad guys." An assembly line will always be alienating to some degree, even if it is under total workers' control.

George Bradford: "Confronting the Enemy: A Response on Time" (1983)

The following article by George Bradford continues the discussion of time and alienation initiated by John Zerzan in his article "Beginning of Time, End of Time," which appeared in the Summer 1983 FE.

A project such as ours, based as it is on our mutual desire to abolish technological civilization, capital and domination, has to eventually take up the problem of time. All of us know with a visceral vengeance the horrid role of the clock in our lives. We don't have to be convinced: we measure out our precious, limited im/mortality against the days, the hours and minutes of captive time. So it was with great sympathy that I began John Zerzan's ambitious essay on time. Unfortunately, my enthusiasm was dampened significantly by what I think were flaws not only in the form but in the intention or trajectory of the piece.

John felt the need, it seems, to sledgehammer his readers with deluge of ambiguous and at times downright dubious quotations in order to defend a thesis which he had already set out to prove no matter what. Bob Brubaker, in the Summer 1983 issue of the FE, points out a number of such problems with citations, and having had the privilege of seeing the footnotes, I would concur. One also gets the eerie sensation that for all its "anti-time" spirit, the article follows a strangely linear and incremental development — the whole world from the Book of Genesis and the Fall into an eschatology of the apocalyptic dissolution of time (followed by paradise) — which forces the entire human universe from prehistory onward into a procrustean apparatus built around a single element. Hence it becomes "not inconceivable," for example, that even the Bubonic Plagues of the mid-14th century were "in a sense a massive, visceral reaction to the attack of modern time"! (Of course, it's obvious in this one extravagant case that a morbid time sense accompanied the plagues — evidenced by chilling protests against death in poetry and in the

I see three major directions in which our species can go. The first is towards the continually expanding techno-managerial Orwellian computer Mega-state. This would involve greater and greater interlocks amongst the planet's ruling elites, greater control over the lives and thoughts of individuals, and a steady erosion of individual liberty, free thought and free expression.

The second likely direction is mass self-destruction through a nuclear war or an eco-catastrophe. This second course would favor the FE's goals, in my view, as it would drastically reduce the population pressures of the human species for obvious reasons. The question of how a reduced human population could live in a paleolithic mode of production and have enough for everyone to eat remains only partially answered at best.

The third choice which our species has is towards an ecologically sound, decentralized humanistic technology. There is simply no other way to support the basic needs of 4 billion people without some forms of technology or a massacre. If you can prove me wrong, please do so and I will eat my typewriter. That's a promise!

Population control is going to be essential one way or the other. The techno-Megastate will accomplish this through war, genocide, family planning by government decree, and through forced sterilization of "undesirables." The alternative is voluntary, rational population control by a cooperative planet-wide confederation of ecologically-based autonomous communities. The alternatives are Big Brother or the mushroom cloud on the cover of FE (or both!).

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John Zerzan responds: To see class society as the "response to rising population pressures" is to view it as a natural, inevitable outcome and neglect the tragic struggle of communal life against its domination. For an anarchist, I would have thought Kropotkin's

stress on mutual aid and the perfectibility of society would be more pertinent to the question of population than Hobbes and Malthus, who seem larger influences and who bolstered bourgeois ideology by elevating the scarcity of resources and proclaiming the constancy of the ethical limitations of humanity.

Similarly, your prescription of a "planet-wide confederation" to somehow control population on a "voluntary, rational" basis seems to me way off for one who, presumably, desires a free, unmediated condition of life. I would think that either people will apprehend and express the dimensions of anarchy directly or they will need the lingering authority of global bureaux. Not both.

In the matter of technology, here also a couple of unsound notions. You cite my "Industrialism & Domestication" as a corrective to the idea, allegedly the Fifth Estate's, that technology is independent of the social and political framework in which it is found. Yet the FE was the original publisher of this essay and I've seen no evidence that the paper's staff has ever disputed the article's thesis that a designed social control intentionality was the hallmark of factory-system technology.

On the other hand, there has been a willingness in the FE to consider the sense in which present and future technology tend toward a life of their own. Here there has been an effort to critically assess the extent to which Jacques Ellul is correct that technology is becoming itself an independent system dominating society.

Concerning the definition of technology, or rather the point at which "technology" becomes a destructive influence, here I think you have also misread the FE.

Recent anthropology (e.g. Marshall Sahlins, R.B. Lee) has completely reversed the view that original, hunter-gatherer life was nasty, short and brutish, in favor of recognizing in the Stone Age the original affluent society, in which work was neither valued in itself or needed in great amounts and in which the spirit of the gift dominated. But as I see it, the attention accorded this momentous discovery and its implications has not meant that a foraging way of life is an exact formula promoted to end the profound alienation of humanity from itself and nature. Eschewing blueprints, the FE has mainly tried to show that the myths of progress have concealed much about our origins, and has also tried to see through to the nature of the technology that now envelops us.

I tend to think the line should be drawn between tools and machines. It is here that division of labor, with its diminution of the individual, begins, and its consequence, the arrival of the effective power of specialists. The devitalization and depersonalization so vivid today perhaps finds its axial point back at the distinction between tools and machines. Langdon Winner, in his *Autonomous Technology*, put it this way: "One can seek the high levels of productivity that modern technological systems bring. One can also seek the founding of a communal life in which the division of labor, social hierarchy, and political domination are eradicated. But can one in any realistic terms have both? I am convinced that the answer to this question is a firm 'no.'"

Of course, we are meant to believe that we would all die if technology were dismantled. We are so steeped in it that the simple idea of growing our own food is not what springs to mind but rather the artificial problem of how to "coordinate" its "production." Instead of the notion of natural ways of birth control, related to the condition of being one with our own bodies, there is an unthinking assumption of factories that produce surgical steel, plastics and other dependency-maintaining substances. Today's growing distrust of high technology, however, and the "surprising" recent movement, as noted in 1980 census analysis, away from the cities to small towns and rural areas are two phenomena that point away from massified, complex technology.

But if one continues to think in terms of "production," and sees the assembly line as merely alienating "to some degree," then the essential point of the FE's quest for the bedrock of freedom is being missed.[1]

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[1] from *Fifth Estate* #309 (vol. 17, no. 2), June 19, 1982, p 2.