

GOOD SOUP

issue 1

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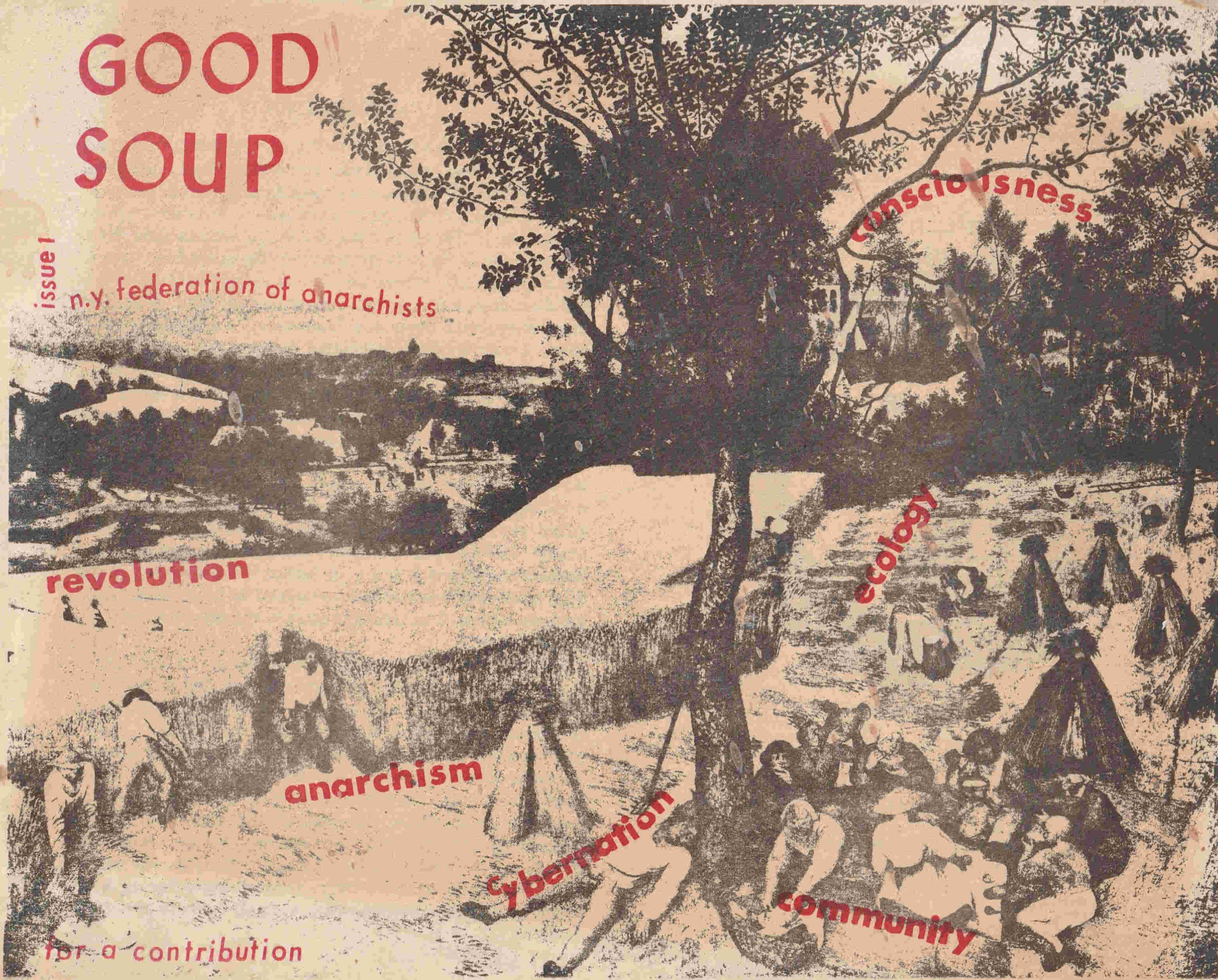
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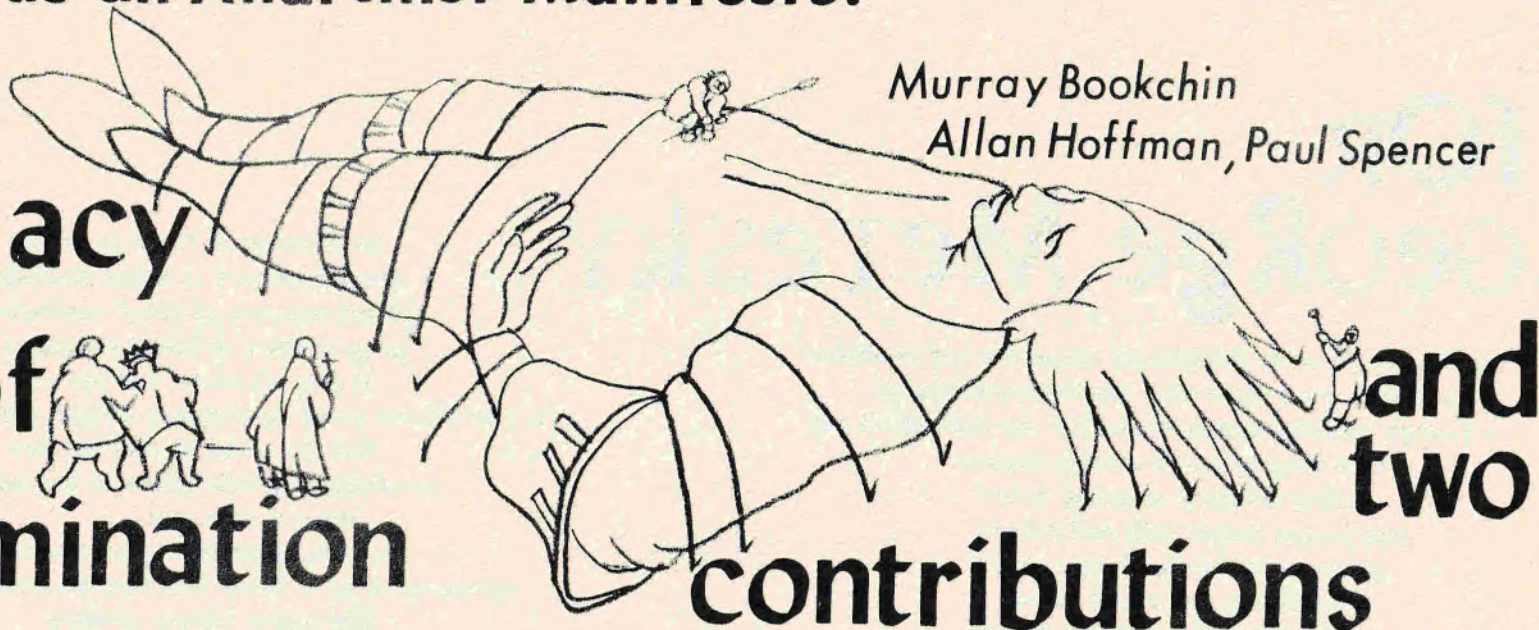
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Towards an Anarchist Manifesto:

The Legacy

of Domination



Murray Bookchin
Allan Hoffman, Paul Spencer

and two contributions

Note: An Anarchist Manifesto calls for the broadest possible participation of active anarchists and the public, not only in support or criticism of its views, but also in their formulation. For it is only in this way that a truly representative anarchist ideology can be constructed. In publishing this statement of views we are therefore calling on all those who are concerned with the unique problems of the American 20th century to enter into a wide ranging discussion on the problems of contemporary society and in formulating programs for their solution. Criticism and contributions to this introduction and to the larger body of the statement which is to follow are invited from the reader. They will be published in future issues of Good Soup.

This statement of views is written in the conviction that the 20th century is the heir of human history--the legatee of man's age-old effort to free himself from drudgery and material insecurity. For the first time in the long succession of centuries, this century--and this one alone--has elevated mankind to an entirely new level of technological achievement and to an entirely new vision of the human experience.

We of this century have finally opened the prospect of a vast material abundance for all to enjoy, of sheer superfluity in the means of life without the need for grinding,

day-to-day toil. We have discovered resources, both for man and industry, that were totally unknown a generation ago. We have devised machines that automatically make machines. We have perfected devices that can execute onerous tasks more effectively than the strongest human muscles; that can surpass the industrial skills of the most deft human hands; that can calculate with greater rapidity and precision than the most intelligent human brain. Supported by this unique, qualitatively new technology, we can now provide food, shelter, garments, and a broad spectrum of luxuries without devouring the precious time of humanity and

without dissipating its invaluable reservoir of creative energy in mindless labor. We have opened the prospect of man's development from an elemental mass, bitterly divided by economic conflicts, into a free community of sovereign, creative beings, each the master of his own destiny.

Technologically, we have achieved man's historical goal of material security. But socially and culturally we are mired in the attitudes, institutions, and values of a barbarous past. Despite the potentiality of complete human freedom, we live in the actuality of material insecurity and a subtle, ever-oppressive system of personal coercion. We live above all in a society of fear, be it of war or dehumanization. For decades, we have tried to plan our lives and achieve our aspirations under the cloud of a thermonuclear war, streaked by the fires of local conflicts in half the continents of the world. We have tried to find our identity in a society that has become ever more centralized and mobilized, dominated by swollen civil, military, and industrial bureaucracies. We have tried to adapt to an environment that is becoming increasingly befouled with noxious wastes. We have seen our cities and their governments grow beyond all human comprehension, reducing our authority as individuals, indeed our very sovereignty as human beings, to ant-like proportions--the manipulated, dehumanized, victims of immense administrative engines and political machines.

Viewed from a purely personal standpoint, we are treated with less dignity and identity than cattle. We are squeezed into underground freight-cars, rushed to the spirit-

ual slaughterhouses called "offices" and "factories", and reduced to insensibility by monotonous, often purposeless work. We live to work and we work to live--the mere automata of a system that creates superfluous, if not absurd needs; that steeps us in debts, anxieties, and insecurities; and finally, that delivers us to the margins of society, to the human scrap heap called the aged and chronically ill--deseccated beings, deprived of all vitality, spontaneity and humanity.

Our youth are processed with the same cold indifference through academic factories that their parents encounter in their places of work. Worse, millions of young people march along the road from adolescence to adulthood, the conscripted, uniformed creatures of a murder machine guided by electronic brains and military morons. Hypocrisy pervades every pore of our society. We are expected to equate political opportunism with civic virtue, cheap palliatives with social reforms, middle-class prostitution with love, television with culture, napalm bombs with freedom, advertising with art, profit with social responsibility, a philistine stupidity with intelligence, business with religion, pharmaceuticals with good health, dogmatism with knowledge, money-grubbing with idealism, competition with human solidarity, salesmanship with friendship--and when the anxieties, insecurities, and hypocrisies engendered by our society become intolerable, we are asked to equate tranquilizers with serenity.

The debasement of modern society--all the more terrifying because its irrational, coercive actualities stand in such blatant

contrast to its rational, liberatory potentialities--has no precedent in human history. Never before has man done so little with so much; indeed, never before has he used his resources for such demeaning, even catastrophic ends. How did this paradox arise? How has it come about that modern man is mired in a system of complete mobilization and coercion precisely at a point in history when he could attain complete freedom? To answer these questions, we must look at the legacy of domination which pervades his environment, his thinking, and his behavior.

Ironically, domination is usually equated with injustice--this, in a society that sweats coercion with every gesture it makes. Yet we as anarchists, who seek above all to liberate ourselves and our fellow man from coercion in all its forms, know that domination could not have been challenged as meaningfully in the past as it can be today. In making the long journey from animality to the threshold of a humanistic civilization, man required the service of not only animals, tools, and later machines, but also the labor of his fellow man. Throughout most of history the material surpluses eked from nature by the toil of the many were commandeered by the privileged few--the elite classes endowed with leisure and material comforts at

the expense of society as a whole. But by no means can these elite classes be regarded merely as parasites, although many were little more than lice on the body of history. Despite their extravagant pleasure and even more extravagant cruelties, the fact remains that they--and the gifted plebians who dined at their tables--slowly, often sporadically, pieced together man's liberating heritage of science, art, and technology. To have scattered the wealth of the few among the many, to have established equality in social rank and in the means of life, would have doomed man to a life of endless scarcity and to a different form of subjugation--subjugation to the vicissitudes of nature. Contradictory as it may seem, domination was closely wedded to man's development toward freedom--above all, freedom from scarcity.**

Conversely, just as domination made it possible for man to overcome scarcity, so scarcity provided the soil for the development of domination. The cry of freedom, equality, and a full life has been heard over the ages from the lips of visionaries and masses alike, only to be subdued by the mundane tasks of earning a livelihood. After every revolution in society, the masses of people were compelled to retire from the public arena, wearily take up their tools, and again produce for

** I do not wish to imply from the above that the brutality, inhumanity, and bestiality of class societies was unavoidable--that the blood and suffering produced by history was intrinsic to the historic process. Throughout history, great humanists and visionaries repeatedly offered rational alternatives to the vicious social forms and institutions that prevailed in their time. Alas, more often than not, history took the most irrational course of development and not the most rational. With Josef Weber, I can only say: "In history, it is exclusively a matter of what has actually happened, not what might have occurred under different circumstances and conditions. It is purely and simply a matter of historical fact that all progress has been achieved at the expense of the great majority, that is, it has been accompanied by the rise and increase of the social question. The social question is, in truth, but the form in which the struggle to assure the continuance of human life is fought." (Josef Weber, "The Great Utopia," Contemporary Issues, Winter, 1950)

long hours the means of life by which they supported themselves and a new ruling elite. Scarcity drove them back to the land and the work bench. The very meagreness of the tools in their hands, the very poverty of their technology, confined them to lives of drudgery with greater effectiveness than the police, armies, jails, and weapons of their masters. Thus it is not surprising to find that every basic change in society replaced one ruling elite by another. Only a fully automated, computerized technology could have provided the masses of people with freedom from scarcity and toil, with the free time to fully direct their social affairs, with the key for eliminating elitism itself, thereby eliminating the very notion of "masses" and "elites," of "inequality" and "equality."

We of this century have fashioned the key. We have developed the technology that could free man from the domination of his fellow man and from subjugation to the blind forces of nature. We have deprived domination of its social rationale. What confronts us now is domination that lacks any kind of historic function, domination for its own sake, domination in its purest form. Domination that lacks any kind of rationale must justify itself. It must find a seeming rationality for its inherent irrationality. Precisely because it lacks any historical, social, or human functions, precisely because it is merely a legacy of the past, a product of historical inertia, it must create its own false functions in every sphere of human existence. Just as a dying man mobilizes every organ in his body to perpetuate life, so pure domination acquires universal characteristics to perpetuate it-

self. It must try to invade every space of the human experience, capture it and remake it, for every unconquered space--be it the tradition of liberty, be it the critical spirit of thought, be it the spontaneous world of fantasy and its objectification in the world of art, be it even the adventurous impulses of manhood--all are fertile ground for revolutionary criticism. Pure domination must become totalitarian in the profoundest sense of the word. It must try to assimilate the memory of man--the memory of freedom as it exists in history and in his personal experiences. It must provide the raw materials for his fantasies, blunt the critical edge of his reasoning powers, and ritualize his relations with other human beings. For any free play of mind and spirit threatens to transcend the barrier of mere reform and pass into the open world of revolution and liberation.

Pure domination must subdue the very consciousness of domination itself. To achieve this goal in the mass mind, it presents itself as the Land of Cockayne, the plebian utopia in which "oil, milk, honey and... wine" are available for all to enjoy. In the 20th century, oil, milk, honey, and wine are transfigured into high-rise apartment houses, chromium-plated automobiles, glistening television sets, and a dazzling variety of home furnishings, gadgets, appliances and refrigerators stocked with processed foods. The semblance of utopia is reinforced by social rituals in the form of elections, televised debates, wars against poverty, and a benign atmosphere of permissiveness toward marginal protests. An unofficial morality of "live-

and-let-live," of "enjoy-enjoy," of "youth-must-have-its-fling," and a toleration of bedroom frailties cushions the stern official morality of Victorianism that lingers from the last century. To every abuse, indignity, injustice, and inhumanity, this chromium-plated utopia invokes the pledge of reform and preaches the sermon that all improvements take time.

Pure domination must try to create needs. In fact, the creation of needs is one of the most coercive forces in its armamentarium. Marx perceptively observes that the realm of human freedom begins where the labor determined by need ceases. Beyond the arena of necessary labor "begins that development of human potentiality for its own sake, the true realm of freedom..." By inculcating extravagant, senseless needs in man, pure domination not only mires him in the prevailing system of irrationality, making him ever more dependent upon things for the "satisfaction" of life, but it also mutilates his sense of values, reducing his human potentialities to the pursuit, worship, and discussion of things. Patently frivolous things become "indispensable."

By the same token, his own mind becomes frivolous, until he can no longer distinguish what is significant from what is trivial. All his thought processes, all his sensibilities, and all his emotions become thoroughly banalized.

The need for things, in turn, artificially enlarges the arena of necessary labor, diminishing the realm of human freedom. Men begin to take on two jobs instead of one, women enter the labor force in immense numbers, and the labor-force itself swells

to astronomical proportions--this, at a time when technology could easily diminish the real arena of necessary labor to the vanishing point. Thus, the words "necessary labor," like the word "needs," must be taken advisedly. Just as most needs today are artificial, so most labor today is unnecessary, purposeless, and even harmful to society. Like pure domination, labor begins to lose its social rationale. It becomes primarily coercive. Labor is used to turn the potentiality of free time into the mutilated reality of mobilized time. It conditions man in the arts of subordination and renunciation. It teaches him to accept the dullest routines and the most excruciating monotony; it forces him to prostitute his integrity and sell his personality. Fundamentally, it makes him renounce his own humanity--the spontaneity of his spirit, the free-play of his imagination, the uniqueness of his personality--lest spontaneity, free-play, and uniqueness diminish his value as a commodity.

If the chromium-plated utopia, if needs, and if labor do not suffice to coerce man, pure domination must resort to terror. What pure domination cannot invade and subdue, it must try to isolate and destroy. The coordinator of this terror, indeed of modern society itself, is the state. The existence of the state is the precondition for any system of domination. But just as domination is divested by history of its social rationale, so the state is divested by history of its particularistic functions as the guardian of a ruling elite. What it now guards is an anonymous system--a system larger than the interests of a specific class of people. From its once limited position as a police force for the defense of property, the

state extends its activities to every area of social life. It absorbs the managerial functions of the capitalist, the moral functions of the priest, the educational functions of the teacher, the ideological functions of the mass media, even the domestic functions of the parent. In a sense it not only nationalizes the economy of the classical bourgeoisie in one way or another; it also nationalizes and assimilates society itself.

If it is true, as we affirm, that pure domination is all-pervasive, that it is an end in itself, lacking a social rationale and a historic function, we must conclude that it can only be meaningfully opposed by uncompromising opposition. By uncompromising opposition we mean that we oppose the prevailing irrationality in an absolute sense: its economic shibboleths, its political illusions, its aesthetic chaos, its moral hypocrisies, its religious pieties, its prostituted values, and its tinsel rewards. We oppose all of these obscene violations of reason and the human spirit not merely as separate, isolated dimensions of life, but as a social totality. We refuse to be assimilated by the work, the play, the logic, and the myths of pure domination. In the words of Maurice Blanchot: "There is a reason which we can no longer accept, there is an appearance of wisdom which horrifies us, there is a plea for agreement and conciliation which we no longer heed. A break has occurred. We have been reduced to that frankness which no longer tolerates complicity."

If pure domination, by its very nature, invades every space of life, uncompromising

opposition, by its very nature, must block this invasion wherever it occurs. At the very least, it must begin by rescuing the rationality of the individual revolutionary from the irrationality of the existing society. If uncompromising opposition cannot stake out this minimal domain, if it cannot reclaim its own heart as well as mind, then pure domination is a vicious circle, shaping and eventually assimilating the very protest directed against it. Either theory must guide practice, or practice will eventually prevail over theory. We flatly declare that the true revolutionary cannot affirm in theory what he denies in practice. It may be that pure domination obstructs the execution of his theories with its terror, but he must try wherever possible to live by the dictates of reason, widening the gap between his individual rationality and the prevailing irrationality around him. To the degree that it is humanly possible, he must reflect in his own life what he is fighting for in social life. And this he must do not only because he wishes to exemplify his theory by practice, but because he wishes to preserve his very rationality, sanity, passion, and self-identity in a totally irrational, insane, and massified society.

What is true for the individual revolutionary holds with equal truth for the movement he is trying to build. As anarchists, we believe in the immediate abolition of the state--its institutions, its bureaucracy, its military forces, its professional legislators. We believe in the immediate abolition of private property and the commodity relationship that anchors all human values in the predatory jungle of the market place. We believe in the immediate abolition of

centralized, representative government, indeed of all centralized authority whose functions are not confined to the technical administration of things. We believe that the state must be replaced by assemblies of free individuals who live in decentralized communities, scaled to comprehensible human dimensions, and who determine their social destiny in a direct, face-to-face democracy. We believe that factories, fields and workshops must be placed at the unrestricted service of the community; that commodities must cease to be mere objects for exchange, the vehicles for acquiring profit, and must become useful goods, designed exclusively for satisfying human needs. In the pages which follow, we shall try to explain these convictions in detail. We shall try to show that they constitute the only basis for a rational, humanistic society--that modern technology not only makes this mode of society possible, but that the prevailing social irrationality of our time makes this mode of society a dire necessity if man himself is to survive.

For the present, we affirm that our movement must reflect in its own existence what it is trying to create for society as a whole. We believe that the revolutionary movement must be composed of free communes, based on direct, face-to-face democracy, and its resources must be totally committed to the dissemination of its ideas and the articulation of protest. As such, we thoroughly reject the existence of any apparatus, of any bureaucracy, of any leadership that rests on authority rather than the validity of thought. We reject political professionalism and organizational centralism in all its forms. We reject any delegated author-

ity, be it that of a local committee, a regional committee, or a central committee, whose delegates are not subject to immediate recall and whose functions extend beyond a limited, practical task. We reject the monolithic press, the hidden "party life," the buried internal controversies that disfigure most so-called "radical" organizations today. We reject the commodity nexus that has so often turned the most inspired movement into an end-in-itself--assimilated by its property, its bureaucracy, its funds, and finally its policies into the prevailing system of pure domination.

We are aware that to those who take society as it is, who seek to modify rather than reconstruct it, nothing could seem more "utopian" than the demand for decentralization amidst growing centralization and nothing could seem more remote than the demand for the abolition of the state amidst growing stratification. We are aware that to those who preach the gospel of "effectiveness," of power at the expense of principle, nothing could seem more ineffective than to build a movement based on a direct, face-to-face democracy, free of all bureaucratic control. Yet to us, the very fact that our views run counter to all the trends of pure domination is a token of their rationality and validity. Indeed, if our views were acceptable to the architects of the prevailing society, we would regard them as suspect. We do not deceive ourselves that a genuinely revolutionary movement commands a huge following, a large parliamentary bloc, and a swollen treasury in stable, non-revolutionary periods. "Effectiveness" is not a matter of technique. Revolutionary views can only exercise a significant influence in society

in periods of widespread dissatisfaction and revolutionary change. If revolutionary movements begin to grow in periods of complacency, stability, and general satisfaction with the reforms of the prevailing social order, we are convinced it is because such movements have begun to serve alien interests and their views are merely a guise for treachery and the surrender of principle.

By the same token, we do not deceive ourselves about the "effectiveness" of reform. What reform has done, today, is to preserve the illusion of rationality in an utterly irrational reality. The election rituals, the wars on poverty, the community welfare groups for better housing, parks, and schools, reinforce the myths of the system--the claim that it can deliver the "Great Society" based on pure domination. But we know that this pledge is more rhetorical than real. We find that those who engage in "practical politics," who try to improve the prevailing system with social services and political coalitions, are continually reduced by each dilemma to a choice between "lesser evils"--until the succession of choices leads to more formidable evils than those that were originally encountered. Let there be no mistake about the fact that the principal victims of "practical politics" and "realism" are the "practical, realistic" politicians themselves. They pay for their opportunism with an erosion of morale and integrity--a process that slowly leads them into the vicious embrace of authoritarianism and total submission.

On the other hand, we do not deceive ourselves that ideas alone are sufficient to sever humanity's ties to the existing sys-

tem of irrationality. To sever these ties requires the aid of forces more powerful than ideas. These are the forces of history itself, be they the conflict of social interests, the impact of automation on employment, the growing contradiction between the pledges and realities of the "Great Society," or even the suffocating effect of an all-pervasive system of coercion. How long these processes will take before society embarks on a revolutionary course we do not know. It may well be that the prevailing social order, owing to its own lack of vision, will precipitate a series of social crises long before it has lost its maneuverability. In this respect, the stupidity of the state and of the ruling elites in past eras has never failed to abet the higher interests of humanity.

But we do know that before the masses of people begin to act, the intellectuals must begin to think. The earliest signs of an impending social change are the dissatisfactions articulated by the literate, educated classes in society, such as students, teachers, professionals, writers, and artists. Initially, these dissatisfactions take the form of criticism--a re-evaluation of social life, an all-pervasive alienation from the institutions and mores of the established order. It is significant that this type of broad criticism is slowly developing in the United States. The tendency of American intellectuals to seek out issues, even where they are nascent and ill-defined, reflects a widespread dissatisfaction with the prevailing society. What is most promising about this criticism is that it cannot be confined to single issues, such as civil rights, nor can it be anchored in special interest groups

New Dimensions in Revolutionary Theory

such as the labor movement. Its very dynamism, its tendency to extend over ever larger areas of modern life--ranging from sexual mores to urban expansion--is reason more for hope than despair. This type of encyclopedic criticism may yet give rise to a new era of enlightenment, a climate of revolutionary opposition, comparable in impact to the Encyclopedist criticism that preceded the Great French Revolution.

We believe that intellectuals must discuss not only what is wrong with the prevailing society, but also what must replace it. In the pages which follow, we shall try to present a paradigm of a humanistic society, based upon reason, mutual aid, and freedom. We shall begin by tracing two historic developments--the development of liberatory ideas and the development of a liberatory technology--and examine the bearing that these developments have on a rational society. We shall then try to examine the nature of such a society in terms of its preconditions, its possibilities, and its implications for man. Our statement of views is deliberately anchored in the future. We frankly admit that we can present nothing on the existing society but sheer critique. When the prevailing system of irrationality passes into the junkroom of history together with feudalism and ancient slavery, when it has been rendered harmless and its relics are placed in a museum, then perhaps men of the future will be able to assess its dubious merits. We who are its victims can only say that to see the "good" together with the "bad," to exhibit a queasy impartiality toward its overall effect, is to be grotesquely insensitive to the mutilation it has inflicted on humanity and the human spirit.

Murray Bookchin 10/65

"...We must hope for a common rallying /of the Left/. But first our Leftist intellectuals, who have swallowed so many insults & may well have to begin doing so again, would have to undertake a critique of the reasonings & ideologies to which they have hitherto subscribed, which have wreaked the havoc they have seen in our most recent history. That will be the hardest thing. We must admit that today conformity is on the Left... The Left is in complete decadence, a prisoner of words, caught in its own vocabulary, capable merely of stereotyped replies, constantly at a loss when faced with the truth, from which it nevertheless claimed to derive to derive its laws. The Left is schizophrenic & needs doctoring through pitiless self-criticism, exercise of the heart, close reasoning, & a little modesty. Until such an effort at re-examination is well under way, any rallying will be useless & even harmful..."

"In order to strike a constructive note, however, I shall propose as one of the preliminaries to any future gathering the unqualified acceptance of the following principle: none of the evils that totalitarianism (defined as the single party & suppression of all opposition) claims to remedy is worse than totalitarianism itself...

"I believe...that the indispensable conditions for intellectual creation & historical justice are liberty & the free confronting of differences. Without freedom, no art /& no creation/; art lives only on the restraints it imposes on itself, & dies of all others. But without freedom, no socialism either, except the socialism of the gallows." Albert Camus, Socialism of the Gallows, Feb. 1957 /emphasis & brackets mine/

When there is no dogma, no party line, & there are no set formulas or rituals for expression, then, the movement which attempts to contain (within itself) the freedoms that it is fighting for, must open itself to all ideas, in order to choose from among them those concepts which best express its own inner reality. Anarchists must participate not only the social struggle for the propagation of ideas but also in their creation & formulation--only then are they fully a part of the movement for real change. In publishing the "Legacy of Domination" it will be our responsibility to also publish articles in criticism or opposition; as well as further contributions to the body of the statement; and at a later date to publish an answer from the author. The reason for this is in the desire of the movement to remain transparent so that everyone who is interested in it will be able to see & participate in the final fruits of its efforts as well as the real historical process by which they are arrived at.

My criticism, here, is not directed against the specific propositions stated, since I am in general agreement with them, but will deal with those "elements" or "dimensions" of revolutionary thought & experience which are noticeably absent from it. It is not a criticism of what has been done, but an attempt to outline what remains to be done.

The statement is a historical document with an essentially strategic intent. It develops, & its terminology is heavily laden with the terms & ideas of the Hegelian & Marxian philosophies. But by the strange & inexorable laws of dialectical thought it has evolved through & out of the limits of the political-

Marxism which dominated the 19th century & it has moved onto a new level of speculation which becomes suddenly Anarchist. But it remains for all that, an Anarchism which represents the furthest rational development of Marxist ideals, measured against those critically new aspects of our social, political & technological environment which have qualitatively changed the nature of the contemporary world. Basing itself on the Hegelian notion of the dialectic of history, Marxian concepts of the relation between the mode of production & the social mode (mode of life); it introduces the concept of a utopian social order based on complete automation-of-production. This new social order, it believes, can only be achieved through revolution; & will not have the failures of its predecessors because it points to a future goal whose substance has already been achieved in the development of the automated technology which provides the basis of this utopia, by eliminating the need for labor & therefore the need for coercion & domination in the social order that is built on its foundation.

In this process it rejects the Marxian notion of a transitional period, which it believes has already been accomplished by history; & consequently it also rejects that socialism, based on the temporary need for centralism in the party & in the new social order (state), which is given the responsibility of accomplishing this transition. After rejecting the Marxian party & the Marxian state, it then also rejects the theory which gave to the proletariat class the role of creating these organs of transition. So that, finally, it ends up denuding classical revolutionary theory of its strategic substance, while retaining its philosophical base. In so doing

it reopens for us several questions which are central to revolutionary theory, but it does not sufficiently answer these questions: If not the proletariat class, then what elements, classes, or forces in society will provide the impetus for revolutionary change? Under what circumstances or conditions might we envision that change taking place? If successful, how will the revolution consolidate its gains? And, finally, how will it deal with opposition within the revolutionary camp & the inevitable counter-revolution?

Once we have made our readers conscious of the repression & coercion which cause the horrors of contemporary life, & they, themselves, desire to eradicate the needless suffering which persists in the world; & once we have informed them about the changes in contemporary technology which provide the key to that general liberation of mankind which is the real goal of all revolutionaries; then we are faced with the real strategic questions which we must answer in order to undertake the task of transcribing our vision of the ideal into a functioning reality. And in so far as the "Legacy" does not deal with the questions of strategy which we have outlined above, it does not become for us a strategic document, a manifesto; but is merely a statement of desires & goals. What we are faced with, therefore, is a theoretical document which seeks neither to prove its assumptions nor to develop the method by which they can be brought into practice.

And yet, despite my severe criticism, the central body of ideas which define our time are contained here, & they do provide us with a foundation stone or central point of perspective from which we may view in two

directions in order to elucidate, on the one hand, the historic & human causes of society's failure, and on the other, to develop these ideas into a mature & strategic revolutionary tool. It is necessary to reveal the roots of the conflict which is raging & to reveal the methods for its solution. Revolutionary theory which does not clarify the historical & the psychological causes of the present crisis in contemporary society will certainly not develop forces to change them. And likewise, theory which does not answer the questions of practice must remain suspect, because we have already seen too many high ideals which turn into gardens for the cultivation of the flowers of evil; too many revolutions which create greater evils than the ones they destroy. The unconscious revolution leads of necessity to its own subjugation by the forces which it refuses to recognize. The task which we face is that of abolishing not only material scarcity, but of providing for the beginnings of a new epoch of peace & freedom in man's developing humanity. And while this is the most difficult of all tasks, it must remain for us the only alternative both to the horrors of capitalism & to that socialism which devours not only its opponents but also its children; that socialism which Camus calls "socialism of the gallows".

Following the logic we have been developing throughout, we recognize that the struggle for social change will be removed from the point of production because automation will displace the majority of working people from essential productive tasks. We must therefore admit that the revolutionary question has to do with the content of social life rather than the content of economic life. The de-

mands of the revolution are not demands about wages & working conditions, they are demands for a new social order. But it remains the task of those who recognize in automation the solution to the historic problems of survival & scarcity, to begin to outline the content of this new social form in order to meet the crisis of the future. Unfortunately no society has ever existed, or even been conceived of, that was not built around the necessity of labor which automation abolishes. We must therefore realize that there are several dimensions of life that have not previously been part of revolutionary theory which at the present time must be included if that theory is to precisely define the nature of contemporary social life. If we try to define what we mean by "social" in this context, we are forced to admit that we mean the whole content of human experience & the organization of society in its totality, because a technology that ends labor also ends, by the same logic, all societies based on & organized around labor--in effect it changes the fundamental character of human life, & even human nature--so that the content & organization of social life must be re-examined before we know how man will react to the total crisis which these changes threaten.

Society is built in Nature, on an economic base which stimulates & limits the development of the social forms which grow out of this ground like a plant. The economic form provides for the sustenance of the individuals; & the social form organizes them so that they can perform their economic tasks efficiently in order to survive in Nature. The heart & core of the social forms are their decision making processes, their po-

litical mechanisms, which reinforce & daily reconstitute the organs of the social structure: through the assent of the governed, who participate in some of the decision making, or through the coercion & domination of a bureaucracy or state. At the same time as these structures evolve during the course of historic development, a parallel development occurs in the character or personality structure of the individuals who are born into these societies. These structures, with their modes of feeling, modes of thought, & their symbols, are projected into the character structure of the individual by the family & the other organs of the social body. The same rules & regulations which govern the larger body of society are used to construct the psyche of the individual. The family & the state grow up together through history. Sexual mores, aesthetic mores, cultural, educational mores, all grow up along with the development of labor (or work) mores. The individual is forced by circumstance, by necessity, to organize his time, his energy, his mental attention, his creative powers, around the necessity for labor which dominates his existence. And therefore every aspect of his life & thought reflect within them the constraints imposed from outside by these necessities.

The psychological dimension, with its history & its accumulated character structures, its role in the formation & organization of society, must be understood before the psychological content of the individual & of the social order can be changed from its present state of rigidity & repression into a new psychological order in which the fundamental drives (Eros) are liberated & allowed free

play. Revolutionary theory must also show how the present level of individual & social consciousness is a product of the socialization process & how it too can be successfully changed through the revolutionary process. For it must be clearly recognized that a libertarian society can only function when there is a high level of individual consciousness, so that each individual recognizes the responsibilities & limitations inherent in his own freedom. "Man does not live by bread alone," and in society liberated from material necessity, the content of life will increasingly be filled with the struggle of emerging psychological & conscious forces which are expressions of the continuing evolutionary struggle when it has moved out of the material level into the social & psychological dimensions. Revolutionary social theory, therefore, must deal with all levels of human life & experience, the cumulate social mores & the cumulate mental notions which are the real, the human, products of social history.

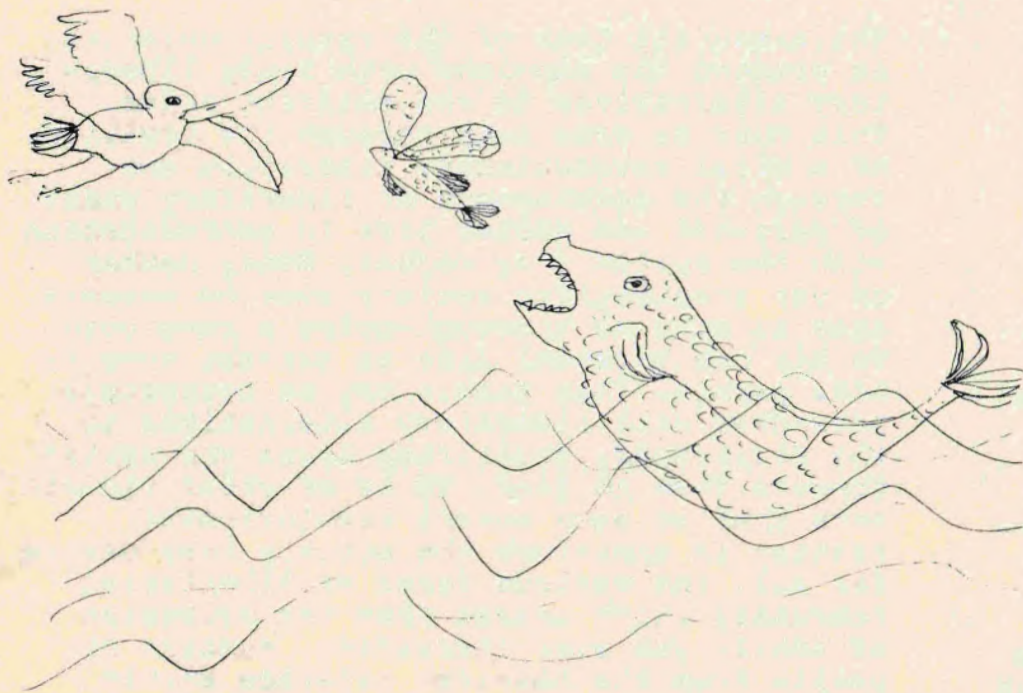
The many dimensions of this task which remain open for clarification can just barely be enumerated: it is necessary to show that automation provides a secure economic basis for a liberatory society which can free men from almost all necessary & unnecessary toil; & that this marks a qualitative change in the historical dynamic which we all participate in, marks the turning point in history when man is liberated through conscious choice from the law of material scarcity which is the cause of struggle. At the same time it is necessary to show that institutions & structures have been created which block the development of this liberatory potential; & that these struc-

tures not only oppose us in our external environment, but that they also inhabit our minds & our bodies, inhibiting us from the realization of this potential in ourselves. For those of us who are products of repressive society, the process by which these changes will occur must be clarified, because it is precisely in the content of social life that the measure of the real gains of revolution is found. And Anarchism must show how it will obtain those freedoms which are the goals for which we fight. How those freedoms will be part of the movement for change itself, how, in a word, the means of the revolution will become its ends. For it falls upon us to develop those tools of revolutionary creation & destruction which will provide us with the method for attaining our ends: for ending economic struggle; for curing the sickness of the mind & body; for quelling the hatred which is unleashed within us in the very struggle against barbarism & brutality; & for providing the social, political & personal freedoms which no previous revolution has achieved. And finally it remains for us, as a historical duty, to openly & outspokenly condemn those forces for change which style themselves as revolutionary while they prepare for the establishment of a new order based on the same coercive principles of force & totalitarianism as the enemy we are fighting. Further than this it is not sufficient merely to criticize. The revolutionary movement which styles itself as Anarchist must provide, in so far as it is possible, the guarantees of its own incorruptability, lest its pieties become ribbons on the tombs of its enemies. It must say & it must become in practice, the movement which will allow no man to rule another; it

2 Functions of the Revolutionary

must learn to build a new way of life within the old; it must become the community of brothers & sisters who find the peace, love, & freedom with each other that does not exist in capitalist society; it must become the movement in which differences between individuals are freely confronted; and it must discover & assert the underlying brotherhood of all men at the same time that it learns to defend itself from those forces in society which seek to destroy all that is good & beautiful.

Allan Hoffman 11/65



Hak Vogrin

The "Legacy of Domination" does not offer a broad enough perspective of the nature of the revolutionary process, and it takes an excessively narrow view of the functions of the revolutionist during the period preceding the revolutionary crisis, when the revolutionary transformation of society as a whole is not yet possible. Relying on "objective historic processes" it restricts the revolutionary's role to the intellectual function of criticizing the existing order and proposing alternatives. The closing paragraph of the "Legacy of Domination" states: "Our statement of views is deliberately anchored in the future. We frankly admit that we can produce nothing on the existing society but sheer critique." This is an unwarranted confession of impotence. We must also begin to develop the revolutionized social order, in embryo, within the crevices of the existing one; at the same time that we are being critical.

We must learn to view revolution as an organic process in which the abolition of power is merely a culminating, and perhaps uneventful, incident. The revolutionary movement must become an embryonic federation of free communities and attempt to persuade people in all "walks of life" to break decisively with the dominant values and institutions of our society. The development of transitional forms leading to a truly liberatory social order is a vital task of the revolutionary movement in the "pre-revolutionary" period. Historically, in virtually every thorough-going popular revolution, the appropriate political forms have spontaneously emerged at the moment of crisis. They have been organs based primarily on direct, face-to-face democracy, e.g.,

the Parisian and provincial communes of the French Revolution, the Paris Commune of 1871, the Russian soviets of 1905 and 1917, and, more recently, the Hungarian soviets of the abortive 1956 revolution. Although appropriate revolutionary forms may be expected to emerge spontaneously in a revolutionary crisis, nevertheless, it is essential that revolutionists create them now in embryo in order to produce a visible alternative to the present corporate system.

In order for revolutionists to survive and develop in an increasingly coercive and totalitarian society, they themselves must develop revolutionary modes of living, must create oases of sanity and humanity from which to venture forth in their struggle with the American Leviathan. "Eight hours for the bosses, two hours for the party" simply won't do. We must seek to live our entire lives as revolutionists; else we shall perish, either deadened and coopted by the system we oppose or driven insane.

The revolutionary overturn cannot create a liberatory social order out of nothing; it can only produce a favorable soil in which already existing liberatory forces and forms can flourish. The nature of the new social and political forms which emerge during the period of social disintegration leading up to the revolutionary crisis greatly influence the character of a revolution and the social and political configurations which flow from it. If the seeds of a liberatory social order are not sown during the "pre-revolutionary" period, the revolutionary overturn is likely to produce a power vacuum resulting in the constitution of a stronger, more efficient system of cent-

ralized state oppression than that which has been eliminated.

It is necessary to present people who are not yet sufficiently exasperated with their present lives with a viable, visible alternative so that when their discontent reaches revolutionary proportions they will seek liberatory, not authoritarian solutions. If this is not done, the spirit of radicalism may again merge catastrophically with that of reaction, as in Germany during the period of the Nazi rise to power. Objective historical forces must be relied upon to generate the radical discontents necessary for revolution, but revolutionists are needed to indicate liberatory resolutions of these discontents.

The essential task of the revolutionist is to present the populace with truly liberatory alternatives to the existing order. This must be done both through the creation of a vital revolutionary literature and through the development of liberatory modes of personal and social life in confrontation with the system they reject. Every member of our anesthetized society must be encouraged to make as thorough-going a revolution in his own personal life as present conditions permit. That people may be concretely presented with liberatory alternatives to the frustrated, stultified lives the system compels them to lead. It is of vital importance that at each moment revolutionist fashion in miniature the society they desire for all. The various forms of libertarian community which emerge from the secession of small, yet ever increasing, numbers of people from the American rat-race should form the organizational core of the revo-

lutionary movement. Each community will, of course, be thoroughly autonomous, as the basic decision-making unit in a nation-wide federation of groups and individuals.

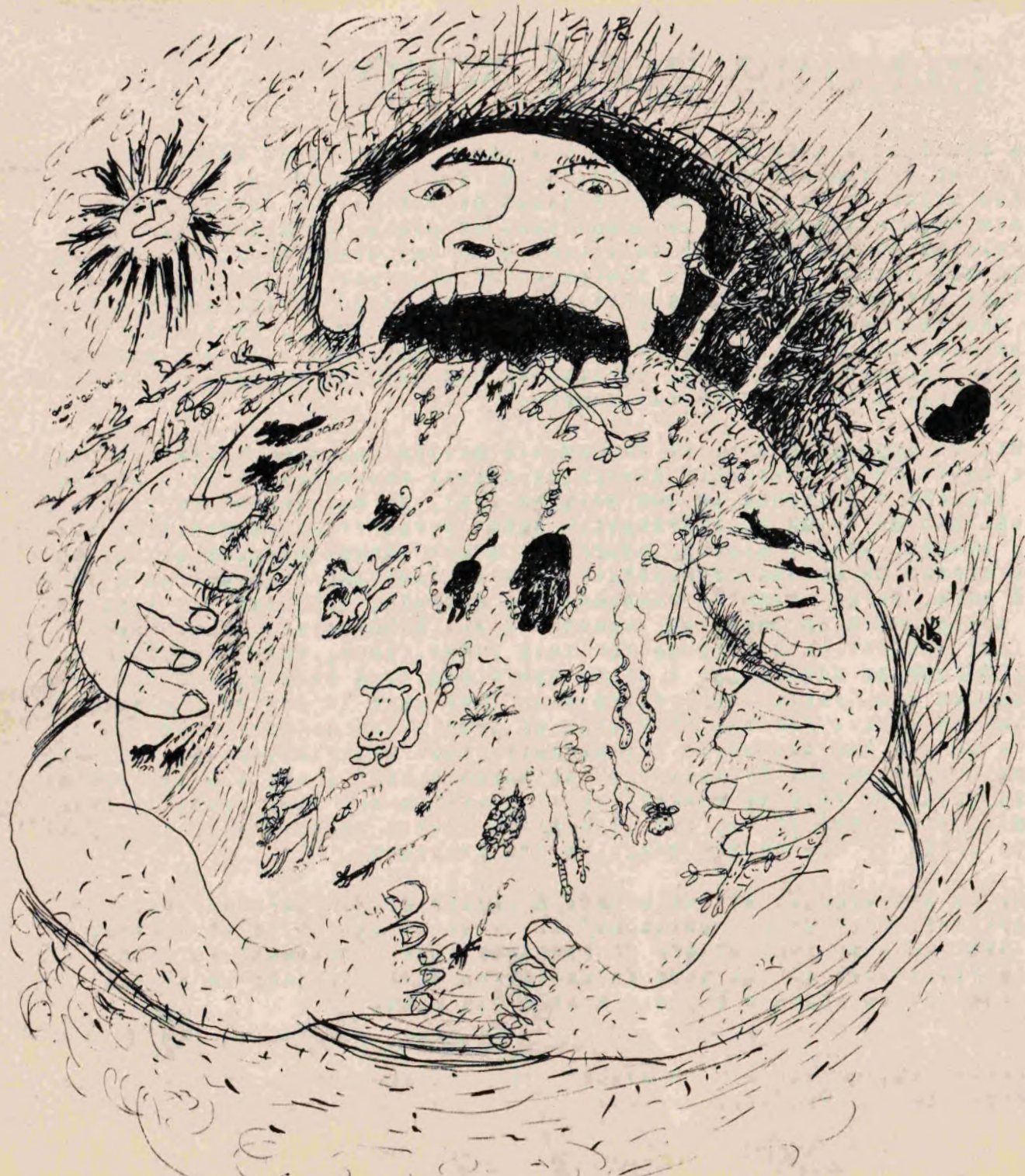
It is absolutely necessary to break with the values and ways of ersatz-life of mainstream America. This personal revolt must lead people to develop liberatory ways of living and liberatory societal forms based on direct, face-to-face democracy. But this does not suffice. Unless rebels and communitarians direct their rebellion and constructive activity toward unrelenting confrontation with American mass society and its ruling strata, their very success in achieving a more satisfying life by breaking with the dominant mores and institutions of the fraudulent "Great Society" may serve to strengthen the existing regime. Although they are unable to halt the progress of cybernation, the corporate decision makers and their political representatives feel obliged to slow its pace, because cybernation produces involuntary unemployment which may seriously threaten their power if it reaches substantial proportions. The Bohemians and communitarians who are able to find an enduring life for themselves without holding down a regular job present the oligarchy with a potential way out of the dilemma with which cybernation presents them. If the increasingly superfluous employees or their children can be persuaded that a decent life can be had on the fringes of the prevailing society by joining a swelling quietistic déclassé, then the power elite can proceed more rapidly in cybernating its subjects out of their social functions, without fear of producing unmanageable discontent. The "citizenry" could be deprived of

its last vestige of control over social processes as the ruling strata became the first elite in history to produce its own means of livelihood through its control over the computerized means of production and distribution. If this should occur, if cybernation of the economy is substantially completed without a thorough-going social revolution, then you and I and most of humanity are doomed to complete enslavement or to liquidation, as our all-powerful masters choose.

To avert the danger that those who break in their personal lives with the prevailing system of centralized repression will become an increasingly powerless declassed appendage of an increasingly oligarchical cybernating society, it is necessary that personal secession assume an explicitly revolutionary form. It is not enough merely to secede from the chrome-plated utopia of unreason; the oligarchy that cunningly and relentlessly maintains it must be uncompromisingly opposed at every step--until its power to dominate is totally destroyed. As the corporate state assimilates ever broader areas of private and social life, the opposition to it must become ever more total if it is to be relevant. The politics, the styles of life, the moral standards, the very vocabulary of its functionaries must be decisively rejected and subjected to a constant stream of criticism.

The revolutionist must combine the personal revolt of the Bohemian, the scathing criticism of the satirist, the hopeful vision of a better world to come of the utopian, the constructive development of new societal forms of the communitarian, and the theoretical perspective of history of the traditional revolutionary if he is to deal meaningfully with the problems of a rapidly changing world.

Paul Spencer



Hak Vogrin

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