

H: What I want to know, do you see any way of fusing what electric bands are doing & what printed poets are doing?

G: Well, Dylan did that, I think.

H: He did it?

G: Dylan did it sure. And the Beatles did it. Like the Beatles text for 'I'm the Walrus' would not look out of place in any book of early 20th century Dadaist rosey poetry & 'The Day in the Life' is just exactly like something by Apollinaire. It's like Apollinaire's own.

H: It hasn't gotten across to our poets yet because you have a lot of fine poets who are sitting around depressed as hell all by themselves out in the country.

G: Now?

H: Yeah, you got & & these are fine poets who have kept their integrity & there's just completely no relationship. They can't get out to the rock...they're not not... their presence...they should be out on stage. I don't know what to do about it.

G: What I've been doing, I've been learning music. The only way you can do it is to learn music, you know. You can't expect a bunch of musicians to come up & be your sidemen, you know, lift you up on a golden chair. So what I've been doing is learning music, learning notation of chords, keyboard a bit & actually composing & performing. Except I wound up not with rock people, but with black jazz. Musicians like Don Cherry & Allen Jones.

...For what you are asking, I think Dylan did accomplish the transition back to minstrelsy. Remember Pound all along recalled that poetry began with dance and music with the Greek chorus...

H: So few people learned it from Dylan. They're so many good poets that I'm constantly dealing with & they're just demoralized because they can't get out front.

G: There's more chance to get out front now than ever before because there's more mimeograph magazines...anybody who writes anything that's readable can get it printed even if he has to mimeograph it himself...which is what I did, the first thing I ever put out, when I was younger.

H: I'm not thinking about mimeograph, I'm thinking about the function that rock groups...electric rock bands..to give people energy...say the Grateful Dead...I think the poets should be out there doing that.

G: Why?

H: I'm just convinced of that.

G: Yeah, but anthropologically it should be a shaman out there.

H: That's what I've been talking about.

G: But the shaman did not always depend just on literary picture words. He did depend on dance, music, moaning, groaning, shrieking, ecstatic body movement rhythmic behaviour of all kinds, whether verbal mantra or dancing to Shango's drums.

H: I was just going over that the other day. Me & you have arrived at shamans apparently independently because that's what I've been screaming about.

G: I've been talking about it a long, long, time. Burroughs says so in print a long time back in Naked Lunch. He warns that he is a shaman & one of the things about a shaman is that if somebody disapproves the shaman he is likely to crack up & die right on the spot. He needs total belief. The shaman's art is not necessarily like literary sentences so it would be incomplete for a purely verbal poet to try & perform at all unless he depended very heavily upon rhythm as I did or as Dylan Thomas did or as Vachel Lindsay.

H: You have to learn more than one art...

G: You have to inhabit your body. You have to get into your body very deeply & that would involve the art of chanting or minstrelsy at any rate, I think. The thing I visioned originally was a beautiful naked long-haired cat dancing, chanting language with musicians...finally as an end product, somebody in a state of ecstatic prophesy...which really in a way Jagger & Morrison aspire to... What there is, is a background for what we got electrically now... is dancing & chanting & trance states which take place in Cuba & other Caribbean countries in front of the drums of Shango, Shango being a Yoruba god from Niger represented by a phallus colored red... very similar to Shiva the Indian. In Yoruba ritual as now practiced still in Caribbean countries like Cuba & I think in Brazil where

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Shango is also worshipped... the drumming has the same effect as vibrations into your muscles & bones that electric rock machinery does... in other words the original African drum also had that heavy vibration or physical impact on the body... especially as practiced in a room about this size... maybe 20 feet... with a high ceiling... packed with maybe 50, 60 people with 3 or 4 guys doing heavy drumming the god Shango being incarnate in the drum itself & the devotees and worshippers dancing in front of the drum, to the drum, are worshipping Shango in that way. So that the form of that ritual is very similar to what could be observed around 1965 in Liverpool in the Cave or Sink which was a rock n' roll underground night club... literally underground in cellars... where there'd be maybe 50 or 60 people dancing in the same way... lined up... in circles or row on row... black African style... in front of the rock musicians who were laying out vibrational patterns that went thru the wood of the seats... & the tables & the peoples bodies & bones. And there was also trance states or ecstatic possession in Liverpool, you know, girls going into a trance state for George or John Lennon... wetting their pants or whatever... going into an hysterical trance, which wasn't just a hysterical trance, it was an actual possession state... exactly as in Voodoo or in Shango dancing people go into trance states ... & then the actual circle of dancers and the shuffle step is exactly the same, or was the same, in Cuba in 1965 & I guess I saw in in 1967 in Liverpool, which is a real simple step, one two three four, one two three four, so it was just a shuffle step.

H: In conjunction with this do you see any new viable unit of social life? John Sinclair is trying to build a positive consciousness.. We Are a

People. Burroughs wants to get rid of the nation & the family...

G: ...and the tribe too. He wants to get rid of women to begin with... Snyder is working in that same area... attempting to build a tribe.

H: In conjunction with the shaman thing it seems we've got to somehow prevent a Janis Joplin scene where we've got this person way out there... We need a smaller unit...

G: The Tibetans have shamans too, you know, who had a classical thing of shamans who would do prophesying & predicting, & to do that, I think, they took a drug that was datura-esc & they had a short life-span. So classically shamans & often poets & musicians do, as we know, freek themselves out of the universe. It isn't something that I want to do, or did do.

H: It takes a lot of soul.

G: It takes a lot of soul to live too. It takes some courage I guess to go into complete swirling transvestite universes & blow them up.

H: Do you think that ordinary people could learn to live like this without having to depend on Janis Joplin to give them some life on Friday nite?

G: Yes! Ordinary people always did.

H: The situation you have now, people live off these rock stars, they go there for soul, & that's what they want; it seems to be killing some...

G: Some. It's just an extension in large magnification of what went on, say, with Bix Beiderbecke

IS THE UNITED STATES A PLANETARY DISEASE?

Imagine that we could compress the world's present population of over three billion persons into one town of 1,000 persons, in exactly the same proportions. In such a town of 1,000 persons there would be only 70 (united states) Americans. These 70 Americans--a mere 7% of the town's population--would receive half of the town's income. This would be the direct result of their monopolizing over half of the town's income. This would be the direct of their monopolizing over half of the town's available resources. Correspondingly, the 70 Americans would have fifteen times as many possessions per person as the remainder of the townsmen.

The 7% Americans would have an average life expectancy of 70 years. The other 930 would average less than 40 years. The lowest income group among the Americans, even though it included a few people who were hungry much of the time, would be better off by far than the average of the other townsmen. The 70 Americans and about 200 others representing Western Europe, and a few classes in South America, South Africa, Australia and Japan would be well off by comparison with the rest.

Could such a town, in which the 930 non-Americans were quite aware of both the fact and means of the Americans' advantages, survive? Could the 70 Americans continue to extract the majority of the raw materials essential to their standard of living from the other 930 inhabitants? While doing so, could they convince the other 930 inhabitants to limit their population growth on the thesis that resources are limited? How many of the 70 Americans would have to become soldiers? How much of their material resources would have to be devoted to military efforts in order to keep the rest of the

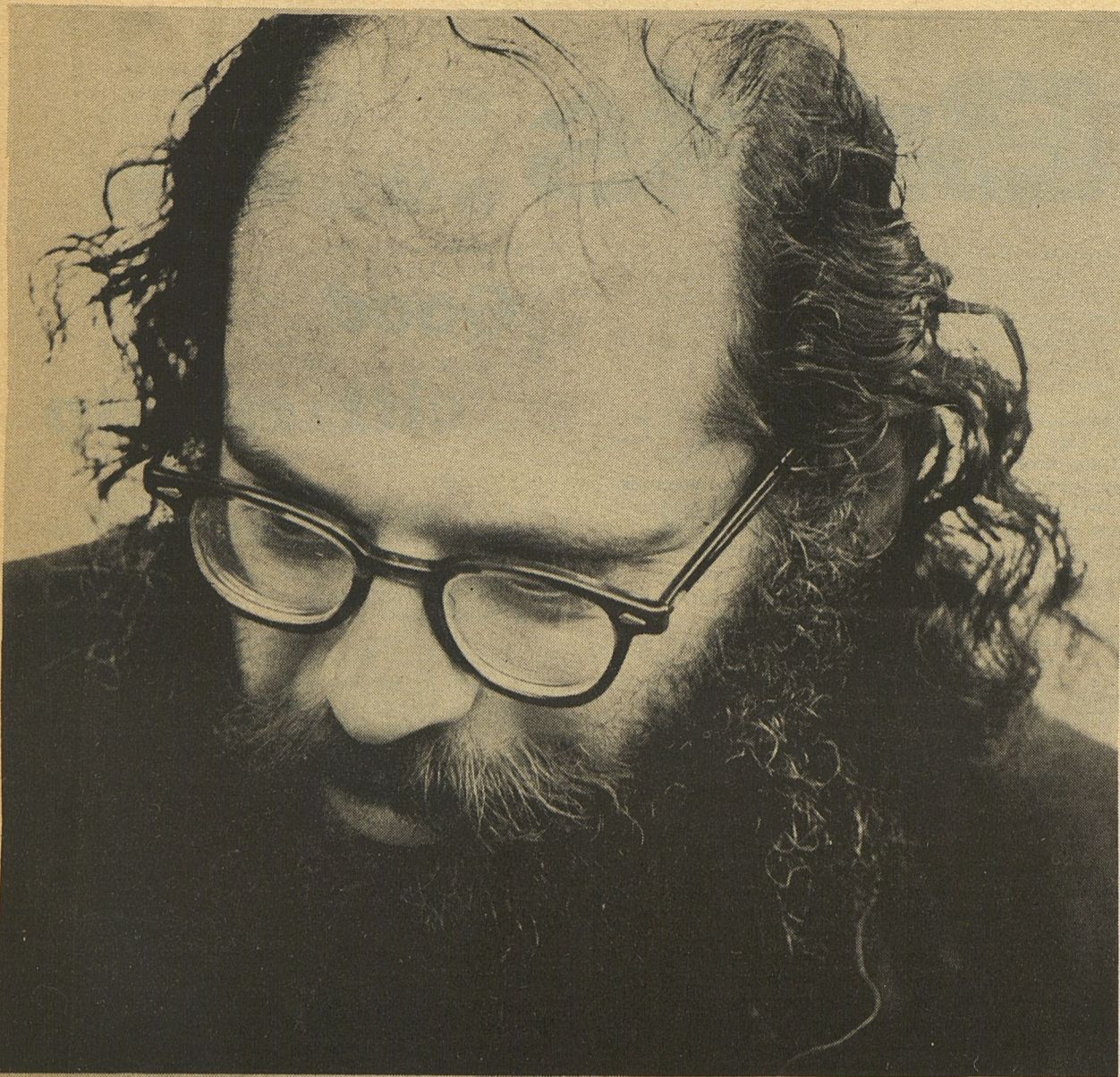
town at its present disadvantage?

Chances are the 70 Americans would have to organize into a military camp in order to maintain their material dominance of the remainder of the town. Chances are most of the Americans would be too insecure or guilty about their situation to enjoy their dominance. Chances are this guilt and insecurity would lead some of the Americans to protest the situation and call for a change. Chances are that the protesting Americans would find themselves subjected to variations of the same repressive forces being used to subdue the other 930 townspeople. Chances are the military camp would also be a police camp.

The most regretful thing about the situation you have been asked to imagine is that it is not imaginary. For such is the present material relationship and incipient political relationship of the United States to the rest of the world. The material relationship is very clear; The United States is systematically plundering the planet's physical resources. And if the political conclusions drawn above are not yet so, they are rapidly becoming so. The logical complement of a nation of plunderers is a nation of police.

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& the great blues singers of yesteryear. What's interesting is to go to Preservation Hall & see the jazz musicians who played with Bunk Johnson who are now very ancient, who are the selected ones who didn't freak out, didn't drink too much, didn't take too much dope, probably didn't even smoke... & survived 70 years & they're still playing. There are some ancient musicians, a lot of them have died on the way, but here are some ancient musicians hanging on, still blowing. I wonder, I kept thinking when I was sitting there, whether the dead musicians would accuse them of being finks & bourgeois mediocrity musicians.

H: Do you see any new kind of social unit that could be viable for people? What I'm envisioning is something that combines both politics and friendship where you don't have a political party where everybody pays lip service to something & half the people in them are agents. Some unit of social life for self-preservation & to grow... other than the family... we've had that problem on the paper.

G: OK, the problem is, the trouble with rock n roll groups, & city hippy families, is that they are alienated from the production of useful foods, & goods, that sustain them, that they are dependent upon the city. Until they get into something basic like garbage collection or food production there'll still be a feeling of uselessness, of disconnection from Mama Earth, so that I keep feeling the most strong form of commune or new family group or tribe group would be one that is connected with either reprocessing garbage, doing something absolutely useful ecologically, or growing their own food organically, or making experiments that are of use to other people. Communal groups have the best chance of having a reason for being... aside from their love for each other... have their best chance if they're producing something that's of use to themselves & to others.

What I would recommend as political action for everybody after Leary's flight & statement & Weatherman affiliation is that whatever political action anyone take it should be done on the basis of at least a minimum of one hour daily sitting, meditation, contemplation, of one form of yoga or another with or without a teacher but at least one hour daily best in the morning around dawn. In other words, if we propose to ourselves that we're going to have a revolution & that we've got to be disciplined to have a revolution then the least thing we can do is stick with the original revolutionary illumination which was the universe of soul that everybody discovered either naturally by God's finger's touch or psychedelic drugs, so I think to supplement the drugs & to make that trip a little more solid, & to augment the drugs & make the psychedelic illumination more steadily integrated with the daily body, or even to replace the drugs if one wants to do that, the universal medicine, universally applicable in the United States right now, & traditionally classically universally applied by American Indians, by Indian Indians, by any tribal

groups that had to sit long hours waiting for animals or gods to come into their consciousness. Sitting. So I think we ought to all start doing that. It will provide a bodily base for any further actions that need to be taken during the day, of either a revolutionary nature, of a political nature, of a communal nature, of a productive nature. But a politics that is not based on absolute spirituality is the same old draggy politics that will drive everybody up the material walls screaming with the heebie-jeebies again, which everybody is at this point anyway.

The medicine for the immediate hysteria which you can see reflected in the horrible pig-mantra chanting in all the underground newspapers, the remedy for that is I think the effort of relaxing for exactly one hour every morning, in total silence. Everybody at this point has been in contact with one swami or another, one religious group or another, in order to get any specific practical meditation exercise started. If nobody's been in contact with them, you can sit for an hour every morning, back straight, in a comfortable position, & say Om with each breath in & out, or Hare Krishna with each breath in & out, or any word that particularly pleases you. Pronouncing any mantra that you know that you like. The point of the mantra is just to focus the mind somewhere, preferably to say, tho, silently in the heart area while breathing easily. I've been doing it now ever since Leary left jail. That precipitated my decision, you know... decision for Christ (laughter). That precipitated decisive things, I've been thinking a lot about meditation & I had done some in the past but I had never like stuck fixedly to it as a medicine path. That's my news, & that's my proposition for the entire American left. Sit down an hour every morning from now on. Otherwise there will be a growing credibility gap between inflated revolutionary violent rhetoric & the so-called spiritual revolution which is also part of the inflated violent revolutionary rhetoric.

So if we're going to have a spiritual revolution we better have the means & the tools & the weapons of a spiritual revolution. & finally, if everybody is going to get so serious about guns then they might as well get serious about spiritual sitting.

The net effect of Leary's alliance with the Weatherman on me so to speak has been to move me further left into actual practice of research into inner space.

H: It's happening in New Orleans too.

G: It's logical & it isn't anything new or anything shocking because after all that was the premise originally from beatnik times to hippy times to be-in times of entire change of consciousness & alteration of mind. The original premise was a termination of consciousness as part of whatever was going to take place to change the world. & like it has to be stuck with faithfully. Else we get trapped in the world of our own heads, just as illusory as any capital investment.

H: Are there any Russian poets we should know about? I'm interested in Russia because of the similarities (with America) in the state apparatus.

G: I was in Moscow in 1965 & met with a couple of guys in madhouses--in jails. Alexi Ginsberg from Moscow published a magazine called Syntax in the early '60's which like stole & printed--mimeographed--poems by respectable poets about Stalin, like a poet named Shlutsky--Shlutsky's sonnets on Stalin which are attacks on Stalin, which embarrassed Shlutsky who is a member of the Writers Union, so the Russian police couldn't get Alexi Ginsberg in jail on grounds of mimeographing on account of a mimeograph is protected by the Soviet constitution, so they interviewed all his friends, like 200 people, until they found something on him, which was that he lent his university luncheonette card to a friend & they put him in jail for two years for that. So the surveillance & technical legal nit-picking jail-horror scene is very similar there to here. Tho the thing that must be remembered, which I think the left has not remembered, is something that many of the poets told me in Moscow which is that between 1935 & 1953, 20 million Russians were arrested, & 15 million didn't come back. And the guys that did that are all sitting as they say in their chairs in the bureaucracy still. Still clinging to their chairs in the bureaucracy. So what the Russian poets and the intelligensia are trying to climb up out of now is a total police state horror massacre scene which is much heavier than anything we've seen here. And much more depressing.

H: I read where they found a Russian underground paper in the engine room of a nuclear submarine being run by one of the engineers.

G: That's possible. I've heard of people dropping acid in American Polarises. There's another Russian poet named the bastard son of Yezemin-Yezemin Vopin-whom I saw with Alexi Ginsberg in Moscow & he was interested in having people send him books on British Constitutional law because, see, their whole battle there is to make the government stick to the constitution. Just like here. With them it's like a wit fight, to get an advantage verbally in public or in private, to force them by mind-force to obey the constitution.

H: That's what we've been trying to do.

G: So the situation is very parallel.

H: Have you seen Such the underground erotic paper out of Amsterdam run by Jim Haynes--he can't get it into Russia, England, or Spain.

G: Anti-grass, anti-sensory awareness, anti-sex forces in right-wing American police-bureaucracy wing Russia are identical persons, so to speak. The mentality is almost identical. That's why there's a war, there's these two power groups, totally identical, fighting each other, with everybody else caught in the middle.

H: Do you see any way we could get the Russian police and the American police to wipe each other out?

G: Hum...no, you see the funny thing is, they're using us as pawns. They're using the populace as pawns to wipe each other out.

H: I've often wondered, by the very nature of the police, that they always obey orders, if we couldn't take advantage of this fact?

G: Yeah, you might tell them to walk into the ocean (laughter)

H: You got any ideas about what UPS papers ought to be doing: In the way of intellectual initiative:

G: Yeah. There should be more pragmatic spiritual recording & reporting in the underground papers. There should be regular columns on inner search and yoga.

H: I see all these rock groups & they're out there in front and I think poets should be out there speaking intelligible words too.

G: I don't think you can separate the words from the music.

H: I agree.

G: So then what you're asking for is greater rock groups, or greater poets in the rock groups.

H: Right.

G: Or greater minstrels. But that is coming anyway because this is the first generation of such minstrels, that is 10 years now. And there's still second generations coming. You know, this generation, which grew up, invented rock minstrelsy out of, for the whites at any rate, tho it had been there as a mode for the blacks, in fact the whites stole it from the blacks in a sense, or adapted it for their own use from blacks, watered it down from blacks, but the next generation is going to have grown up with that form...