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Ted Kaczynski
Letter to a Turkish anarchist

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Ted Kaczynski

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It will be necessary to build a new revolutionary movement that will keep itself strictly separate from the GA Movement and its soft, civilized values. I don't mean that there is anything wrong with gender equality, kindness to animals, tolerance of homosexuality, or the like. But these values have no relevance to the effort to eliminate technological civilization. They are not revolutionary values. An effective revolutionary movement will have to adopt instead the hard values of primitive societies, such as skill, self-discipline, honesty, physical and mental stamina, intolerance of externally-imposed restraints, capacity to endure physical pain, and, above all, courage.

P.S. Letters addressed to me sometimes fail to reach me, so if you should write to me and get no answer, you can assume that I did not receive your letter. — TJK

Sincerely yours,

Ted Kaczynski

Enclosures: Photocopies of pages 28 and 29 of magazine *Bears and Other Top Predators*, Volume 1, Issue 2.

Photocopy of article "Sibling Desperado," *Science News*, Volume 163, February 15, 2003.

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Introduction

Ted Kaczynski wrote this letter in reply to a Turkish anarchist, Kara, who sent him a series of questions as an interview for her zine. Rather than include Kara's letter, I have quoted only the questions which Kaczynski answered. Spelling and typographical errors, apparently introduced in transcription, have been fixed. Kara's English has been corrected. Section headings have been added.

In the letter, Kaczynski describes his personal motivation for absconding from civilization; he quotes from his journal to explain his motive for seeking its destruction; he asserts the responsibility of technology for civilization; he addresses the idea of non-violence as a value in itself; he rebuts the romanticized vision of primitive society promoted by some primitivists; and he warns against the counter-revolutionary potential of the "Green Anarchist Movement," which he attributes to the influence of leftist values.

Regarding his bombings, Kaczynski claims here that he sought to destroy industrial society only after the land on which he had escaped it was destroyed by development.

The letter follows.

Dear Kara,

I am sorry I have taken so long to answer your letter dated August 12. I am usually busy, especially with answering correspondence, and your letter is one that could not be answered hastily, because some of your questions require long, complicated, carefully-considered answers.

For this same reason, it would cost me an unreasonable amount of time to answer all of your questions. So I will answer only some of them — the ones that seem to me to be most important and those that can be answered easily and briefly.

Biographical

Kara: Where/when were you born?

I was born in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., on May 22, 1942.

Kara: Which schools did you graduate from?

I graduated from an elementary school and a high school in Evergreen Park, Illinois. I received a bachelors degree from Harvard University, and masters degree and doctors degree in mathematics from the University of Michigan.

Kara: What was your job?

After receiving my doctors degree from the University of Michigan, I was an assistant professor of mathematics for two years at the University of California.

Kara: Were you married? Do you have children?

I have never been married and have no children.

Rejecting civilization

> *Kara:* You were a mathematician — do you have thoughts like that now? What has changed your ideas wholly? When did you start to think that the problem is in civilisation? Can you tell in a few words why you refused civilisation? How/when did you decide to live in the forest?

A complete answer to these questions would be excessively long and complicated, but I will say the following:

as a revolutionary movement it was a complete failure. It did nothing to correct the social inequalities of its time, and as soon as the Christians had an opportunity to make a deal with the emperor Constantine they sold out and became part of the power-structure of the Roman Empire.

There appear to be some disquieting resemblances between the psychology of the GA Movement and that of early Christianity. The analogies between the two movements are striking: primitive utopia = Garden of Eden; development of civilization = the Fall, original sin, eating the apple from the Tree of Knowledge; the Revolution = Day of Judgment; return to primitive utopia = arrival of the Kingdom God. Veganism probably plays the same psychological role as the dietary restrictions of Christianity (fasting during Lent) and of other religions. The risks taken by activists in using their bodies to block logging machinery and so forth can be compared to the martyrdom of early Christians who died for their beliefs (except that the Christians' martyrdom required far more courage than the tactics of today's activists do). If the GA Movement takes the same path as Christianity, it too will be a complete failure as a revolutionary movement.

The GA Movement may be not only useless, but worse than useless, because it may be an obstacle to the development of an effective revolutionary movement. Since opposition to technology and civilization is an important part of the GA Movements program, young people who are concerned about what technological civilization is doing to the world are drawn into that movement. Certainly not all of these young people are leftists or soft, dreamy, ineffectual types; some of them have potential to become real revolutionaries. But in the GA Movement they are outnumbered by leftists and other useless people, so they are neutralized, they become corrupted, and their revolutionary potential is wasted. In this sense, the GA Movement could be called a destroyer of potential revolutionaries.

Green Anarchism and revolution

Thus, even though the GA Movement claims to reject civilization and modernity, it remains enslaved to some of the most important values of modern society. For this reason, the GA Movement cannot be an effective revolutionary movement.

In the first place, part of the GA Movements energy is deflected away from the real revolutionary objective — to eliminate modern technology and civilization in general — in favor of the pseudo-revolutionary issues of racism, sexism, animal rights, homosexual rights, and so forth.

In the second place, because of its commitment to these pseudo-revolutionary issues, the GA Movement may attract too many leftists — people who are less interested in getting rid of modern civilization than they are in the leftist issues of racism, sexism, etc. This would cause a further deflection of the movements energy away from the issues of technology and civilization.

In the third place, the objective of securing the rights of women, homosexuals, animals, and so forth, is incompatible with the objective of eliminating civilization, because women and homosexuals in primitive societies often do not have equality, and such societies are usually cruel to animals. If one's goal is to secure the rights of these groups, then ones best policy is to stick with modern civilization.

In the fourth place, the GA Movements adoption of many of the soft values of modern civilization, as well as its myth of a soft primitive utopia, attracts too many soft, dreamy, lazy, impractical people who are more inclined to retreat into utopian fantasies than to take effective, realistic action to get rid of the technoindustrial system.

In fact, there is grave danger that the GA Movement may take the same route as Christianity. Originally, under the personal leadership of Jesus Christ, Christianity was not only a religious movement but also a movement toward social revolution. As a purely religious movement Christianity turned out to be successful, but

The process through which I came to reject modernity and civilization began when I was eleven years old. At that age I began to be attracted to the primitive way of life as a result of reading of the life of Neanderthal man. In the following years, up to the time when I entered Harvard University at the age of sixteen, I used to dream of escaping from civilization and going to live in some wild place. During the same period, my distaste for modern life grew as I became increasingly aware that people in industrial society were reduced to the status of gears in a machine, that they lacked freedom and were at the mercy of the large organizations that controlled the conditions under which they lived.

After I entered Harvard University I took some courses in anthropology, which taught me more about primitive peoples and gave me an appetite to acquire some of the knowledge that enabled them to live in the wild. For example, I wished to have their knowledge of edible plants. But I had no idea where to get such knowledge until a couple of years later, when I discovered to my surprise that there were books about edible wild plants. The first such a book that I bought was *Stalking the Wild Asparagus*, by Euell Gibbons, and after that when I was home from college and graduate school during the summers, I went several times each week to the Cook County Forest Preserves near Chicago to look for edible plants. At first it seemed eerie and strange to go all alone into the forest, away from all roads and paths. But as I came to know the forest and many of the plants and animals that lived in it, the feeling of strangeness disappeared and I grew more and more comfortable in the woodland. I also became more and more certain that I did not want to spend my whole life in civilization, and that I wanted to go and live in some wild place.

Meanwhile, I was doing well in mathematics. It was fun to solve mathematical problems, but in a deeper sense mathematics was boring and empty because for me it had no purpose. If I had worked on applied mathematics I would have contributed to the development of the technological society that I hated, so I worked only

on pure mathematics. But pure mathematics was only a game. I did not understand then, and I still do not understand, why mathematicians are content to fritter away their whole lives in a mere game. I myself was completely dissatisfied with such a life. I knew what I wanted: to go and live in some wild place. But I didn't know how to do so. In those days there were no primitivist movements, no survivalists, and anyone who left a promising career in mathematics to go live among forests or mountains would have been regarded as foolish or crazy. I did not know even one person who would have understood why I wanted to do such a thing. So, deep in my heart, I felt convinced that I would never be able to escape from civilization.

Because I found modern life absolutely unacceptable, I grew increasingly hopeless until, at the age of 24, I arrived at a kind of crisis: I felt so miserable that I didn't care whether I lived or died. But when I reached that point, a sudden change took place: I realized that if I didn't care whether I lived or died, then I didn't need to fear the consequences of anything I might do. Therefore I could do anything I wanted. I was free! That was the great turning-point in my life because it was then that I acquired courage, which has remained with me ever since. It was at that time, too, that I became certain that I would soon go to live in the wild, no matter what the consequences. I spent two years teaching at the University of California in order to save some money, then I resigned my position and went to look for a place to live in the forest.

Motivation for bombing

Kara: How/when did you decide to bomb?

It would take too much time to give a complete answer to the last part of your ninth question, but I will give you a partial answer by quoting what I wrote for my journal on August 14, 1983:

> [The Mbuti] were a people who had found in the forest something that made their life more than just worth living, something that made it, with all its hardships and problems and tragedies, a wonderful thing full of joy and happiness and free of care.

Schebesta writes, page 73:

> How varied are the dangers, but also the joyous experiences on his hunting-excursions and countless journeys through the primeval forest! We of an unpoetic, mechanical age can have no more than an inkling of how deeply all of that touches the forest people in their mystical-magical thinking and shapes their attitude.

And on page 205:

> The pygmies stand before us as one of the most natural of human races, as people who live exclusively in compliance with nature and without violation of their physical organism. Among their principal traits are an unusually sturdy naturalness and liveness, and an unparalleled cheerfulness and freedom from care. They are people whose lives pass in compliance with the laws of nature.

But obviously the reasons why primitive life was better than civilized life had nothing to do with gender equality, kindness to animals, non-competitiveness, or non-violence. Those values are the soft values of modern civilization. By projecting those values onto hunting-and-gathering societies, the GA Movement has created a myth of a primitive utopia that never existed in reality.

Competition

The presence of competition in hunting-and-gathering societies is shown by the fights that occurred in some of them. See for example Coon, *Hunting Peoples*, pages 238, 252, 257–58. If a physical fight isn't a form of competition, then nothing is.

Fights may arise from competition for mates. For instance, Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, pages 206, mentions a woman who lost three teeth in fighting with another woman over a man. Coon, page 260, mentions fighting over women by Australian aboriginal men. Competition for food may also lead to quarreling. "This is not to say that sharing [of meat] takes place without any dispute or acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt returns to camp are frequently long and loud [...]." Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, page 158. Coon refers to "vociferous arguments" over sharing of whale meat among certain Eskimos. *Hunting Peoples*, page 125.

Conclusion

I could go on and on citing concrete facts that show how ridiculous is the image of primitive peoples as non-competitive, vegetarian conservationists who had gender equality, respected the rights of animals, and didn't have to work for a living. But this letter is already too long, so the examples already given will have to suffice.

I don't mean to say that the hunting-and-gathering way of life was no better than modern life. On the contrary, I believe it was better beyond comparison. Many, perhaps most investigators who have studied hunter-gatherers have expressed their respect, their admiration, or even their envy of them. For example, Cashdan, page 21, refers to the hunting-and-gathering way of life as "highly successful." Coon, page XIX, refers to the "full and satisfactory lives" of hunter-gatherers. Turnbull, *Forest People*, page 26, writes:

The fifth of August I began a hike to the east. I got to my hidden camp that I have in a gulch beyond what I call "Diagonal Gulch." I stayed there through the following day, August 6. I felt the peace of the forest there. But there are few huckleberries there, and though there are deer, there is very little small game. Furthermore, it had been a long time since I had seen the beautiful and isolated plateau where the various branches of Trout Creek originate. So I decided to take off for that area on the 7th of August. A little after crossing the roads in the neighborhood of Crater Mountain I began to hear chain saws; the sound seemed to be coming from the upper reaches of Roaster Bill Creek. I assumed they were cutting trees; I didn't like it but I thought I would be able to avoid such things when I got onto the plateau. Walking across the hillsides on my way there, I saw down below me a new road that had not been there previously, and that appeared to cross one of the ridges that close in Stemple Creek. This made me feel a little sick. Nevertheless, I went on to the plateau. What I found there broke my heart. The plateau was criss-crossed with new roads, broad and well-made for roads of that kind. The plateau is ruined forever. The only thing that could save it now would be the collapse of the technological society. I couldn't bear it. That was the best and most beautiful and isolated place around here and I have wonderful memories of it.

One road passed within a couple of hundred feet of a lovely spot where I camped for a long time a few years ago and passed many happy hours. Full of grief and

> rage I went back and camped by South Fork Humbug Creek.
>
> The next day I started for my home cabin. My route took me past a beautiful spot, a favorite place of mine where there was a spring of pure water that could safely be drunk without boiling. I stopped and said a kind of prayer to the spirit of the spring. It was a prayer in which I swore that I would take revenge for what was being done to the forest.

My journal continues: "[…] and then I returned home as quickly as I could because I have something to do!"

You can guess what it was that I had to do.

Technology and civilization

> *Kara:* What made you decide to bomb technological areas? How do you think we can we destroy civilisation? What will make its destruction closer?

Anything like a complete answer to these questions would take too much time. But the following remarks are relevant:

The problem of civilization is identical with the problem of technology. Let me first explain that when I speak of technology I do not refer only to physical apparatus such as tools and machines. I include also techniques, such as the techniques of chemistry, civil engineering, or biotechnology. Included too are human techniques such as those of propaganda or of educational psychology, as well as organizational techniques that could not exist at an advanced level without the physical apparatus — the tools, machines, and structures — on which the whole technological system depends.

However, technology in the broader sense of the word includes not only modern technology but also the techniques and physi-

and six o'clock in the afternoon. Holmberg, pages 100–101. This makes on average at least eleven hours of hunting, and at three and a half days a week it comes to an average of 38 hours of hunting per week, at the least. Since the men also did a significant amount of work on days when they did not hunt (pages 76, 100), their work week, averaged over the year, had to be far more than forty hours. Actually, Holmberg estimated that the Siriono spent about half their waking time in hunting and foraging (page 222), which would mean about 56 hours a week in these activities alone. With other work included, the work week would have had to be well over sixty hours. The Siriono woman "enjoys even less respite from labor than her husband," and "the obligation of bringing her children to maturity leaves little time for rest." Holmberg, page 224. For other information indicating how hard the Siriono had to work, see pages 87, 107, 157, 213, 220, 223, 246, 248–49, 254, 268.

Violence

As mentioned earlier, numerous examples of violence can be found in Coon's *The Hunting Peoples*. According to Gontran de Poncins, *Kabloona*, pages 116–120, 125, 162–165, 237–238, 244, homicides — usually by a stab in the back — were rather common among his Eskimos. The Mbuti pygmies were probably one of the least violent primitive peoples that I know of, since Turnbull reports no cases of homicide among them (apart from infanticide; see *Wayward Servants*, page 130). However, throughout *The Forest People* and *Wayward Servants* Turnbull mentions many beatings and fights with fists or sticks. Paul Schebesta, *Die Bambuti-Pygäen vom Ituri*, Volume I, Institute Royal Colonial Belge, Brussels, 1938, pages 81–84, reports evidence that during the first half of the 19th century the Mbuti waged deadly warfare against the village-dwelling Africans who also lived in their forest. (For infanticide, see Schebesta, page 138.)

earlier), page 255. Among some Australian tribes, young women were forced to marry old men, mainly so that they should work for the men. Women who refused were beaten until they gave in. See Aldo Massola, *The Aborigines of South-Eastern Australia: As They Were*, The Griffin Press, Adelaide, Australia, 1971. I don't have the exact page, but you will probably find the foregoing between pages 70 and 80.

Time spent working

A good general discussion of this is by Elizabeth Cashdan, *Hunters and Gatherers: Economic Behaviour in Bands*, in Stuart Plattner (editor), *Economic Anthropology*, Stanford University Press, 1989, pages 21–48. Cashdan discusses a study by Richard Lee, who found that a certain group of Kung Bushmen worked a little more that forty hours per week. And she points out on pages 24–25 that there was evidence that Lees study was made at a time of year when the Kung worked least, and they may have worked a great deal more at other times of year. She points out on page 26 that Lee's study did not include time spent on care of children. And on pages 24–25 she mentions other hunter-gatherers who worked longer hours than the Bushmen studied by Lee. Forty hours per week is probably a minimum estimate of the working time of fully nomadic hunter-gatherers. Gontran de Poncins, *Kabloona* (cited earlier), page 111, stated that the Eskimos with whom he lived toiled fifteen hours a day. He probably did not mean that they worked fifteen hours every day, but it is clear from his book that his Eskimos worked plenty hard.

Among the Mbuti pygmies who use nets to hunt, "Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation […] in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination." Turnbull, *Forest People*, page 131. Among the Siriono, the men hunted, on average, every other day. Holmberg, pages 75–76. They started at daybreak and returned to camp typically between four

cal apparatuses that existed at earlier stages of society. For example, plows, harnesses for animals, blacksmiths tools, domesticated breed of plants and animals, and the techniques of agriculture, animal husbandry, and metalworking. Early civilizations depended on these technologies, as well as on the human and organizational techniques needed to govern large numbers of people. Civilizations cannot exist without the technology on which they are based. Conversely, where the technology is available civilization is likely to develop sooner or later.

Thus, the problem of civilization can be equated with the problem of technology. The farther back we can push technology, the father back we will push civilization. If we could push technology all the way back to the stone age, there would be no more civilization.

Violence

Kara: Don't you think violence is violence?

In reference to my alleged actions you ask, "Don't you think violence is violence?" Of course, violence is violence. And violence is also a necessary part of nature. If predators did not kill members of prey species, then the prey species would multiply to the point where they would destroy their environment by consuming everything edible. Many kinds of animals are violent even against members their own species. For example, it is well known that wild chimpanzees often kill other chimpanzees. See, e.g., *Time Magazine*, August 19, 202, page 56. In some regions, fights are common among wild bears. The magazine *Bear and Other Top Predators*, Volume 1, Issue 2, pages 28–29, shows a photograph of bears fighting and a photograph of a bear wounded in a fight, and mentions that such wounds can be deadly. Among the sea birds called brown boobies, two eggs are laid in each nest. After the eggs are hatched, one of the young birds attacks the other and forces it out of the nest, so

that it dies. See article "Sibling Desperado," *Science News*, Volume 163, February 15, 2003.

Human beings in the wild constitute one of the more violent species. A good general survey of the cultures of hunting-and-gathering people is *The Hunting Peoples*, by Carleton S. Coon, published by Little, Brown and Company, Boston and Toronto, 1971, and in this book you will find numerous examples in hunting-and-gathering societies of violence by human beings against other human beings. Professor Coon makes clear (pages XIX, 3, 4, 9, 10) that he admires hunting-and-gathering peoples and regards them as more fortunate than civilized ones. But he is an honest man and does not censor out those aspects of primitive life, such as violence, that appear disagreeable to modern people.

Thus, it is clear that a significant amount of violence is a natural part of human life. There is nothing wrong with violence in itself. In any particular case, whether violence is good or bad depends on how it is used and the purpose for which it is used.

So why do modern people regard violence as evil in itself? They do so for one reason only: they have been brainwashed by propaganda. Modern society uses various forms of propaganda to teach people to be frightened and horrified by violence because the technoindustrial system needs a population that is timid, docile, and afraid to assert itself, a population that will not make trouble or disrupt the orderly functioning of the system. Power depends ultimately on physical force. By teaching people that violence is wrong (except, of course, when the system itself uses violence via the police or the military), the system maintains its monopoly on physical force and thus keeps all power in its own hands.

Whatever philosophical or moral rationalizations people may invent to explain their belief that violence is wrong, the real reason for that belief is that they have unconsciously absorbed the system's propaganda.

Lack of gender equality

Mbuti pygmies: Turnbull says that among the Mbuti, "A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man" (Colin Turnbull, *Wayward Servants*, The Natural History Press, Garden City, New York, 1965, page 270), and that "the woman is not discriminated against" (Turnbull, *Forest People*, page 154). But in the very same books Turnbull states a number of facts that show that the Mbuti did not have gender equality as that term is understood today. "A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back." *Wayward Servants*, page 287. "He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often." *Forest People*, page 205. Man throws his wife to the ground and slaps her.

Wayward Servants, page 211. Husband beats wife. *Wayward Servants*, page 192. Mbuti practice what Americans would call "date rape." *Wayward Servants*, page 137. Turnbull mentions two instances of men giving orders to their wives. *Wayward Servants*, page 288–89; *Forest People*, page 265. I have not found any instance in Turnbull's books of wives giving orders to their husbands.

Siriono: The Siriono did not beat their wives. Holmberg, page 128. But: "A woman is subservient to her husband." Holmberg, page 125. "The extended family is generally dominated by the oldest active male." Page 129. "[W]omen […] are dominated by the men." Page 147. "Sexual advances are generally made by the men. […] If a man is out in the forest alone with a woman he may throw her to the ground roughly and take his prize without so much saying a word." Page 163. Parents definitely prefer to have male children. Page 202. Also see pages 148, 156, 168–69, 210, 224.

Australian Aborigines: "Farther north and west [in Australia] […] [p]erceptible power lay in the hands of the mature, fully initiated, and usually polygynous men of the age group from thirty to fifty, and the control over the women and younger males was shared between them." Carleton S. Coon, *The Hunting Peoples* (cited

Cruelty to animals

Mbuti pygmies:

> The youngster had spread it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. […] Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle. […] [T]he Pygmies stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing the feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day die.
>
> — Colin Turnbull, *The Forest People*, Simon and Schuster, 1962, page 101.

Eskimos: The Eskimos with whom Gontran de Poncins lived kicked and beat their dogs brutally. Gontran de Poncins, *Kabloona*, Time-Life Books, Alexandria, Virginia, 1980, pages 29, 30, 49, 189, 196, 198–99, 212, 216.

Siriono: The Siriono sometimes captured young animals alive and brought them back to camp, but they gave them nothing to eat, and the animals were treated so roughly by the children that they soon died. Allan R. Holmberg, *Nomads of the Long Bow: The Siriono of Eastern Bolivia*, The Natural History Press, Garden City, New York, 1969, pages 69–70, 208. (The Siriono were not pure hunter-gatherers, since they did plant crops to a limited extent at certain times of year, but they lived mostly by hunting and gathering. Holmberg, pages 51, 63, 67, 76–77, 82–83, 265.)

Green Anarchism

> *Kara:* How do you see anarchists, green-anarchists, anarcho-primitivists? Do you agree with them? How do you see vegetarianism/veganism? What do you think about refusing to eat and use animals? What do you think about Animal/Earth Liberation? What do you think about groups such as Earth First!, Earth Liberation Front and Gardening Guerillas?

All of the groups you mention here are part of a single movement. (Let's call it the "Green Anarchist" (GA) Movement). Of course, these people are right to the extent that they oppose civilization and the technology on which it is based. But, because of the form in which this movement is developing, it may actually help to protect the technoindustrial system and may serve as an obstacle to revolution. I will explain:

It is difficult to suppress rebellion directly. When rebellion is put down by force, it very often breaks out again later in some new form in which the authorities find it more difficult to control. For example, in 1878 the German Reichstag enacted harsh and repressive laws against Social-Democratic movement, as a result of which the movement was crushed and its members were scattered, confused, and discouraged. But only for a short time. The movement soon reunited itself, became more energetic, and found new ways of spreading its ideas, so that by 1884 it was stronger than ever. G. A. Zimmermann, *Das Neunzehnte Jahrhundert: Geshichtlicher und kulturhistorischer Rückblick*, Druck und Verlag von Geo. Brumder, Milwaukee, 1902, page 23.

Thus, astute observers of human affairs know that the powerful classes of a society can most effectively defend themselves against rebellion by using force and direct repression only to a limited extent, and relying mainly on manipulation to deflect rebellion. One of the most effective devices used is that of providing channels

through which rebellious impulses can be expressed in ways that are harmless to the system. For example, it is well known that in the Soviet Union the satirical magazine *Krokodil* was designed to provide an outlet for complaints and for resentment of the authorities in a way that would lead no one to question the legitimacy of the Soviet system or rebel against it in any serious way.

But the "democratic" system of the West has evolved mechanisms for deflecting rebellion that are far more sophisticated and effective than any that existed in the Soviet Union. It is a truly remarkable fact that in modern Western society people "rebel" in favor of the values of the very system against which they imagine themselves to be rebelling. The left "rebels" in favor of racial and religious equality, equality for women and homosexuals, humane treatment of animals, and so forth. But these are the values that the American mass media teach us over and over again every day. Leftists have been so thoroughly brainwashed by media propaganda that they are able to "rebel" only in terms of these values, which are values of the technoindustrial system itself. In this way the system has successfully deflected the rebellious impulses of the left into channels that are harmless to the system.

Primitive society

The romanticized vision

Rebellion against technology and civilization is real rebellion, a real attack on the values of the existing system. But the green anarchist, anarcho-primitivists, and so forth (the "GA Movement") have fallen under such heavy influence from the left that their rebellion against civilization has to a great extent been neutralized. Instead of rebelling against the values of civilization, they have adopted many civilized values themselves and have constructed an imaginary picture of primitive societies that embodies these civilized values. They pretend that hunter-gatherers worked only two or three

hours a day (which would come to 14 to 21 hours a week), that they had gender equality, that they respected the rights of animals, that they took care not to damage their environment, and so forth. But all that is a myth. If you will read many reports written by people who personally observed hunting-and-gathering societies at a time when these were relatively free of influence from civilization, you will see that:

- All of these societies ate some form of animal food, none were vegan.
- Most (if not all) of these societies were cruel to animals.
- The majority of these societies did not have gender equality.
- The estimate of two or three hours of work a day, or 14 to 21 hours per week, is based on a misleading definition of "work." A more realistic minimum estimate for fully nomadic hunter-gatherers would probably be about forty hours of work per week, and some worked a great deal more than that.
- Most of these societies were not nonviolent.
- Competition existed in most, or probably all of these societies. In some of them competition could take violent forms.
- These societies varied greatly in the extent to which they took care not to damage their environment. Some may have been excellent conservationists, but others damaged their environment through over-hunting, reckless use of fire, or in other ways.

I could cite numerous reliable sources of information in support of the foregoing statements, but if I did so this letter would become unreasonably long. So I will reserve full documentation for a more suitable occasion. Here I mention only a few examples.