Ted Kaczynski, Derrick Jensen
Derrick Jensen Letters

Retrieved on 11/6/23 from https://anarchistnews.org/content/letters-ted-Kaczynski-and-derrick-Jensen-0

theanarchistlibrary.org

Derrick Jensen Letters

Ted Kaczynski, Derrick Jensen

Jensen to Kaczynski — December 10, 2000

Thank you for your note. I'm sorry it's taken me so long to write back. I've been off touring to support *Language*, which is being received surprisingly well. A lot of people understand the whole anti-civilizational theme. I think that you may very well be right that we are entering what I believe you described long ago as a pre-revolutionary phase.

[…]

I'm also sorry but unsurprised to hear about how Alston Chase treated you. He's a jerk, and a capitalist ideologue. Probably the only thing we share is a common hatred of mainstream environmental organizations though for entirely different reasons.

Of course my letters can go into the archives with yours. I would be honored. This goes for future letters, too. I don't anticipate this, but if ever there are any letters I don't want for public display, I will let you know.

[…]

could get an undiluted message out to that large audience, and I couldn't get an undiluted message out you that large audience, but I presumed, essentially correctly, that an interview of you by me would be able to get that message out undiluted to a large audience. That was why I wanted to interview you for a big magazine. Not that it matters now, but I did want to let you know what I was thinking.

When I first wrote you I told you that even if you didn't give me an interview I would continue to correspond, if that's what you wanted, and that offer is of course still open. I wish you all great luck with your appeal. I do hope you win it.

Things go well here. *Language* should be out in a couple of months. It's a good book. I just reinterviewed John Zerzan about WTO, and that should be out in a month or two. And I'm working on three books, one of which might interest you. It is about the question of when violence against the system is appropriate. I'm actually not writing it by myself, but with a Buddhist guy who is very strongly against violence. I figured that having someone real to respond to would be better than setting up straw men. I've written the first five pages, and then he wrote the next ten, which I've not yet seen.

[…]

Contents

Jensen to Kaczynski — February 13, 2000

Thank you for your letter. As happens so often, part of the problem was confusion. When you made your statement about not wanting any edits made to the final piece, I was presuming you meant that no one could edit it after you and I made our pass at it. That was a condition that no one would ever go for. Of course I wasn't reneging on my original statement that you would be granted final say. After you and I had our pass, then the editors would get theirs, and then you and I would have gotten another (and final) pass. In fact it was the notion of you getting both of those passes (or either of them, in fact) that caused the problem with *Rolling Stone*. They didn't want you to see it, and I told them that was entirely unacceptable to me. I had given you my word that you would have final say and that was the end of it.

I wanted to address one other point in your letter, which was that you were surprised that I was sending it to major magazines. I'm sorry I was never clear about that before. I was trying to get some synergy going between you and me. I can publish by myself in the *EF! Journal*, and in fact have published some good pieces on violence. I don't know if you've seen them. And I've published by myself in other small magazines like that. I do it all the time. But there is no way that *Rolling Stone* or another magazine would let me talk about what it will take to make civilization collapse. They just won't do it. Simultaneously, I don't think they're going to take a piece that you write. Maybe they would, I don't know. So I didn't believe that you

more than mild irritation. If you don't like my conditions, don't do the interview.

Anyway, since you seem to want a definite and final answer about the interview, I'll give you the only such answer that I can give you under present circumstances: No.

As for your good relations with Beau, as I pointed out in my earlier letter, you may get along with him very well as long as his interests coincide with yours. If your goals are money, prestige, or career advancement, then you will probably continue indefinitely to get along well with Beau, since your goals will be consistent with his. But I repeat my earlier warning: If any serious conflict between your interests and Beau's should develop, then watch out!

In your 11/27/99 letter you wrote: "I saw a brief article in the newspaper that said you were looking for a filmmaker to tell the public your side of the story." Like so much that the media have published about me, this is bullshit. Some film or TV companies have been looking for *me*, and I have very cautiously considered one or two offers. I have at most a lukewarm interest in any such offers, and, while it's conceivable that I might some day accept such an offer, I have no immediate plans to do so.

Introduction

These letters are representative of a unique phase in Kaczynski's thought. Immediately after his capture and until about the early 2000s, Kaczynski seemed to focus his recruitment efforts on the anarcho-primitivist and green anarchist movements. He submitted articles to the *Earth First! Journal* and *Green Anarchist*, and he updated *Live Wild or Die!* on his legal case. He also corresponded heavily with figures like John Zerzan, Theresa Kintz, and Derrick Jensen. But in each of the correspondences, one can observe a general pattern: the conversation starts off easy-going, then gradually devolves as Kaczynski charges the other parties with being too leftist. As a result, by the late 90s and early 2000s, Kaczynski pretty much entirely split from the anarchist movement. The following letters to Jensen demonstrate one instance of this development. In addition, it records important events in Kaczynski's timeline, such as his early media strategy and his deal with the University of Michigan, which now stores all his papers.

Jensen is known for being a popularizer of radical environmentalist ideas and a founder of the still active organization Deep Green Resistance. To read more about the connection between Kaczynski and Deep Green Resistance, see *NY Magazine*'s "Children of Ted."

Jensen to Kaczynski — April 1, 1998

I'm off the next couple of days to interview John Zerzan. It should be fun. I'm really studying *Future Primitive* and *Elements of Refusal* in preparation. John's great. His stuff is very important. If you would like for me to send you the interview once it gets transcribed, edited, and then approved, I'd be happy to do so.

I've included here a copy of *Listening to the Land.* I hope you like it.

The writing goes well here. I don't recollect if I mentioned I just finished a play. It's about different forms of despair caused by the (economic) activities of the dominant culture, and about different forms of theoretical and pragmatic resistance to those activities. I'll tell you more about it some other time. I'm reworking some of the language, and I'm really happy with it.

Not much else to report on this end. I'll be moving later this year, so I've been doing lots of cleaning. A goose and a hen are setting. The bushes and trees are just beginning to pop. In other words, excerpt for the cleaning a normal spring.

I do hope all is well on your end. Enjoy the book!

Thank you for your note. I wish you all the very best in your sentencing. I'm not sure how much variability there is in the sentencing at this point, but I do hope that your [unreadable] is the shortest, and that the prison you go to is the least bad.

of course he knew that in that case I wouldn't have given Dubner the interview.)

So it's likely that if you published an interview with me in any mainstream magazine, it would be edited not merely for "flow, concision, or clarify," but to put a negative slant on it; or else editorial comments would be added that would lead a negative slant. (It was for just such a reason that Dubner wouldn't let *Talk* magazine publish his interview with me; *Talk* apparently felt that the article wasn't sufficiently negative toward me, and the editors wanted to add a further negative slant.) That's why it would be foolish for me to give an interview for a mainstream mag except under the condition you offered me earlier, that I should be "guaranteed final say over every word that sees print." If that makes publication in a major magazine impossible, then so be it.

I never had more than a slight interest in doing an interview with you, and I considered doing one mainly as a favor to you, because you are anti-tech. (Later also as a favor to Beau, since he seemed to want me to give interviews.) I originally assumed that any interview with you would be published either in a radical journal or in some small-circulation mag that at least had leanings in the direction of green radicalism. It came as a surprise to me when you proposed large-circulation magazines such as Rolling Stone. I was willing to consider such magazines only because at that time I still trusted Beau, and was prepared to rely on him to see to it that conditions of publication would be reasonably safe. But that was no longer true after the Dubner article appeared, since Beau had given me a wildly inaccurate picture of what the article would be like.

I really don't think that the angry tone of your 11/27/99 letter is justified. I've never had any obligation to give you an interview, and if I'd given you a flat "no" you would have had no cause for complaint. I can understand your being annoyed at the fact that I've given you indecisive answers hedged with conditions, but I don't see that you have grounds for anything

from having their fingers in the preparation of the final version (i.e., nothing that would prevent them from editing), but *after* I have approved the final version there must be no further editing or other changes.

You describe this condition as "outrageous, and impossible," and it may well be so, but in that case I fail to understand why you yourself earlier offered me the very same condition. I quote from your letter to me of August 19, 1999:

"a strict condition of publication…will be that you are guaranteed final say over every word that sees print. That will not be negotiable."

Those are your own words, verbatim.

In your 11/27/99 letter, you say that the editor (of the magazine) would only edit for flow, concision, or clarity. I don't question that it is true in the case of your other interviews, but it is doubtful that it would be true in the case of an interview with me. With only rare, partial exceptions, mainstream media treatment of me and my case has been given a highly negative slant. It would be very difficult to get anything about me that wasn't negative published in the mainstream media. Don't take *my* word for this. You seem to trust Beau, so take *his* word for it: In response to my complaint about Dubner's article, Beau wrote me,

"The media rely on nuance to say things that do not reflect status quo values, on the rare occasions that they have something to say that challenges common mores. They can only articulate 'dangerous ideas'…if they disguise such sentiments behind a veil of social propriety. … This fact about the media has some bearing on the manner in which Dubner's article was published." (Letter from Beau Friedlander to me, 11/1/99, page 1.)

In other words, Beau was telling me that I could not reasonably have expected Dubner's article to be less insulting than other media material about me, except in terms of "nuances." (Note that Beau told me this only *after* I had given Dubner the interview. Why didn't he tell me *before* the interview? Because

My quite incomplete understanding is that there exists a wide range of conditions among prisons.

I finished working on the interview of John Zerzan a couple of days ago, and mailed it off to him. If you'd like to see it after John gets through working on it, I'd be glad to ask him if I can send it to you. I'm sure he won't mind.

Today I gave an Earth Day talk at a local community college. I talked about the 6000-10,000 year sordid history of our civilization, and then focused on the crash — what it means, how it may play out (and already be playing out), what we can do, how we can shift largely away from the institutions that do not serve us well, and toward the land where we live, and so on. I was glad to see that many of the people, especially the young ones, had already thought much about the crash. I think there is tremendous understanding of our predicament out there, it's just that open discussion of this predicament is, as you know, forbidden. That is one reason I enjoy doing the various talks. I get to see the look of recognition as someone realizes, "Here is someone articulating what I know, but haven't yet heard someone say publicly." I know that especially Neil Evernden's book *The Natural Alien* did that for me. I may have already mentioned that to you. What books have inspired you like that?

Well, it's getting late, and I'm tired. I will work again soon. Please do write when you get to China. And by all means please call me Derrick instead of Mr. Jensen.

I just got off the phone with Judy Clarke, and am so very glad to hear that you would like to correspond with me. When I spoke with her last week, it was gratifying to hear that you had received and read my letters I sent a couple of years ago. Did you also receive my book? If so, did you like it? I do hope so. If you didn't receive a copy, I would be glad to send you another.

When I was talking to Judy, she mentioned that you suggested she read Ellul. What other writers do you especially like? A few who've been very important for me include R.D. Laing (His *Politics of Experience* is absolutely amazing), Neil Evernden, and Lewis Mumford. I'm sure I could think of more. I presume you've read especially Mumford. What did you think?

Within the past couple of months I've made the acquaintance of John Zerzan. I like him a lot. Both his work and his person. So far as his work, I especially agree with his basic thesis surrounding the problems of domestication: all the stuff outlined in *Future Primitive*. I work a lot with indigenous peoples, and it's pretty clear to me our real problems started about 6000 years ago. It seems like that's got to be pretty clear to anybody who thinks about these issues very much at all. It's like a friend of mine says, "So many environmental activists begin by wanting to protect a piece of ground, and end up questioning the foundations of western civilization." That's not precisely where my path began, but the path has certainly led me that direction: to question and then repudiate civilization. What was your genesis? What started you questioning?

Not, of course, that the genesis is central. It always frustrates me when people mistake the original catalyst for the analysis. Do you know what I mean? But it's just a catalyst: it's not the reaction itself.

I don't know if John has told you, but I am going to interview him next month. I'm pretty excited about that. I do quite a lot of interviews: I really like the form, and feel that the dialogue manifests something we need to learn how to do if we are to survive. More on this in a moment. Also, I love both the feeling of exploration with another person, and the different feel it gives to the final product. One of the reasons I did *Listening to the Land* as a multi-voice piece instead of a single-voice narrative is that I didn't want for anyone to be able to dismiss it as just the message of one lone lunatic, but instead the direction of an entire community. Back to Zerzan, and my interview

…

"Several other publishers had previously reject the manuscript…"

This was quite unnecessary. Moreover, parts of it are false and much of the rest is misleading. It gives a very incorrect impression of my role in the affair.

Since Beau spoke negatively about me *in public*, you can hardly blame me for speaking negatively about him *in private* to a few friends.

Also: If you had been taken for a sucker by a con man, and if you saw your friends doing business with him, would you warn your friends or would you let them unwittingly risk being taken for suckers too? In the course of his dealings with me, Beau has repeatedly made highly misleading statements, and false statements that he should have known were false. I have his letters to prove it. He has done me significant harm by misleading me, and I would be remiss if I didn't give a heads-up to friends or acquaintances who were dealing with him.

I can understand your annoyance over my indecisiveness about the interview, for which I apologize, but I don't believe you have any very serious reason to complain. Have I done you any significant harm? I don't think so. As far as I know, you have not wasted any substantial amount of money, time, or effort in preparation for an interview. So what have you lost? Very little that I can see.

You write that I "add conditions that make it absolutely impossible to place" the interview, and that my conditions are "outrageous, and impossible."

The condition that I imposed was (and I quote here from my letter to you of 10/21/99):

"the article can't be published until I have approved the final version of it, and then it must be printed 'as is,' with no editing, deletions, additions, or other changes."

Just to make sure there is no misunderstanding, there is nothing here that would prevent the editors of the magazine

Kaczynski to Jensen — January 10, 2000

[…]

In the first paragraph of your 11/27/99 letter, you wrote,

"I'm put off by [the letter] in which you warned me about Beau… […]"

That one should not talk negatively about one's acquaintances is undoubtedly a noble principle, but it is one to which Beau Friedlander himself apparently does not subscribe. I won't bother to quote to you things that he has written to me about third parties, but will only call your attention to what he has said about me to the media. For example, note the following Associated Press dispatch by Larry McShane, dated 11/5/99, at 4:28:45 AM, Central, Standard Time:

"Unable to handle Theodore Kaczynski's increasingly strident demands for handling his manuscript, a Manhattan publisher has pulled the plug on the Unabomber's planned book.

"'Toward the end, it wasn't a pleasant exchange at all, said Context Books publisher Beau Friedlander, who spiked Kaczynski's 546-page 'Truth Versus Lies.'

"A flurry of letters between the publisher and Kaczynski led to Thursday's announcement that the book deal — first revealed in February — was off. Kaczynski had tried to terminate the deal several days before Context reached the same conclusion, Friedlander said.

"'Kaczynski was uncooperative and expressed himself in ways that made it impossible for the book to be published by Context, or by anyone else,' Friedlander said in a statement Thursday.

with him. I want to be totally clear about something. John and I are not going to talk about you. Both he and I were explicit about that. I'm interviewing John based on his work, not his connection to you.

I also want to be clear about that with you, too. Judy and I talked about this extensively. I am still extremely interested in interviewing you, both because I feel lie I could learn a lot from you (and I hope you would find my conversation stimulating as well) and because I believe it would be a great way to push public discourse, to take the message (that unfortunately not enough people are willing to speak in public) to a greater audience. But as I said to her (and as I believe I said in my original letters to you), my writing to you is in no way dependent on the possibility of interviewing you. If you don't wish to be interviewed, I would still be absolutely delighted and honored to correspond with you. And you need have no fear about anything being published or revealed without your permission: in other words, I'm not going to publish your letters. The only words that would ever see print would be those you approved of. This is whether we do an interview or not. If we *were* to do an interview, you would be granted final approval over every word that gets published (this, by the way, is not unique to you: this is how I always work. John will get final approval over his interview. I just did an interview with George Gerbner, who for forty years has been an anti-TV and anti-corporate activist. He got final approval over that. And so on.) And if we don't do an interview, I will never publish or otherwise broadcast a word of our correspondence. One more thing on the topic of interviews, before I drop it: if we were to do an interview, it would be about issues. It would be substantive. If you have read my book, you know that I spend every moment of every day trying to understand and describe the pervasive destructiveness of our culture, and to try also to describe another way to be, and finally to bring about that revolution in values that is necessary for us to survive. I'm not a journalist, and am in

no way associated with the corporate press (although I am one of the very few anarchists I know who has been able to get an article in the *NY Times Magazine*. I've included here a copy). The reason I've gone on about this at length is that I just want to be explicit.

Back to the idea of dialogue. I just finished writing a book I'm very proud of. It is about how our culture systematically silences all dissenting voices, and silences as well the voices of those to be exploited, and our internal voices as well. Here is what I say on page 7: "This silencing is central to the workings of our culture. The staunch refusal to hear the voices of those to be exploited is crucial to their smooth domination. Religion, science, philosophy, politics, education, psychology, medicine, literature, linguistics, and art have all been pressed into service as tools to rationalize the silencing and degradation of women, children, other races, other cultures, the natural world and its members, our emotions, our consciences, our experiences, and our cultural and personal histories." I'm very excited about it. So much nature writing (and more broadly so much so-called social criticism) frustrates me tremendously, because it is filled with beautiful descriptions of nature and occasional outburst of righteous indignation, but it so often is careful to not offend too much, to not step too near the truth about our culture. I hope I have pierced at least that level of denial.

I'm not really sure what else to say in this first letter. How are you doing? How are you feeling? How is the adjustment to living caged? […]

sistance is helpful, and the same for violent resistance. How can we best resist? All these questions are at the heart of my work and my life, and I thought a conversation about these would be extremely useful to building resistance across the culture. But no major magazine would touch the interview where they couldn't edit your words at all. That's outrageous, and impossible. I am almost unique among interviewers in allowing my subjects to look at even my edits. I personally know of no other interviewers who extend this courtesy.

My perception of your reason for this latest set of conditions is that you got burned by the Dubner article. But don't you see the difference? That is exactly why from the beginning I have wanted to do a Q and A interview, and not an article. Your words. Not mixed with the words of your brother or anyone else. Only me asking questions. You seem to fear an ambush, but no one could ambush you in the Q and A form. It's your words. Not my interpretation of your words. Not the editor's interpretation of your words. Your words. That's it. I edit them for flow, for concision, for clarity. That's it. The editor then does the same.

I saw a brief article in the newspaper that said you were looking for a filmmaker to tell the public your side of the story. Don't you realize that as an interviewer I've been willing to do that in print from the beginning? You could have reached a couple million people — with your words — in *Rolling Stone*. But you've thrown that away by jerking me around.

I've lost patience with this. If you want to do an interview, fine, let's just do it. If not, good luck finding someone who will treat you better.

None of my frustration here in any way diminishes my hope for all good luck in your appeal. How is that going? I do wish you well on that.

Jensen to Kaczynski — November 27, 1999

I received both your two letters of this last month, and have to tell you I'm put off by both of them. I guess I'll handle the last one — in which you warned me about Beau — first. I need to say that as much as possible, I don't triangulate among my acquaintances, by which I mean I don't generally talk negatively about one of my friends or acquaintances to another. It makes me feel dirty, and it kills relationships, not only damaging the relationship with the person about whom I'm gossiping, but also the primary relationship, because it destroys trust. If I have a problem with Beau, I take it to Beau. If I have one with you, I take it to you.

Having said that, I need to also say that my experience of Beau is far different than yours. This in fact makes a nice segue to your first letter, because the truth is that Beau has treated me far more squarely than you have. I'm really frustrated with the way you've jerked me around regarding an interview. It's on, it's off because according to you I don't want to shut down the machine, it's on, and now you add conditions that make it absolutely impossible to place. In sixteen years of doing interviews I've never run into anyone who has been one-tenth as difficult. To be frank, most people have been delighted and honored to be interviewed by me. But you've made it simply impossible. Originally I perceived a Q and A interview with you as a wonderful opportunity to explore in public questions about how to take down civilization, what it takes to see your way clear of the culture, the question of whether nonviolent re-

Kaczynski to Jensen — April 11, 1998

Thanks for your two recent letters and the copy of *Listening to the Land.* I'll have to keep this note very short, in part because I'm burdened with things I need to get done before I am sentenced. After the sentencing I'll be able to write to you more freely.

By the way, when you next write to me you can address me as "Ted," if you like. No need to make it the formal "Mr. Kaczynski."

Jensen to Kaczynski — August 22, 1998

Thank you for your letter. It was good to hear from you. […]

I had to laugh when you said you hoped that the successes (the possibilities of film and theater) wouldn't cause me to start thinking the system isn't so bad. Does that mean you think I should cancel my order for the yacht, and quit my new job as spokesperson for Plum Creek Timber? Just kidding. Don't worry. I hate the ubiquitous destructiveness of the system far more than you can know. That won't ever change. But I do very much appreciate your concern.

So, James Baldwin sold out? That's too bad. When you've got some more time, you might tell me more about that. What did he write? I've not read any of his. I always sort of put him in the category with Richard Wright, whose *Native Son* was pretty good, and also Ralph Ellison, whose *Invisible Man* I liked very much. But even those I read a while ago.

[…]

I need to say something about Alston Chase. I don't know what he said about himself, but he is most well known as an anti-environmental philosopher. I have read some of his material (that which you sent, and also his book *Playing God in Yellowstone*), and I need to tell you that I distrust him deeply. To put it most bluntly, he lies. *Playing God* is full of lies that support his corporate masters. It is not merely bad scholarship, but seems to me pretty clearly the work of someone whose intent is very bad. He showed no hesitation to misquote and misattribute much material. I cannot overemphasize how dangerous

tertain lawsuits — which usually, after much time and money is expended on the part of the plaintiff, are thrown out."

This refers to 60 Minutes, but much the same may be true of any mainstream media entity, such as *Rolling Stone*.

I'm especially cautious about the media now since the publication in *Time Magazine* of Stephen Dubner's disastrous article (October 18) based on an interview that I was unwise enough to give him on Beau's recommendation. See enclosed copies of letters. […]

I *might* consider *Playboy*, but I think it's probably futile, because I don't see any way of guaranteeing that any media entity would actually honor any contract I might make with them.

I'm enclosing an article on inflammatory bowel disease (L.A. Times, 9/23/99, p. B2) that may be of interest to you.

Kaczynski to Jensen — No Date

[…]

I have to make it clear what I will require before I will give an interview. These people — I mean the mainstream media — are utterly unscrupulous, and there hardly seem to be any exceptions among them. The only mainstream journalist I've encountered so far who I think is honest is William Finnegan. Consequently, if you're going to put your article in anything but a really radical journal, such as the *Earth First! Journal* or *Green Anarchist*, I won't agree to the interview until I have in my and a properly signed contract providing an ironclad guarantee that the article can't be published until I have approved the final version of it, and then it must be printed "as is," with no editing, deletions, additions, or other changes. And even at tat I won't grant the interview until I've discussed the contract with lawyers to determine whether I will in practice have the means to enforce the agreement. Which may not be the case.

Let me quote from a letter dated 6/2/99 that I received from Steven Fischler, an anarchist film-maker who is very experienced with the media.

"[E]ven if something were to be given to Beau, in writing, the reality of a network establishment honoring such a contract, is 'EMUS,' a phrase coined by an unscrupulous record promoter who used this as a label on his records ('sue me' backwards). 60-Minutes has the best lawyers in the entertainment business, and once a piece is run, (and they've garnered their audience, ratings, and ad revenue), they have more than enough time to en-

this person is. He, along with Gregg Easterbrook, are two of the most virulent anti-environmentalist writers going today. They cloak their work in the rhetoric of environmentalism, but their work is deeply supportive of the status quo. I hope you know, by the way, that I'm not saying this because of their attacks on the major environmental groups: everyone I know and respect attacks them constantly. But Chase is dangerous. Be very careful, and if you allow him to write something about you (which, for what it is worth, I would not recommend), please be certain to insist on final approval of every word. I hope I'm not crossing bounds by being so blunt. Enough said about all that.

Kaczynski to Jensen — September 7, 1998

In answer to your letter of Aug 22: About James Baldwin, in fairness I should explain that what I said about his selling out is based on something I read many years ago, and I may be wrong. I know that Baldwin in his early days was quite bitter against the system, mostly because of racial injustice. Some years later, after Baldwin had acquired wealth and fame, as I remember it he was quoted in a magazine as having said that he was no longer bitter against the system, or words to that effect. But that is slender evidence on which to charge him with having sold out.

[…]

What am I reading now? *Listening to the Land*! I'll have something to say about that further on in this letter.

I take seriously your warning about Alston Chase. No, you're not crossing bounds by being so blunt. On the contrary, I value your bluntness. I'd rather have blunt but honest disagreement, or even a blunt but honest personal attack, than the kind of devious soft-soap that I've had from my lawyers and their hired shrinks over the last two years.

Now as to Alston Chase, in the first place I can't prevent him from writing about me. He's already well along with a book that's partly about me. By cooperating with him I get to review his book before publication and point out errors — which gives me at least some degree of control over it. In the second place, Chase has been providing me with a lot of useful information.

sibility that human activities might have anything to do with the decline.

I don't know much about salmon myself, so I didn't feel qualified to challenge him. But I wrote back to him and asked him politely whether he thought that dams might have anything to do with the decline of salmon populations. He never answered my letter. You can interpret that any way you like.

You may recall that I'm giving many of my personal papers to the Labadie Collection of the University of Michigan Library. The papers I've given them so far include some of our correspondence. [Omitted], the curator of the Labadie Collection, wants to know whether you have any objection to the correspondence being made accessible to the public. […].

Kaczynski to Jensen — October 8, 2000

I'm glad to see from your letter of 2/14/00 that you apparently aren't sore about the fact that I turned down the interview.

What I want to write to you about now is Alston Chase: You were basically right about him. I have concluded, for what I think are good reasons, that Chase selects and distorts his evidence in order to support whatever theory he is advocating at the moment. It's true that some unconscious slating is usually inevitable in argumentative writing, but Chase's misuse of evidence goes beyond what is excusable. I won't express an opinion as to whether his slanting is unconscious (in which case he is a fool) or conscious (in which case he is dishonest), but whichever it is, the practical effect is the same. He *is* dangerous, too, because his writings can seem quite plausible if one isn't in a position to check his sources.

Anyway, I thought you might be interested to know that I've concluded you were essentially right about Chase.

The following may or may not amuse you: Quite a while ago I received a letter from a Victor Kaczynski who is probably a distant relative of mine. I answered his letter, and he wrote back to me again telling me (among other things) that he was a biologist specializing in the study of fishes. He said that he had carried out studies (sponsored by timber companies) of salmon populations, and had concluded that the decline of the salmon was part of a natural cycle. He made no mention of any pos-

I know that I disagreed with Chase on important points. Most fundamentally, he seems to accept industrial civilization as inevitable, while I, as you know, am completely uncompromising and insist on and end to all modern technology regardless of the cost. I can cooperate with someone with whom I disagree; but if Chase is not honest, then that is another matter.

Would you be willing to provide me with specific examples of Chase's dishonesty? I'd like to challenge him on them and see what he says. Also, Chase used to write a syndicated newspaper column. Do you think you could get me a copy of his columns for 1/12/98 and 9/16/96? I'd like to check these out.

Now here are some comments on the people you interviewed for *Listening to the Land*. I like Dave Foreman's interview just fine. I think he wants to go to the same place that I want to go (i.e., an end to every form of technological civilization), though I would disagree with him about how to get there.

A lot of the other people you interviewed worry me very much, and I'll explain why.

Let me first posit a couple of propositions on which I believe we agree, just to make sure we do in fact agree on them.

First, all modern technology must be eliminated — at any cost.

Second, a managed wilderness is not a wilderness. The "wild" in the word wilderness is fundamental; i.e., human control over wilderness must be avoided at all cost.

Third, human control over other human beings must be reduced to a minimum.

Assuming that we agree on these three points, I argue as follows against many of the people you've interviewed. (So far I've read the interviews through David Ehrenfeld, and I'm part way through John Keeble's interview.)

Most of these people say little or nothing about eliminating the industrial system. They seem much more concerned about

imposing politically correct behavior on people. For example, they keep saying that people must be compliant and cooperative; they stress what amounts to self-abnegation and they hate all individualistic, aggressive, competitive, or self-assertive behavior.

But individualistic, self-assertive, noncompliant behavior is exactly what we need. The industrial system is founded on cooperation and compliance — on the willingness of people to spend their lives going to work every day, following orders, complying with innumerable rules and regulations. We need people who will *not* comply, who will stand up for their personal dignity and not let themselves be pushed around.

The leftist insistance [sic] on compliance and cooperation can only lead in the end to their *forcing* people to comply and cooperate wherever and whenever the leftists attain power. The truth is that human nature includes both cooperative impulses and individualistic, self-assertive ones. Leftists' ideological commitment to compliance and cooperation will lead them to squelch the individualistic impulses. In doing so they will be dominating people — controlling them.

Prior to the Russian Revolution the Communists believed that once capitalism and Tsarism had been eliminated, people would voluntarily and spontaneously behave like good little socialists (i.e., be compliant and cooperative), hence the state could be allowed eventually to wither away. After the Revolution they discovered that people did *not* spontaneously behave like good little socialists. So the Communists had to *force* them to behave like good little socialists (they called this "creating the New Soviet Man"), and we know what that led to.

Today's leftists will do much the same thing. They oppose the way technology is being used today, but they only want to see that technology is used in a politically correct way. They don't want to *eliminate* modern tech., because they know that without it they can never realize their dream of a collectivized world.

What are you reading/ I remember reading somewhere that you read *The Secret Agent*, by Conrad. […]

Jensen to Kaczynski — October 16, 1999

[…]

I spoke too soon on *Rolling Stone*. They agreed to the interview, then backed out because they didn't want me to let you see it after I had edited it. They were prattling on about "journalistic integrity." This from a magazine that publishes an interview of Brad Pitt and talks about his dreams. It's total crap.

Beau is helping me with negotiations because I hate negotiations. I just hate them. So we're going to call some more magazines and see if we can interest others.

In the meantime, I have a couple of questions for you. 1) Would you consider removing the condition that you see the interview after I edit it? I am not in favor of this. The *RS* editor said that "it just isn't done." Bullshit. I do it all the time. And to be honest, I don't trust hi. He has jerked me around a bunch of times already in negotiations. If you would like to relax this condition, we can get it in *Rolling Stone*. Like I said, I'm not excited about doing that, but if it's okay with you, we can do that. The other one I feel more strongly about. 2) Would you consider removing your stricture against *Penthouse* and especially *Playboy*? I understand your concern, but especially *Playboy* is actually well-considered. Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura recently was interviewed in *Playboy*, and it got lots of bounce, with nobody talking about "pornography." Once again, I will defer to your wishes on this, but I would strongly urge you to reconsider.

[…]

They not only will not eliminate industrial society, they will want to manage wilderness according to their standards of political correctness. E.g., some animal-rights activists want to solve the problem of deer over-population by shooting the deer with tranquilizer darts and administering contraceptive medication — a profoundly intrusive measure of human control over nature. (But more politically-correct than hunting.)

To me it seems that many of the people you interviewed are engaged in a form of co-optation. They talk about nature and wilderness, but underneath they are much less interested in the *wild* in wilderness, or in human nature, than they are in their collectivistic political agenda. Hence, in the end, they will betray both wilderness and human freedom.

I suggest that you should ask all your interviewees the following key question, which will help to reveal where they *really* stand:

Do you believe that all modern technology should be eliminated, even if that should result in the release of certain unfortunate human impulses such as aggression, competitiveness, or male dominance?

Okay, *there's* a point to argue over, and I invite you to be as blunt, or even aggressive, as you please in arguing it.

[…]

Jensen to Kaczynski — September 14, 1998

Thank you for your letter. It was interesting and good to hear what you said about James Baldwin. You put the caveat that the quote attributed to him in a magazine was slender evidence of him having sold out. That's a tough one, because if he did say he was no longer bitter toward the machine, then he certainly did sell out. But how much can we believe of what the press says?

Another problem is what a friend of mine calls "ideological specialists." In an overtly totalitarian state they're murdered, but in a more "friendly fascist" state they are given titles and roles in society, and serve the important function of carrying on the lie of open discourse. You of course know about this. But as soon as they threaten real change, the ideological specialist is assassinated, said killing blamed on a lone gunman (a "lone lunatic") and trotted out as evidence that the ideological specialist wasn't taken seriously by anyone, anyway.

This leads right into your criticism of many of the people in my book. I do believe that many of them would fall into this category of ideological specialist, serving as a release valve for pressure built up in our ridiculous system. I do believe that many of them, in their heart of hearts, do not deeply oppose the system, and if push came to shove, would be shoving for all they're worth in the wrong direction. I know you said good things about the Dave Foreman interview, but truth be told, if I were to do the book again I wouldn't include him. These past couple of years he has come out strongly against ending com-

Jensen to Kazynski — August 19, 1999

I talked to Beau, who said you have decided to do an interview with me. I'm glad. I think it will be good.

Before I can set it up, I will need to place it. I'm sure that won't be a problem. Do you have any places you would or would not like to see it placed? My inclination would be to place it in the largest circulation magazine possible, simply to reach the largest audience. […]

whole system to be brought down (and now) doesn't mean I don't file timber sale appeals […], it doesn't mean that I don't do what I can to promote dam removal, and it doesn't mean I don't physically do stream restoration, the whole time keeping in mind (and being vocal about), the fact that these are all itty bitty pieces of the larger puzzle, and the whole time keeping in mind that my ultimate (and insofar as possible, immediate) goal is to bring down this culture of death before it destroys all life on earth. […]

mercial logging in the National Forests, and in fact is quoted widely now in the anti-wilderness set. I think what happened is that when he got arrested several years ago he got scared, and went back to his Wilderness Society roots. But there are a few in the book I know would come down on the right side. I know that.

This whole question brings up something I've written in my new book. I don't know if I've shared this with you before, but it addresses this question of what writers want. It's a question I ask myself daily: how can discourse help. I'll ask you that question: how can discourse help? Anyway, here is the section from my book. I don't mind it being read by authorities because I've already given this testimony numerous times before National Marine Fisheries Services hearings, and also Northwest Power Planning Council hearings, and it's been in print several times. "Every morning when I awaken I ask myself whether I should write or blow up a dam. Every day I tell myself I should continue to write. Yet I'm not always convinced I'm making the right decision. I've written books and I've done activism. At the same time I know it's neither a lack of words nor a lack of activism that's killing the salmon here in the Northwest, but rather the presence of dams. […]"

Actually one reason that right now I keep writing is that I got so frustrated in writing LTTL that many of the people I interviewed stopped well short of where both they and I knew their analysis was headed. Or another thing that happens all the time is that when the tape recorder is off, they will openly admit how awful the system is, but when the recorder goes on they back away. One reason I write is simply because I don't do it, nobody else is saying what I need to say.

For example, the death urge of the culture. I believe that underlying all of our talk, all of our justifications, our culture is driven by an urge to annihilate the world and to annihilate itself. This is a subject for a whole other discussion. The point here is that I couldn't get anybody in LTTL to talk about that,

except for Arno Gruen. And no one is really writing about it. The point: I've got to discuss this. But I still wonder, of course, if that is how I can best serve.

Now to the other issue you brought up, of cooperation. I agree with you one hundred percent that we need to not cooperate with the system. This is spot on. But there's another issue here, I think. I write about this, too, extensively in my newest book. I think we need to separate the notion of going along with a wretched system, and finding our place in the natural world. There's a difference between cooperating with the salmon and cooperating with a tyrant. And I think that is really important. One of the central imperatives of our culture is to try to dominate nature. That's one reason we're killing the planet. But it is a much better survival tactic to simply cooperate with the natural world, to take what it gives willingly. One reason this is really important is because so often people say that domination is central to the natural world, and that us dominating everything (or rather attempting to) is just natural, it's inevitable. But that's crap. Here's how I know. I've written about this, too, in the new book, and said it in talks, like this one given to farmers:

The destruction of dodo birds, for example, may have been regrettable, but we simply couldn't help ourselves, and in any case they were unfit. As for indigenous peoples, they, too, are 'inferior' and must make way as we, and this is a direct quote used to justify genocide, 'invoke and remorselessly fulfill the inexorable law of natural selection.' Same with family farms. Same with farmers who care about their animals. Same with anyone who cannot compete with taxpayer-subsidized forms of institutionalized exploitation such as Tyson, ConAgra, Dreyfus, etc. I'm sorry, *we will say,* but that's the way the world goes. *But any attempt to say that ruthless competition is 'the inexorable law of natural selection' is nothing more than a pathetic attempt to make our culture's psychopathology seem natural. If there is one thing I know about natural selection it is this: creatures who have sur-*

and collectively we're much stronger than the government and the corporations.

But even if thousands don't go on the air, even if it's only hundreds, or even if it's only one, that would be good enough reason to go on. I don't now who first said that it's better to struggle for something and not win than to not struggle at all. As I've said before, it's far better to fight to the grave than to live on your knees as a slave. Are we going to be a free people or are we not? That's the central question.

All this brings me to a place where you and I might disagree. The fact that I want to overturn the whole system, and I want to overturn it now, doesn't mean I don't interview people who work on discrete parts, many of whom cannot see the whole pictures (and many of whom refuse to see the whole picture). But they still see a PART of the whole picture, and in interviews with them I aim to make those parts of the picture as clear as I can. A good example is my interview last year with John Stauber, the world's foremost anti-PR expert. Unfortunately, he didn't want to talk about the problems inherent in industrial civilization. I tried. And that's okay, because that's not the area he has thought most about anyway, which means that most of what he would have had to say about it would probably have been next to useless. But his inability or unwillingness to speak to the roots of the problem in no way denigrates the fact that he holds one piece of the puzzle, that piece being how the public relations industry manipulates individual desire and social decision-making processes. You hold another (larger and far more basic) piece of the puzzle. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't talk about his piece of the puzzle. If we're going to dismantle a huge machine, which is what we're talking about, we need people like you and like me who look at the whole part of the machine, and we need people like John Stauber who tug at individual parts, and who frankly do an infinitely better job of tugging at that particular part than I ever could. I'll put this another way: just because I want the

on whom I can get published. And I push that farther than any other interviewer or writer I've encountered. For example, my interview with John Zerzan. I'm currently waiting for Stephen Dunifer (one of the progenitors of microradio, so-called "pirate radio") to return to me the final draft of an interview I did with him this spring. I don't think he would mind if I shared with you this excerpt:

SD: We are all in prison. Many are in physical prisons, but many more of us are imprisoned just as surely by the commodification of our desires. And then so many social workers and even social activists essentially act as prison consultants, and say they're acting in our best interests as they try to make our prison cells slightly more comfortable. I'm not interested in that. I'm interested in dismantling the whole carcerial system we call civilization. And microradio is one tool to help us break it down. It's part of this whole road of liberation, both at the individual and community levels, that's so antithetical to the thinking of corporate people, and the whole neoliberal establishment.

We're really at a crisis point, not only in terms of the micropower broadcasting movement, but in terms of social movements, and movements for autonomy around the world, because if we don't succeed somehow, we're screwed. The biosphere cannot sustain the current level of activity.

DJ: If we don't succeed we won't survive.

SD: That's the bottom line. I think we have opportunities, and I think it's a matter of everyone seizing those opportunities and going for it. Maybe Y2K will bring the whole shebang down. It might. It might not. Who knows? But here's a though I'm urging everyone now, if possible, to develop their equipment and go on the air January 1, 2000. They might have to go on the air because everything else might shut down. But I think it would certainly be a feasible thing to get several thousand people to all go on the air at once. That would be a powerful statement. If people can just begin to stand up on their own, they'll realize that individually

vived in the long run, have survived in the long run. *It is not possible to survive in the long run by taking from your surroundings more than you give back. It's clearly in the interests of bears to make sure salmon return and berries ripen. They can eat them, but they cannot dominate or hyperexploit them and expect to survive.Insofar as even so-called competitors enrich and enliven the natural community in which they live, it is in the bears' best interests to see that they, too, thrive. The same can be said for all of us — human and nonhuman alike — that we cannot long survive lest we enrich the lives of those around us. Those who don't cooperate don't survive in the long run.*

I need to be really clear about this. This does NOT imply cooperating with the system. It's like Dag Hamerskjold said, "It is easy to be nice to someone, even an enemy, from a lack of character." It's one thing to fit into your ecological niche, to try to get along with your human and nonhuman neighbors, and it is quite another to try to fit into a deathly and deadly system that is destroying everything, that is, to be a slave. I have above my work space a newspaper clipping titled, "Mother Bear Charges Trains." It's an article about this mother griz who kept charging the trains that had mangled her two sons. The article gives me so much hope. That's what we need to all do.

I don't know if this is what the people in LTTL were thinking about the relationship between cooperation and conflict, but I know that is what I think.

You asked me to keep an eye out for mainstream news coverage of you. Here is a pretty nasty hit piece that was in the San Francisco Examiner yesterday. It's pretty awful. I'm really sorry you've had to receive a full power of the machine's propaganda. I know that would hurt me. I hope you're okay.

I will look for Chase's columns from 1/12/98 and 9/16/96. I'll let you know when I find them. I'm glad he's been providing you with useful information. I'm really glad of that.

Now to the propositions you posited to see if we do agree:

1. "All modern technology must be eliminated — at any cost." I agree. Please define modern. How far back do you want to go? Certainly I go farther back than the industrial revolution. I would go farther back than clocks. Here's how I would say it. "Civilization must be eliminated — at any cost." I would also say that, and I know that you and I *may* disagree on this, that civilization will go down in the reasonably near future, and that it is our primary task to see that it does so, and that it does so at a minimum cost to human and nonhuman life, so that those (human and nonhuman) who come after will be able to carry on. I believe I've said this to you before, but if I can help salmon to survive till after the completion of the crash, then they may be able to carry on. If they do not survive, they do not survive. Back to your question: not only technology but the mindset that created it must be eliminated: both are antithetical to life on the planet, and to human and nonhuman freedom.

2. "A managed wilderness is not a wilderness… Human control over wilderness must be avoided at all cost." I would agree with this. I do not believe in management, nor do I believe in control. This does not mean that humans cannot exist within that wilderness. It DOES mean that civilized humans cannot exist within that wilderness.

3. "Human control over other human beings must be reduced to a minimum." I would say that coercive control must be eradicated entirely (which brings up the question we MUST answer if we are to survive, which is "How do you stop the coercers?"). I would say that this does not do away with all forms of authority, because I believe that parents, for example, have some form of authority over children. But it must not be coercive authority. It can be experiential authority. When I lived in Spokane I would go hunting and fishing with this one guy. When we went out, he way always in charge because he was a much better fisher and hunter than I. But he never TOLD me what to do. He merely made suggestions.

Community. That book approaches the same subject, through a study of the evolution of our wretched economic system.

Since you remarked in your letter that you don't like liberation theologians, and that most of them are leftists, I don't now if any of your concern arose from my statement in one letter that I liked a quote you sent by one. I hope you didn't misinterpret my statement, which was that "liberation theologists are really about the only Christians I can stand," as support for their leftism. The only think I like about liberation theologists is that occasionally they support indigenous resistance movements in Central America. Other than that they're part of the Christian tradition that, as Vine Deloria so well put it, "has been the curse of all cultures into which it has intruded."

Do you know Vine Deloria? He wrote *Custer Died for Your Sins*, *Red Earth, White Lies*, (which is an indigenous critique of science), and many others. I interviewed him earlier this month. It was okay. Not the best, since he's not very talkative. But it went okay.

You expressed concern that many of the people I've interviewed have been, in your estimation, leftists. Frankly one of the reasons I want to interview you is that you explore areas many other people are afraid to. And I need to emphasize that these are areas I explore in my own writing.

Also, if you don't like the people I interview, please do suggest some better ones. I'm always looking for the strongest cultural critics I can find to interview. Remember that in order for me to be able to place the interview, the people you suggest will have to be fairly famous. Also, it's almost impossible for me to place interviews of activists. Generally, for me to be able to convince editors to publish a piece the interview subjects have to have a track record, which almost invariably means they have to have a couple of books out. That is simply the reality of publishing.

The next point you need to realize is that my published interviews (including those in *Listening to the Land*) are based

Jensen to Kaczynski — August 2, 1999

Thank you for your letter. I'm sorry to hear your most recent attorney quite on you at the eleventh hour.

I've had a couple of good talks with Theresa about your talks with her. She enjoyed them very much. She sent me a copy of the piece the *EF! Journal* did not take, and I thought it was very good.

You wrote in your last letter that you're concerned that most of the people I interview may not be so strongly opposed to technological culture as you are, and that you're afraid you would be lumped with them. Unless I misread the letter, you also seemed to imply that I am "left of center," and seemed to question whether I really want to bring down technological society. I have a number of responses to this.

The first is that I don't think you will be lumped together with anyone else I've interviewed. That sort of cross-pollination simply hasn't occurred, especially in magazines. The only way I could see that connection being made at all would be in an anthology, which a) I'm not planning on doing; and b) would only include you with your permission. So I simply don't see that happening.

The second is that I need to be clear about where I stand: I want nothing more than to bring down the entire technological culture of death. I've stated this often in print. It is what my newest book is about. I think I've also mentioned the book I've got half-written that explores our economic system. It's call *End Game: The Collapse of Civilization and the Rebirth of*

Back to LTTL. Here's why I don't so much mind that I don't agree with them on all spots: the purpose of that book in my mind was to try to piece together different parts of environmental thinking at the end of the 20th century. So Mander is the guy to talk to about technology, although I have to say that had I known you at the time I would have wanted to talk to you about technology. Ward Churchill is the person to talk to about genocide, Robert Lifton is the one to talk to about the psychology of genocide. And so on. I don't believe, for example, that Liften would really want to end civilization. But that doesn't alter the fact that what he has to say about the genocidal impulse isn't useful. So I was trying to make a quilt, as it were. Also, I have to say that I was a bit younger. The book taught me much, and some of it is where I was in passing through. Now I am much more radical, and much less, by the way, publishable.

You gave me a question to ask: "Do you believe that all modern technology should be eliminated, even if that should result in the release of certain unfortunate human impulses as aggression, competitiveness, or male dominance?" I have to tell you that on a global scale, aggression, competitiveness (only on terms such that those in power can win), and male dominance are already being facilitated and in fact exacerbated by modern technology. You know this. My point is that I'm not even sure how the elimination of modern technology would make this worse. Crap, right now 25 percent of all women in this culture are raped within their lifetimes, and another 19 percent have to fend off rape attempts. A single factory trawler in the North Pacific kills 80 TONS of fish per day, most of which is shredded and tossed back into the ocean.

One last topic, and then that should be enough for one day: I've though about putting together a sequel to LTTL, which would be called *Shutting Down the Machine*, and would be a collection of interviews about how we can shut it down. What

would you think of that project? If I did it, whom do you think I should talk to?

[…]

Jensen to Kaczynski — June 9, 1999

Yesterday I called Theresa at the *EF! Journal* to ask her some questions about Headwaters, and she told me that you'd set up an interview with her, and with a professor from the University of Wisconsin. She had mentioned the first part (about you but not the professor) in a note last week. Now she also said that you have or had been considering giving an interview to someone from *Der Spiegel*. This leaves me wondering why I've been now left out of the loop. You said last fall that you were interested in doing an interview with me, and I am wondering what has happened. You know my credentials, ability, and beliefs, and know that an interview we would do would be excellent. We would also be able to place it anywhere we wanted, to reach whatever audience we wanted. Do you still want to do one? If so, please let me know. If not, could you do me the courtesy of letting me know why not?

I don't understand why, given that we seem to have been enjoying our correspondence, and given my abilities as an interviewer, and my work toward shutting down the machine, and the fact that you already agreed to do an interview, that you are now actively setting up interviews with other people while not even answering my notes.

What's the story?

Jensen to Kaczynski — March 28, 1999

Since you quit math, do you still think about it much? You know my first degree was in physics. I actually dislike physics quite a lot ever since. Sometimes I think about basic stuff, stuff that's obvious like torque, but, and here's an example of what I'm talking about, if I look at waves in the ocean, if it occurs to me that there are incredibly complicated functions that could describe at least a small small portion of the activity (with a whole host of simplifying assumptions), then I get a bad feeling in my stomach. I don't like thinking about fairly complex physics. I think my response my be unusual. I don't know why it is. […]

I've not been pushing the new book forward much, since I moved (please note the new address), and then also The Sun has asked me to do a lot more interviews for them. I interviewed Satish Kumar earlier this month and then next month I'll talk to Frances Moore Lappe […].

Satish had some good things to say. As you probably know, I've had a lot of problems with Gandhian philosophy. […]

Kaczynski to Jensen — November 11, 1998

I apologize for taking so long to answer your latest letter (dated Sept. 14), but now, as you can see, I'm at last getting around to it. I've been working with a lawyer and struggling to meet a legal deadline. It doesn't leave me a lot of time to spare.

A while ago I sent you a book by William Finnegan, *Cold New World*, which Finnegan had sent me. The reason why I think the book is interesting is that it helps to confirm an opinion I had already been forming for other reasons, namely, that our society is moving into a pre-revolutionary situation. By that I mean a situation in which there are large numbers of people who are dissatisfied, who have no direction or purpose in life, and who are alienated from mainstream values. Such people potentially can provide material for a revolutionary movement.

Finnegan tries to explain this situation by claiming that it's caused by a lack of sufficient economic opportunity for young people, but I think you'll agree that that is silly.

Anyway, please let me know whether you received the book.

As to Dave Foreman, the fact that I liked his interview as quoted in your book does not imply that I like him personally. The fact is that I don't know a heck of a lot about what is going on in the world. When I was living in Montana I couldn't afford to subscribe to any periodicals, and since my arrest I have *sometimes* had a newspaper subscription (paid for by someone else)

but have had little other information about current events. So I didn't know much about what Dave Foreskin — I mean Foreman — was up to. I do recall, though that there was some controversy about him a few years ago in the *Earth First! Journal*. It was claimed he had sold out his co-conspirators in that power-line cutting affair in order to get a convenient plea-bargain for himself. I don't know the truth about this, but your letter seems to confirm what I had feared — that Dave Foreskin is just another chicken-hearted sellout.

You wrote, "How many social critics… really want to stop the horrors… and how many have merely found a way to make a comfortable living while they comfort their consciences with beautiful descriptions of nature and occasional outbursts of righteous indignation?"

Exactly right, and well said! But I think it goes further than that. I think some of the people you interviewed for LTTL are not just taking the easy way out, they are leftists. When they talk about cooperation they're not talking about what you have in mind — living in harmony with nature. I think their tendency is in the direction of large-scale collectivism, i.e., socialism. If I remember correctly what I read many years ago, in Stalin's Russia scientists who spoke of competition between members of the same species were at risk of being sent to a concentration camp. Because according to the regime's political line all members of the same species were supposed to cooperate with one another. This of course was part of the system of propaganda designed to make all Russian cooperate in Stalin's big, wonderful socialist collectivity.

I'm enclosing a newspaper clipping (*L.A. Times,* Sept. 25, 1998) about the "Greens" Party in Germany, which now shows its true colors (no pun intended). It's just what you would expect of leftists; they talk about their concern for the environment, but they are really much more interested in getting power so taht they can impose their socialistic political agenda on everyone. I think some of the people you

Kaczynski to Jensen — February 5, 1999

[…]

Well — enough of speculation about Chase. I've never seen Ward Churchill's essay on "Pacifism as Pathology." (Could you send me a copy of it?) Believe it or not, I've been reading some theology (of all things) lately, in Spanish yet, Liberation theology. There's a passage that connects with what you say about pacifism. Translating it into English: "The history of Christian thought shows that passivity, quietism, not only is not an acknowledgement of the gratuitous love of God, but denies it, or at least mutilates it." (Gustavo Gutierrez, *La verdad los hará libres*, Instituto Bartolomé de las Casa, Lima, Peru, 1986; page 52.) Of course, I doubt that any Catholic theologians really have much in common with this; but still the passage is interesting.

To answer your questions:

What am I reading these days? I've already answered that in part; but I've also been reading a book about Russia.

How do I keep my spirits up? Well, it ain't easy.

Jensen to Kaczynski — February 9, 1999

I'm sorry it's taken me so long to write you back. Until the past week or so I've been in some doldrums, stuck in my writing and not very pleased. But there was a breakthrough, and I feel more sociable.

Thank you for sending along the clippings. Yes, I don believe the collapse is coming sooner than we may think.

And thank you especially for sending along the name of Beau Friedlander. I sent him the first few chapters of *Language,* and he asked to see the rest. We have talked on the phone once, and I would say there is at least a 90 percent chance he's going to take on the book. I'm very excited! And very grateful. Thank you so very much for making that connection.

What I know so far about the press I like very much. His heart is in the right place, and he understands our culture.

We spoke a little of you, and I want to tell you that he thinks very highly of you. He is honored and proud to be putting out your work.

Also I wanted to tell you that he edited a chapter of my book so that I could see his editing style, and I like it very much. The suggestions he has made so far have been quite good.

At what point in the process is your book with him? Have you gotten to the line-editing stage? The book design? When is it supposed to come out? […]

interviewed in LTTL are of the same type. Such people are the last in the world who would really want to shut down the technoindustrial system. They are extremely dangerous to us because they coopt rebellious impulses and turn them to the advantage of the system.

I agree with you that civilization is a curse and should be eliminated — if possible. But unlike you I am *not* confident that civilization will go down in the reasonably near future. Even just the elimination of the technoindustrial system is very problematic, and we must exert ourselves to the utmost in an effort to assure that it will happen. That is why I strongly disagree with your statement that "it is our primary task" to see that civilization goes down "at a minimum cost to human…life." I think we have a desperate struggle ahead of us, and if we pull our punches we are sure to lose. Here's what will happen if we worry about conserving human life: Suppose the system is on the brink of collapse. Do we give it a push, or do we scramble to keep things together so that the system will survive? You presumably realize what will happen if the system collapses: There won't be any fuel or spare parts for farm machinery, there won't be any of the pesticides or artificial fertilizers on which modern agriculture has become dependent, and the trucks and trains won't be running to transport any food that is produced to the places where it's needed. Consequently, people won't have enough to eat. Not to mention other necessities such as clothing, fuel for heating and cooking, or potable water. There probably will be fighting over food and other scarce resources. That's why the collapse of the technoindustrial system will probably unleash aggressive and competitive impulses. Also male dominance, since men for obvious reasons tend to assume leadership in a fighting situation.

To get an idea of what is likely to happen if the system collapses, read the history of the Russian Revolution with all its bloodshed, violence, and death. Or look at what is happening

today in countries where social order has broken down: Bosnia, Albania, Afghanistan, Rwanda, etc.

So, if we worry about conserving human life, what choice do we make when the system is on the brink of collapse? We can't give it a push because then many people will die. Instead we have to scramble to keep the system crippling along somehow; and we might just save it. And then we'll *never* get rid of it, because a gradualist approach just isn't going to work.

If we are ever to get rid of the system, we will have to accept the consequences. The human race will have to pass through fire. When a species becomes too numerous, typically it reaches a point where it suffers a sudden population collapse, through starvation, epidemic, or whatever. The human race should be subject to the same law.

In answer to your question about how I watered my garden. I had a spring [...]

justify any action. Some "pathological pacifists" (have you ever seen Ward Churchill's essay on "Pacificism as Pathology"? Much of it is quite good) say that just because someone uses a line of reasoning for bad ends means no one can use that same line of reasoning. I got into an argument about this with an environmentalist friend of mine just the other day. She said precisely what I said two sentences ago [ommitted], and I responded by saying that just because the Forest Service says it is concerned about the health of the forests, and uses that concern to justify clearcutting, that doesn't mean we can't be concerned abotu the health of the forest, and use that as an argument NOT to cut. It seems a non-issue to me.

Different subject: there was an article on the paper yesterday about Florence. It showed a picture of a cell. God, I'm so sorry. That sounds really awful. How DO you keep your spirits up? [...]

Jensen to Kaczynski — December 29, 1998

[…]

I need to say something about that article I passed on to you about the mall of america, and how shopping diversity makes up for biodiversity. I wrote to the source listed at the bottom of the article, and he said it was a joke. That's good to know, in one sense, but I don't think it's a very good joke, because it's too believable. I am sorry if this caused any confusion or difficulty to you.

I can't see any reason to pass my name to Alston Chase. I'm not the issue here, so far as I can tell. The issue is this representation of himself to you, and more generally, his beliefs about civilization.

You raise a very good point, or rather ask a very good question, about not understanding his defense, asking whether he himself believes what he writes (the example you use is about "moderate amounts" of radiation being good for people). That's a question I ask all the time: are these people evil or are they stupid? Hannah Arendt, I believe it was, pointed out that the best liars end up believing their own lies, and I think there's something to that. This is something else I deal with extensively in the book my agent is ostensibly shopping around. Ultimately, however, I don't think we can ever really know.

[…]

This then is an interesting line to walk, because I also don't want to imply that just because other people lie to themselves, justify some atrocity, that all people always lie when they

Jensen to Kaczynski — November 6, 1998

I've been doing a lot of research lately into Alston Chase, and everything I see points toward my original assessment, which is that he is nothing more than your garden variety corporate whore. If his stuff didn't serve a corporate agenda, he wouldn't be able to get it published. He says crap like there is more old growth today than before Columbus arrived. He says logging isn't a threat to forests, and that it isn't natural or beneficial for trees to live for hundreds of years. In his book *In a Dark Wood*, he blames the spotted owl for the loss of jobs in the Northwest. Anyone who says that is either ignorant, a fool, or a corporate stooge. I vacillate between which of the three he is. In this book he ignores the fact that overcapitalization of timber mills had guaranteed a timer supply squeeze which had been predicted for at least thirty years. He ignores raw log exports (about one out of four logs cut in the NW is exported raw). He ignores automation (all through the 70s and 80s, as he cut went up, job numbers went down). He ignores the fact that the natural history of the timber industry is cut and run (prior to the listing of the spotted owl the big timber companies had already reduced their lumber and plywood mill capacity by 34 percent in the Northwest, and increased it by 121 percent in the South. (By the way, he mistakenly "blames" the ESA for this, which shows even his basic facts are wrong: a grassroots group called Green World sued under NFMA (or maybe NEPA, but I'm pretty sure its NFMA). He says that spotted owls like second growth. This is disingenous in the extreme. The truth

is that they are being forced out of old growth, and taking up residence in second growth. There they are outcompeted by barred owls, among others. He conveniently neglects to say this. His fundamental ignorance of basic facts is really amazing. He labels as endangered species "gnatcatcher" and "salamander," neither of which are species at all. He also labels as endangered species the "cave bat" and the "wildcat," neither of which exist. He states that "all seven species of woodpecker that live in the Northwest excavate holes only in deadwood." The truth is that dozen woodpecker species occur in the Northwest; some prefer to nest in deadwood, some in live. He calls gopher snakes "small mammals," and categorizes amphibians as invertebrates. Other things he does: he defends DDT as safe. He defends plutonium as safe, in fact healthful. Get this direct quote: "In dramatizing dangers of the Cassini liftoff, many media were calling plutonium 'the most toxic substance known.' Thus they ignored what many researchers believe [name two, you asshole, that don't work for the nuke industry or its federal partners] — that moderate radiation exposure may actually enhance human health. Japanese who lived near Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1948 have been living longer than their peers. Ditto, workers exposed to plutonium at Los Alamos during World War II." Sheesh. He says, "Civilizations, not nature, are fragile flowers, and when they disappear, they are gone forever. By contrast, the earth eventually recovers from abuse." He attacks environmentalists because they allegedly "believe saving the environment is more important than liberty, justice or observing the law." Note that he is conflating our current fascist technological corporate state with liberty, justice, and the observance of the law. Note that he is conflating observance of laws with liberty and/or justice. Note that he is suggesting that observing the law is a necessary good (ignoring the fact that in an unjust state it is morally reprehensible to obey unjust laws, for example the "Good Germans"). Utter bullshit. He states, "Once we recognize that the balance of nature is not the supreme good, the house

Jensen to Kaczynski — December 21, 1998

Merry Christmas and happy New Year. (Consider this a Christmas card.)

I mailed you a letter on November 23. Did you get it? Sometimes my mail doesn't arrive at its destination. I suspect that there are people in the Postal Service who get curious when they see my name on the return address, or else they hope to sell the letter to an autograph collector.

I sent Alston Chase a copy of your most recent letter about him and invited him to defend himself. (Needless to say, I black out your name and all other identifying information on the letter.) I really don't know what to make of Chase's defense. It's possible that he honestly believes all that stuff he writes. Some of it is very hard to swallow (for example, that "moderate amounts of radiation are good for you"), but there are people who believe stranger things than that. (e.g., flying saucers, etc.)

However that may be, Chase indicated that he wanted to have the names of the two people who had written me negative things about him. Of course, I wrote him back and told him I couldn't give him their names without their permission. So do you want to give me permission to give Chase your name? It's up to you. I don't care one way or the other.

Anyhow, I hope you're enjoying the holiday season. I can't honestly say that I'm enjoying it myself. Apart from the fact that I'm locked up, problems keep arising faster than I can take care of them.

lence are themselves willing to resort to violence… Their fundamental objection is to change in the economic institution that now exists, and for its maintenance they resort to the use of force that is placed in their hands by this very institution. They do not need to advocate the use of force; their only need is to employ it." I love this last line. I've already put it into the novel I'm working on.

Did I tell you about this novel? I know I told you about *Flashpoint*. This novel emerged from a play I wrote last spring about, well, I'll just send you here the synopsis. Let me know what you think and if you want I'll send the play along at some point. I' be interested in what you think of it.

I have some information here to pass on because it is about the most absurd I've ever heard. Even I found this hard to believe. A friend of mine passed this on to me. I had to read it several times to convince myself it wasn't a joke. I'm going to send off for the original document. Here is the piece I received:

REPLACING AN AMAZON RAINFOREST WITH A MALL OF AMERICA

[…]

that biocentrism built collapses." I'm not sure who his sponsors are, but I know that at least one wood pulp company has sponsored him. I've not been able to yet find the specific columns you asked for. I'll keep looking, but I'm not sure how much more time I want to devote over reading this guy's lies. When I read stuff like this, I always think about Julius Streicher. He was a publisher in Germany who was put on trial as one of the major war criminals because his lies were central for creating an ideological atmosphere in which genocide could be carried out. For this he was found guilty as Nuremberg and hanged alongside Kaltenbrunner, Jodi, and the other big boys. Chase performs a similar duty in his country: his words help create an ideological atmosphere in which ecocide can be carried out.

Speaking of observance of the law, did you hear about the logger who killed the Earth First!er in Humboldt County, California? He was videotaped threatening to kill the protesters, and then falled a tree onto one a little later. Of course the media has gone into high gear to protect the guy, and the sheriff's dept didn't even send an official team out to investigate until ten days later. In the meantime all destruction of evidence was left up to the Pacific Lumber employees. So EF!ers set up blockades. Now of course the cops had crimes they could deal with. They came in, pepper spray flying. Now they are planning on charging EF! activists with manslaughter in the death of the activist. Amazing. Typical.

Other news of note. Did you hear about the torching of part of a ski resort in Vail, Colorado? It was all in the news. Members of the Earth Liberation Front burned down four buildings worth $12 million. The ski resort is planning on expanding into roadless territory.

This brings me to a question. After I finish the book I'm working on, and then the next book, I'm going to write a novel called "Flashpoint." It will be about how all sorts of groups get together to start trying to take down civilization, by any means possible. Here's my question: one of the central groups of peo-

ple in the book will be fairly small. Do you think it would be a better use of their small numbers to try to first go after totally inexcusable and gratuitous forms of technology (for example, jet ski factories) that produce absolutely no good value, or to go after the infrastructure itself? I suspect it would be the latter. Maybe in the book I'll have the group have a philosophical split over that and one group does one, and another does the other.

I've thought a lot about your last letter, and one of the things I really like about our correspondence is that normally I am always the one who pushes people to think more deeply and to push more radically and/or militantly, and you do that for me. I appreciate that deeply. Thank you.

Now to some specifics of your letter. First your clippings about how the Greens are compromising already in Germany. Yes, I have no faith in the Greens, the political process, or much of anything else along those lines.

As to us being in a pre-revolutionary state, I totally agree. I see it everywhere. It's in the air. It's going to blow, and its going to blow big time. Here's a problem I see, and perhaps you can help me see a way to do something to push this pre-revolutionary state in a good direction. This is that while many environmentalists and Indians and others of good heart are fed up, I believe there are many more of bad heart who are equally fed up, and are often more obstreperous and, frankly, violent. I'm thinking about some of the militia types. For a long time I thought we should be making alliances with at least some of the non-racist, non-fundamentalist-Christian people. In fact I've done exactly that, working with small loggers or millowners, and small farmers. In fact I gave a talk about a year ago in Minneapolis to farmers, enviros, etc, about how revolutions fail, and how we can hope to solve some of the structural reasons they inevitably fail to help either human beings or the ground. I was very revolutionary. The farmers absolutely loved it. They were with me. The animal rights people were with

One-third of black kids, young people, are in jail, in prison, on parole, going to prison, waiting for trial. We'll lock them away. Any kind of resistance." He makes a good point, but I don't think the point is good enough, in part because in one of his books he quotes John Hay: "In reality, the White Man was not a philanthropist: he would treat the Black, Yellow, or Brown Man humanely if it was convenient, but if the dark-skinned resisted, the White Man would destroy him." Basically this is saying to me that he suggests nonviolence only, because those in power are so good at responding to violence, but at the same time he is saying that those in power will respond nonviolently only if it is convenient for them. I bring this up because then he and I talked about resistance to the Vietnam War. He said that US protests got the US out of the war, and it was important "to the moral capital of the movement" that the movement be nonviolent. He used that as an example of a nonviolent movement that worked. That's fine. BUT, and this is a huge but, it occurred to me last night, as I was working on the interview, that what he failed to mention, and what EVERYONE fails to mention, is that the only reason there was an anti-war movement here at all is because the Vietnamese had taken up arms against colonialism. Had the Vietnamese attempted the same nonviolent means as the US protesters, it would have gotten nowhere. Hell, the Vietnamese tried for years to peacefully remove the yoke of colonialism. They got nowhere.

What's my point? I don't know that I have one. Just more of this discussion of violence and nonviolence. There's a great line by Camus, about how violence is both "necessary and inexcusable." I love that. He continues: "Mediocre minds, confronted with this terrible problem, can take refuge by ignoring one of the terms of the dilemma. They are content, in the name of formal principles, to find all direct violence inexcusable and then to sanction that diffuse form of violence which takes place on the scale of world history." There's also a great line by John Dewey, who wrote that people "who decry the use of any vio-

Jensen to Kaczynski — December 14, 1998

Thank you for your most recent letter. I enjoyed it very much. […]

How go things with your probably publisher? Have things gotten nailed down there at all? That would be great. And I would love it if you would put me in contact with him. I realize there are no guarantees, but nothing is happening with my agent. I'm on the verge of dumping her. Of course I've been on that verge for many months.

A couple of days ago I interviewed Richard Drinnon. He wrote the very good book *Facing West: The Metaphysics of Indian-Hating and Empire-Building*, in which he traces "Indian-hating" from the early colonies until today, when Clinton attempts to distract us from the farce of Monicagate (which itself is of course a distraction from the real problems we face) by lasting a bunch of black and brown people into oblivion. He's very good at following that thread, with lots of good research. And though he doesn't write about it he also recognizes that the problem goes further back than the colonies. He totally understands the whole problem of civilization. He also wrote a biography of Emma Goldman.

He and I talked some about the question of violence in response to the system, and he is totally against it because, as he says, "I don't see violence as effectively dealing with it because all of our [culture's] instrumentalities are set up to deal with violent resistance. This is one of the things we do very well. We'll just lock them away. We'll lock whole populations away.

me, interestingly enough. The environmentalists were scared to death. Of course the environmentalists who were there, with a few exceptions, were the type who make deals with McDonald's and consider themselves to have done a good thing. Anyway, more recently I have encountered more of a bigoted, ignorant, angry white male types whom I fear may form the backbone of a coming revolution. Any revolution coming from these people will be entirely in the wrong direction. It will increase all of the things you and I hate. Here's the deal: assuming a revolution is reasonably imminent, and will be highly chaotic, what do we do to attempt to get this revolution to go in the right direction? I don't relish the idea of a bunch of fascists using the chaos to simply increase present trends. I know there has to be things we can do in the meantime to try to prevent this.

And this also brings up another point. You wrote that "some of the people you interviewed in LTTL were of the same type… They are extremely dangerous to us because they coopt rebellious impulses and turn them to the advantage of the system." I would agree. I don't know if I mentioned that a friend of mine calls them "ideological specialists," pet critics (members of the loyal opposition, as it were) who are allowed to flourish so long as they don't too severely rock the boat. I think that's one reason I was more well-received by the farmers than the environmentalists (and I need to point out that most of the farmers fully realized that farming is a big part of the problem: that's why we were there) at that meeting last fall. It's not some power game for the farmers. It's life and death. And for most environmentalists it's a game, it's theoretical. And so of course they will bail out when the chips get down. The question: What do we do about that?

I've thought a lot about what you said about how in the push to take down industrial civilization we can't pull our punches, can't really worry about conserving human life, because if we do, we may very well hold back from knocking

out civ (You know, in "Flashpoint," I've got to have my protagonists deal with that exact question). I agree with you. Here's my caveat, and I think it's a reasonable one; that all sorts of atrocities have been committed in the name of a higher good. In LTTL, Lifton talks about this. Before people can commit any atrocities, they have to convince themselves that what they are doing is in fact beneficial. Note that I am NOT suggesting that this then becomes an excuse for inaction: that's absurd. But we always need to be reexamining our own motivations. An example: Nestor Makhno was a pretty damn cool anarchist fighting against the Reds, the Whites, the Germans, and so forth in the Ukraine during WWI and the Russian Revolution. Great guy. Did great things. Gave the land back to the poor, did away with cash economies, established absolute freedom of the press, etc. Entire units of the Red Army defected to his side. Great stuff. But he also called rival anarchist leaders into his camp under a flag of truce and murdered them. In many ways, he was great at opposing the state, but in many ways, he was interested in becoming another dictator. Do you see what I am trying to get at? If not, I can try again. But back to the original point. I do believe you are right. And I agree that a gradualist approach won't solve things.

And I TOTALLY agree that if we are to get rid of civ, humans (and everyone else) will have to pass through fire. I just wish someone would have done this 1000 years ago, or 4000, when it might have been easier.

as soon as they show any sign of being too fond of power — before they get so powerful that they can't be deposed. Keeping leaders from getting powerful will require a constant, hard struggle, and there's no certainty that we will win it. But we have to try.

I have a lot more that I want to say on these matters, and when I can find time I hope to write a properly-organized essay on strategies for building a revolutionary movement.

I liked what you said on p. 4 of your letter: "…a friend of mine calls them 'ideological specialists,' pet critics (members of the loyal opposition, as it were) who are allowed to flourish as long as they don't too severely rock the boat."

Exactly right. One of our big problems is that the system allows wide latitude for rebellion as long as it doesn't go so far as to threaten the essential needs of the system. This allows people to "blow off steam" — to release rebellious impulses without taking any real risks for themselves and without doing any significant damage to the system. In fact, the pseudo-rebels often actually help the system by bringing about reforms that are necessary for the system's survival.

By the way, did you ever receive that book by William Finnegan that I sent you, *Col New World*? The book itself isn't very important, but I like to know whether the things I send out ever reach their destination. Sometimes they don't.

[…]

Derrick, once again, I enjoyed your November 6 letter immediately.

of further members for the movement; publishing a newsletter or a journal, liaison with other groups in the U.S. or other countries; research into such questions as how movements are formed and grow and how revolutions come about; learning wilderness skills and skills of self-sufficient living. Probably you can think of other activities as well.

I also think it would be very useful to *practice* affirmative action but not to *preach* it. Here's what I mean: If you start preaching affirmative action, a lot of white males think it means discrimination against them, and you drive them away. If you preach to white people about black slavery or about what was done to the American Indians, a lot of them react by saying, "Heck, I personally never had a slave, I never harmed a black person, I never personally took any land from the Indians. Why should *I* feel guilty." Again, you drive them away.

So, instead of preaching, we should simply *practice* affirmative action by working to recruit people of all races and all ethnic groups into the movement, and getting members of all groups into leadership positions. Instead of emphasizing past or present conflicts between ethnic groups, we emphasize the common interests that they have *now*. In this way, we bring the members of the movement together instead of dividing them.

While I'm on this subject I'd like to mention that there were a lot of black guys in the pod where I was confined at the Sacramento County Jail, and I got the impression that we might find a lot of very valuable recruits among black people of the so-called "lower" class. I think it might prove very useful if you could develop conflicts in the black community.

Another question you raised, near the end of your letter, could be rephrased this way: How do we prevent revolutionary leaders from being seduced by the attractions of power and making themselves into dictators?

That's probably the hardest question of all. I don't think there's any way of guaranteeing that it won't happen. All one can do is be mistrustful of the leaders and try to depose them

Kaczynski to Jensen — No Date

I like your letter of November 6 very much! It's just great!

Thanks for the additional information about Alston Chase. I especially appreciated the direct quotes from his own writings. They confirm what was already becoming clear, namely, that he misrepresented himself to me.

But Chase is a real puzzle — I can't figure him out. I don't know where he stands, and I'm not sure he knows himself where he stands. One of my correspondent pulled off the Internet a column that Chase published on March 30, 1998. In it he clearly comes out against technology. Get this, for example:

"[E]ncouraged by environmentalists, we place our hopes in technology [clearly, Chase is referring to mainstream environmentalists, not to the real radicals], and it can't live up to expectations. Led by Vice President Al Gore, a certifiable techno-wonk, greens are the most gung-ho hardware nerds around. …They suppose engineers need only manipulate gigabytes of data to make cheap electric vehicles whose batteries won't poison the planet and find safe substitutes for everything from asbestos to freon…"

I think we would agree with that. But Chase's apparent opposition to technology seems inconsistent with his other positions. I just can't understand where he's coming from. Maybe he's just irrational.

Yes, I did read about the killing of the Earth First!er in Humboldt County, California. I think the media are making a big mistake in trying to "sanitize" the incident. The more the media try to feed bullshit to the public, the more people lose faith

in the system when the truth comes out. In cases like this, I think radicals should make every possible effort to collect evidence, witnesses, etc., so that the truth can be proved, and consequently the mainstream media discredited. But I think a lot of radicals make a big mistake when they make exaggerated or unfounded accusations against the system, because then *they* can be discredited. I think we should stick to the exact truth, because the truth about the system is bad enough. We don't *have* to exaggerate. The strict truth can be one of our most powerful weapons.

You talked about your projected novel *Flashpoint*, and, referring to the characters in the novel, you asked whether it would be better for them to "try to first go after totally inexcusable and gratuitous forms of technology (for example, jet ski factories) that produce absolutely no good value, or to go after the infrastructure itself?" You then wrote, "I suspect it would be the latter." I agree completely. You should have your character do the latter. Please hurry up and get this novel written, because I look forward to reading it!

By the way, you've told me in the past that you have trouble getting your stuff published because it's too radical. I don't remember whether I've told you, but I have a probably publisher for my book, and I think he *might* have more courage about publishing radical things than most publishers do. Would you like me to put you in touch with him? I can't guarantee that he will look favorably on your stuff, but it might be worth a try.

[…]

Getting back to your letter, now, I notice that you asked, "what do we do to get this revolution to go in the right direction?" I wish there were a simple answer to that question, but there isn't, so all I can do is give you a few ideas. If and when the system collapses, whether it does so spontaneously or through revolution, I think it's a pretty safe bet that there will be violence, and that physical force will play an important role in determining what group, what ideology comes out on top. I

am by no means an admirer of Mao Zedong, but I think he was quite right when he said that "power grows out of the barrel of a gun." If the extreme right — or any other groups, for that matter — arm themselves, then I have to hope that the people who support our ideas will be better armed and better prepared to fight than their rivals are.

But, what is much more important, we will have to outrecruit the rival groups. That is, we have to try to get more people on our side than they have. My guess is that the real, incorrigible racists and extreme right-wingers are a very small minority, and that many of their followers are with them more-or-less by accident. I suspect that many of these followers are people who are deeply dissatisfied with the present system, but aren't very bright and get involved in nazi or similar movements just because they don't know where else to turn. It may be that if we reach out to these people we may be able to recruit some of them to our point of view.

But quality is more important than quantity. If we want to win out against the nazis, leftists, and other dangerous rivals, we have to get better-quality people on our side than they have on theirs. One thing that will be helpful in this regard will be truthfulness: Cheap propaganda may attract larger numbers of people, but strict truthfulness will attract people of better quality.

I have a suggestion for you: When you give your talks, bring a box and a lot of pencils and slips of paper. Invite people who are interested in getting involved in a movement to write their name and address on a slip of paper and put it in the box. Later, get in touch with these people, communicate with them, and try to pick out those who are intelligent, have leadership ability, are honest, reliable, and committed. These are the people you'll want to recruit to form the backbone of a movement.

The movement won't hold their interest if it's just a debating society, so you have to get them involved in practical activities. Some such activists would be: Selection and recruitment