

Manifesto

It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.
— **Jiddu Krishnamurti**

We violently reject the complacency and evil of the American status quo and seek through music to re-educate the populace and assist with establishing a new and equitable radical democracy.

We function as a collective and, as such, place high value on group decision making, honesty, and self-reliance. We attempt to make our music and ideas available to the populace without regard to status, income, or the ability to pay.

We consider the eulogizing of banal musical trends and increasingly reactionary political policies and views to be both destructive and elitist. We reject careerism among musicians as it can only lead to the productization of music within a corrupt capitalist system. We reject the trappings of rock-star excess and strive to maintain decorum in all our actions, including conservative dress and behavior during performances and interviews.

We subscribe to a musical approach that values simplicity, emotion, and self-satisfaction. We are untroubled by the duality of live performance and studio recording. We believe that lyrics dealing with political subject matter must always relate to personal impact and the human condition.

We accept that we must function within the existing system at present, as imperfect as it may be, in order to change hearts and minds as well as the system itself. We will zealously lend our name and resources to like-minded organizations attempting to help establish a more equitable society.

We are idealists and hold high these revolutionary ideals even while we understand and are heedful of the risk of corruption if radical individual change does not accompany societal change.

When The Revolution Comes, Everything Will Be Beautiful

The story is one of an oppressed and hopeless people. Pushed to the brink by corruption and squalid, inequitable conditions, they resort to violence. As they struggle, they convince themselves that their violence is justified and, in fact, that they have no other choice. When they come to power, they face the same problems as those they replaced and become oppressors themselves. Dissension within the new order sets the cycle in motion again.

Fundamental societal change can emerge only through radical individual change.

Alcoholism in the Former Soviet Republics

It is an unfortunate fact that society can neither fill bellies nor heat homes with idealism alone.

Too many stars have gone out.

Clean off the bare shelves; your leaders fail.
Question the locked doors; young skin's too pale.
Blood rushes through you.
Blood rushin' through you.

Too many stars have gone out.
I can't control. I didn't cause. I can't cure it.

Filth for the cleaning; blot out the sun.
Ticket is shaking; this is the one.
Blood rushes through you.
Blood rushin' through you.

In 1992, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there were an estimated 4.5 million alcoholics and as many as 17 million alcohol abusers in the former Soviet republics. The transition to capitalism in most states triggered precipitous drops in GDPs — in many cases as much as 40%. (By comparison, the GDP decline in the United States during the Great Depression was 27%.) As governments tried to respond to the pressures of market economies, they made drastic cuts in social programs, notably health and education. As the population spiraled downward into poverty, alcoholism and suicide soared. In Lithuania, for example, suicide rates climbed steadily after independence. By 1996, the suicide rate for women aged 50-59 was up 106% and the rate for young men was up 195%.

References

- Alyankak, Leyla. "Suicide In Lithuania." *Earth Times News Service*. January 2000.
- Clinard, Marshall Barron and Robert F. Meier. *Sociology of Deviant Behavior*. 2003
- Dorman, Nancy D. and Leland H. Towle. "Initiatives to Curb Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in the Former Soviet Union." *Alcohol Health & Research World*. Fall 1991.

Overturing the Rumford Fair Housing Act

The old guard is always surprised when the people they subjugate, exploit, and leave hopeless suddenly explode, seemingly unprovoked, in a rage of violent indignation.

Rats and black boys. Dissension.
Coins and schoolyards. Dissension.

Horizon line chokes off my hate.
Television man tells me to wait.

Rage from ghettos. Contention.
Votes with bonfires. Contention.

In 1963, the California legislature passed the Rumford Fair Housing Act in an effort to prevent property owners from discriminating against potential tenants and home buyers. Written by African-American congressman William Byron Rumford, the law made it illegal to deny anyone housing because of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, handicap, or marital status. Property owners complained bitterly and claimed that the law unreasonably interfered with their right not to rent or sell to "coloreds." In 1964, the California Real Estate Association spearheaded an effort to overturn the act which resulted in a successful ballot initiative to amend the California constitution. Proposition 14 made it perfectly clear that discrimination should be legal and protected.

On August 11, 1965 a white California Highway Patrol officer arrested a black motorist for drunk driving in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts. The situation escalated when the man's family intervened and hundreds of onlookers began gathering and throwing rocks at police. This sparked four days of rioting during which 34 people were killed, 1,032 injured, and 3,438 arrested. In the wake of the riots, the investigation of the McCone Commission found that poverty, inequality, racial discrimination, and the November 1964 passage of Proposition 14 were the root causes.

References

- "California: Proposition 14." *Time Magazine*. September 25, 1964
- Reitman, Valerie and Mitchell Landsberg. "Watts Riots 40 Years Later." *LA Times*. August 11, 2005.

ILO Convention 169

Indigenous people opposing the exploitation of natural resources quickly become so much brush to be cleared. The fact that the defense of culture and homeland can become violent, in no way justifies the state's genocidal greed and ruthlessness.

Intentions burn. Understand?

One moment of silence. One moment of hope.
Police line is breaking, destroying all hope.

What did you leave?

You'll bury your dead when you get home.
The state will take everything you own.
The rivers choke, the jungles burn.
Ancestral lands now have to earn

The International Labour Organization's Convention No.169 is a legally binding agreement that guarantees the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples. Once a country agrees to and ratifies the agreement, it is legally bound to protect and respect its indigenous populations and to allow and encourage their participation in decisions that affect them. Twenty countries, including Peru, have ratified Convention 169 since 1989.

In June of 2009, indigenous tribes in Peru began protesting against President Alan Garcia's policies allowing foreign companies to exploit oil, gas, timber, and minerals on traditional tribal lands. When the face-offs turned violent, 23 police officers and at least 10 indigenous people were killed. Riot police used tear gas and shot 82 protesters.

References

- Hance, Jeremy. "The Real Avatar Story: Indigenous People Fight to Save Their Forest Homes From Corporate Exploitation." *Mongabay*. December 22, 2009. Accessed February 24, 2011. <http://news.mongabay.com/2009/1222-hance_avatar.html>
- "Investigate Violence Against Indigenous People in Peru." *Amnesty International*. June 04, 2010. Accessed February 24, 2011. <<http://www.amnesty.org/en/appeals-for-action/investigate-violence-against-indigenous-people-peru>>
- Páez, Ángel, "No Justice for Indians in Amazon Massacre." *Inter Press Service*. February 19, 2010.

The Concept of the Urban Guerrilla

Eventually, documenting injustice, and those fighting against it, is not enough. Violence is seen as the only alternative to a chilling and reactionary slide towards imperialism.

You grew up with acquiescence.
What did you learn from all the chaos?
You're writing stories for freedom fighters.
But you don't really think it's justice.
Strong ideas aren't strong enough.
The old guard wheezes out its sickness.
The country recoils. You rot in prison.
What did you learn from all the chaos?

You're shouting. You're shouting.
You know this city — it's all about the the shouting.

The Urban Guerilla Concept was a statement of intent written by German journalist-turned-revolutionary Ulrike Meinhof in 1971. The manifesto justified the violent resistance tactics of Meinhof's Red Army Faction. It quoted extensively from Mao Tse Tung and borrowed heavily from Brazilian revolutionary Carlos Marighella's *Minimanual of the Urban Guerrilla*.

As a journalist, Meinhof covered a number of stories in the 1960s about the growing left-wing protest movement and began to identify with the activists who she saw as kindred spirits, including Andreas Baader. In 1968 she wrote, "Protest is when I say this does not please me. Resistance is when I ensure what does not please me occurs no more." Following her participation in a 1970 prison breakout that freed Baader, the two formed the Red Army Faction. The RAF directly opposed the capitalism and imperialism of the conservative German state and saw the process of denazification following World War II as an utter failure. Their violent resistance included robberies, murders, kidnappings, and bombings. Meinhof was arrested in 1972 and died in prison in 1976. The official cause of death was suicide.

References

- Ascherson, Neal "A Terror Campaign of Love and Hate." *The Observer*. Sep 2008.
- Becker, Jillian. "The Red Army Faction: Another Final Battle on the Stage of History." *Terrorism: An International Journal*. Vol. 5, No. 1/2. 1981.
- Meinhof, Ulrike. *The Urban Guerilla Concept*. Apr 1971.

The Shining Path

Those involved in the struggle towards a utopian ideal often fail to understand the importance of personal behavior and ethics. Their violent tactics corrupt and undermine the lofty goals behind the struggle to seize power.

The young men march on shining paths.

Breathing new life. Insight grows dim.
Cutting them down. Clearing the land.

Whose anger did you voice? And did you walk away?
And did you feel you want to rule the world?

The shining path, it beckons. A new life stirs inside.
You'll never buy hegemony.

The decadence unfolded. The silence gnawed within.
You dreamed of foment and of war.

You call to question training. Your father's scriptures swell.
The gallows beckon you no more.

The Shining Path, officially known as the Communist Party of Peru, was a Maoist organization established in opposition to the country's bourgeois democracy. In 1980, it launched an armed struggle aimed at establishing a "New Democracy" and, eventually, pure communism. Funding their operations by drug trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion, they engaged in a guerrilla war against the Peruvian government. The group's "irreducible dogmatism" often resulted in brutal violence against the very people they should have championed, including peasants and trade unionists. Eventually atrocities like 1983's Lucanamarca massacre, the brutal repression of rural "capitalist" markets, and a series of military defeats lead to the collapse of The Shining Path.

References

- Gonzalez, Manolo. "Peru: The Ideology Of Apocalypse Shining Path To What?" *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed*. Summer 1993.
- Lucero, Wayne. "The Rise and Fall of Shining Path." *Council on Hemispheric Affairs*. 2008.

Sword of Damocles

There is a fundamental, yet often-ignored, difference between trying to overthrow and trying to govern justly.

Mouth of bile. Violence mounting.
Prepare for rapture. Who's counting?
A billion leaders. Righteous thinking.
Famine's calling. Disease is sinking.

Without the sword.

Our sun is sinking.
What are you looking for?
It's righteous thinking.
What are you looking for?

The sword of Damocles was an anecdote retold by the Roman philosopher Cicero illustrating the precarious and dangerous position of those in power. The sycophantic Damocles was a member of the tyrant-king Dionysius' court and talked constantly about Dionysius' privileged life. When Dionysius offered to trade places with him, Damocles eagerly accepted. As he lounged luxuriously on the throne, Damocles suddenly noticed an enormous sword hanging above his head, suspended by a single hair of a horse's tail. Damocles grew so uneasy that he begged the king to trade places again. Not only is power a heavy burden to bear, but the threat of disaster is at least as devastating as the disaster itself.

Reference

Cicero. *Tusculan Disputations*. Quoting Timaeus of Tauromenium. Circa 45 BC.

The Contrition of the Addict

Imperialists try to soften the impact of their transgressions against weak and disadvantaged nation-states by launching public-relations campaigns glorifying their self-serving forays into humanitarian aid.

You kiss the blackened eye.
A boy kills his first man.
A girl tells her first lie.

Scars. The change never comes.
Scars. The mine field's at home.

We want to wake.

You strike with open hand.
Addiction wonders why.
A nation takes a stand.

On June 28, 2009 the democratically elected president of Honduras was abducted and removed from power by the country's US-trained military. Manuel Zelaya was elected in 2005 and immediately began a program of reforms and anti-imperialist policies. His push to increase the minimum wage was an affront to companies like Adidas, Nike, and Gap, who run dozens of factories in Honduras. In addition, Zelaya began calling for the closing of the American military base at Soto Cano — the base of operations for the 1954 CIA-organized coup in Guatemala.

While the U.S. government condemned the coup and expressed shock and surprise, it soon betrayed its advance knowledge of the attacks, and support and organization of agitators supporting the coup. Corporate-backed PR campaigns run by Washington insiders quickly sought to discredit Zelaya and then legitimize the coup government. Washington called for and supported "democratic" elections but, tellingly, neither Jimmy Carter nor the United Nations sent observers since the elections were being conducted by an illegitimate coup government.

Honduras stands in stark contrast to Iran where the double standard in U.S. foreign policy is crystal clear. When protestors oppose a regime that is an official state enemy, they are freedom fighters and worthy of lionization. When protestors oppose a coup against a president who stood against U.S. economic imperialism, they are ignored and marginalized.

References

- Corcoran, Michael and Maher, Stephen. "Iran vs. Honduras." *Extra*. Aug 2009.
- Zapata, Johan. "Honduras: Chronicle of a Planned Coup." *Liberation*. Aug 21, 2009.

Operation Cast Lead

The horror of a killing field in a nation's backyard isn't lessened by proclaiming the intent to do good deeds half a world away, especially when the time spent proclaiming obviates the need to actually follow through.

Get it started. Your scars.
Pushing forward, looking backward.
The walls, the psalms, the guns, the stars — water.
Pushing tractors, lauding doctors. Your scars.
Get it started.

Operation Cast Lead was the Israeli Defense Forces' code name for the 2008-2009 Gaza War. As many as 1400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed during the 22-day war. In the wake of the conflict, which destroyed half of the territory's medical facilities, nearly all its farms, and much of its infrastructure, Israel imposed severe sanctions and a blockade, essentially turning Gaza into "a 140-square-mile prison." Both the United Nations and World Health Organization have expressed grave concerns over the squalid conditions, but mainstream American media has largely ignored the plight of the Palestinians in Gaza.

Following the devastating earthquake in Haiti, Israel and its supporters trumpeted the fact that Israeli doctors were among the first on the ground and that Israel was providing tons of food aid. American media were blind to the fact that Cuban doctors were there within hours of the quake and that aid was pouring in from all over the Middle East, including from residents of Gaza. While the excellent work by a small team of Israeli doctors was being promoted, Israel was denying foreign nationals working for NGO relief agencies access to any Palestinian territories, including Gaza.

References

- "The Gaza Strip." *Palestine Monitor*. Jan 01, 2010. Accessed Mar 01, 2011. <<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/spip/spip.php?article6>>
- Issacharoff, Avi, "Gaza collects Haiti Aid." *Haaretz*. Jan 18, 2010.
- Kane, Alex. "Gaza's Ongoing Crisis Is Not News." *Extra*. Aug 2010.
- "Pity the poor defenders of Israel." *Left I On The News*. Jan 20, 2010. Accessed Mar 01, 2011. <http://lefti.blogspot.com/2010_01_01_archive.html#6361479257025920511>
- "UN, WHO Concerned With Gaza Healthcare." *Press TV*. Jan 20, 2010.

State-Sponsored Terrorism

The individual goes into battle knowing in his heart that the actions he carries out on behalf of the state are fundamentally flawed and malevolent.

How do we live? And how do we fail?
Sharpshooter's gotten some doubts on his mind.
His village is closer and closer to law.
Foot soldiers dragging their feet to the crime.
Their houses are built on foundations of straw.
How do we live? And how do we fail?

One little thing — you're not alone.
One fucking thing — you're not alone.
The sand flows black.

Crisis of faith to come until the desert blooms.
Repress the greatest war — crisis of faith to come.
Guard well the sin within — crisis of faith to come.

The 2009 settlement freeze in Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories resulted in nothing but a temporary lull — the rate of construction slowed to about half that prior to the "freeze." Home demolitions, water theft, and other forms of violent and systemic oppression continue throughout the occupied territories. The settlements in question are housing developments built on land seized by Israel following the Six-Day War in 1967. Despite the fact that the United Nations has declared these settlements illegal, Israel continues to build, populate, and dominate these areas. A social policy that keeps one ethnic group separate and dominated is generally referred to in most other contexts as apartheid.

References

- Eldar, Akiva. "Construction in West Bank Settlements Booming Despite Declared Freeze." *Haaretz*. Jan 01, 2010.
- Halper, Jeff. "The Message of the Bulldozers." *CounterPunch*. Aug 16, 2010.
- Hollar, Julie. "'Law-Abiding' Israelis, 'Unwelcoming' Palestinians." *Extra*. Oct 2009.
- "Israeli Settlements." *Palestine Monitor*. Mar 15, 2010. Accessed Mar 01, 2011. <<http://www.palestinemonitor.org/spip/spip.php?article7>>

Credits

All Songs by The United Sons of Toil (cc by-sa) unitedsonsoftoil.com

Basic tracks recorded by Ricky Riemer at Science Of Sound, Madison WI. Additional recording and mixing by Russell Hall and Jason Jensen at Flannel Jammies. Mastered by Carl Saff at Saff Mastering, Chicago.

Cover art: "Martha the Mayoress at the Destruction of the Novgorod Veche" by Klavdiy Vasilievich Lebedev, 1889.

The United Sons of Toil

Bill Borowski: Bass, Vocals

Mr. Borowski is a member of a workers cooperative that operates a community pharmacy and de facto advocacy group. He is profoundly distrustful of the American government and all its shadowy nether regions and ponzi schemes. His cynical attitude is fueled by wide-ranging academic interests and is directed toward the herd mentality all around us.

Russell Emerson Hall: Guitar, Vocals

Mr. Hall is a jaded and grizzled knowledge worker increasingly disaffected by the imperio-capitalist status quo. Humanity's history of exploitation and inequality have incensed him to such an extent that he finds it difficult to function within the American single-party politico-economic system. He believes that the most intensely political act one can carry out is raising children.

Jason Jensen: Drums

Mr. Jensen is a seething wage slave plagued by the ennui of modern life. His is the soul of an anarchist but hardly that of a nihilist. His strong sense of compassion and community is driven by this anarcho-syndicalist world-view. Sometimes though, the other Sons hear his violent rants about smashing the power of the bourgeois capitalists and shake their heads as if to say "he means it."