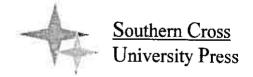
# FRED EMERY COLLECTION

# LIMITS TO CHOICE



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Published by Southern Cross University Press PO Box 157 Lismore NSW 2480 Australia

ISBN 1875855343

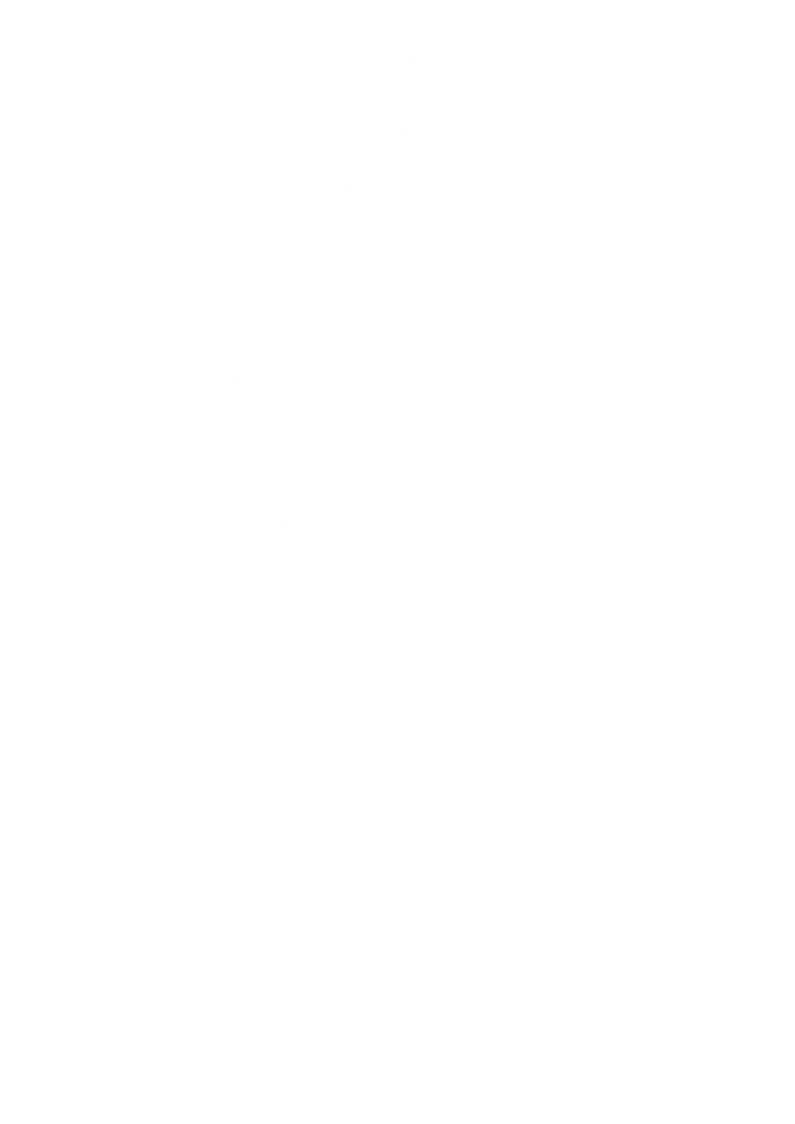
Typesetting and layout by Michelle Sharpe

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## LIMITS TO CHOICE

Introduction to Revised Edition.

F. Emery

March, 1993

The social transformation envisaged in the original collection of papers is already well underway in Australia. A close check of those papers has not, however, revealed any need for extensive revision. The problems that were then identified remain as relevant as ever.

Some editorial comments might help to bridge the time gap and explain the inclusion of two further papers.

The first paper on the 'baby boomers' is still very much an educated guess at what might have caused such a rapid and profound shift in cultural values. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the momentous year of 1968 there have been many public re-analyses. None of those go beyond the explanations criticized in that paper. The prediction, in that paper, of a third phase of cultural revolution seemed to be a long time in coming. A reason for this delay is suggested in the later comments on the 'Fifth Wave' paper. It should be noted that surveys by Yankelovitch and others have constantly reminded us that the baby-boomers have remained unrepentant. They have accommodated to the extent of earning a living but not adopted the old values. In 1983 the Clinton and Keating (Australia) governments were elected and promoted themselves as the first governments by the baby-boomers. Both present themselves as committed to transforming their national workforces from the mass labour model to one constituted of multi-skilled, self-governing work-teams. Of course, that is still just words and appearances. But at least, once again, we are hearing the word of 1968.

The paper on "The ennui of management" was the one that gave me greatest concern. I recalled my state of mind when that was written and thought it might be very dated. On rereading it I realized that, unfortunately, it was not dated. Some leading figures, amongst the corporate leaders, had brought into being the Business Council of Australia. Following the example of the Round Tables of the USA and the UK this had brought together the CEO's of the top corporations and had created a strategic dimension to employer thinking. Their views did not translate into national policies because the conservative parties drew their electoral support from a mass of small and medium sized business people who were locked into a mass labor model. By default the leadership for restructuring the workforce fell to the ACTU, Australia's central union body, which had very close ties with the governing Labor Party. That will not necessarily continue. Ageing has had its effects (see paper 5). Many of the senior managers we now meet were junior managers during the spate of field experiments in the seventies and they have not forgotten the lessons.

The Fifth Wave paper (No. 6) was written just as we thought that the serious recession of 1975-6 presaged a slump of world depression scale. The International Bank for Monetary Settlements (between the national banks) had already flagged this possibility. When the world economies went into deep recession in 1979 it was to be expected that governments would opt for some Keynesian deficit budgeting to support consumer demand.

What was quite unexpected were the directions taken in President Reagan's Message to Congress, February 1981. Deficit budgeting was to be the order of the day, but not to support consumer demand. A massive rearmament program was launched with such targets as a 600 ship navy and, eventually, a 'star war' capability. Together with this, government programs and regulatory overheads were slashed to permit major tax reductions and rebates to the higher income levels who are primarily concerned with investment. In the twelve years to 1992 the national debt of the USA had quadrupled to four trillion dollars demanding net interest payments of about \$US 235 billion a year. The rearmament race had broken the economic back of the Soviet Union and forced a dissolution of that empire. On the home front the opportunities for social and economic reconstruction had been wasted. There was nothing to show but the industrial heartland turned into the Rust Belt and the value of US farmland had dropped from \$US 712 billion to \$US 293 billion. Further unforeseen limits to choice had emerged!

The seventh paper, "Communications for a sustainable society", has been included as a warning that the revolution in communications technology (which still continues at amazing speed) confronts us with new limits. In pursuit of 'virtual reality' we may find it harder to come to grips with reality.

The last paper, "The Australian Experience", is a look back over the twenty-five years since 1968. It recognizes the continued lack of industrial investment but is cautiously optimistic about the accelerating rate of change in the restructuring of the workforce and the supporting educational institutions. In the months since that report was written the first firm steps have been taken to restructure the relation between work and the family. This includes not only the institutionalisation of creches but also the first recognition that housework is economically valuable even when performed privately.

## Introduction to 1978 Edition

People have some ability and some desire to shape the future. I believe this to be the case, allowing only that:

- (a) "people can proceed only from the objective conditions of the present;
- (b) they tend to pursue only those ends that seem to be achievable (and hence may often be blind to possibilities that have newly emerged); and
- (c) the means they choose may frequently have unanticipated consequences for other ends that they desire." (Emery, 1967)

In the first paper of this set, Youth - victims, vanguard or vandals, the emphasis is upon the emergence of new possibilities in our culture and, by the same token, the blocking off of many traditionally acceptable courses of action (point b, above). If we see the culture of a society as the aggregate of historically evolved ways of managing human affects, and hence human relations, then it is not difficult to envisage such cultural changes undermining and even paralyzing some or all of our accepted institutional arrangements. In the traditional culture and the traditional structures it was the going wisdom that people could not be held together in joint enterprises unless they were self-seeking, practical, down-to-earth and practiced the "real-politik". Anything smelling of value orientation or ideal-seeking was strictly for the demagogues. This culture placed its own limits to choice. In the emergent culture it is taken for granted that we can go to the moon, or go for an inner trip. It is taken for granted that human rights and conservation are achievable ends - not idealistic pipe-dreams. I suggest that this has radically widened what people regard as real possibilities and radically limited the choices of would-be leaders in the traditional mode.

In the last paper, <u>The fifth wave</u>, is the prime reason for choosing the title for this collection ie., Limits to Choice.

This paper is primarily concerned with the "objective conditions of the present" (point a, above). To define the present it has been necessary to go back into the past even more than to conjecture futures.

Its implications for what we are free to choose are considerable. When modern societies have been making a good living and considerable progress off a given set of technologies, for something like forty years, there is a strong pre-dilection to choose future courses of action that follow along those same technological lines ie. more and bigger of the same. Since most of the existing scientific and technological know-how has been centred around these technologies they will also appear to be the areas where new technological break-throughs most frequently present themselves. The temptation to take non-viable courses of action is considerable. It is the same inability to adapt that strikes down all corporations that have been too good for too long eg. Rolls-Royce and IBM.

Part Two is constituted of a set of papers that I wrote after the three V's paper and before the Fifth Wave paper. Each was written for people in industry but each reflects my considerable concern with how we might successfully negotiate what I had described as phase three of the cultural revolution. Relations in industry were not immune to what was happening in society at large and hence I do not think that the matters raised in these papers are any less relevant to the general level of social discourse. In both the narrower sphere of work and the comprehensive sphere of society we confront the same unusual obstacle to communication. The changes are so radical that we find ourselves arguing about the same facts because we view them from radically different perspectives. The usual processes of debate cannot cope with this. We find ourselves just talking straight past each other. We have to wonder whether the other person is mad, or completely unscrupulous.

It is our hope that the first and last papers will cause people to think about where their limits of choice now lie. More importantly, because we think that this first task is probably well in hand, we are hoping that people will realize that the difficulties experienced in working through these changes are probably not due to bad faith or ill intent, but just to, "I cannot see".

## LIMITS TO CHOICE

## Fred Emery

Expanded and updated

CENTRE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION, AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## Source of the Papers

"Youth - victims, vanguard or vandals?" Keynote speech, National Youth Conference, 1977

"Ennui of management." Invited speech, Melbourne University Business administration Graduates Association, (BAGS) 1977.

"Parameters of communication." Invited speech, Business Law Education Centre, 1977.

"Concern for quality." Invited speech, first National Conference for Australian Society for Quality Control, 1978.

"Conflicting paradigms of work." Invited speech, South Australian Government's Conference on Industrial Democracy, 1978.

"The fifth wave."

## **PART ONE**

## 1. YOUTH - VANGUARD, VICTIMS OR THE NEW VANDALS...?

## **Summary**

To better understand where youth are at today and where they are likely to go, I have found it necessary to see where they have come from.

It is clear that the message that came from the "Beat generation" in the mid-fifties was a new message. It was not just a louder, wilder statement of the traditional adolescent protest.

By asking why this message emerged at that time, we are led to identify the momentous social events which preceded it. These events make it easier to identify the keys to the message from Kerouac and Allan Ginsberg and to trace these through the messages of Bob Dylan, the Beatles and the hippies to the early seventies.

By the mid-fifties it was clear that the dedicated pursuit of affluence in the Western societies was meaningless. It only made sense to dedicate one's life and one's family life to the pursuit of affluence when there was not enough to go around. World War II had amply demonstrated our productive capabilities and shown that the lash of poverty was not necessarily the lot of man. As Orwell had predicted the tyranny of the state over the individual was propped up on the age old arguments of war, national defence, national security, the sacredness of "our way of life" and, of course, patriotism. Those props were shattered when both the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. exploded thermo-nuclear devices. No rationale remained to justify the age-old subservience of the individual to the state and its vast array of institutions.

Both Krushchev and Eisenhower warned of the powerful stake in the old order that was lodged in the military-economic-scientific complex. To shore up the old structure they had only lies, hypocrisy, prejudices and manufactured crises and threats.

I have come to the conclusion that Roszak, Reich, etc. were right in identifying in the reactions of youth, a cultural revolution. It is not about getting a new set of masters as in the French and Russian Revolutions.

As a cultural revolution it appears to have already passed through the first two phases. At the moment we appear to be in the lull before the storm of the third phase. It is my best guess that this third phase will see the general acceptance of the new ideals that the youth have been espousing and the cooperation of the young and not so young to re-order our lives accordingly.

### Introduction

In this paper I have tried to honestly preserve the circuitous course by which I arrived at the view expressed in the latter part. Asked to address the topic of "Youth - Vanguard or Victim...?" I could only assume that what was required was a re-appraisal of the events of the past decade or so in which the youth have figured so prominently.

At Berkeley, Columbia, the L.S.E., Monash and the Sorbonne; in ten thousand and one urban and rural communes; on the discs; in Carnaby Street and the barbers' shops, and in countless street demonstrations and sit-ins the youth have stood out as the vanguard.

In the unemployment statistics, hospital records and surveys of satisfactions gained from life, schooling and work, youth appear as the victims.

However, the same phenomena, labelled as rioting, disrespect, drugs, dis-orderliness, dirtiness, irresponsibility, dropping-out, dole-bludging, etc., caused many adults, and the faithful among their children, to see the overall phenomena in a very different way.

They certainly did not see these youths as a vanguard heralding their future. As witness the cool response of the militant workers of the Renault plant in Paris to the student street battles in spring 1968. They did not see the youth as victims. They saw them as the spoilt generation - the generation who were given the Dr. Spock treatment and offered on a platter what their parents had to struggle for - a higher education and an assured source of income.

The picture that formed in the minds of the establishment and their keener supporters was that they were confronted by barbarians, not by vanguards they should listen to, nor by victims toward whom they should show compassion. Their reaction to this confrontation has been to call for forceful reinstatement of the prerogatives of adults. This back-lash tells us very little about what is happening in the youthful generations, just that something has been happening of a nature and on a scale to deeply disturb a lot of adults.

I have introduced the notion of "the New Vandals" into the title for a very different reason. Late in the nineteen fifties the novelists John Wyndham and Howard Fast both raised the possibility of a discontinuity between generations. The sort of discontinuity that they sensed was in the air was the sort of discontinuity the Romans must have felt when the original Vandals came crashing into their empire, met savagery with savagery and rejected Roman civilization for a more human scale of affairs. It is twenty years since they wrote and I think we have now to take this possibility quite seriously. The notion of victim is too limiting in that it suggests that the dynamics of the recent changes stem from the callousness of the old system. What we have seen has been too novel to have been predicted in say 1950. Similarly, the notion of vanguard seems to imply that youth are simply leading some already existing interest group in a polarized social structure. It tends to assume away the very question we need to ask, namely, what has happened to so quickly out-date the concepts of a simple polarized class society, its political parties, its established authorities and to erode its traditional patterns of age and sex statuses?

Following the clue from Wyndham and Fast I thought it might be fruitful to see if there was evidence of cultural discontinuity - a cultural revolution, not just changes in social conditions or modification of social structures. Many months after starting that search I was convinced that what they saw on the horizon they correctly identified as the first scouts of the new Vandal hordes. I was reminded of the passage in the Kotan: "Systems have passed away before you. Do but travel in the land and see the consequences for those who did deny the messengers."

### The Last Two Decades:

If a re-centering of civilization is taking place we should most easily observe its effects by seeing what is being shifted off-centre. It would be much more difficult to identify the invader because it will be parasitical on old forms and garb itself in whatever new forms suit the passing moment.

Much is in the process of being re-centred. Religion has been moved off-centre, but then the same is now happening to science, which many thought to be the new emergent religion. More slowly so, the same is happening to universities and the other citadels of formal education. The multi-national corporations, that ten years ago seemed ready to take over from the nation-states, are now fading into the background, looking more like vultures than eagles. The viability of the Westminster form of democracy is being questioned now in a way that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. The bureaucratic forms of organization are no longer unquestionably assumed to be the efficient way of doing anything. The formal marriage is no longer unquestionably the form of the family and the production of children is no longer the proof that there is a family. On a different time scale we have seen the meteoric rise of the Planners in the fifties and the sixties, and their equally spectacular decline in the seventies. They were going to fill the gaps in the centre with scientific decision-making (even trying us on with computer matching of potential lovers). Instead they got caught up in the same sort of centrifugal social forces.

Are there any underlying similarities in what is going on in all these different parts of society? I think there are two.

One pervasive theme would seem the be that people are determined to "bombard the Headquarters." I can think of no central institution that has remained unscathed. None, not still under threat. There is more to it than the drift of the individual institutions from the centre of the stage. These institutions collectively have preserved, protected and extended the power of the Establishment - a minority of the old men of the tribe. So long as these institutions were at the centre of things this minority of older men were the Establishment and all others of different ages and sex, class and ethnic origin were effectively second-class citizens. Use of the Westminster system assured the process of exclusion even if the second-raters organized to assert their rights. With the institutional drift the Establishment lost the firmness of their footing and their arrogant self-assurance.

This points to a second pervasive theme, the other side of the penny as it were: the general erosion of status discrimination, of sex inequalities, of the master-servant relation, of <u>status pupillary</u>, of bastardy, of colour, ethnicity, etc. It was getting harder to put down "inferiors" with contempt and shame.

A striking thing about these changes is the way they have been happening. People have tried to bombard the headquarters before and found themselves very severely dealt with. This time we find that the people are bombarding their own headquarters. It is the Roman Catholics who are overthrowing what has been most oppressive in the Church's relations with its individual members - it has not been a Protestant reformation nor an atheistic-Bolshevik plot. The same with the changes that have taken place in the RSL and the communist parties. Similarly, in industry it has been the management who have made most of the running in democratization of work.

There is one further curious aspect about these changes. Until the careers of Stalin and Joseph McCarthy ended in 1953-4 there seemed no way in which the world could halt the blind rush into the horrible world of Orwell's 1984. Many feared that the rush would take us even beyond 1984 into some barbaric, post-nuclear, stone age. However, very quickly the settlement of the Korean conflict and the Geneva Conference that ended the French phase of the Viet-Nam war created new confidence. "Whereas such incidents in the thirties were solved by force and appeared to create an irreversible process leading to war, the present day incidents have been settled peacefully and, to all appearances have been followed by a lessening of international tension" (Emery, 1957, p.64). In 1956 there was a veritable rash of events marking the end of an era. At Suez, France and Britain were told in no uncertain manner by the two super-powers that those sort of wars were no longer on in Europe. Krushchev's famous denunciation of Stalin gave hope of some liberalization in the Soviet countries. The uprisings in Hungary and Poland showed that the demand for individual freedom had not been destroyed by a decade or more of police terror. in the same year, although we did not know it at the time, Mao Tse-Tung denounced the Soviet model to his colleagues and spelt out a new independent path for China. A path in which two-thirds of the bureaucracy were to be disbanded. Parallel with these events was a marked change in the economic confidence of the people. Trends for all kinds of consumer goods turned upwards to herald the emergence of affluent western societies.

What all this meant was not clear in 1956. Not even to those who were about to play a major role in putting it all together.

The uncertainty that hung in air is well captured by Charles Jarvis in his biography of Jack Kerouac: (foundation beatnik):

"Something different was happening. But no one was sure what it was. These people would meet and talk, and talk. Their subject matter was wide ranging, but inevitably it always seemed to focus (on) the concept that some sort of change was taking place in America, some sort of rebellion was being whipped up. But by whom?"

"Though they did not know it them they were whipping up this rebellion; they, and the millions of others of their generation who were merely waiting for someone to show them the direction this storm should follow. Holmes, Ginsberg, Kerouac, Burroughs, Neal Cassidy..." (1973, pp.120-1).

Across the Atlantic the scene as re-captured by Christopher Booker, himself one of the figures of the period, was remarkably in accord with the message Kerouac and Ginsberg were giving to the Beat Generation:

"Out of this comparative placidity, however, at the end of 1955 Britain suddenly entered on a period of upheaval. Within twelve months it was outwardly marked by a trail of signs, storms and sensations ... When it was over, Britain was a changed country ... Above all, with the coming of this new age, a new spirit was unleashed - a new wind of essentially youthful hostility to every kind of established convention and traditional authority, a wind of moral freedom and rebellion." (1969, pp.35-6)

This phenomena was not confined to the wealthy Anglo-Saxon nations. As Booker sums it up: "There have been few years in this century which have marked so decisive a watershed as 1956...In all parts the pattern of change was essentially the same - the under-dogs, the underprivileged, the young, the colonially occupied, all those who could see themselves as oppressed, were becoming fired with the same bright vision of a new world - a world of freedom and excitement." (ibid, p.106)

Trumpeting out the change were the London Riots of August and September that year with the screening of the film "Rock Around the Clock." The strident urgency of rock 'n roll borrowed from the music of another oppressed minority to make sure that there was no way that the newly defined "squares" would not get the message.

Going back to study this period has forced me to raise a number of questions that I could not previously frame for myself. By the early sixties I was convinced that our societies were into something new. I wrote about this as a change from the disturbed-reactive social environments, of what was essentially "monopoly capitalism", to turbulent environments. I could not clearly identify why the change had come about but thought that in some way it was a qualitative change brought about by the quantitative trends in organizational and technological development. That in some way these trends had added up to create a degree of relevant uncertainty with which neither we, nor our organizations could cope. Over time I added to the list of quantifiable trends; and became increasingly hazy about when turbulence started to be a real phenomena. Throughout this period I thought Kerouac and Ginsberg had been unusually prescient. It had not occurred to me that they were reporting it as it was. Now I have had to face three questions that I could not even pose before:

- 1. What led to 1956 as a turning point?
- 2. What did the cultural revolution mean, for youth in particular?
- 3. What has happened since 1956?

I think I had been looking in the wrong places for what pushed us into turbulence. I was looking at what was new, big and growing in the old society. Now I think the answer lies quite elsewhere; in the demise of two silent assumptions that have provided the historical rationale for the persistence of the principle of "hierarchical domination"; and done so even after the demise of "the divine right of aristocracies" and the eternal threat of "hell fire and brimstone." The two assumptions that have continued to make reasonable the sub-ordination of the individual to the nation-state and to its network of supporting institutions have been:

(a)that there is not enough to go around to support everyone at a decent level of living, and hence some centralized bodies or agreed practices must exist to ensure survival of the "worthy." (the "work ethic") In its so-called socialist form this was parodied as "to each according to his contribution";

(b)preservation of the nation-state as the prior requirement for having adequate centralized power to allocate; and hence all individual aspirations must be subordinated to the nation's requirements for waging war and to preserving and enhancing that power. (Patriotism). Together they enshrine a "struggle for the survival of the fittest" and the indispensability of elites.

I am going to suggest that 1956 came to be the year it was because by then both of these assumptions had lost their validity and a lot of people, particularly the youth, felt it in their bones. This did not all happen at once.

The tremendous productive efforts put forward in World War II, at a time when a major part of the adult male workforce was engaged in non-productive military activity, finally put an end to the traditional rationale for the subordination of the individual to "society as the provider. "As Orwell put it, "...an all round increase in wealth threatened the destruction - indeed, in some sense was the destruction of a hierarchical society." (1949, p.154)

This heady thought was very much in the air in the years 1944-47. Labour governments were voted in with resounding majorities; the USA passed its Employment Act; radical legislation for education, welfare, Workers' Councils cropping up throughout Europe. New, democratized forms of society seemed inevitable, at least in the west.

This spirit of optimism and enthusiastic social reconstruction quickly turned to confusion, bitterness and eventually cynicism and despair.

Churchill's "iron curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri, 1946, and the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947 marked the beginning of the end of that short sunny dream. The principle of hierarchical domination was very firmly re-emplaced on the second rationale, national survival. A Cold War was declared which justified any subordination of the individual that was required by the nation (including the sub-ordination of the arts eg., the trial of the Hollywood Ten and the Zhdanov purges.)

This was not a new rationale. In one way or another it had done service, alongside the rationale of economic productivity, since the emergence of the nation-state. What was new was its being invoked as the principle justifying State and institutional domination of the individual in all aspects of their lives. If anything defines the characteristics of the Cold War it is an apparent agreement between the super-powers that they would not engage in Hot War whilst they were so busy in fighting their own inhabitants. The public "brinkmanship" of John Foster, Dulles and Molotov was essential to this exercise. As Orwell again so well puts it: "...the consciousness of being at war, and therefore in danger, makes the handing-over of all power to a small caste seem the natural unavoidable condition of survival." (1949 p.155)

Orwell was quickly off the mark to spot the deflation of the post-war dreams of a new society. He saw the hideous dialectic that was drawing the West and the East into police states of total domination. In 1947 he started writing down this vision under the clear shadow of his own death. He published in 1949 and died, as expected, of T.B., in 1950.

His book, 1984, was an immediate and resounding success. He had obviously hit on a deep seated and widespread feeling that we, the ordinary people, were now being plunged into a new and endless Dark Age.

The basic premise of this new Dark Age was destroyed in just a couple of years. It was not destroyed by the emergence of religious or ideological revelations. It was destroyed, I think, by two hard facts: in 1952 the USA exploded its first thermonuclear device, and in 1953 the U.S.S.R. exploded their first thermonuclear device.

With these two events the last rationalization for the subordination of the individual to his institutions was crippled. The argument that every individual should be prepared to serve his country was meaningless - "what country?", after the first exchange of thermo-nuclear devices?

It took a little while for people to realize that these assumptions had been pulled out from under the old social order. In fact, it appeared to require events of the sort we have noted for 1956. Where people would now go was not clear to anyone, so it seems, but as Booker put it (and Ginsberg and Kerouac) it was out of the mental asylum of the old society and into some world where individual aspirations and expectations counted.

I think that the above gives a better answer to when and why turbulence emerged than anything I could previously propose. I think it also gives a better explanation of why the only adequate answers to turbulence appeared to be cultural ones - the emergence of new ideals and the sharing of values in new forms of social matrix organizations. In the decade 1944-54, we had out-grown the assumption that societies could only be built on the notion that the individual was a replaceable, redundant part, like a brick.

It is still hard to grasp the magnitude of the change that occurred in the mid-fifties. What was at issue in those years can perhaps be grasped by taking a look at a debate between two of the major philosophers of the time.

The size of the gap that was jumped in those brief years was dramatically shown in the 1958 debate between Sidney Hook and Bertrand Russell. Hook was still living in the past. Posing the limiting case, "choice between the horror of communism for some hundreds of years and the end of human life" he added "At present, I cannot, like Russell, find grounds in history for reconciling myself to the first of the above

alternatives." (p.151) Russell in 1948 had declared that a preventative war to destroy communism would be worth it even if it cost the destruction of Europe. Now, in this 1958 debate, he accuses Hook of going far beyond anything that has been advocated in previous human history" in arguing "that it is justified to bury not several generations but all future generations, not in order that they may enjoy a glorious future, but in order that they may have no future at all." (p.156) With the emergence of thermonuclear weapons on both sides Russell saw "that war cannot achieve anything that either side desires, and that, in consequence, points in dispute can only be settled by negotiation." (p.156) He argues that the situation was now such that both sides stood to gain more for their people by surrendering them to the social system of their enemy than by launching a nuclear war.

The position as stated by Russell remains just as true today and, for all the shadow-play of the militarists and scientists, there is no conceivable way it can be changed. The relation between the nation-state and its subjects that had existed since 1648 had undergone a fundamental change and the demand for genuine participative forms of democracy was inevitably to emerge. At the heart of this was the new value attached to human life. Hook premised his misanthropic doctrine on the assumption that "Paradoxical as it may sound, life itself is not a value. What gives life value is not its mere existence but its quality." (p.141) Russell is still so close to the past that the best he can say is that "Dr. Hook says quite truly that life, in itself, is not of value. It gives, however, the only possibility of any value." (p.147) I think that we would now go further than that. We attach value to life itself, our life and the life of others, and we hope our neighbours do likewise. And this value is in no way lessened if the quality of the life being led is for some unfortunate reason low. Hook argues that below a certain point on the scale of quality a person might just as well be dead, and Americans living under communism would be below that point. On this argument those who are too weak to grasp a high quality life are thereby worthless. Not pleasant but that was the way it was. Even Maslow the founder of so-called humanitarian psychology accepted this position in 1954.

At this point we might well pause to ask what difference does it make to put this interpretation on the causes of the changes emerging around 1956? First, it means that we are not just talking about a generation of Dr. Spock's babies raised in an atmosphere of permissiveness and indulgence. That is no answer to what happened in the American ghetto's, let alone the colonial countries. Second, it means that we are not talking about what too much education is supposed to do to you. It was not the content of education but the degrading teacher-pupil relation of the mass university that spurred the university riots. Third, it is not, as Booker would have us believe, just a mass psychosis of the type that flares up and dies away for no obvious reason. Lastly, it is not just a generation gap.

As Bob Dylan said in one of his rare interviews, he never thought about differences in generations only the difference between the living and the living dead. If the causes of 1956 arose from a growing awareness that the persistence of hierarchical domination was no longer justified then that awareness does not depend an education or youthful idealism. It is simply a matter of believing what you see before your eyes. As John Lennon put it "War is over if you want it. We have the power. All you have got to do is be aware of it." Admittedly it is easier to see that the world has been some sort of inhuman mad-house when you have been a victim of it and it is harder to see that the emperor wears no clothes if one is blinded by long servitude or self-interest. Furthermore, if these are the causes then there is no turning back. No matter how long it takes, the process of change is not likely to cease until all of our human relationships and institutions are re-structured. No facet of our culture is likely to remain untouched simply because the pattern of hierarchical domination had come to permeate every relationship between people, and between people and their institutions. This is what is meant by a cultural revolution. The change in system principle has been variously described as that from variety-decreasing to variety-increasing organizations (Ackoff and Emery, 1972) and from the person as a redundant, replaceable part to the person as multi-functional. (Emery 1967)

The nature of the change will be better spelt out if we can answer the second question, "What does it mean to youth?"

First, let us see what we are moving away from by sketching in the picture of youths' treatment under the traditional assumptions of necessary oppression.'.

The traditional picture has been well-documented. The difficulty is to abstract the essentials, and not to get them confused with recent changes. I think the first essential feature to note is the inferior status attributed to youth. A clear example of this was the fact that they could be conscripted for military duties even though they had no vote. Let us add some more examples. If they had earnings they were taxed without a vote. If they were under twenty-one it was legal to pay them at lower rates for doing the same job. If they wanted to marry it was on parents' consent. If they wanted to study then they had to accept the status of pupil and the domination of the so-called teacher. This inferior status was a persistent and pervasive fact of life for youth. It made no difference whether some youth were financially spoilt or others given license to sow their wild oats; it was still adults who gave or took away as they deemed fit.

The other feature to note is the complex interlocking institutional arrangements to accommodate these inferior statuses youths, and mould or sublimate their every interest into a means of self-enslavement and self-denial. Repress and sublimate sec, and you have the old-style Children of Mary, Scouts and Guides, and the Salvation Army bands. Harness the zest for physical activity and you have an army of adults who regard international sports as a form of Cold War, or an army of young men performing military drills on our surf beaches. Scorn and deride the natural curiosity and innovativeness of youth and you have an army of non-readers and a small regiment of slavish, imitative, academic specialists. In this traditional scenario the corruption of youth went deeper than instilling these rather lifeless forms of behaviour.

If that was all there was to it then seeing Barry Humphries, "Edna Everidge", would enable us to laugh until our desiccated hides fell off. The reduction of people to a lifetime of willing subservience to their institutions and to their nation-state bit deeper into our humanity. The cruellest cut of all was the alienation of the individual from himself or herself. All influences were brought to bear to imbue the individual with a conscience. This conscience was evolved by implanting into the individual a sense of being born in sin, a sense of personal worthlessness, and a fear of hell--fire. What was most likely to bring about the punishments for child and youth that proved their worthlessness and inherent tendency to sin was any display of personal innovativeness or curiosity that happened to cross the boundary of conformity, wittingly or unwittingly. What was in the mind of the child or youth was irrelevant, that was "mere psychology" (Vyshinsky, closing speech at the Moscow Trials 1936.) The only relevant fact was the objective transgression of the norms. The demands of conscience could be met only by serving, or by the furtherance of, the purposes of the state or its institutions. What one required for one's own growth of character or what other individuals needed of oneself was irrelevant except as defined by these institutions in norms and rules that were to be observed by everyone, regardless of personal circumstances.

It is little wonder that within this social pattern adolescence was commonly defined as a period of "sturm and drang". Able and willing to help remedy the obvious shortfalls in the human consideration and endeavour that they could see around them the adolescents found themselves rejected from any responsible role until they had proven themselves "of good character", "sound", "conscientious" and hence "fit" and "suitable" for such responsible "adult" roles. As in Darkness at Noon they found that their persecutors (potential employers and patrons) would give no clearer definition of what was required of them; an essential part of the selection process was to identify those well enough prepared for life by parents and schools to design their own straight-jackets. That human resources were discarded in this process was of no concern: there were only a few places of responsibility to fill in an hierarchically organized society and, so long as they were filled, the rest of the able people were surplus; garbage.

In the world that I am describing the greatest prizes in life were offered to those youth who could evade personal growth while giving the semblance of maturing (Angyal 1965, p.191.)

Is it any wonder that the period of adolescence became notorious as a phase of crazy mixed-up behaviour? That schizophrenia was the psychosis of youth and formally known as dementia praecox ie., demented before their time? The vast body of psychiatrists looked for the causes of this scourge of schizophrenia in genetics, ie., bad breeding, whilst turning a blind eye to the fact that the disease was of recent origin.

It took Ronnie Laing to reveal that it was a ritual murder, by families that could not cope with the society's demand that they implant a conscience in each and every one of their children. Schizophrenia was only the deadliest flower in the weed bed of mental disorder in which our youth were developed. The commonplace disorders were the hysterical neurosis amongst those that just could not cope with a world in which love and human consideration counted for so little compared with national survival; and the obsessive compulsive disorders amongst those who rejected their inner selves and accepted the world as defined for them by the institutions.

The second class citizens were more likely to be smitten with the anxiety of just being a nothing; at best, someone else's doormat or donkey. So smitten, they showed the classical hysterical patterns.

The mental diseases took a different form for those who accepted as reality what - the oppressive society offered. Their sickness started when they found that they could not deny the reality of human inside themselves and in the others around them, except by building high fences.

I mention these basic differences only to indicate that the mental toll exacted by these oppressive societies took many different forms. As already mentioned both of these paths to mental sickness were ways of evading personal growth while giving the semblance of maturing into good mothers, good fathers, good citizens, etc.

More than that, both paths arose from a view of the self as weak and unlovable in an overpowering social world whose purposes are inimical to their felt sense of preferred personal directions. (Angyal, 1965)

If my interpretation of the events of 1953-6 is correct then the "sturm and drang" of adolescence should be fading into the past.

The notion of a generational gap had a very real meaning in the oppressive society. In that society the youthful generation stood on the verge of assuming the roles and authority that went only to adults. They had some emerging sense of their own capabilities relative to the adults they knew and were not necessarily put down by a sense of inferior competence. They were confronted, however, with a sort-out by the adults, in which more youth would lose out than would win.

This generation gap was not either a simple gap of misunderstanding. It was not a gap caused by the youth having learnt a lot of new ideas that their elders were too fixed in their ways to accept. It was not a gap in maturity with only the youth being in the business of sowing wild oats or avoiding social commitments. None of these descriptions of the generation gap would stand up to historical analysis.

The generation gap was a grimmer affair.

With each generation of youth that came along there was some challenge to the proposition that all individual rights had to be subordinated ultimately to serve the nation-state.

There was nothing ever very new about this. The challenge was not new, despite the frequent change of garments. The response was institutionalized so that it worked like clock-work. It mattered little which persons confronted each other across the meal-table, the head-master's desk, in the job interview, the confessional, the sporting change rooms or in the public places.

The generation gap could more appropriately be termed the annual round-up. Collected from the feeding ranges the youth were sorted out into sheep, goats and mavericks (stud being bred in different ways.) Once sorted out they are given the appropriate treatment. Always a rough sort-out, with rites de passage, but even this gives the message of replaceability and essential worthlessness of the individual and the power of the social machinery - so what if we knock a few off by mistake? So what if some slip through as we have later back-up systems to catch them out and deal with them?

Let us now come to the third question. How far have we really moved from all of that?

It is now some twenty years since those events in the fifties that I suggested were the beginning of the end of the long era of hierarchical domination. Yet all around us the traditional forms still survive and still act to churn out new generations of imitation people.

Admittedly the language of today is replete with phrases such as alternative lifestyles, sexual liberation, participative democracy, open government., ecumenicalism. But what is the reality? Is there no hope?

What is at stake, I think, is that it is a cultural revolution that we are in. It is not just a change in the forms of our society. It is not something that can be legislated for, or in any other way be done for us or to us. A cultural revolution can be carried through only by the people themselves. As I tried to point out earlier this particular cultural revolution would not have got off the ground if people had not tumbled to the fact that the threat of World War III and of necessary poverty were as empty as the old threat of hell-fire. This freeing up of the mind, identifying as possible what was always unthinkable and of trying out the new possibilities, is inevitably a long process marked with many ups and downs. We can see this process very vividly in the struggle of an individual to get out of a neurotic system of life into the healthy one. Millions of people, in <u>all</u> of the living generations, have to realize that it is not a case of them against THE SYSTEM, but that they are the system. Only then do you get the phenomena we have been seeing since the mid-sixties of powerful bastions being turned over from within, of a gigantic armed force being brought home from Viet-Nam on the orders of the people, and not because they had been defeated or had won.

How long this process might go on might seem anyone's guess. Roszak looked at this problem and made the comment that 150 years after Christ's death hardly anyone in the Roman Empire would have even known that he had lived.

However, the world is now so interdependent and changing so rapidly that I do not think we are discussing a time scale of this order. Twenty to thirty years, yes, even forty years, but not hundreds.

There is one way to assess the rate of cultural change before it has actually been accomplished. The switch-over from one basic cultural system to another involves three successive phases.

By checking actual developments against the theoretical characteristics of these phases we can get some idea of how far we have got and what has yet to come. The art in this kind of analysis is to identify when the

characteristics associated with one phase begin to be displaced by characteristics more typical of the next.

The first phase of change is the assault from without, on the "establishment".

In this initial phase there is little coherence. Any and every opening is sought to do one's own thing, and to drop it for something new just as quickly. Booker labelled this phase in Britain, 1956-66, the decade of the neophiliacs. A sort of mass psychosis where everyone loved anything that was new and did not belong to the old ways. The old world was known with conviction to be dead. This conviction affected more than the youth. In his famous Winds of Change speech, 1960, Harold Macmillan announced his conviction, as the Prime Minister, that any idea of colonial empire was dead. In 1963 the Anglican Bishop of Woolwich announced that God, as we knew him, was dead, and the Ten Commandments were a dead letter.

In 1965 the Beatles went to Buckingham Palace to be decorated. In 1966 John Lennon could claim that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus Christ.

There was, in this phase, a great demolition of the myths that held the old society together, and there is no doubt that television greatly aided the process. There was though, not much sign of reconstruction for an alternative healthy life. The Freedom Riders in the U.S. and the Aldermaston marches in the U.K. gave ample evidence of what had to go, but even in 1963 the young prophet Bob Dylan could only say that "the answer is blowin' in the wind." In "When The Ship Comes In" he was still re-iterating the vindictive theme of this first phase of change: "Then they'll raise their hands, say we'll meet all your demands and we'll shout from the bow, your days are numbered." The message was still that of Ginsberg's poem Howl (1956.) Not much of the learning had been done that would be required for the second phase. This was to become apparent in the tragedies of the Haight-Ashbury, the drug scene and the Weathermen.

Before moving to the second phase it is useful to consider why the first phase got so far so quickly. Firstly, of course, even the old men of the tribe had the feeling that things had never been so good. It had struck them, too that they had never been in such a hopeful situation before (eg., Macmillan's"...our people have never had it so good." 20th July 1957.) Secondly, though, we have to recognize that they were initially unaware of how much was at stake (which is hardly surprising) and, lastly, they were greatly confident in the old system's ability to muddle through.

The Second phase is that of the assault from within. This arrives when it is not just enough to do your own thing and people start to believe that their own institutions should serve them, not vice versa. We could expect this to be manifested in the reconstruction of old institutions and in the development of new social forms.

I think we can see this phase emerging in the period 1966 to 1968. The outbreak of China's amazing cultural revolution in 1966 probably played a part in the timing.

In those first years we saw the ghetto riots, the student revolts in the universities, the Catholic Church in a ferment of change, de Gaulle promising worker participation to the French workers after the May student demonstrations, the Scandinavians actually launching themselves into worker participation, and we saw the emergence of the sexual liberation movement. We saw also the idealistic construction work begun with Haigh-Ashbury and flower-power, the psycho-delic drugs, the underground press and the communes. The hippies replaced the beatniks and the counter-culture replaced the neophilia of the preceding decade

By 1969 Bob Dylan was telling us in "Open the Door Richard" to "remember when you're out there tryin' to heal the sick, that you must always first forgive them."

The same years saw the end of the illusion of the old men of the tribe. They very rapidly became aware of how much was at stake and they were no longer confident enough to let the system just muddle through.

President Johnson put war back on the map by sharply escalating the Viet-Nam conflict in 1966. At the end of 1967 he decided to meet the ghetto riots with armed force, not by constructive methods. British academics organized themselves to produce a Black Book on how the universities should go back to the Dark Ages. The new Pope acted as if John XXIII never existed. Nixon tried to mobilize the hard-hats and the silent majority. The BACK LASH was predicted to be just around the corner.

These efforts to turn back the clock have already been condemned by history to the waste bin.

There is not much point in going into these efforts except to note their common fault of trying to go against the grain. This grain in the texture of events still runs strongly against the notion of hierarchical domination as the natural order of social life.

I do not think that we can underestimate the degree to which that notion continues to be undermined by such things as the Watergate and Lockheed scandals or the changes in the Latin countries of Europe. There is little evidence that we have slipped back to the crazy neophilia of phase 1.

What I wonder now, is whether, there are signs that we have started to move into phase three? If not, are there signs that the preparatory work for phase three is under way?

What signs would we look for?

Phase three is the terminal phase in the transition toward a healthy society. The dominant theme in this phase is the replacement of the pride system by the humility system (Angyal).

The social system of hierarchical domination draws its human energy from the pride and arrogance it generates in its winners. The alternative system must draw its strength from people who are humble enough to work with or for any of their fellows: even, or particularly, if their work is so skilled or learned that others are dependent on how well they do it.

To my mind the only way that this switch-over can be carried through is by mutual learning. Phases one and two should have created the conditions of awareness and mutual respect whereby mutual learning was possible.

Again I will draw on Dylan. In "Dear landlord," 1968, we get a good picture of what had to be learnt if we were to get into phase three -

"Dear landlord, please don't dismiss my case
I'm not about to argue, I'm not about to move to no other place
Now each of us has his own special gift and you know this was meant to be
true

And if you don't underestimate me I won't underestimate you."

This is not at all the way he would have treated such a subject a few years before.

I do not think that we have done much of a job in creating the mutual respect. By this I mean the mutual respect of those who support or constitute the establishment, and those who are convinced that a human order of things should prevail. The former are both young and old, the latter mainly young. A lot of experience existed of utopian efforts in the past and the ideas and efforts of the break-away youth were easily rubbished by the scholars. The Marcusels, Laing's, Alan Watts', Goodman's were too few for a task that was so large. In our own project of ridding work of hierarchical domination, Thorsrud and I certainly found ourselves treated like lepers by colleagues who had the means to contribute to the task of reconstruction.

Given that we approach this third phase pretty well unprepared, it is necessary to spell out why mutual learning is so critical because it is very likely that we have not learnt this already. My basic thought is that being neurotically sick is not like having a cancer. It cannot be extirpated by surgery. Declaring that everyone over thirty is dead is no more intelligent than Stalin's dreadful solution for extirpating the ghost of the class enemy, and "enemies of the State." All of those goals, purposes and ideals that identify us as individuals can as easily be enslaved to a neurotic system as serve a healthy system of living. Most people do things for reasons that we could only admire, as fellow humans, if we could understand their reasons. I am sure that Mao is right on this point, not Stalin or Hitler. We must reconstruct what is, not build on ruins.

The major prerequisite for mutual learning to occur is that the establishment and the counterculture stand close enough together to find that their views of the human landscape have something in common. That might sound like a tall-order, given the effort that has gone into creating a cultural gap.

I do not think it is beyond our grasp. Our establishment is not unaware that their experts cannot find a war threat anywhere out there for a least the next decade, they are not unaware of our productive capabilities and they are not unaware that they simply have to move to more open, participative ways of governing, if things are to get done. This standing closer thing can be achieved only by engaging in joint projects that affect the common community. As such joint action emerges I will feel that we are into phase three. Once into phase three we might find that haste is less attractive than the careful evolution of new ways of governing ourselves: Ways that enable autonomous individuals to create nurturant communities on a human scale.

### Conclusions:

I have tried to comprehend the phenomena of the beatniks, the hippies and the counterculture. Their origin was shrouded by the tortuous finaglings of the Cold War. It appeared to me that they emerged as a first confused response to the rapid erosion of the rationale of societies and cultures based on the principle of dominating hierarchies. In the first decade, 1956-66, it seemed that we were dealing simply with freak-outs, narrowly focussed protest movements and an epidemic of neophilia. When 1966-68 unfolded there was no longer any question of the seriousness of the challenge. Even the cultural trappings of the new Vandals were adopted by those who sought their careers in the establishment. Long hair, denims, beads, etc. The concept of an alternative life-style became popular with those facing mid-life crisis. Consumerism and conservation emerged as "obvious" expressions of new human ideals. Just as the last two years of the first phase were remarkably quiet so have been the last year or so. Conservative governments have been returned in countries like Sweden, Australia and New Zealand. On my interpretation of what has been emerging in the past twenty years there is no way but that these last years are but a lull before the storm. The shape of the next phase is likely to be that being announced by the ABBA group, not the acid-rock of phase two.

### What kind of storm is likely?

One shadow hanging over the scene is the persistence of the Arms Race. Only in February this year the recently retired Assistant Secretary General of the U.N. told the National Youth Conference in Britain that "Humanity is facing self-destruction within a matter of a few years from now." (MacBride 1977) If this were true we might just as well re-enact Boccachio's Decameron. I think MacBride misrepresents the situation:

- (a) In the years just before the achievement of thermo-nuclear parity the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. were spending on defence twelve to thirteen percent of their respective G.N.P's. In the decade after, it was down to seven to ten percent. Still high but a significant drop. Just recently it is thought to be rising again, but, against a backdrop of SALT agreements.
- (b) The persistence of the Arms Race between the super powers tells us more about the continuing power of the industrial-military complex in those countries than

about the probability of war. The games they play on their own political leaders is simple; they tell them that the other side is developing a fantastic new weapon system that will break the thermonuclear deadlock eg., the ABM, MIRV and now the "cruise missile," with new developments promised on the laser front. (See the fascinating discussion between Eisenhower and Krushchev at Camp David, as reported in Krushchev Remembers, pp.474-5.) As we have seen in all weapon fields no side has succeeded in holding a decisive advantage over anyone but their own politicians. Old fashioned war was a handy way to keep up demand but planned obsolescence, the international arms trade and military aid programmes are pretty good substitutes.

(c) As the colonial wars brought liberation to most nations the super-powers increasingly sought to fight by proxy. Viet-Nam was a disaster for the U.S. because it could not build up a decent proxy and hence they had to take the casualties themselves. The wars are to be deplored, but they do not threaten world peace. Unlike the nineteen thirties peace is now divisible.

For these reasons I can not agree with MacBride that "The first and major problem for the youth of tomorrow is how to stop this mad race towards the self-destruction of humanity." That would only take us back to the World peace movements of the years of nuclear disparity.

I see a much more creative role emerging.

The new creative possibilities arise primarily because so many people, not just youth, are actively involved in freeing-up their bit of society. The freedom they want is to have an effective say in the day-to-day things happening in their work-places, communities, schools, leisure, etc., not just a vote; and freedom from the shameful put-downs associated with the traditional statuses eg., you are just a woman. Adults, including many in positions of power, are increasingly rejecting the social philosophy of domination that insists that "...the responsibility for decision cannot be shared equally without equating inexperience with experience, ignorance with expertise, childishness with maturity." (Hook, 1969, p.122)

We can expect that co-operation with these adults will still be hindered by their anxiety that things are going too far, too fast, and their fervent wish that things would stop for a minute; not so that they can get off, but just to take a breather. More important though has been the emerging consciousness since 1956 of not just the need for change (that was strong enough in the Depression and the war) but of the direction of required change. And these directions have nothing to do with political party platforms. I think adults and youth alike are now more concerned with mutual nurturance and caring than with Welfare State hand-outs, with humanity than Justice, with plentitude than Plenty, with mutual respect than with achievement. With these growing concerns has come an increasing disenchantment with the institutionalized "ideals" of western society. When the Beat Generation turned to Zen, Toaism and the other eastern philosophies it seemed like a crazy quirk. Now it is the pursuit of Plenty, and of "knowledge for its own sake", that seems a bit crazy.

I have gone into a lot of different things to try and get some sense of how we got to where we are today; of how it was possible to think of youth as vanguard, victims or vandals.

What I have written can be summed up in a few words. Allen Ginsberg in 1956, introduced this phase of frenetic cultural change with the poetic declaration that,

"...the world is a mountain of shit: if it's going to be moved at all, it's got to be taken by handfuls.

There have been many capable hands at work since then, and that mountain is looking like Mt. Tom Price in the Pilbara iron ore fields.

## Appendix I.

### War and modern social changes

It might seem from this paper that I attribute a great deal of importance to the role of war in what has come to pass. I do! As Clausewitz observed at the time of the emergence of the modern nation-state system, war had become the pursuit of politics by other means. Napoleon had demonstrated for him, the new scale of power unleashed by a "nation-at-arms." The nation-states, including Japan and the U.S.S.R. had struggled back from the economic abyss of the Great Depression only by re-armament (starting 1934-6.) Even so it required four years of world war, 1939-44, before there was anything like full utilization of labour, technology and science.

It was this mobilization for destruction that laid the basis in technology and techniques\* for the take off in the early fifties of the mass consumption society.

It was the Cold War that sucked the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., into the massive diversion of resources required for production of thermo-nuclear weapons in the early fifties.

The forward thrust in instrumentation, computerization, cybernation and remote sensing in the first two decades after the war, was almost entirely due to the demands of war preparation.

That is, it was the mobilization of national resources for the destruction of individuals and societies that created the two conditions for human liberation; and it pre-empted the technological base on which people would seek a liberated future.

I realize that it is disturbing to contemplate such a growth pattern. I am, however, suggesting that we have seen the undoing of the dynamic of war between nation-states through the very success of their efforts to conduct or prepare for warring. The dynamic of war was coming, of course, from the relations existing in a world system of sovereign nation-states.

What I have written must strain the credulity of many of my readers. Surely the vast commitment of resources to armaments, the publicly expressed hatred between "superpowers" and the constant fuelling of small power wars, must be evidence of trends leading to the holocaust of a nuclear World War III? Surely this implies that nation-states can insist upon their primacy as guardians of the conditions for individual development regardless of the irrationality of this claim since 1954?

I have suggested that this is not so. By the time 1954 rolled by, the military-industrial-scientific complex had built up its own head of steam. Eisenhower exposed this in his last, and for him unprecedented address to the U.S. nation. Malenkov was rolled out of office when he had earlier tried to break this complex of vested interests in the U.S.S.R. The same sort of alliance appears to have emerged and played a major role in China's development. Against this need, take but one case - the U.S. Army. After Viet-Nam they have had to move to a volunteer army, they have been seriously arguing whether their soldiers should be allowed to unionize, and a survey conducted by themselves, has revealed that practically none of their officer's expect to ever have to fight in a nuclear war.

The perceptions of the U.S. Army officers do not appear to be unreal. From the scientists who are supposed to fuel the ever present threat of nuclear war we hear that:

"No fine tuning of military technology (can alter) the basic truth: neither nation can defend itself against the other's destructive intent, and no military technology now in the cards will change this, because of both the size and the destructiveness of American and Soviet nuclear forces. "(Rathjen's G & Ruina, J. arms control experts, M.I.T., quoted in Sci. Amer. April 1977, p.52 from J. International Security 1977.)

I think further comment is unnecessary. The name of the arms game is no longer that of major war.