“It is necessary to travel. It is not necessary to live.” These words inspired early navigators when the vast frontier of unknown seas opened to their sails in the fifteenth century. Space is the new frontier. To travel in space you must leave the old verbal garbage behind: God talk, country talk, mother talk, love talk, party talk. You must learn to exist with no religion no country no allies. You must learn to live alone in silence. Anyone who prays in space is not there.

To achieve complete freedom from past conditioning is to be in space. Techniques exist for achieving such freedom. These techniques are being concealed and withheld. In The Job I consider techniques of discovery.

*Is the ability “to see what is in front of us” a way of escaping from the image-prison which surrounds us?*

Very definitely, yes. But this is an ability which very few people have, and fewer and fewer as time passes. For one thing, because of the absolute barrage of images to which we are subjected so that we become blunted. Remember that a hundred years ago there were relatively few images, and people living in a more simplified environment, a farm environment, encounter very few images and they see those quite clearly. But if you’re absolutely bombarded with images from passing trucks and cars and televisions and newspapers, you become blunted and this makes a permanent haze in front of your eyes, you can’t see anything.

*Is there a political path to the liberation of the world? Would a complete ideological change, the replacement of the capitalist world by a socialist world, for example, offer a solution?*

It would seem to me most emphatically no. Because these are just batting around the same old formulas. What happens, for example, when the government takes over the so-called means of production? Nothing. Our factories in the West are practically state-owned now.

*The anarchist is perhaps one of the few who offers a possible solution for the future. Do you believe in the solutions which he proposes?*

I don’t really know what they are, although I would say this, that I don’t believe in any solution that proposes halfway measures. Unless we can abolish the whole concept of the nation, and the whole concept of the family, we aren’t going to get anywhere at all.

*Could the elimination of money alter the structures of society?*
1959, Minutes To Go I wrote: “I’m absolutely weak I can only just totter home darling the dollar has collapsed.” Minutes To Go which incorporates the first cut-up experiments, has turned out to be a prophetic book. You see there is something wrong with the whole concept of money. It takes always more and more to buy less and less. Money is like junk. A dose that fixes you on Monday won’t fix you on Friday. We are being swept with vertiginous speed into a worldwide inflation comparable to what happened in Germany after World War I. The rich are desperately stockpiling gold, diamonds, antiques, paintings, first editions, stamps, food, liquor, medicines, tools, weapons.

The scion of a well-known banking family once told me a family secret. When a certain stage of responsibility and awareness has been reached by a young banker he is taken to a room lined with family portraits in the middle of which is an ornate gilded toilet. Here he comes every day to defecate surrounded by the family portraits until he realizes that money is shit. And what does the money machine eat to shit it out? It eats youth, spontaneity, life, beauty and above all it eats creativity. It eats quality and shits out quantity. There was a time when the machine ate in moderation from a plentiful larder and what it ate was replaced. Now the machine is eating faster much faster than what it eats can be replaced. That is why by its nature money is worth always less. People want money to buy what the machine eats to shit money out. The more the machine eats the less remains. So your money buys always less. This process is now escalating geometrically. If the West does not start a nuclear war first their monetary system will fall apart through the inexorable consumption by the machine of life art flavor beauty to make more and more shit which buys less and less life art flavor beauty because there is less and less to buy. The machine is eating it all. The time must come when money will buy nothing because there will be nothing left for money to buy. Money will eliminate itself.

Do Good and Evil really exist?

Not in the absolute sense. Something is good or evil according to your needs and the nature of your organism. What opposes or tries to annihilate any person or species is seen by that person or species as being evil. I think it’s naïve to predicate any absolutes there; it only has reference to the conditions of life of a given organism or species or society.

What do you think of contemporary America?

At the official level a nightmare. Difficult to believe that people in positions of power who form the foreign and domestic policies of America could be so stupid and so basically ill-intentioned. Conformity on the part of a vast middle class and dissent on the part of young people, intellectuals and the professions have reached an unprecedented scale. America may well be the hope of the world. It is also the source of such emotional plagues as drug hysteria, racism, Bible belt morality, Protestant capitalistic ethic, muscular Christianity that have spread everywhere transforming this planet into an annex of Hell.

Do you conceive a way in which the U.S.A. can surmount the problems posed by foreign policy and integration without undergoing a radical governmental change?

No, I do not. There’s not a politician in America that will admit that there’s anything basically wrong. They think you can just patch the thing together and they will not examine their basic premises and realize that the whole thing is unworkable. It can’t possibly work. And naturally, if they just patch things together, which is all they’re very likely to do, things are going to get worse and worse and worse. And I
think the most likely change would be some form of extreme rightist fascism, a takeover by the army. Very likely to occur. Contrary to what Marx believed, of course, industrialized countries that go communist.

*Does the question of Vietnam seem to you a characteristic problem which the U.S.A. will encounter again and again?*

Obviously, they will encounter it again and again. First was Korea, now it’s Vietnam. If they ever settle that, it’ll be some place else.

*Is the destruction of the police machine still possible?*

Possibly, yes. The machine is certainly on the defensive at the present time, and with enough resistance, worldwide, it is still possible. Of course, the police machine isn’t going to be smashed until we destroy with it the whole concept of a nation. I see a future where guerilla armies of liberation have arisen in South and Central America and Africa. “We will march on the police machine. Everywhere, we will destroy it. We will destroy the machine and all its records, and we will destroy the house organ of police machine which goes under the name of conservative press.”

*You wrote: “I am not two, I am one.” What are the consequences of this unity?*

I’ve spoken of unworkable formulas and possibly the most unworkable formula is the whole concept of a dualistic universe. I don’t think that there is really room for more than one person, that is, one will, on any planet. As soon as you get two you get trouble. Dualism is the whole basis of this planet—good and evil, communism, fascism, man, woman, etc. As soon as you have a formula like that, of course you’re going to have trouble. The planet is populated by various groups and their conditions of life are completely incompatible and they aren’t going to get together. It isn’t a question of their just getting together and loving each other: they can’t, ’cause their interests are not the same. Just take men and women for example, they’ll never get together, their interests are not the same.

*What is the value of intelligence in the search for oneself?*

Intelligence I would define simply as the ability to adapt oneself to new situations and environments and solve problems, obviously a useful instrument that will probably be laid aside eventually. The whole human brain is actually an artifact and when you don’t need an artifact, you throw it away.

*“Nothing Is True—Everything is Permitted,” Hassan I Sabbah says. Is this the principle of freedom?*

Yes, I would say that. If nothing were true, then everything is permitted. That is, if we realize that everything is illusion, then any illusion is permitted. As soon as we say that something is true, real, then immediately things are not permitted.
Is love a solution?

I don’t think so at all. I think love is a virus. I think love is a con put down by the female sex. I don’t think that it’s a solution to anything.

How do you feel about human beings?

They have possibilities of development, but they aren’t going to realize them unless they can get rid of the factors and the individuals who are suppressing them and deliberately keeping them right where they are, not only suppressing them but shoving them down further so they’re getting stupider and stupider.

Nothing basically wrong with the human beings themselves, but they certainly will have to take a very basic forward step in evolution. It’s quite probable that at the real beginning point of what we call modern man was speech. In the beginning was the word. I think the next step will have to be beyond the word. The word is now an outmoded artifact. Any life form that gets stuck with an outmoded built-in artifact is doomed to destruction. The present form of human being quite possibly results from words, and unless they get rid of this outmoded artifact, it will lead to their extinction.

You speak of the necessity of breaking down the whole formula of separate countries and nations. How can this be brought about?

At the present time we all are confined in concentration camps called nations. We are forced to obey laws to which we have not consented, and to pay exorbitant taxes to maintain the prisons in which we are confined. The pretext that there is any measure of consent involved or benefits received is wearing very thin indeed. The American people did not even know the atom bomb existed. Still less were they consulted as to whether or not it should be used. Thus, one of the most disastrous decisions in human history was made by incompetent, ill-informed, and ill-intentioned men.

You have described America as a nightmare. Would you enlarge on this point?

America is not so a nightmare as a non-dream. The American non-dream is precisely a move to wipe the dream out of existence. The dream is a spontaneous happening and therefore dangerous to a control system set up by non-dreamers.

Space is dream. Space is illusion. To travel in space you must learn to leave the old verbal garbage behind: God talk, priest talk, mother talk, family talk, love talk, party talk, and country talk. You must learn to exist with no religion no country no allies. You must learn to see what is in front of you with no preconceptions.
The Job
interviews with Daniel Odier

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