

Trial "Are These Our Lives?" album lyrics (<http://www.wordsasweapons.com/triallyrics.html>)

reflections

"Hierarchy, dominance and submission, repression and power - these are facts of everyday life. Revolution is a process, and even the eradication of coercive institutions will not automatically create a liberatory society. We create that society by building new institutions, by changing the character of our social relationships, by changing ourselves - and throughout that process by changing the distribution of power in society. It is by the constant building of new forms of organization, by the continual critical evaluation of our successes and failures, that we prevent old ideas and old forms of organization from re-emerging."

- Carol and Howard J. Ehrlich, Reinventing Anarchy: What the Anarchists Are Thinking These Days

the wreckage of humanity has been strewn across the land
and now the hour of desperation is at hand
we the maggots feed off the dead seeking solace in a bed of broken glass

we bleed infected water beneath bright skins of polished steel
through empty, yearning, starved and frustrated hearts
which long for risk and reason
this is a standard and sterile half-life to lead
empty facades conceal slow decay

within these new dark ages which breed discontent
to give up all hope to see the dawn
reveals a victims face beneath the veneer
struggling to show that it's been wronged

led astray by the myths of the Father
with ancient wounds often ignored
fighting for scraps from the table while we slowly rot on the floor
struggling for balance amid these unholy lies
reflecting terror and chaos
we are born into suffering with constructs icons, idols, and eyes
which manifest and forecast our fear of our own demise
but on the eve of the apocalypse
you can burn these words into my flesh:

“we are tortured and insane disillusioned and mundane
unknown and unnamed desperate and enslaved and we want something more”

war by other means

"The United States government will not allow any opposition to the underlying fascism of its foreign and domestic policies. And when that opposition becomes too strong, they deny us the rights to stand up against the status quo. Our government understands that the people have the full capacity to take back the power, and that frightens them to death."

- Anonymous

every voice you've silenced and every life you've taken
 recollections from your distant past
 the tortured and the dying from a legacy of hatred
 are back to echo in your ears screams you thought for sure wouldn't last

because you can't kill an idea, I will not be ruled...
 you can't kill an idea and we will not be ruled...

"disrupt misdirect isolate and neutralize"
 like the Trudells who burned alive in '79
 now those enemies of the hour are the focus of this moment
 for as long as we are here every voice remains alive

because you can't kill an idea, I will not be ruled...
 you can't kill an idea and we will not be ruled by fear

i pledge no allegiance to the flag of the undeniable mistakes of america
 which due to plutocracy for which it stands
 so many nations and their gods have become invisible
 with liberty and justice reserved for a precious chosen few

let our allegiances remain with those betrayed by the façade
 for the calm is an illusion

"the struggle is not over...it assumes new forms"
 for no matter what the face, no matter what the name,
 it's still...war

the laws are silent in times of war

one step away

*"we but teach
bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
to plague th' inventor."*

- Shakespeare, Macbeth

facing brutality I struggle with morality
I don't think that I can take it anymore
indoctrinated into cultural norms functionless forms:
"dominate and bleed infect with greed" and we succumb...

I aggressively inherently
am the illegitimate child of the gun intertwined with the dollar sign
and now as I walk through the valley of the shadow of death
I have become your evil and your hate is within me
for the rod and the staff have taught me all too well
these hands would drip with blood if I traded truth for certainty
power beckons to the unsure and afraid
the atavists of ignorance who initiate

our bodies cast the shadow of everyone who has ever lived and
all the gods all the demons all the heavens and all the hells are
within us...but that I, privileged revolutionary could prescribe rites
of passage for all? in preparing bloody defenses let our lineage
remain clear: Armenia, Nanking, East Timor, Cambodia, Rwanda,
Iraq, Kosovo the shattered lives and battered wives, underscored by forceful
lies are inside of us, inside of me

I aggressively inherently could destroy humanity
I'm only one step away
with one single blow unjustified I'm only one step away

caught between rule or be ruled
want or want not
with no easy way out

in the balance

"In a highly developed society, the Establishment cannot survive without the obedience and loyalty of millions of people who are given small rewards to keep the system going: the soldiers and police, teachers and ministers, administrators and social workers, technicians and production workers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, transport and communication workers, garbage men and firemen. These people - the employed, the someway privileged - are drawn into alliance with the elite. They become the guards of the system, buffers between the upper and lower classes. If they stop obeying, the system fails. That will happen, I think, only when all of us who are slightly privileged and slightly uneasy begin to see that we are like the guards in the prison uprising at Attica - expendable; that the Establishment, whatever rewards it gives us, will also, if necessary to maintain it's control, kill us"

- Howard Zinn, A People's History Of The United States

while I choke strangled by the hands of time my life slowly slips away
the dollars I save aren't worth the days I spend
with images of freedom as lies in my head

the hand that feeds will always bleed my dry
through these hours these minutes these moments are mine
intensify
for no one else will guide the way
break the silence before it breaks us...
down to a point from where there's no escape
where regret destroys whatever life remains
and you when you've told yourself a lie
the path of least resistance destroys you in time

is it heresy to want to live today? that's not asking too much
so many are barely getting by and starving in the streets
while in denial of death yet still afraid to be free
we grovel beneath the pantheon of security
assured as we sell our dreams to buy our pain
that "the meek shall inherit" when only the strong will reign
all life hangs in the balance I won't wait until it drops
I can't wait they might not have another day
I have to live I might not even have even
one more day

when there's nothing left to lose

*"In this head the all baffling brain
In it and below it the makings of heroes."*

- Walt Whitman, Leaves of Grass

she's tried so hard to fit the mold
to embrace the image she's been sold
she'll binge and purge to fill her soul but she's wasting away
he thinks the cure for his frustration lies
in the battering of what he despises
the children face his ruthless eyes
they'll grow up blind with tears of rage
in agony eternally but we are we practicing our hunger well?
cowering in corners can we find freedom beneath the blows?
crawling like roaches awaiting mercy from the merciless
decimated alienated with nothing left to lose

left to die alone he fights disgrace
not immune even to the fear he'll face
as he comes to know that he's been condemned
by those who profit from his pain
her golden years have rusted through
and now there's nothing left for her to do
but demand the respect she longed for in her youth
and hope that when her time comes
that she will not have died in vain
are the poisons we endorse worth more than our flesh?
is the only peace we'll know awaiting us in death?
I've reached the limit there is nothing left to lose
yet a choice still remains
a choice still remains to survive
I claim this life
I claim this hope
I claim these horrors for my own
I claim it all

unrestrained

*"He only earns his freedom and his life
who takes them everyday by storm"*

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Faust

take what you feel inside of this room and break away
I'll bring the feeling of this moment when I leave
envision what life could be if move beyond our comfort and ability
we'll rot in this tomb until we start to move
no one is handing "change" our way
facing each day with so much to say
and in the absence of action even our screams are worth something
what we want we must create what we risk will be regained
what we'd assume we must forsake what's been destroyed...
what have we done? what do I know? how far are you willing to go?
never restricted by who I am supposed to be
looking beyond all that I can see to make this a movement again
instead of only a scene do you realize what that means?
what we make of this energy is everything
but in the absence of passion our screams are worth nothing
what we want we must create
what we risk will be regained
what we'd assume we must forsake
what's been destroyed can be replaced
too many years spent "screaming for change"
and I see now that what remains
is the time I give and the chances I take
in the way I live and the choices I make

legacy

"No real social change has ever come about without a revolution. People are either not familiar with their history, or they have not yet learned that revolution is but thought carried into action."

- Emma Goldman, Anarchism: What it Really Stands For

with empty minds and vacant stares
 our lifeless generation is drawn towards the illusions of endless offered bait
 the same selective vision let boxcars carry millions to their cremation
 inaction masked by pseudo-satisfaction
 so many lives have burned away

"another night with nothing to do" is an infection
 when anger has no motive and force has no direction
 a lack of self control invites every distraction
 from the holocausts we'd see and a world in agony
 1944 through 1998: children dead at Birkenau or Tibetans laid to waste
 excuses become our legacy

postponing introspection through denial and self rejection
 there is no inevitable oppression
 we are digging our own graves
 afraid of what we feel so our lives remain the same
 uphold the status quo as if there's someone else to blame
 who will cast away our ashes after we've thrown ourselves into the flames?

"I can always do it tomorrow" well
 you might as well be dead today
 this is my revolution
 the epitaph of our collective grave will read that "work never made us free"
 our strength maintained by never giving in
 we have so much to lose and so little time left to begin
 for even when we're gone the effect of our legacy will still remain

so we've got to break it

in time alone as the years go by
 what I feel can't be denied
 when tension builds but nothing gets changed
 I strive to understand and redefine this rage
 and fight for a new legacy

an awakening

"People grow so used to fear, to murder, to contempt and hate that they become deaf to whatever in them whispers that maybe they are wrong and their attitude simply reflects what they loathe in their own lives. That is why they prefer drugs to suppress their despair - the illusion of instant cure keeps them going. But the canker which devours them remains."

- Raoul Vaneigem, The Book of Pleasures

an aimless mass of corpses awaiting a not so distant end?
numb to pleasure
numb to pain
overwhelmed by our surroundings and the traps we have laid?

to protect ignorance from arrogance we carve this skin of stone
and as the weights of cast and character layer with the years
we drown at the convergence of rivers poisoned by this world

each second I let slip by
every feeling I sacrifice
the emotions which I deny
drag me down into the depths

are these our lives?

"He had learned the way of things about him now. It was a war of each against all, and the devil take the hindmost. You did not give feasts to other people, you waited for them to give feasts to you. You went about with your soul full of suspicion and hatred; you understood that you were environed by hostile powers that were trying to get your money, and who used all the virtues to bait their traps with. The store keepers plastered up their windows with all sorts of lies to entice you; the very fences by the wayside, the lampposts and telegraph poles, were pasted over with lies. The great corporation which employed you lied to you, and lied to the whole country - from top to bottom it was nothing but one gigantic lie."

- Upton Sinclair, The Jungle

under the ruins of a paradise never to be known
 crushed beneath the feet of gods who reap what we have sown
 as the industrial neo-fascists slash and burn through flesh
 endorse the individual and sacrifice the rest

I want the truth to be told
 that we are more than the sum of what we're sold
 social darwinist manipulation
 multilateral agreement for the devastation of all but the hegemon
 while we as one are sacrificed on the altar

in the age of the refugee
 this era of death for profit
 ideas alone will minimize the fringe
 organization can enhance empowerment

against forced abortions sterilizations clitoridectomy aberrations
 oil addiction inculcation while alternatives face negation
 by those who anesthetize the mind and invest in broken lives
 disorganize overpower exploit and stratify

the distorted promise of a free exchange haunts us through the debts we pay
 to the alliances who turn me against all those around me and against myself
 generation after generation enduring apocalyptic visions
 in individual private hells with bodies weak and minds distorted with nothing left to sell
 while the masters of the new feudal age drink to satisfy an unquenchable thirst
 gulping our blood and our sweat and spit back lies
 are these our lives?

saints and sinners

"On behalf of the earth and mankind, we must join in laying claim to everything which religions have hauled off into the heavens and bestowed upon their gods: truth, liberty, happiness, justice, goodness. We must recognize that morality is totally independent of theology and divine metaphysics, and has no source other than the collective consciousness of man"

- Mikhail Bakunin

I am incomplete damaged and imperfect
 this world is not divided between saints and sinners
 forgive me for being human...

I struggle
 I suffer
 I know what it means to survive
 this world is crumbling
 I'll take my flaws with me and beyond you
 beneath it all...

“family values” with national pride will lead to the new cross burnings
 and who will be hanging next from that tree?
 who'd have my sisters stay at home to feed and mend and tremble?
 their place is not on their backs or on their knees

we look to anyone ‘to make the trains run on time’
 then praise their shovels as we're buried alive
 the days pass by unnoticed as we choose not to see the bars
 imprisoned for life while free to go
 with a key clutched in our desperate hands all along

beyond those walls I am wounded and scarred
 isolated but aware and alive

I alone maintain control
 I accept no higher soul
 I am my beginning and my end
 this is a call for redemption
 for those I know to have been led blind

with the wounds of the forsaken
 I'm still screaming
 and I might stand alone with no one left to listen
 but the last words of this song have yet to be heard...