

April 2005

**TOP SECRET**

# INTELLIGENCE

## Mat Callahan's Newsletter

1905 was Einstein's 'miracle year'. All at once he brought forth the discoveries that radically altered our perception. This was remarkable for its eruptive suddenness, its universal persuasiveness and its stunning demonstration of the power of thought.

100 years later I'm writing this newsletter with that event in mind. Why? Because it is a good example of the kind of conversation I'd like to have with you, dear friends.

To *break out* of the prison of opinion and 'acceptable' terms of debate

By *thinking* about thinking and how thought can be applied to changing itself

In order to *imagine* how what is deemed impossible today might be made the possibility of tomorrow.

At first, I thought of calling this newsletter: The Dark Times. This is, after all the *appearance* of the current state of affairs. The news is always bad; why not say so and be done with it? But, upon consideration, I thought it better to call attention to what is missing or absent from the 'here and now'. And what so rarely makes an appearance as intelligence? Besides, after several years of media blather about the shoddy intelligence that provided justification for the invasion of Iraq I couldn't help having a bit of fun. Since the professionals spent billions and couldn't find the WMDs why not let us amateurs have a go.

So this is what *my* spies and informants have ferreted out. We continue the work of Dashiell Hammet's nameless private eye, "the Continental Op". The scene is familiar: A crime has been committed. Agents of the Law bumble about miserably failing to unravel the mystery. Their opposite numbers-the bad guys-remain at large, eternally evading the punishment they deserve. This Janus, this two-faced God, transfixes the gaze of its hapless victims: the rest of us. The Continental Op maintains a distance from both 'the Authorities' and their mirror image, the criminals, and from this vantage point collects the intelligence neither of them wants us to have.

Be warned, I'm an incurable optimist. This is a malady I've suffered as long as I can remember. "Learn to forget", sang Jim Morrison. I followed this maxim ironically and, learning nothing, remembered everything. What grounds are there for optimism? Coffee? Or something more ephemeral? Could it be some intrinsic resilience in the human species; our spirit, our reason? I know that for me there is always 'The Work'. Though we've learned to forget the BIG PROJECT of world revolution that occupied humanity for the last 100 years, it is 'The Work' that still motivates me daily, hourly. I try to connect it to my own vision of humanity's Big Project: liberty, equality, justice for all. This may be folly but it contains a grain of truth. At least it maintains a fidelity to those great events which have shaped me and the world from the French Revolution down to May, 1968. 'We want the world and we want it now!' sang Jim Morrison. Exactly, say I.

I admit I just love to do it. 'The Work', that is. In my case, making music. But the necessity to be part of a larger conversation remains. I cannot *just* do it, as much as I like to. Rather, I try, simultaneously, to forge links such as those we made through the Looters and Komotion International. These are based on common interest in music, above all, but related themes from politics to science to love. After half a lifetime engaged in such activity I realize that the thread running through all of this is thought. We all know 'military intelligence' is an oxymoron. But intelligence is quite another matter. Strangely, though, of all the capacities humans share this is the one most frequently maligned, ridiculed and abandoned. There are good reasons this is so. Just look how 'reasonable', 'intelligent' experts have brought us to the brink of catastrophe.

All the old wars are over, they say. And this is peace? Here you have it, my Rwandan brother, my Chinese sister, my Russian cousin, my Palestinian comrade. The Four Horsemen ride the land, torches alight, banners ablaze. We are

conditioned, conscripted and condemned. Above all, we are conned. We find ourselves mute witnesses to a scene of desolate abundance. Of desolation in abundance. Of the emptiness of things. No wonder people question the utility of thought or the benefit of intelligence. The Ruling Idea is expressed in the equation: Me + Me = Me. This is the end towards which society's endeavors are directed.

I have another idea. *Us* is not a thing, it is infinite or it is nothing.

Our lives are not our own-if they ever were or could be. But they do not have to belong to the liar and the wicked priest. Sweep the money changers from your soul. Rip out of your hearts the toxic talisman of lucre and LIVE!

These are only the words of one man. They are also the words of a thousand years of struggle against suffering and injustice. "Free your minds and your ass will follow". "Emancipate yourself from mental slavery". "Workers of all countries, unite". "Imagine".

Pursuing this thought further I discovered how old it is. I also discovered a secret that lay buried beneath the turmoil of subsequent centuries.

"The principle of justice is mutuality and equality, through which, in a way most nearly approximating union of body and soul, all men become cooperative, and distinguish the mine from the thine, as is also testified by Plato who learned this from Pythagoras. Pythagoras effected this in the best possible manner by erasing from common life everything private, while increasing everything held in common, so far as ultimate possessions, which after all are the causes of tumult and sedition."-*Iamblichus, the Life of Pythagoras*

And the buried secret: Friendship.

"Friendship is equality; equality is friendship"-*attributed to Pythagoras*

It is on this basis that this little sheet is composed.

## Where To Begin

Let's begin with eternity. No beginning, no middle and no end. Let's enter the fray with a declaration: We want the World and we want it Now. Let's open these proceedings with a demand for the Impossible. No more deals. No more negotiations. No more Time. 500 years ago Thomas More wrote Utopia. What are we waiting for? Paradise is here. Here is paradise.

Haven't we had it with History?

*"16 tons and what do you get?*

*Another day older and deeper in debt.*

*St. Peter don't you call me 'cause I can't go.*

*I owe my soul to the company store."*

The tragedy is there is none. The comedy is that this is serious. Dismantling the apparatus might be difficult. It might be the work of generations. But the self-delusion, the delusion of *self* must be swept away at once. Hoarding objects, possessing things, scratching and clawing after bodies occupying space is the ultimate futility. Pathetic cretins swoon over the 'Ownership Society'. Pitiful nostalgia. I suggest: the Ownerless Society. And declare it already exists. We need only to recognize it and think accordingly.

"All we ever had were songs of Freedom. Redemption songs". Imagine. No more compromise. No more delays. Let the infinite illuminate the here and now to expose the 'being for death' that is capitalist accumulation. Let us celebrate the fact that these ideas are very, very old and, yet, timeless-right now and forever.

That's why I spent the last two years writing a book about music. Why not just play my guitar? Because, returning to Einstein, all the brilliant discoveries, all the beautiful sounds, all the ecstatic romantic encounters do not, by themselves, provide wisdom. Einstein himself pointed this out on many occasions. Certainly, he grasped the breakthrough made by his work. But he also recognized and argued fervently that this did not solve the more pressing problem: the emancipation of humanity from suffering and injustice. For this to be achieved, a revolution in thinking of even greater scope than Relativity is required.

## NEWS AND REVIEWS

"The Trouble With Music" is now available. I will be touring the US to bring this to the attention of everyone who loves music.

Simultaneously, Broken Arrow Records has released my CD "A Wild Bouquet". This was made 10 years ago by Pete Scaturro and a wonderful group of musicians. These include: Brain, Eric Ware, Joe Gore, MIRV, Les Claypool, Zoe

Ellis and Jim Johnson. It was never released in the US. Instead, it came out in Switzerland and Italy. Subsequent tours of these countries ended up bringing me here to work and, finally, to live. I am grateful to the folks at Broken Arrow for undertaking this project since it reconnects my current efforts with their origins. I am very much a product of the San Francisco music scene. I am indebted to many fine musicians who continue to make great music. I hope the release of this album will be the beginning of a new connection to my home town.

**The Trouble with Music** by Mat Callahan

\$18.95

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**“A Wild Bouquet”**

Broken Arrow Records

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CD available online at:

<http://www.brokenarrowrecords.com>

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**ONE MORE THING: *Rock And Rap Confidential***

I want to call attention to another publication I regularly read and greatly admire: *Rock And Rap Confidential*. *Rock & Rap Confidential* is the monthly newsletter edited by Grammy-winning writer Dave Marsh. We accept no advertising so we are free to tell the truth about what's going on in music. We promote every style of music. Check us out with a super-cheap introductory subscription.

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