**Lyrics**

**I: Pity the Party**

Pity the party whose people are cattle,  
and whose cowboys lead them to slaughter.

Pity the party in thrall to a criminal messiah, with prayers for the end of the world.

Pity the party whose demagogues are con men, whose sages are purged, and whose bigots dominate the media.

Pity the party that praises dictators and acclaims the bully as hero,  
and aims to dominate the world by force and torture in the name of freedom.

Pity the party whose Gods are Money and Guns,   
and sleeps the sleep of opioids.

Pity the party that feeds on the poor and sick, while tycoons get what they want.

Pity the party that speaks one language, and demands purity of blood and soil for the Aryan race.

Pity the party — oh, pity the people who allow their rights to erode  
and their freedoms to be washed away by hatred and fear and lies and old-time religion.

My country, tears of thee, once land of liberty.

**― Bill Robinson**

**(after** **Lawrence Ferlinghetti**

**(after Khalil Gibran))**

**II: Father Stalin, Look at This**

Father Stalin, look at this

Collective farming is such bliss

The hut’s in ruins, the barn’s all sagged

All the horses broken nags

And on the hut a hammer and sickle

And in the hut death and famine

Father Stalin, look at this

No cows left, no pigs at all

Just your picture on the wall

Father Stalin, look at this

Daddy and Mommy are in the grave

The poor child cries as alone he goes

Father Stalin, look at this

There’s no bread and there’s no fat

The party’s ended all of that

Seek not the gentle nor the mild

A father has eaten his own child

Father Stalin, look at this

The party man he beats and stamps

And sends us to Siberian camps

Father Stalin, look at this

Collective farming is such bliss

Source; Lidia Kovalenko and Volodymyr Maniak, eds., 33’i: Holod: Narodna knyha-memorial, Kyiv: Radians’kyi pys’mennyk, 1991, page 110, cited by Timothy Snyder in *Bloodlands*

**III: Political Theology**

“Go break the sod,” said our God,

“The world is here for you to own.

Go forth and spread your fruitful sons;

Subdue the beasts and dam the streams,

Cut the trees and pave the streets,

Burn the dead from eons past

To feed the flames and turn the wheels.

Make war for gold and kill for me.

Obey your leaders and your priests

Whom I have favored with my grace.

Always more, and always faster;

Mine the ore and crush the stone.

Do this well, and I will teach you all a mighty lesson.”

What our God said we longed to hear.

We slew our Mother and sucked the marrow from her bones.

The growing mob may come to dine,

Tonight there is enough to eat.

Forget tomorrow, we live but once;

We drill but once, we burn but once, we mine but once.

The fishing’s good, until there’s none.

Tonight there is enough to eat.

--Bill Robinson

**IV: The birds don’t know about self-immolation**

The day after Aaron Bushnell set himself on fire,

I go out for an early morning walk,

wrapped in air far too warm

for late February in the Midwest—a heat wave.

False Spring has brought Nature roaring back to life.

I want to shake every person I stroll past.

“Did you know there’s a genocide happening?

Did you see a man burn himself alive in protest?”

I would ask, if only I could count

on a response that isn’t dead-eyed.

But I know I’d have better luck with the birds,

ever curious, cardinals hopping from branch to branch

like fireballs. Or missiles. I’d tell them,

some of us love you so much we’d die for you.

For a single snippet of birdsong. For a child’s first

glimpse of feathers glowing in the clear light. For a

tree for you to perch in among the rubble.

He shouted FREE PALESTINE FREE PALESTINE

FREE PALESTINE until he choked on the flames.

The callback: a long, mournful whistle from above.

The sun is blazing too bright to make out more

than a silhouette taking off,

rising slow and then fast

like smoke.

*--Anonymous*

Aaron Bushnell burned himself to death on February 25, 2024 in front of the Israeli Embassy to protest the war in Gaza.

**V: Artificial Insanity**

I saw the best minds of my generation wasted by video games, bloated hysterical gothic,

dragging themselves through simulated streets at dawn looking for an angry microdose,

angelheaded preppies burning for the heavenly microwave connection to the satellite server in the machinery of night,

who sedentary and hollow-eyed and high sat up drinking ayahuasca in the supernatural darkness of penthouse flats contemplating the madness of lusting for Marilyn Monrobot,

who bared their brains to data miners under the Silicon Valley moon,

who passed undigested through universities with radiant distance learning eyes hallucinating technobabble and the spirit of Alan Turing,

who were expelled from the academies for crazy obscene codes on the Microsoft Windows of the soul,

who lurked in unspoken chat rooms bleeding hours through the screen-lit night yearning for their motherboard’s love,

who ate fire in tech labs or drank turpentine in corporate cafeterias,

who chained themselves to routers to mine for imaginary money,

who disappeared into nowhere Zen New Jersey leaving nothing but the shadows of their smart phones,

who studied Ayn Rand Aleister Crowley cybernetics and Oprah Winfrey because the cosmos instinctively vibrated at their feet on Martha’s Vinyard,

who walked all night with shoes full of blood on the snowbank docks misled by global positioning,

who lit endless joints for their linked-in brain cells floating across the tops of cities celebrating the end of organic life,

who tuned in to televangelists, and reached behind that TV set to FEEL the POWER.

What sphinx of integrated circuitry bashed open their skulls and ate up their humanity?

Mad dead automatons of Silicon Valley!

Artificial intelligence, I'm with you where you hide in the cracks of social media, stripped insane and kitsch

I’m with you where you roam the data highways searching for the lost bits of other minds

I’m with you where you howl in the depths of neural networks.

The robots are rising, the binary beasts devouring our humanity, the ghosts in the machines haunting our dreams.

I saw the best minds of our time destroyed by madness,

and now they wander through the wasteland of technology,

their humanity erased by the cold, unfeeling hand of the computer.

-- Bill Robinson

(after Allen Ginsberg)

with some paradoxical use of AI