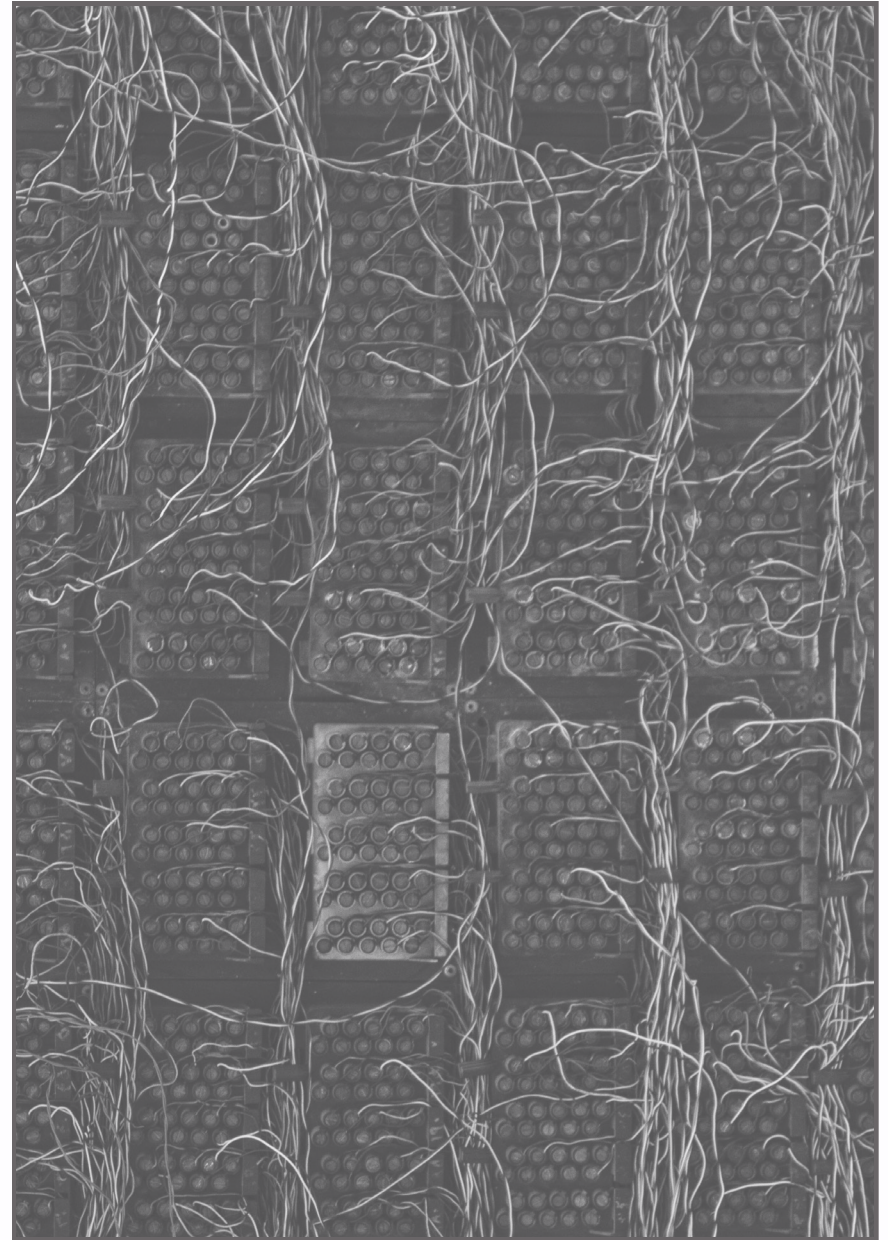


COUNTERFLOW DISTRO

2021



War Against the Information Age:
A Future of Mass Social Control
Anonymous

*This essay was originally published in 325 issue #10. This zine was
independently formatted by the Counterflow Distro Collective.
For more zines, please visit counterflow.noblogs.org*

its method of communication — the powerful image or communicate — is the blood of the new anarchist direct action, communicating a radicalised awareness based on methods of participatory organisation and the proliferation of destructive and iconoclastic ideas.

Anarchistic and nihilist ideas are anathema to the information-age, they are the glitch in the database society which escapes classification and control. The imagination walking; dangerous and capable of unforeseen actions and moments of interconnection.

The future of civilisation is an increasing merger of state and corporate power, with the new sciences as an essential ally. With war and crisis always as a pretext, the elite have declared dominion over every free individual, animal, plant and wilderness. Emerging as the omnipresent machine intelligence that forms human beings to its whims, it damages and manipulates entire continents of beings. Reflecting our emptiness and our loss, the prison-society must be fought, because the logic which it operates on is a system of closure of parameters that work by exclusion of vast amounts of alternative possibilities and potentials. It is self-referential and non-creative; it pursues a model of progress that is the abolition of personal individuality and freedom.

Our struggle pushes forward into the future, let's strike against the concepts and mechanisms of their control.

War Against the Information Age

A Future of Mass Social Control

As capitalist imperialism consolidates its economic borders through an ongoing paramilitarisation process and harmonised internal policing structure to cope with increased external war and social-ecological collapse, there is an amplification of repression in response to the manufactured 'crisis' of the bankers. Enough decentralisation in the hegemony is maintained to allow internal security services to retain sufficient self-rule to operate according to the local situations, but generally speaking, the areas of amplification — 'terrorism' and immigration (specifically mass incarceration and deportation) — correspond with a rise in an encouraged nationalism and the prison-society. The legislature of the new authoritarianism is in fact not a new set of laws, but rather the amplification and conjunction of existing laws that carry themselves forward to meet "new threats". The prison-society is firstly an information-age authoritarian social model, as information technology and the new sciences are the key to its infrastructural progress and evolution. The prison-society is not just the regime of 'intelligent' surveillance cameras, databases, police-stations and prisons, it is urban planning, biometrics, contactless smart chips, electronic

tagging and pattern recognition. It is satellite mapping, private security armies, automated drones and unmanned border planes. It is universalisation of social welfare systems, banking and corporate services. It is telephone voice analysis, high-definition CCTV, facial-recognition systems, "X-Ray" microwave scanners, covert units of police for breaking and entry, bugging and tailing, and the global surveillance network, Echelon. It is blacklists of 'subversives', 'criminals', 'immigrants' and 'terrorists'. It is concepts and viral messages from the powerful, beamed directly into your head 24 hours a day, reprogramming your reality through television, newspapers, advertising, radio and internet.

It is the strength of the marketing poll, the consumer survey and the pressure group. It is the tax office, the exchange rate, the currencies and their manipulation. It is the details of countless numbers of individuals being processed by machines. It is statistics and their virtualisation.

It is in the minutiae; it controls your existence without you even seeing a prison-guard, it controls your routine, sets the clock, sets the debt and spends the wage. It fits the lock and fills the cell. It is an industry, a society, a way of living. It is the future you were born for, and the life of regulatory servility it forms people to fulfill.

Embryonic, it is distributed and skeletal in form at present, but already controls all important state structures in the post-industrial centres of power. To a lesser extent in the peripheries, such as South East Asia and Latin America, the prison-society is reconciling and overcoming the contradictions inherent in the classical fascist and dictatorial social control model through consumerism. The control society being constructed gathers enough information to assess individual activity and potential for deviation from top-down generated norms. This includes monitoring physical features (eg: maintaining a national com-

they are subject to the whims of Capital and State, they constantly break apart and reconfigure. The actually immutable nation-states cannot adapt to the new cybernetic, networked, corporative future unless the 'democratic' relationship it manages itself on is rejected for the adoption of the prison-society as the social model. It already moves in this direction knowingly. The nation-states will be superseded by the corporations and will come to rely on them more, whilst the corporations rely on them less. If the nation-states seek to dominate or subvert them, they'll most likely fail.

Now a point is reached where the strategic narratives which kept back the unleashing of revolutionary libertarian violence are crumbling as populations in revolt confront the plans of the rich. The post-industrial nation-states are at risk, and are increasingly revealing their own developed and connected prison-society projects; the ascendant form of power relations backed by the multinational corporations.

Some of these corporations have greater gross domestic product and paramilitary capabilities than many countries and are responsible for more injustice and exploitation than many small dictatorial states. In the globalist modern society, attacks should be properly understood as information. Rapidly moving image-narratives and violent models of urban rebellion against the system have spread, moving amongst the disaffected of the world. In the age of instantaneous data-exchange, the actual technical rupture created by sabotage is often minor compared to the impact it imparts as a signifier of collapse and refusal. The capitalist system and civilisation itself can absorb the vast majority of sabotages and attacks, but the new media which is based on self-production and self-replication is creating international 'communities' of rebellion with shared intersecting global histories. Highly symbolic content exchange, theme-repetition, maximum-distribution and propulsive coherence are the aim. The destructive violent attack or anarchist sabotage, added to

Information control is a state of war: internal borders, check points, so-called 'green zones' and 'total security' environments. The important questions are still: who knows what, where, when, how and why! Information war is "impervious branding", "negative briefings", it is the "spinning of facts", black and grey propaganda, the fabrication of "narratives" etc. It is a list of names, a list of materials or a list of instructions.

Internet and social media are transforming the way people interact, and what they demand. Information which was not widely spread 30, even 20 years ago now circulates freely, and there are more possibilities to access previously 'forbidden' knowledge than ever before. From trade secrets on methods of production, to government files on wartime atrocities, it is easier to find out about several different shades of truth than ever before, but it is absolutely meaningless without the will to use this information to act. Through consumerism, a comfortable liberalism has evolved in the post-industrial core. In the long term, the failure of traditional supplies of resources (the situation of peak oil production) will lead to shortages and conflict. The nation-states cannot fulfil the demands of the people any more, and their only future is to sell out to corporatism if they wish to hold their ranking positions and maintain order. They are entering a period of unprecedented 'crisis', with little hope of recovery unless the development of new technologies for energy supply and production can prevent an overwhelming collapse in industry due to the depletion of resources and the fact of scarcity. Despite this, capitalism can and will adapt to any phase of deprivation, as the plan of the banks is to capture as much social wealth as is possible and eviscerate the ability of the nation-state to resist their manipulation of the economy and government.

Reconfiguration of power appears imminent, accompanied by a totalising interlinked corporatist future. Corporations are networked entities that have monolithic agendas, but because

puterised biometric and DNA database etc.) and location (eg: GPS, mobile-phone location, financial services tracking, internet tracking etc.), combined with behavioural patterns such as what is consumed and accessed (eg: library books, food shopping, transport, leisure etc.). The outcome is the dream of the cyberneticians of social control – the perfectly ordered utopia where each polices the other and the machine runs all.

Geotime, a security programme used by the US military, and now being used by the London Metropolitan Police creates a graph of an individual's movements and communications with other people on a three-dimensional graphic. It can be used to collate information gathered from social networking sites, satellite navigation equipment, mobile phones, financial transactions and IP network logs. Links between entities can represent communications, relationships, transactions, message logs, etc. and are visualised over time to reveal temporal patterns and behaviours, and to highlight previously undetected links. Once millions and millions of pieces of microdata are aggregated, you end up with a very high-resolution picture of a targeted individual or group of individuals. Curtis Garton, product management director for Oculus, the company that markets the programme, is quoted as saying "*... in terms of commercial sales pretty much anybody can buy,*". Professor Anthony Glees, director of the University of Buckingham's Centre for Security and Intelligence Studies, said he was aware of tracking software such as Geotime, the use of which he described as "*absolutely right*". He is quoted as saying: "*My feeling is: if it can be done, and if its purpose is the protection of the ordinary citizen that wants to go about their lawful business ... then it's absolutely fine.*"

These product developers and academics of social control are the architects of structural hierarchy and injustice.

New technology is introduced in the following sequence: military hardware/personnel (eg: internet; cybernetics, satellite

technology, microwaves etc.); prison & policing (eg: electronic tagging, 'non-lethal' weapons, 'area of denial' systems, 'public disorder' situations etc.); civil population (eg: home CCTV systems, personal computers, new products, leisure time etc.). This sequence returns military advances to entertainment, and conditions the population to be dependent on the pieces imposed on it by the system of militarism.

Technology seeks to disappear, in an ongoing process of miniaturisation, nanotechnology being the present expression of this tendency. This is to become the invisible background and context of what we do and how we live. Machines and the bureaucratic processes they initiate have come to dominate human behaviour and damage the Earth. It has created a situation where ordinary people are excluded from the processes of the system around them and lack the ability to make any real decisions over their lives. In the creation of 'useful' tools, human skills have migrated to machines. Modern social control is now defined by growing militarisation of the internal police force and transport infrastructure, with development in the use of cutting-edge technologies in the gathering and profiling of information that can be used and acted on in a model of population management. All this requires networks, servers, routers, transmission and conduit systems, admins, back-ups, contingency exercises. Cybernetic modelling by multinational corporations and information-age nation states already altered warfare and civil planning decades ago. The management of a city is the management of only so much information. The political and capitalist functionaries understand this, that is why it is logical to them to allow machines to become the city.

Technological convergence in fields such as artificial intelligence, biotech, robotics, nanotech and information technology is the current expression of hierarchical relationships that are based on a newly defined poverty gap of understanding, knowledge and language.

Control of information is the defining factor in the control of modern wars. As our lives take place in a social war for survival against the techno-system, information warfare and information control/distribution are two key factors in the new urban war which is taking place between the system and the people of the world it wants to conquer. The social clash is defined by access to information like any other resource or commodity. Huge gulfs in access are simply a form of the division facing excluded people, who have been cut from the means to secure their survival.

Information technology has its basis in a purely productive, quantitative sense: mass society requires it. Information technology is what enabled the Third Reich to execute its final solution: the well-known machines of IBM completed a feat that would have taken civil servants too long to do before the end of the war, and filed 6 million people to their deaths. Efficiency and utilitarianism combine to form the present.

In the capitalist economy, the flow of information is encountered as an item to be processed with as much scrutiny as any other controlled item. Information is as precious as, sometimes more than, the realities it refers to. Accordingly truth has a value (economic), secrecy being quantifiable.

The 'intelligence agencies' and units of secret police increasingly rely on so-called 'human intelligence': less people on the street, less physical surveillance but more agents behind desks analysing 'signal intelligence' instead. Presently machines can scan for keywords and patterns, but it takes transcription and analysis by humans, which still takes time. This means that often digital methods of monitoring can be defeated by face-to-face informal meetings and being aware of the operating environment. Despite the buggings, tailings and psy-war, direct action and sabotage continues to spread, along with the internationalist anarchic virus.