

The Houseboat Summit
Featuring Timothy Leary, Gary Snyder, Alan Watts and Allen Ginsberg
Part One: Changes

Watts: ...Look the, we're going to discuss where it's going...the whole problem of whether to drop out or take over.

Leary: Or anything in between?

Watts: Or anything in between, sure.

Leary: Cop out...drop in...

Snyder: I see it as the problem about whether or not to throw all you energies to the subculture or try to maintain some communication network within the main culture.

Watts: Yes. All right. Now look...I would like to make a preliminary announcement so that it has a certain coherence.

This is Alan Watts speaking, and I'm this evening, on my ferry boat, the host to a fascinating party sponsored by the San Francisco Oracle, which is our new underground paper, far-outter than any far-out that has yet been seen. And we have here, members of the staff of the Oracle. We have Allen Ginsberg, poet, and rabbinic saddhu. We have Timothy Leary, about whom nothing needs to be said. (laughs) And Gary Snyder, also poet, Zen monk, and old friend of many years.

Ginsberg: This swami wants you to introduce him in Berkeley. He's going to have a Kirtan to sanctify the peace movement. So what I said is, he ought to invite Jerry Rubin and Mario Savio, and his cohorts. And he said: "Great, great, great!"

So I said, "Why don't you invite the Hell's Angels, too?" He said: "Great, great, great! When are we gonna get hold of them?"

So I think that's one next feature...

Watts: You know, what is being said here, isn't it: To sanctify the peace movement is to take the violence out of it. Ginsberg: Well, to point attention to its root nature, which is desire for peace, which is equivalent to the goals of all the wisdom schools and all the Saddhanas.

A PACIFIST ON THE RAMPAGE

Watts: Yes, but it isn't so until sanctified. That is to say, I have found in practice that nothing is more violent than peace movements. You know, when you get a pacifist on the rampage, nobody can be more emotionally bound and intolerant and full of hatred.

And I think this is the thing that many of us understand in common, that we are trying to take moral violence out of all those efforts that are being made to bring human beings into a harmonious relationship. Ginsberg: Now, how much of that did the peace movement people in Berkeley realize? Watts: I don't think they realize it at all. I think they're still working on the basis of moral violence, just as Gandhi was. Ginsberg: Yeah...I went last night and turned on with Mario Savio. Two nights ago...After I finished and I was talking with him, and he doesn't turn on very much...This was maybe the third or fourth time.

But he was describing his efforts in terms of the motive power for large mass movements. He felt on of the things that move large crowds was righteousness, moral outrage, and ANGER...Righteous anger.

MENOPAUSAL MINDS

Leary: Well, let's stop right here. The implication of that statement is: we want a mass movement. Mass movements make no sense to me, and I want no part of mass movements. I think this is the error that the leftist activists are making. I see them as young men with menopausal minds.

They are repeating the same dreary quarrels and conflicts for power of the thirties and forties, of the trade union movement, of Trotskyism and so forth. I think they should be sanctified, drop out, find their own center, turn on, and above all avoid mass movements, mass leadership, mass followers. I see that there is a great difference--I say completely incompatible difference--between the leftist activist movement and the psychedelic religious movement.

In the first place, the psychedelic movement, I think, is much more numerous. But it doesn't express itself as noisily. I think there are different goals. I think that the activists want power. They talk about student power. This shocks me, and alienates my spiritual sensitivities.

Of course, there is a great deal of difference in method. The psychedelic movement, the spiritual seeker movement, or whatever you want to call it, expresses itself...as the Haight-Ashbury group had done...with flowers and chants and pictures and beads and acts of beauty and harmony...sweeping the streets. That sort of thing.

Watts: And giving away free food.

Leary: Yes...I think this point must be made straight away, but because we are both looked upon with disfavor by the Establishment, this tendency to group the two together...I think that such confusion can only lead to disillusion and hard feelings on someone's part. So, I'd like to lay this down as a premise right at the beginning.

Ginsberg: Well, of course, that's the same premise they lay down, that there is an irreconcilable split. Only, their stereotype of the psychedelic movement is that it's just sort of the opposite...I think you're presenting a stereotype of them.

Snyder: I think that you have to look at this historically, and there's no doubt that the historical roots of the revolutionary movements and the historical roots of this spiritual movement are identical. This is something that has been going on since the Neolithic as a strain in human history, and one which has been consistently, on one level or another, opposed to the collectivism of civilization toward the rigidities of the city states and city temples. Christian utopianism is behind Marxism.

Leary: They're out and they want in.

UTOPIAN, RELIGIOUS DRIVE

Snyder: ...but historically it arrives from a utopian and essentially religious drive. The early revolutionary political movements in Europe have this utopian strain to them.

Then Marxism finally becomes a separate, non-religious movement, but only very late. That utopian strain runs right through it all along. So that we do share this...

Ginsberg: What are the early utopian texts? What are the early mystical utopian political texts?

Snyder: Political?

Ginsberg: Yeah. Are you running your mind back through Bakunin or something?

Snyder: I'm running it back to earlier people. To Fourier, and stuff...

Watts: Well, it goes back to the seventeenth century and the movements in Flemish and German mysticism, which started up the whole idea of democracy in England in the seventeenth century. You have the Anabaptists, the Levellers, the Brothers of the Free Spirit...

Snyder: The Diggers!

SECULAR MYSTICISM

Watts: THE DIGGERS, and all those people, and then eventually the Quakers. This was the source. It was, in a way, the secularization of mysticism.

In other words, the mystical doctrine that all men are equal in the sight of God, for the simple reason that they ARE God. They're all God's incarnations.

When that doctrine is secularized, it becomes a parody...that all men are equally inferior. And therefore may be evil-treated by the bureaucrats and the police, with no manners.

The whole tendency of this equalization of man in the nineteenth century is a result, in a way, of the work of Freud. But the absolute recipe for writing a best seller biography was to take some person who was renowned for his virtue and probity, and to show, after all, that everything was scurrilous and low down.

You see? This became the parody. Because the point that I am making--this may seem to be a little bit of a diversion, but the actual point is this;

Whenever the insights one derives from mystical vision become politically active they always create their own opposite. They create a parody.

Wouldn't you agree with that, Tim? I mean, this is the point I think you're saying: that when we try to force a vision upon the world, and say that everybody ought to have this, and it's GOOD for you, then a parody of it is set up. As it was historically when this vision was forced upon the West, that all men are equal in the sight of God and so on and so forth...it became bureaucratic democracy, which is that all people are equally inferior.

Snyder: Well, my answer to what Tim was saying there is that, it seems to me at least, in left-wing politics there are certain elements, and there are always going to be certain people who are motivated by the same thing that I'm motivated by.

And I don't want to reject the history, or sacrifices of the people in that movement...if they can be brought around to what I would consider a more profound vision of themselves, and a more profound vision of themselves and society...

Leary: I think we should get them to drop out, turn on, and tune in.

Ginsberg: Yeah, but they don't know what that means even.

Leary: I know it. No politician, left or right, young or old, knows what we mean by that.

Ginsberg: Don't be so angry!

Leary: I'm not angry...

Ginsberg: Yes, you are. Now, wait a minute...Everybody in Berkeley, all week long, has been bugging me...and Alpert...about what you mean by drop out, tune in, and turn on. Finally, one young kid said, "Drop out, turn on, and tune in." Meaning: get with an activity--a manifest activity--worldly activity--that's harmonious with whatever vision he has.

Everybody in Berkeley is all bugged because they think, one: drop-out thing really doesn't mean anything, that what you're gonna cultivate is a lot of freak-out hippies goofing around and throwing bottles through windows when they flip out on LSD. That's their stereotype vision. Obviously stereotype.

Leary: Sounds like bullshitting...

THE NEWSPAPER VISION

Ginsberg: No, like it's no different from the newspaper vision, anyway. I mean, they've got the newspaper vision.

Then, secondly, they're afraid that there'll be some sort of fascist putsch. Like, it's rumored lately that everyone's gonna be arrested. So that the lack of communicating community among hippies will lead to some concentration camp situation, or lead...as it has been in Los Angeles recently...to a dispersal of

what the beginning of the community began.

Leary: These are the old, menopausal minds. There was a psychiatrist named Adler in San Francisco whose interpretation of the group Be-In was that this is the basis for a new fascism...when a leader comes along. And I sense in the activist movement the cry for a leader...the cry for organization...

Ginsberg: But they're just as intelligent as you are on this fact. They know about what happened in Russia. That's the reason they haven't got a big, active organization.

It's because they, too, are stumped by: How do you have a community, and a community movement, and cooperation within the community to make life more pleasing for everybody--including the end of the Vietnam War? How do you have such a situation organized, or disorganized, just so long as it's effective--without a fascist leadership? Because they don't want to be that either.

See, they are conscious of the fact that they don't want to be messiahs--political messiahs. At least, Savio in particular. Yesterday, he was weeping. Saying he wanted to go out and live in nature.

Leary: Beautiful.

Ginsberg: So, I mean he's like basically where we are: stoned.

GENIUS OF NON-LEADERSHIP

Watts: Well, I think that thus far, the genius of this kind of underground that we're talking about is that it has no leadership.

Leary: Exactly!

Watts: That everybody recognizes everybody else.

Ginsberg: Right, except that that's not really entirely so.

Watts: Isn't it so? But it is to a great extent now...

Ginsberg: There's an organized leadership, say, at such a thing as a Be-In. There is organization; there is community. There are community groups which cooperate, and those community groups are sparked by active people who don't necessarily parade their names in public, but who are capable people...who are capable of ordering sound trucks and distributing thousands of cubs of LSD and getting signs posted.

Watts: Oh yes, that's perfectly true. There are people who can organize things. But they don't assume the figurehead role.

Leary: I would prefer to call them FOCI of energy. There's no question. You start the poetry, chanting thing...

Watts: Yes.

Leary: And I come along with a celebration. Like Allen and Gary at the Be-In.

NATURE AND BOSSISM

Watts: And there is nobody in charge as a ruler, and this is the absolutely vital thing. That the Western world has labored for many, many centuries under a monarchical conception of the universe where God is the boss, and political systems and all kinds of law have been based on this model of the universe...that nature is run by a boss.

Whereas, if you take the Chinese view of the world, which is organic..They would say, for example, that the human body is an organization in which there is no boss. It is a situation of order resulting from mutual interrelationship of all the parts.

And what we need to realize is that there can be, shall we say, a movement...a stirring among people...which can be ORGANICALLY designed instead of POLITICALLY designed. It has no boss. Yet all parts recognize each other in the same way as the cells of the body all cooperate together.

Snyder: Yes, it's a new social structure. It's a new social structure which follows certain kinds of historically known tribal models.

Leary: Exactly, yeah! My historical reading of the situation is that these great, monolithic empires that developed in history: Rome, Turkey and so forth...always break down when enough people (and it's always the young, the creative, and the minority groups) drop out and go back to a tribal form.

I agree with what I've heard you say in the past, Gary, that the basic unit is tribal. What I envision is thousands of small groups throughout the United States and Western Europe, and eventually the world, as dropping out. What happened when Jerusalem fell? Little groups went off together...

Ginsberg: Precisely what do you mean by drop out, then...again, for the millionth time?

Snyder: Drop out throws me a little bit, Tim. Because it's assumed that we're dropping out. The next step is, now what are we doing where we're in something else? We're in a new society. We're in the seeds of a new society.

Ginsberg: For instance, you haven't dropped out, Tim. You dropped out of your job as a psychology teacher in Harvard. Now, what you've dropped into is, one: a highly complicated series of arrangements for lecturing and for putting on the festival...

Leary: Well, I'm dropped out of that.

Ginsberg: But you're not dropped out of the very highly complicated legal constitutional appeal, which you feel a sentimental regard for, as I do. You haven't dropped out of being the financial provider for Milbrook, and you haven't dropped out of planning and conducting community organization and participating in it.

And that community organization is related to the national community, too. Either through the Supreme Court, or through the very existence of the dollar that is exchanged for you to pay your lawyers, or to take money to pay your lawyers in the theatre. So you can't drop out, like DROP OUT, 'cause you haven't.

Leary: Well, let me explain...

Ginsberg: So they think you mean like, drop out, like go live on Haight-Ashbury Street and do nothing at all. Even if you can do something like build furniture and sell it, or give it away in barter with somebody else.

Leary: You have to drop out in a group. You drop out in a small tribal group.

Snyder: Well, you drop out one by one, but...You know, you can join the sub-culture.

Ginsberg: Maybe it's: "Drop out of what?"

Watts: Gary, I think you have something to say here. Because you, to me, are one of the most fantastically capable drop-out people I have ever met. I think, at this point, you should say a word or two about your own experience of how live on nothing. How to get by in life economically.

This is the nitty-gritty. This is where it really comes down to in many people's minds. Where's the bread going to come from if everybody drops out? Now, you know expertly where it's gonna come from--living a life of integrity and not being involved in a commute-necktie-strangle scene.

Snyder: Well, this isn't news to anybody, but ten or fifteen years ago when we dropped out, there wasn't a community. There wasn't anybody who was going to take care of you at all. You were completely on your own.

What it meant was, cutting down on your desires and cutting down on your needs to an absolute minimum; and it also meant, don't be a bit fussy about how you work or what you do for a living.

That meant doing any kind of work. Strawberry picking, carpenter, laborer, longshore...Well, longshore is hard to get into. It paid very well. Shipping out...that also pays very well.

THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

But at least in my time, it meant being willing to do any goddam kind of labor that came your way, and not being fuzzy about it.

And it meant cultivating the virtue of patience--the patience of sticking with a shitty job long enough to win the bread that you needed to have some more leisure, which meant more freedom to do more things that you wanted to do. And mastering all kinds of techniques of living really cheap...

Like getting free rice off the docks, because the loading trucks sometimes fork the rice sacks, and spill little piles of rice on the docks which are usually thrown away.

But I had it worked out with some of the guards down on the docks that they would gather 15 or 25 pounds of rice for me, and also tea...I'd pick it up once a week off the docks, and then I'd take it around and give it to friends. This was rice that was going to be thrown away, otherwise. Techniques like that.

Watts: Second day vegetables from the supermarket...

Snyder: Yeah, we used to go around at one or two in the morning, around the Safeways and Piggly Wiggly in Berkeley, with a shopping bag, and hit the garbage can out in back. We'd get Chinese cabbage, lots of broccoli and artichokes that were thrown out because they didn't look sellable any more.

So, I never bought any vegetables for the three years I was a graduate student at Berkeley. When I ate meat, it was usually horse meat from the pet store, because they don't have a law that permits them to sell horsemeat for human consumption in California like they do in Oregon.

Ginsberg: You make a delicious horse meat sukiyaki. (laughter)

A SWEET, CLEAN PAD

Watts: Well, I want to add to this, Gary, that during the time you were living this way, I visited you on occasion, and you had a little hut way up on the hillside of Homestead Valley in Mill Valley and I want to say, for the record, that this was one of the most beautiful pads I ever saw. It was sweet and clean, and it had a very, very good smell to the whole thing. You were living what I consider to be a very noble life.

Now, then, the question that next arises, if this is the way of being a successful drop-out, which I think is true...Can you have a wife and child under such circumstances?

Snyder: Yeah, I think you can, sure.

Watts: What about when the state forces you to send the child to school?

Snyder: You send it to school.

Leary: Oh no, c'mon, I don't see this as drop-out at all.

Snyder: I want to finish what I was going to say. That's they(sic) way it was ten years ago.

Today, there is a huge community. When any kid drops out today, he's got a subculture to go fall into. He's got a place to go where there'll be friends, and people that will feed him--at least for a while--and keep feeding him indefinitely, if he moves around from pad to pad.

Leary: That's just stage one. The value of the Lower East Side, or of the district in Seattle or the

Haight-Ashbury, is that it provides a first launching pad.

Everyone that's caught inside a television set of props, and made of actors...The first thing that you have to do is completely detach yourself from anything inside the plastic, robot Establishment.

A WAY STATION: A LAUNCHING PAD

The next step--for many people--could well be a place like Haight-Ashbury. There they will find spiritual teachers, there they will find friends, lovers, wives...

But that must be seen clearly as a way station. I don't think the Haight-Ashbury district--any city, for that matter--is a place where the new tribal...

Snyder: I agree with you. Not in the city.

Leary: ...is going to live. So, I mean DROP OUT! I don't want to be misinterpreted. I'm dropping out...step by step.

Millbrook, by the way, is a tribal community. We're getting closer and closer to the landing...We're working out our way of import and export with the planet. We consider ourselves a tribe of mutants. Just like all the little tribes of Indians were. We happen to have our little area there, and we have come to terms with the white men around us.

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?

Snyder: Now look...Your drop-out line is fine for all those other people out there, you know, that's what you've got to say to them. But, I want to hear what you're building. What are you making?

Leary: What are we building?

Snyder: Yeah, what are you building? I want to hear your views on that. Now, it's agreed we're dropping out, and there are techniques to do it. Now, what next! Where are we going now? What kind of society are we going to in?

Leary: I'm making the prediction that thousands of groups will look just look around the fake-prop-television-set American society, and just open one of those doors. When you open the doors, they don't lead you in, they lead you OUT into the garden of Eden...which is the planet.

Then you find yourself a little tribe wandering around. As soon as enough people do this--young people do this--it'll bring about an incredible change in the consciousness of this country, and of the Western world.

Ginsberg: Well, that is happening actually...

Leary: Yeah, but...

Snyder: But that garden of Eden is full of old rubber truck tires and tin cans, right now, you know.

Leary: Parts of it are...Each group that drops out has got to use its two billion years of cellular equipment to answer those questions: :Hey, how we gonna eat? Oh, there's no paycheck, there's no more fellowship from the university! How we gonna eat? How we gonna keep warm? How we gonna defend ourselves? How we gonna eat? How we gonna keep warm?

Those are exactly the questions that cellular animals and tribal groups have been asking for thousands of years. Each group is going to have to depend upon its turned on, psychedelic creativity and each group of...

I can envision ten M.I.T. scientists, with their families, they've taken LSD...They've wondered about the insane-robot-television show of M.I.T. They drop out.

They may get a little farm out in Lexington, near Boston. They may use their creativity to make some

new kinds of machines that will turn people on instead of bomb them. Every little group has to do what every little group has done throughout history.

NEW STRUCTURES; NEW TECHNIQUES

Snyder: No, they can't do what they've done through history. What is very important here is, besides taking acid, is that people learn the techniques which have been forgotten. That they learn new structures, and new techniques. Like, you just can't go out and grow vegetables, man. You've got to learn HOW to do it. Like we've gotta learn to do a lot of things we've forgotten to do.

Leary: I agree.

Watts: That is very true, Gary. Our educational system, in its entirety, does nothing to give us any kind of material competence. In other words, we don't learn how to cook, how to make clothes, how to build houses, how to make love, or to do any of the absolutely fundamental things of life.

CEREBRAL "FREAK OUTS"

The whole education that we get for our children in school is entirely in terms of abstractions. It trains you to be an insurance salesman or a bureaucrat, or some kind of cerebral character.

Leary: Yes...it's exactly there that, I think, a clear-cut statement is needed. The American educational system is a narcotic, addictive process...

Watts: Right!

Leary: ...and we must have NOTHING to do with it. Drop out of school, drop out of college, don't be an activist...

Watts: But we've got to do something else.

Leary: Drop OUT of school...

Ginsberg: Where are you gonna learn engineering, or astronomy, or anything like that?

Leary: The way men have always learned the important things in life. Face to face with a teacher, with a guru. Because very little...

Ginsberg: What about astronomy...like calculation of star rations...things like that?

Leary: If any drop-out wants to do that, he can do it...I can tell him how to do it.

Snyder: I would suspect that within the next ten years---within the next five years probably--a modest beginning will be made in sub-culture institutions of higher learning that will informally begin to exist around the country, and will provide this kind of education without being left to the Establishment, to Big Industry, to government.

Watts: Well, it's already happening...

Snyder: I think that there will be a big extension of that, employing a lot of potentially beautiful teachers who are unemployed at the moment...like there are gurus who are just waiting to be put to use; and also drawing people, who are working in the universities with a bad conscience, off to join that...

Leary: Exactly...

Snyder: There's a whole new order of technology that is required for this. A whole new science, actually. A whole new physical science is going to emerge from this. Because the boundaries of the old physical science are within the boundaries of the Judaeo-Christian and Western imperialist boss sense of the universe that Alan was talking about.

In other words, our scientific condition is caught within the limits of that father figure, Jehovah, or

Roman emperor...which limits our scientific objectivity and actually holds us back from exploring areas of science which can be explored.

Leary: Exactly, Gary. Exactly...

Watts: It's like the guy in Los Angeles who had a bad trip on LSD and turned himself into the police, and wrote: "Please help me. Signed, Jehovah." (laughter)

Leary: Beautiful! (more laughter) It's about time he caught on, huh? (more laughter)

Watts: Yes-ss (laughing) But, here though, is this thing, you see. We are really talking about all this, which is really a rather small movement of people, involved in the midst of a FANTASTIC MULTITUDE of people who can only continue to survive if automated industry feeds them, clothes them, houses them and transports them. By means of the creation of IMMENSE quantities of ersatz material: Fake bread, fake homes, fake clothes and fake autos.

In other words, this thing is going on...you know, HUGE, FANTASTIC numbers of people...INCREASING, INCREASING, INCREASING...people think the population is something that's going to happen five years from NOW. They don't realize it's right on us NOW! People are coming out to the WALLS!

Snyder: And they're gobbling up everything on the planet to feed it.

Watts: Right.

Snyder: Well, the ecological conscience is something that has to emerge there, and that's part of what we hope for...hopefully in the subculture.

VOICE FROM AUDIENCE: Gary, doesn't Japan clearly indicate that we can go up in an order of magnitude in population and still...

Snyder: Well, who wants to? It can be very well argued by some people who have not been thinking very clearly about it, that we could support a larger number of people on this planet infinitely. But that's irresponsible and sacrilegious. It's sacrilegious for the simple reason it wipes out too many other animal species which we have no right to wipe out.

Leary: Absolutely.

Snyder: We have no moral right to upset the ecological balance.

Watts: No, that's true. We've got to admit that we belong to the mutual eating society.

Snyder: Furthermore, it simply isn't pleasant to be crowded that way. Human beings lose respect for human beings when they're crowded.

Leary: Out of my LSD experiences I have evolved a vision which makes sense to my cells...that we are already putting to work at Millbrook. And that is, that life on this planet depends upon about twelve inches of topsoil and the incredible balance of species that Gary was just talking about.

On the other hand, man and his technological, Aristotelian zeal has developed these methods of laying down miles of concrete on topsoil, polluting the waters and doing the damage that Gary was just talking about. Now, we cannot say to this society, "Go back to a simple, tribal, pastoral existence." That's romantic.

FORWARD

Snyder: You can say "Go FORWARD to a simple, pastoral existence."

Leary: Yeah. I have come to a very simple solution: All the technology has to go underground. Because metal belongs underground. You take a hatchet out in the forest and let it go. It goes exactly where God and the Divine Process wants it to be: underground.

Now the city of New York--the megalopolis is going to exist from Seattle to San Diego in a few years--could just as well be underground. If it goes underground it's there, where it belongs, with fire and metal and steel.

I foresee that these tribal groups that drop out--and I mean absolutely drop out--will be helping to get back in harmony with the land, and we've got to start immediately putting technology underground.

I can think of different ways we can do this symbolically. The Solstice, last April 21st (March 21st--Oracle) a group of us went out in front of the house in Millbrook and we took a sledgehammer and we spent about an hour breaking through the road. And we had this incredible piece of asphalt and rock--about four inches--and then we said: "Hey! Underneath this planet somewhere there's dirt!" It was really magical. And once you get a little piece taken out--it took about an hour to get one little piece--then you just go underneath it and it begins to crumble.

So I think we should start a movement to--one hour a day or one hour a week--take a little chisel and a little hammer and just see some earth come up, and put a little seed there. And then put a little ring--mandalic ring--of something around it.

I can see the highways and I can see the subways and I can see the patios and so forth...Suddenly the highway department comes along, and: "There's a rose growing in the middle of Highway 101!" And then...then...the robot power group will have to send a group of the highway department to kill the rose and put the asphalt down on the gentle, naked skin of the soil.

Now when they do that, we're getting to them. There'll be pictures in the paper. And consciousness is going to change. Because we've got to get to people's consciousness. We've got to let people realize what they're doing to the earth.

Ginsberg: That's the area of poetry you're dealing with there.

Leary: Here we go. I'm the poet and you're the politician. I've told you that for ten years!

Ginsberg: "There are no ideas but in things," said William Carlos Williams. How does this work out now?

Snyder: Technologically?

Voice from Audience: I wouldn't want to work underground.

Leary: Of course not. The only people that would want to work underground are people that would want to work with metal and steel. But if they're hung up that way, and they want to play with those kinds of symbols, fine. We'll have the greatest, air-conditioned, smooth, airport, tile gardens for them with all sorts of metal toys to play with.

Voice from Audience: Can I ask you for a clarification on one thing about drop out? You said that in another ten years the young men in the colleges are going to have degrees and the doctors, psychologists and so on, will all be turned-on people. But if they drop out from college now they won't have degrees and these people won't gain control of the apparatus--I mean, I know someone now at State who studies psychology and who doesn't know whether to drop out or not, and who's pulled in two directions. I think there are many people like this.

To Be Continued... Coming up >> Part Two: DROP OUT: YES OR NO?

The Houseboat Summit
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Part Two: To Drop Out or Not

Leary: Yes, I think he should drop out. And I want to be absolutely clear on that. NOBODY wants to listen to that simple, two-syllable phrase. It gets jargled and jumbled, and I mean it...Now, everyone has to decide how he drops out and when, and he has to time it gracefully, but that's the goal.

S: We understand that...

Leary: Well, Allen didn't. And Allen, I want to tell you the people in Berkeley that ask you what I mean, I mean ABSOLUTELY have nothing to do with the university, and start planning step by step how you can detect...

Ginsberg: OF course, that's where the big argument is, over the NON-STUDENTS. The guys that dropped out are not involved, and their problem is what kind of communities they organize.

Leary: Now, I can foresee that you might work for Sears & Roebuck for six months to get enough money to go to India. But that's part of your drop out. And what I'm doing today, Allen, is part of my drop out. I've got responsibilities, contracts..and I don't think that anyone should violate contracts with people that they love...Contract with the university--ha! Fine--quit tomorrow. Therefore, I have to detach myself slowly. When I was in India tow years ago...

Ginsberg: India...but look...you know the university is personal relationships also. They're in contact with persons. They can't reflect those persons, necessarily...There might be a Bodhisattva among those persons.

Snyder: ...As Tim says, you can gracefully drop out...

Leary: Aesthetically...

Snyder: ...at one time or another, which I take to mean...

Ginsberg: I was teaching at Berkeley last week--what do you mean 'drop out?' (laughs)

Leary: You've got to do your yoga as a college professor...it's part of the thing you're gonna have to go through, and after you do that then (laughs) you shudder, and run to the door.

SAGES IN THE MOUNTAINS

Watts: Surely the fact of the matter is that you can do this on a small scale, as an individual, where just a few people are doing this...as they always have done. There have always been a kind of elite minority who dropped out--who were the sages in the mountains.

But now we are in a position where the conversations that you and I have go to millions, and people are asking this sort of question.

Let's suppose that everybody in San Francisco decided to take the six o'clock train from the Third Street Station to Palo Alto...See? We know there's no chance of their doing so. And therefore this catastrophe doesn't happen.

Leary: That's exactly what I say to people who say, "Well, suppose everybody dropped out?" Ridiculous!

Watts: Yeah, supposing everyone dropped out...Of course they're not going to.

Leary: Suppose everyone took LSD tonight (laughs) --Great!

THE LEISURE SOCIETY: PUZZLES AND PARADOXES

Watts: The thing is this: what we are facing, what's going to happen is this...if we do not encounter the

final political catastrophe of atomic war, biological warfare and wipe the whole thing out, we're going to have a huge leisure society--where they're going to reverse taxation and PAY people for the work that the machines do for them. Because there's no other solution to it.

In other words, if the manufacturer is going to be able to sell his products, the people gotta have money to pay for the products. All those people have been put out of work by the machines the manufacturer is using. Therefore, the people have got to be paid by the government--CREDIT of some kind, so they can buy what the machines produces--then the thing will go on.

So this means that thousands and thousands of people are going to be loafing around, with nothing at all to do. A few people who are maniacs for work will go on...

Leary: I think what you're defining, Alan, is...

Watts: But that's the kind of situation we're moving into. IF we survive at all.

Leary: Well, there's another possibility. And, I think you're defining two possible new species. Let's face it, the evolution of mankind is not over.

Watts: No!

Leary: Just as there are many kinds of primates: baboons and chimpanzees and so forth. In a few thousand years we'll look back and see that from--what we call man--there may be two or more species developing.

There's no question that one species, which could and probably will develop, is this anthill. It's run like a beehive with queens--or kings--(laughs) and it'll all be television and now, of course, in that, sexuality will become very promiscuous and almost impersonal. Because, in an anthill, it always turns out that way.

BUT you're gonna have another species who will inevitably survive, and that will be the tribal people, who don't have to worry about leisure because when you drop out then the real playwork begins. Because then you have to, as Gary says, learn how to take care of yourself and your loved ones on this...

Snyder: I don't think that you're right about that anthill thing at all though. That's a very negative view of human nature. I don't think it's accurate.

Leary: It's no longer even human nature. We won't call them human anymore. These people

HUMAN BEINGS WANT REALITY

Snyder: C'mon, Tim, they're humans and they're gonna be here. You're talking a drama here. You're talking about--you know--anthropological realities. The anthropological reality is that human beings, in their nature, want to be in touch with what is real in themselves and in the universe.

For example, the longshoremen with their automation contract in San Francisco...a certain number of them have been laid off for the rest of their lives with full pay, and some of them have been laid off already for five years--with full pay--by their contract.

Now, my brother-in-law is a longshoreman, and he's been telling me about what's happening to these guys. Most of them are pretty illiterate, a large portion of them are Negroes. The first thing they all did was get boats and drive around San Francisco Bay...because they have all this leisure.

Then a lot of them got tired driving around boats that were just like cars, and they started sailing. Then a few of them started making their own sailboats. They move into and respond to the possibility of challenge.

Things become simpler and more complex and more challenging for them. The same is true of hunting. Some guy says "I want to go hunting and fishing all the time, when I have my leisure...but God!" So he goes hunting all the time. Then he says, "I want to do this in a more interesting way." So he takes up

bow hunting...Then the next step is--and this has happened--he says, "I want to try making my own arrowheads." And he learns how to flake his own arrowheads out.

Now, human beings want reality. That's, I think, part of human nature. And television and drinking beer and watching television. is what the working man laid off does for the first two weeks.

But then in the third week he begins to get bored, and in the fourth week he wants to do something with his body and his mind and his senses.

Leary: But if he's still being paid by the Establishment, then you have someone who's going back to childhood. Like, he's making arrows that he really doesn't need...

Snyder: May I speak my vision about this?

Leary: I object to this very much. I want him out there really fighting--not fighting, but working--for his family, not chipping.

Snyder: Well, this is a transitional thing, too...It's too transitional.

Ginsberg: This leads to violence because it divides everybody up into separate...

Snyder: Oh, he was talking poetry.

Leary: No, I;m not! I want to be clear about this. Nobody wants to listen to this. We are doing this already...

Snyder: No, but the difference is, the children of the ants are all going to be tribal people. That's the way it's going to work. We're going to get the kids, and it's going to take about three generations.

THE CHANGE

And in the meantime, the family system will change, and when the family system changes the economy will change...and in the meantime, a number of spiritual insights are going to change the minds of the technologists and the scientists themselves, and technology will change.

There will be a diffused and decentralized technology...as I see it...

Watts: Well, go on...Are you saying now what you said was your vision?

Snyder: Now, what I was going to say was very simply this.

I think that automation in the affluent society, plus psychedelics, plus--for the same curious reason--a whole catalytic, spiritual change or bend of mind that seems to be taking place in the west, today especially, is going to result--can result ultimately--in a vast leisure society in which people will voluntarily reduce their number, and because human beings want to do that which is real...simplify their lives.

The whole problem of consumption and marketing is radically altered if a large number of people voluntarily choose to consume less.

And people will voluntarily choose to consume less if their interests are turned in any other direction.

If what is exciting to them is no longer things but states of mind.

Leary: That's true.

STATES OF MIND

Snyder: Now what is something else...

People are not becoming interested in states of mind, and things are not going to substitute for states of

mind. So what I visualize is a very complex and sophisticated cybernetic technology surrounded by thick hedges of trees...

Somewhere, say around Chicago. And the rest of the nation a buffalo pasture...

Leary: That's very close to what I think.

Snyder: ...with a large number of people going around making their own arrowheads because it's fun, but they know better ...(laughter) They know they don't have to make them. (more laughter)

Leary: Now, this seems like our utopian visions are coming closer together. I say that the industry should be underground, and you say it should be in Chicago. This interests me.

Watts: Well, it's the same idea.

Snyder: Well, those who want to be technological engineers will be respected...And the other thing is that you can go out and live close to nature, or you can go back and...

Leary: But you won't be allowed to drive a car outside this technological...

Snyder: You won't want to!

That's the difference, baby. It's not that you won't be allowed to, it's that you won't want to. That's where it's got to be at.

CIVILIZED "PAP"

Watts: Because, it's the same thing when we get down to, say, the fundamental question of food. More and more one realizes that the mass produced food is not worth eating, and therefore, in order to delight in things to eat, you go back to the most primitive processes of raising and preparing food. Because that has taste.

And I see that it will be a sort of flip, that as all the possibilities of technology and automation make it possible for everybody to be assured of having the basic necessities of life...they will then say: "Oh, yes, we have all that, but now in the meantime while we don't have to work, let's go back to making arrowheads and to raising the most AMAZING PLANTS."

Snyder: Yeah...It would be so funny; the thing is that they would all get so good at it that the technology center of Chicago would rust away. (laughter)

Watts: Right! Right! (laughter)

Leary: That's exactly what's going to happen. The psychedelic drop-outs are going to be having so much fun. They're going to be so much obviously healthier.

Watts: But Tim, do you see any indication among people who at present are really turned on, that they are cultivating this kind of material competence? Now, I haven't seen too much of it yet...

Snyder: Some of those kids at Big Sur have got it.

Watts: Yeah, maybe you're right.

Snyder: They're learning. A few years ago they used to go down to Big Sur and they didn't know how to camp or dig latrines.

TECHNOLOGICAL HANDBOOK

But like what Marine has been telling me lately, is that they're getting very sharp about what to gather that's edible, how to get sea salt, what are the edible plants and the edible seeds, and the revolutionary technological book for this state is A.L. Kroeber's Handbook of the California Indians, which tells you what's good to eat and how to prepare it. And also what to use for tampons: milkweed fluff...(laughter)

Diapers made of shredded bark...The whole thing is all there.

Leary: Beautiful...

Watts: But the thing is this. I've found so many people who are the turned on type, and the circumstances and surroundings under which they live are just plain cruddy. You would think that people who have seen what you can see with the visions of psychedelics would reflect themselves in forms of life and art that would be like Persian miniatures. Because obviously Persian miniatures and Moorish arabesques are all reflecting the state of mind of people who were turned on. And they are rich and glorious beyond belief.

Ginsberg: Majestic.

Watts: Majestic! Yeah! Well now, why doesn't it so occur...It is slowly beginning to happen...!Cause I've noticed that, recently, all turned on people are becoming more colorful. They're wearing beads and gorgeous clothes and so and so forth...and it's gradually coming out. Because you remember the old beatnik days when everybody was in blue jeans and ponytails and no lip[stick and DRAB--and CRUMMY!

Snyder: What! (laughter)

Watts: Now, something's beginning to happen!

Snyder: Well, it wasn't quite that bad, but we were mostly concerned with not being consumers then...and so we were showing our non-consumerness.

Watts: Yes, I know! The thing is I am using this as a symbol because the poor cons in San Quentin wear blue jeans.

Snyder: The thing is that there are better things in the Goodwill now than there used to be.

Watts: Yes, exactly. (laughter) But the thing is that now I see it beginning to happen. Timothy here, instead of wearing his old--whatever he used to wear--has now got a white tunic on with gold and colorful gimp on it.

Ginsberg: Gimp?

Watts: Yes, and it's very beautiful, and he's wearing a necklace and all that kind of thing, and color is at last coming into the scene.

Snyder: That's going back before the Roundheads, and before Cromwell...

Watts: Yes, it is.

Leary: Let's get practical here, I think we're all concerned about the increasing number of people who are dropping out and wondering where to go from there. No let's come up some practical suggestions which we might hope could unfold in the next few months.

To Be Continued...

COMING UP: Bush, Farm, City; A Magic Geography; Who's In Charge? & MORE!

The Houseboat Summit
Featuring Timothy Leary, Gary Snyder, Alan Watts and Allen Ginsberg
Part THREE: A Magic Geography

BUSH, FARM, CITY

Snyder: There's three categories: wilderness, rural, and urban. Like there's gonna be bush people, farm people and city people. Bush tribes, farm tribes, and city tribes.

Leary: Beautiful. That makes immediate sense to myself. How about beach people?

Voice from Audience: Let me throw in a word...the word is evil and technology. Somehow they come together, and when there is an increase in technology, and technological facility, there is an increase in what we usually call human evil.

Snyder: I wouldn't agree with that...no, there's all kinds of non-evil technologies. Like, neolithic obsidian flaking is technology.

Voice from Audience: But in its advanced state it produces evil...

Watts: Yes, but what you mean, I think, is this: When you go back to the great myths about the origin of evil, actually the Hebrew words which say good and evil as the knowledge of good and evil being the result of eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge...

ANALYTICAL LAG

These words mean advantageous and disadvantageous and they're words connected with technical skills. And the whole idea is this, which you find reflected in the Taoist philosophy, that the moment you start interfering in the course of nature with a mind that is centered and one-pointed, and analyzes everything, and breaks it down into bits...The moment you do that you lost contact with your original know-how...by means of which you now color your eyes, breathe, and beat your heart.

For thousands of years mankind has lost touch with his original intelligence, and he has been absolutely fascinated by this kind of political, godlike, controlling intelligence...where you can go ptt-ptt-ptt...and analyze things all over the place, and he has forgotten to trust his own organism.

Now the whole thing is that everything is coming to be realized today. Not only through people who take psychedelics, but also through many scientists. They're realizing that this linear kind of intelligence cannot keep up with the course of nature. It can only solve trivial problems when the big problems happen too fast to be thought about in that way.

So, those of us who are in some way or other--through psychedelics, through meditation, through what have you--are getting back to being able to trust our original intelligence...are suggesting an entirely new course for the development of civilization.

Snyder: Well, it happens that civilization develops with the emergence of a class structure. A class structure can't survive, or can't put across its principle, and expect people to accept it...if they believe in themselves. If they believe, individually, one by one, that they are in some way godlike, or buddha like, or potentially illuminati.

So it's almost ingrained in civilization, and Freud said this, you know "Civilization as a Neurosis," that part of the nature of civilization is that it must PUT DOWN the potential of every individual development.

PRIVATE VISIONS

This is the difference between that kind of society which we call civilized, and that much more ancient kind of society, which is still viable and still survives, and which we call primitive. In which everybody is potentially a chief and which everybody...like the Comanche or the

Sioux...EVERYBODY in the whole culture...was expected to go out and have a vision one time in his life.

In other words, to leave the society to have some transcendental experience, to have a song and a totem come to him which he need tell no one, ever--and then come back and live with this double knowledge in society.

Watts: In other words, through his having had his own isolation, his own loneliness, and his own vision, he knows that the game rules of society are fundamentally an illusion.

Snyder: The society not only permits that, the society is built on it...

Watts: Is built on that, right!

Snyder: And everybody has one side of his nature that has been out of it.

Watts: That society is strong and viable which recognizes its own provisionality.

Snyder: And no one who ever came into contact with the Plains Indians didn't think they were men! Every record of American Indians from the cavalry, the pioneers, the missionaries, the Spaniards...say that everyone one of these people was men.

In fact, I learned something just the other day. Talking about the Uroc Indians, an early explorer up there commented on their fantastic self-confidence. He said, "...Every Indian has this fantastic self-confidence. And they laugh at me," he said, "they laugh at me and they say: Aren't you sorry you're not an Indian? Poor wretched Indians!" (laughs) this fellow said.

ALONE AND AT ONE

Well, that is because every one of them has gone out and had this vision experience...has been completely alone with himself, and face to face with himself...and has contacted powers outside of what anything the society could give him, and society expects him to contact powers outside of society...in those cultures.

Watts: Yes, every healthy culture does. Every healthy culture provides for there being non-joiners. Sanyassi, hermits, drop-outs too...Every healthy society has to tolerate this...

Snyder: A society like the Comanche or the Sioux demands that everybody go out there and have this vision, and incorporates and ritualizes it within the culture. Then a society like India, a step more civilized, permits some individuals to have these visions, but doesn't demand it of everyone. And then later it becomes purely eccentric.

Leary: We often wonder why some people are more ready to drop out than others. It may be explained by the theory of reincarnation. The people that don't want to drop out can't conceive of living on this planet outside the prop television studio, are just unlucky enough to have been born into this sort of thing...maybe the first or second time. They're still entranced by all of the manmade props. But there's no question that we should consider how more and more people, who are ready to drop out, can drop out.

Watts: If there is value in being a drop-out...that is to say, being an outsider...You can only appreciate and realize this value, if there are in contrast with you insiders and squares. The two are mutually supportive.

Leary: Yeah, if someone says to me, "I just can't conceive of dropping out..." I can say, "Well, you're having fun with this go around...fine! We've all done it many times in the past."

Ginsberg: The whole thing is too big because it doesn't say drop out of WHAT precisely. What everybody is dealing with is people, it's not dealing with institutions. It's dealing with them but also dealing with people. Working with and including the police.

Snyder: If you're going to talk this way you have to be able to specifically say to somebody in Wichita,

Kansas who says, "I'm going to drop out. How do you advise me to stay living around here in this area which I like?"

Leary: Let's be less historical now for awhile and let's be very practical about ways in which people who want to find the tribal way...How can they do it...what do you tell them?

Snyder: Well, this is what I've been telling kids all over Michigan and Kansas. For example, I tell them first of all: "Do you want to live here, or do you want to go someplace else?"

Leary: Good!

LAND, WATER AND CLOUDS

Snyder: All right, say I want to stay where I am. I say, okay, get in touch with the Indian culture here. Find out what was here before. Find out what the mythologies were. Find out what the local deities were. You can get all of this out of books.

Go and look at your local archaeological sites. Pay a reverend [sic] visit to the local American Indian tombs, and also the tombs of the early American settlers. Find out what your original ecology was. Is it short grass prairie, or long grass prairie here?

Go out and live on the land for a while. Set up a tent and camp out and watch the land and get a sense of what the climate here is. Because, since you've been living in a house all your life, you probably don't know what the climate is.

Leary: Beautiful.

Snyder: Then decide how you want to make your living here. Do you want to be a farmer, or do you want to be a hunter and food gatherer?

You know, start from the ground up, and you can do it in any part of this country today...cities and all...For this continent I took it back to the Indians. Find out what the Indians were up to in your own area. Whether it's Utah, or Kansas, or New Jersey.

Leary: That is a stroke of cellular revelation and genius, Gary. That's one of the wisest things I've heard anyone say in years. Exactly how it should be done.

I do see the need for transitions, though, and you say that there will be city people as well as country people and mountain people...I would suggest that for the next year or two or three, which are gonna be nervous, transitional, mutational years--where things are gonna happen very fast, by the way--the transition could be facilitated if every city set up little meditation rooms, little shrine rooms, where the people in transition, dropping out, could meet and meditate together.

It's already happening at the Psychedelic Shop, it's happening in New York. I see no reason though why there shouldn't be ten or fifteen or twenty such places in San Francisco.

Snyder: There already are.

THE ENERGY TO CREATE

Leary: I know, but let's encourage that. I was just in Seattle and I was urging the people there. Hundreds of them crowd into coffee shops, and there is this beautiful energy.

They are liberated people, these kids, but they don't know where to go. They don't need leadership, but they need, I think, a variety of suggestions from people who have thought about this, giving them the options to move in any direction. The different meditation rooms can have different styles. One can be Zen, one can be macrobiotic, one can be bhahte chanting, once can be rock and roll psychedelic, one can be lights.

If we learn anything from our cells, we learn that God delights in variety. The more of these we can encourage, people would meet in these places, and AUTOMATICALLY tribal groups would develop

and new matings would occur, and the city would be seen for many as transitional...and they get started. They may save up a little money, and then they head out and find the Indian totem wherever they go.

A MAGIC GEOGRAPHY

Snyder: Well, the Indian totem is right under your ground in the city, is right under your feet. Just like when you become initiated into the Haineph pueblo, which is near Albuquerque, you learn the magic geography of your region; and part of that means going to the center of Albuquerque and being told: There is a spring here at a certain street, and its name is such and such. And that's in a street corner in downtown Albuquerque.

But they have that geography intact, you know. They haven't forgotten it. Long after Albuquerque is gone, somebody'll be coming here, saying there's a spring here and it'll be there, probably.

Leary: Tremont Street in Boston means "three hills."

Ginsberg: There's a stream under Greenwich Village.

Voice from Audience: Gary, what do you think of rejecting the week as a measure of time; as a sort of absurd, civilized measure of time, and replacing it with a month, which is a natural time cycle?

Leary: What is the time cycle?

Snyder: The week, the seven day week. Well, the seven day week is based on the Old Testament theory that the world was created in seven days, you know. So you don't need it, particularly.

Voice from Audience: Right. It seems to me a formal rejection of it and a cycling of social events around the idea of monthly cycle...

HOLY DAY!

Watts: I don't agree with that, because...everywhere that this week thing has spread, people have adopted it, where they didn't have this time rhythm before. But people have not understood the real meaning of the week, which is that every seventh day is a day to goof off. It's to turn out of the whole thing. The rules are abrogated. "The six days thou shalt labor, and do all that thou has to do. The seventh day thou shalt keep holy." HOLY DAY! and this means holiday. It means instead of a day for laying on rationality and preaching and making everybody feel guilty because they didn't operate properly the other six days.

Leary: You turn on.

Watts: The seventh day is the day...Yes, absolutely, to go crazy...Because if you can't afford a little corner of craziness in your life, you're like a steel bridge that has no give. You're so rigid you're going to collapse in the first wind.

Leary: There is also some neuro-pharmacological evidence in support of the weekly cycle. That is, you can only have a full-scale LSD session about once a week. And when they said in Genesis--"On the seventh day He rested," it makes very modern sense.

Ginsberg: You can interpret it psychedelically, but that's like new criticism...(laughter) You can actually LIKE new criticism...

Leary: I want you to be very loving to me for the rest of...and the tape will be witness...whether Allen is loving or not me, for the rest of this evening.

Ginsberg: That's all right, I can always use a Big Brother...

Watts: May I point out, this has directly to do with what we've been talking about.

Ginsberg: But I was just getting paranoid of you interpreting the Old Testament as a prophecy of LSD.

That's what I was THINKING.

Leary: My foot has often led to other people's paranoia's at the time.

Watts: One day in seven, one seventh, is the day of the drop out.

Snyder: That's not enough. (laughter)

Watts: Now wait a minute. You're going too fast, Gary.

Voice from Audience: Gary, the first six days of the week you drop out, and the seventh day you work.

Snyder: Baby, we've gotta get away from this distinction between work and play. That's the whole thing, really. Like this one day in seven thing, the reason I don't agree with it is that it implies that making the world was a job.

Watts: Oh, that's perfectly true. I entirely agree with you on that.

A BAD SCENE

Snyder: And any universe that is worth creating isn't any job to create. You dig it. I don't sympathize with his fatigue at all...He must have made a bad scene. (chuckles)

Watts: You are talking on a different level than we're discussing at the moment. You are talking from the point of view where from the very deepest vision everything that happens is okay, and everything is play.

Snyder: Well, I wasn't really talking from that vision.

Watts: Well, that's where you really are. Now, I'm going one level below this, and saying...

Snyder: What I'm saying is if you do enjoy what you're doing, it's not work.

Watts: That's true. That's my philosophy: that I get paid for playing.

Now, the thing is, though, that just as talking on a little bit lower level...now--one day in seven is for golfing off...and that's a certain less percentage. So in a culture, if the culture is to be healthy, there has to be a substantial but, nevertheless, minority percentage of people who are not involved in the rat race.

And this is the thing that it seems to me is coming out of this. We cannot possible (sic) expect that everybody in the United States of America will drop out. But it is entirely important for the welfare of the United States that a certain number of people, a certain percentage, should drop out. Just as one day in seven should be a holiday.

Voice from Audience: That's the baby that's being born. That's the baby that's being born NOW. The problem that we have to deal with is how to get that baby out easily.

Leary: I think we must be more practical than we have been, because there are hundreds of people who are very interested in what we are talking about in the most A-B-C practical sense like: What do I do tomorrow!

Watts: Right!

To Be Continued...