

DISORDER UNDERGROUND

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Championing the musically jaded for 15 years

Observations and Confessions on Politics from Across the International Extreme Music Landscape

with:

Agathocles
Agnostic Front
Armored Saint
Asphyx
Assück
Atheist
Autopsy
Bolt Thrower
Cannibal Corpse
Carcass
Cattle Press
Coroner
Crawl/Child
Dead Body Love
Defiance
Desperate Corruption
The Dream Is Dead
Drowning In Solitude
Exit-13
Extreme Noise Terror
Genital Deformities
God Forsaken
Gore Beyond Necropsy
Gorguts
The Haunted
Hypocrisy
Incarnis
Indecision
Intruder
Inverted
Japanische Kamphörspiele
Kreator
L.D. Kids
Medusa
Monstrosity
Morbid Angel
Mutilated
Napalm Death
Nekhei Naatza
Obituary
Overkill
Pestilence
Prong
Resist
Sacrifice
Sepultura
Sick Of It All
Slug & Lettuce
Snapcase
Spine
Suppression
Terrible Headache
Unbroken
Unleashed
Vermin
Wormhole

DISPOSABLE UNDERGROUND ZINE'S first issue appeared in the fall of 1991, and from the beginning, musicians and other personalities in the music business have been talking politics in these pages, whether it pertains to their band or their community or their country or the world.

Many people don't like to see music and politics mixed, but just as many people are inspired by the two together, or at the least have an interest in what the bands they look up to have to say about the state of the world.

Some of the bands that appear in this issue don't raise political topics in their lyrics while others do. A band that covers political subject matter in its lyrics isn't necessarily a political band or active politically. The comments these artists make don't necessarily reflect the views of their band as a whole.

Most of the subject matter herein is quite dated, but it's interesting to note how the concerns expressed are just as relevant in today's world as they were at the time they were spoken. On another level, reading these conversations could be like a trip down memory lane, to various periods that were just as fucked up and strife ridden as this one

is now.

What I've done is I've gone through all of the back issues of *Disposable Underground* and excerpted any interview content that had to do with politics of any subject and collected these excerpts here. I conducted these interviews in person, over the phone, through the mail, or via the internet from 1990 to 2005, with the exception of The Haunted's interview, which is a new piece appearing here for the first time. Additionally, as opposed to the rest of this issue's content, the Nekhei Naatza interview and the Napalm Death interview from 2005 are here in their entirety.

This issue is organized by year in which each interview took place and then alphabetized by band name. I've included the country of origin of each band to help demonstrate further from which each speaker's perspective comes, to the extent that geographic location influences people's opinions.

Mason conducted the interviews with Dead Body Love, Exit-13, Monstrosity, and Resist, while Vaughn Currier conducted the Snapcase and Unbroken interviews. Taryn Wilkinson contributed to the 2005 Napalm Death interview.

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Agnostic Front (USA)
with Roger Miret

What do you think about the PMRC? Do you have an opinion about it?

"The censorship people? Oh, I think they're full of shit. I don't think anybody has the right to start censoring someone. See, we let 'em get away with this now, and then they'll start censoring magazines, they'll start censoring—I mean, we can't let 'em stop anything, 'cause, like I said, it's freedom of speech. It's wrong."

Those white supremacy and neo-Nazi dudes: should they be stopped or are they entitled to their opinion?

"Well, everybody is entitled to their own opinion. No one knows what's wrong or right. To me, in my eyes, I see it different. I disagree with them, but they disagree with me. And there's no one here who can say who's wrong or who's right. I just don't like it when it's pressed upon me. It doesn't matter, whatever, keep it to yourself. I don't like it."

Have you heard all that talk about the straight edge movement's turned around, and it's not the same thing it used to be, and all that?

"I hear you."

Do you agree with that?

"Me myself, I'm straight edge, but I'm not into all that stupid shit. I just keep my own thoughts to myself, and I don't look at somebody else different just because they drink or somethin'. To me, I'm just a human being."

Defiance (USA)
with Jim Adams

The guitarist from Defiance was hanging out downstairs at the 9:30 Club in Washington, DC near where they sell the tour shirts, and I said, "Hey, man, let's do an interview." I wasn't prepared or anything but we did it anyway. Soon he and the rest of Defiance would be on stage opening for Vio-lence, and I had never heard Defiance before, so I wasn't aware of what the band's lyrical content is.

"I'd like to say environmentally conscious. We talk about the Stockholm massacre, where the guy went in with the automatic weapons and was killing off kids in the playground ... 'Void Terra Firma' is really about the destruction of the ozone and the killing of the rain forests, leaving us with no air, thus we don't exist, type of deal."

Overkill (USA)
with Bobby "Blitz" Ellsworth

I read once that you said that just because you play this type of music, it doesn't mean

you're Satanic.

"Yeah."

Do you feel Satanic bands are stupid, and they should use their lyrics to say something?

"Well, this band has come around to that way of thinking, through four records, that with a recording contract, you should have something to say, because you do influence people. I would never take away anybody's right to express themselves any way that they feel necessary, whether that is from a Satanic point of view or not. I think creativity should be left up to the individual, and not dictated by even my feelings on it. My feelings only pretty much govern what I do, you know what I'm sayin'?" But it doesn't necessarily apply to anyone else. The band in the next room, if they want to write something about Satan, or come

from that angle, they have more than the rights in the world to do it, and I'll back those rights that they have. But it just doesn't jive with me. I just don't like it."

There's a censorship movement happening, I think.

"Most definitely! In Florida, there's been bills passed. They dropped Overkill records from the shelves in the major chains, 'cause they didn't wanna deal with it down there. They sell 'em in the mom an' pop stores, but I think you have to be eighteen or older to buy them. It's kinda ridiculous. If you're not educated to know what's in the fuckin' record, then it shouldn't be on your fuckin' shelf anyway, plain an' simple. I mean, there's some stuff out there that offends me, but, I mean, I'm not gonna take the right away of somebody to create that stuff."

"I become very involved in it. I speak out very adamantly about it at every fuckin' show: 'You are the future of this fuckin' country!' It's like, 'You have to speak up if you want this stopped.'"

Prong (USA)
with Tommy Victor

Do you feel that since you have an audience, you should give it a positive message?

"A lot of our songs are just verbal gripes. We just wanna be truthful to ourselves, and confront different issues from a personal standpoint. And we don't wanna be aligned to any environmentalist group or any type of straight edge movement or any type of death scene. I mean, we're not that kind of people. If anything, some of our songs are like anthems of being individual and not going with the norm an' speaking your own mind and being aware of what's going on around you, and just, you know, avoiding peer pressure. A lot of stuff is sorta like, just trying to uphold some sort of freedom of speech. I don't think anybody should be forced to do anything."

Armored Saint (USA)
with *Joey Very*

I think "Tribal Dance," off the album [*Symbol Of Salvation*], is the closest thing to a socially conscious song you have there, since it's dealing with the drug issue.

"Yeah, it is, you know, because it's so easy to point the finger at other people, like, 'Damn those cartel, those evil people.' But it's really funny if you look at it, because they're only givin' us what we demand. So if there wasn't such a demand for it, then there would be no supply."

What do you think we should do, politically, to stop the demand?

"Politically, I don't know. I don't know what the answer is. I think the answer lies in the individual, and not so much what a government can do. I just think it boils down to individual education. It really starts in the home. I mean, it's easy for me to say, I guess, but there's millions of people in this country, an' some of 'em don't get proper or adequate nurturing, you know what I mean?"

Asphyx (Holland)
with *Martin van Drunen*

Is there some sort of climate in Holland that's breeding all these death metal bands?

"No, the typical is, the social security system in Holland is probably the best in the world. And we are allowed to smoke weed and everything, so everything is really free. But I don't really know where the whole boom comes from. But I can only speculate on this one that, I mean, I think people are bored with the whole circumstances of everything at this moment. Everybody's satisfied about life, about whatever, and they are looking for something else. And probably that will be death metal. I dunno. They are looking for something maybe to shock, maybe to, you know, just get rid of their aggression or frustration, because there's nothing really to do. There's no action. I think people are looking for action and maybe, you know, death metal is giving that."

Do you agree with the United States' foreign policy towards Holland or the European Community?

"Absolutely not. I think they interfere way too much in other people's business, actually. I mean, well, before I start talking, you should know that, actually, I am against any kind of form of political systems, you know? It's not that I'm an anarchist—well, maybe in a kind of way that is—but I just disagree with all kinds of political systems. I mean, in Holland, we have a real good democracy system, but still, there's all kinds of things which are totally wrong. 'Cause, you know, you got this power struggle all the time, everybody's fighting for more power than the other one has.

"And my opinion about, you know, humanity, mankind, or whatever, is that people make business things like gas or oil. There are all kinds of high

economical valued stuff, if you know what I mean.

"This is the first question that I get [like] this today, you know? It's hard to explain. You have to explain, you know, some things in Dutch that it is really hard to find a real word or sentence or whatever [*laughs*]."

When you came to the US, when you were still in Pestilence, what impression of the people here did you get?

"Friendly. Really friendly. Actually, the South, I expected it to have a lot of racism and rednecks and all kinds of stuff, and people who have something against guys with long hair, you know, like cops or people in supermarkets, but everybody was treating us really friendly.

"And then if you speak about the fans, I mean, all over the world they are the same, you know? They hunt for autographs, they try to talk to you, and, you know, have a good time. But I thought Texas was more violent than anywhere else in the US. Especially the Houston gig was pretty violent; a pretty violent crowd was there. That's why Death didn't play. And it ended up as a big riot and everything. It was a real mess. But, I mean, the fans were really great, and the gigs that we played were great gigs, you know. We really had a great time."

Well, that's all the questions I have.

"Okay, thank you very much ... But, I gotta set one thing straight. I mean, what I said about the Dutch government: the stuff is corrupt, right? But, I mean, in America is the same way, I guess. There are corrupt politicians here as well. I mean, you know, there are a couple affairs in the past that happened.

"And what I mean to say is that every government in this world is corrupt, you know? Nobody is doing it a hundred percent really good, you know. They all try to be putting more in their pocket that they actually earn, or that they actually deserve—whatever. Everybody wanted to make more money than another.

"What I'm trying to say is that it's not that we have a dictator or whatever, but he was at one time. He did something corrupt and he didn't get punished to that, and that's what, you know, it's annoying me. But they don't get punished for that, because they are fuckin' politicians. And they always manage to get themselves out of trouble. But, I mean, the normal guy, whatever, who is unemployed, if he steals a bread, you know, he gets punished for that. 'You bad guy. You fuckin' asshole. You should be in jail. You should be punished for this.' And then they complain about the high criminality rates. It's all so irrational, so stupid."

Very. Are you gonna write a song about it?

"'The Krusher' on the new one is actually about that. On that one I convict, actually, the Earth. It's a really doomy song, but it's the first time I expressed my feelings on paper. I try to make a real brutal lyric, but with myself into it.

"If you read the lyrics, you should imagine a kind of celestial force that watches down the Earth, and

he's the prosecutor, he's the witness, he's the judge, and the executioner at the same time. So at first, he sees, you know, the whole history of the Earth and the history of mankind, and all these wars going on, and still, in a couple of thousands years, nothing has changed. But, in the early days, the wars that went on were just with axes and swords and everything, but right now they have nuclear weapons and they can totally destroy the whole Earth. And they still don't seem to learn anyway.

"So what I do is that, you know, mankind has never learned in the whole past and everything, from all the wars and all the bullshit that went on. And the force that looks on the planet then says, 'Okay, this is enough. We tried hard. Now they got nuclear weapons. Now they got all this stuff. Why shouldn't I just destroy this Earth before they themselves do it?' You know? So, that's what the song is mainly about, and it's also my own opinion, actually. 'Cause I don't see this going on for about more than a hundred years with all these weapons. It's really hard to explain it."

Autopsy (USA)
with Chris Reifert

We've all heard about the censorship movement in Florida, what with the 2 Live Crew thing. Is there a prevalent attitude like that in California?

"I don't give a fuck, 'cause it won't affect us. We're not gonna change anything for some tight-ass shiftfucks who don't want their stupid kids to know about the real world. Fuck 'em and their brats, too!"

Bolt Thrower (England)
with Andy Whale

Why do you think in the press, whenever they're talking to a grindcore band, they always say, "Are you vegetarian? Are you vegan?" Why is it so connected?

"Yeah, I dunno. It's just 'cause all of us used to, sort of like, be into punk an' all that, an' the hardcore type thing. It was, sort of like, a natural progression, you know. All the bands an' all that, Napalm an' Carcass type, we all've, sort of like, been around at the same sort of time, you know. And at the time, it was, in a way, quite trendy to become a vegetarian, y'know what I mean. Like, it was trendy to be a crusty. In fact, I dunno, about forty percent of the UK population must be vegetarian now. It's just a big thing over there.

"I mean, with this grindcore thing, in England and Europe, we get called death metal, but in America we get called grindcore. It's strange. We just want people to like us because we're Bolt Thrower, not because we're a trend, sort of thing. But it's just like, music mags catch onto things. They like an angle, don't they? 'Cause they know it's gonna sell copies. It's always the way with big mags. It's what they want, isn't it? They want an angle, sort of like, to aim for, where, 'Oh, you're vegetarian, but you talk about

murder an' all this like, an' war.' Basically, nothing to do with it, really."

Cannibal Corpse (USA)
with Chris Barnes

I heard that the new album cover got banned. Is that true?

"Well, yeah, a lot of record chains in the US aren't gonna carry it because it's too grotesque for 'em or somethin', which I can't understand. I dunno. It'll be available pretty soon with a different cover for the record chains to carry, and there'll be somethin' on it to have the kids send for the artwork and lyrics separately."

How did that make you feel when they told you all this was happening?

"It was pretty surprising, you know? Because, I mean, it seems like if there's a half-naked woman on the cover or somethin', or in a video, it's just brushed off, it's brushed aside, it's nothing big. But if there's a fuckin' cartoonish picture of babies hanging from meathooks, all of a sudden, it's horrible. It makes you think, and they can't handle that. It's pretty stupid, man. There's no reason for it as far as I'm concerned."

Would you say that the song "Vomit The Soul" is Satanic?

"No, I don't think it's Satanic. I wrote the one part for Glen. It's just tellin' that people like to fear death or somethin', an' they're always tryin' to avoid it, and all religions are just full of shit. It's like, [religion] is an unnecessary thing. I don't think it's Satanic, because I think Satanism is unnecessary too."

Is that why you've shied away from Satanism in the lyrics?

"I just don't think Satanism is Satanism. I mean, it's like, there are evil things in the world that go on, an' I'll say something about that. But to say I believe in Satanic stuff is wrong, because I think any religion is false."

Coroner (Switzerland)
with Marquis Marky

A lot of people might think Switzerland is just a place where criminals have secret bank accounts, and they make watches. How do you counter that?

"Right. Well, I know that Switzerland's got a very clean image, like everything is alright there and stuff. And, in fact, there is a lot of bad things goin' on. For an example, especially in Zurich, we got a very, very heavy drug scene, which is one of the main drug centers in whole Europe. And it's like a park, and every day there is people dying there an' stuff, and then no one's talking about this—"

You mean from muggings and shootings? How do they die?

"Yeah, it's like heroin and all that sort of shit. So, that's one of the things the outside of Switzerland just don't know a lot about.

"But on the other side, it's a good place to live. Everything is very good organized, and it's a good place just to relax. And you don't have big problems

in Zurich, I mean, except for, you need a lot of money to pay your rent and shit. But it's not like that we have main important changes every year or something. Everything's very clear, so it's a good place to stay when you come back from touring an' stuff like that, and don't think about anything else."

Gorguts (Canada)
with Luc Lemay

About Canada breaking up, is that still headline news?

"More or less, you know. It's kind of quiet now, but I don't know what they have in mind, you know? But I don't think it will change shit for us. I don't really care about it [laughs]. But we're overtaxed, you know what I mean? You're paying for everything [laughs], yeah. So that's bad.

"Anyway, I wouldn't say it will happen tomorrow, you know, for Canada to break up. But, I mean, it's just for the Quebec matter, 'cause we're the only area that speaks French. Yeah, it's just a language matter, 'cause the other provinces don't wanta learn French. It's just for the—how can I say that?—for the signs and shit, you know? Like, in Quebec, French is the main language, so all the signs got to be in French before they be written in English. They been fighting for all that stupid shit for years. So, that's the main problem."

Intruder (USA)
with Arthur Vinett

How difficult is it for you to express a message in your lyrics without being preachy? I know you want to get your point across without beating anyone over the head with it.

"Oh, definitely. Well, basically—I gotta tie it in with something—I've written a couple of songs, as far as the lyrics, like 'Face Of Hate.' I dunno. You just express things as they are without being so judgmental. I would avoid condemnation. Like in 'Face Of Hate,' it traces it to a tradition. It's not like some kid woke up and said, 'I hate niggers. I don't know why, but I hate niggers, and I hate Jews, and I hate Catholics, and I hate fucking everybody.' It's because he was taught to be like that. And it's just like, prejudice is basically out of fear and ignorance. So, kids, until they reach the age of reason, more or less, they really don't have a whole lot of control over their beliefs. You tend to believe what you're taught. And so, you can get the message that prejudice is a bad thing while pointing out where it comes from, instead of saying, 'You suck because you're prejudiced.' You know what I'm sayin'? Open people's eyes to stuff and try to be positive about it, instead of being preachy."

Do you try to express an opinion in the lyrics or be objective?

"It depends on the subject matter. It's hard to be objective with anything. The way I think about stuff is, I try to get as many facts as possible before

making a decision on stuff. Even play the Devil's advocate, you know? If I was arguing with somebody, if I was trying to get a point by, you just have to take into consideration both sides. Just because, if you don't take into consideration how other people think, then it's not going to make much of an impact on 'em. The language and tools you're gonna use to try to get that across to somebody are just not gonna work."

L.D. Kids (USA)
with Wade

Do you agree with the straight edge movement?

"The last band I came from was straight edge. An'. I mean, everybody tries every day to be better, I guess. But it's tough, an' I respect what straight edge people have to say an' what they do. I tried it once. I tried stopping a couple of things, but I dunno. I'm just livin', you know what I mean? You just live, you just get into life an' shit. It's cool, but it's not for everybody. It shouldn't be, like, thrown down your throat."

Medusa (USA)
with Pete, Chris, and Dave

What do you guys think of George Bush?

Pete [laughs]: "He's definitely incompetent. His whole administration is, basically. We're seeing political families develop just like royal families."

Chris: "I'm probably speaking too soon, but I've seen less scandal during his years as a president, at least so far, than anybody else in the last [few] presidencies, you know?"

Pete: "He's being blamed for a lotta stuff, too."

Chris: "I know that they're trying to prove that he sold Iran weapons while Iran held our hostages over there."

Pete: "To hold the release date until Reagan was gonna go in. I think he should fuckin' go to [prison] if that's true, man."

Dave: "I dunno. I think he's a lot better president than Reagan. I like him more than Reagan, but he doesn't cause much waves."

Morbid Angel (USA)
with David Vincent

Did you catch on the news that radical right-to-life group that blocks abortion clinics?

"Yeah, I sure did."

Do you have any comment or opinion about that?

"I sure do. I just have to say that if any right wing, conservative motherfuckers get in my way, I'm gonna walk through them."

In your lyrics, you concentrate on how the oppressionistic side of Christianity is affecting people. Have you ever covered any ground on any other religions?

"Well [pause], Islam is pretty fuckin' oppressive as well, but that's not something that touches my life."

Just because Christianity is prevalent in the USA, and that's where you're from.

"Right. Well, see, this being a supposedly free country, I just see more and more liberties being kinda pushed away for certain morality conscious groups, quote-unquote, to kinda have their way be the way, and that definitely ain't my way. And if it gets in my way, then it's gonna be dealt with."

*Napalm Death (England)
with Shane Embury
and Mark "Barney" Greenway*

Do you agree with how the United States and the United Kingdom are getting along with foreign policy, or do you not pay attention at all?

Barney: "No, I'm pretty much into the state of world affairs. I like to keep an ear open an' try an' understand what's going on, although I don't understand some of it. In which way? What foreign policy?"

Let's say economics and stuff like that.

Barney: "I dunno. That's part of the things I never really thought about, y'know what I mean? And I don't fully understand now [what side] either nation stands on. I hear all this shit in the news, and, it's like, each day there's some different opinion from somewhere else, an' I can't always work out what's going on. So I can't really answer that one. If there's anything more specific I could prob'ly answer, but in general—"

Yeah, it's a general question.

Shane: "I've, sort of, got my own personal politics, but when I listen to certain politicians talking, I get really confused by what they say, because they seem to contradict themselves every three or four minutes. An' lookin' at it, they're sayin' things an' all of a sudden, what they've just said, it just seems to change. I never understand what the bloke's goin' on. I just confuses me. I dunno. I get confused by it so much. I never understand what goes on."

Barney: "Obviously it's just that there's a lot of bullshit flyin' around an' stuff."

*Pestilence (Holland)
with Marco Foddis*

In Holland, do you pay attention to politics at all? Does it interest you?

"Yeah, well, in a way, it should interest everyone."

*Sacrifice (Canada)
with Scott Watts*

Scott explained what happened about Canada breaking up in 1990.

"No, that's not gonna [pause], well, I dunno if that's gonna happen. I know it's still goin' around in the newspaper, but I think they're not gonna separate.

"It's weird, 'cause I don't know what Quebec's like. They're so weird. I'm from Ontario, Toronto,

an' Quebec's a totally different culture. When you go there, you can just tell the way it is, 'cause they all speak French."

I read about how they made all the street signs French, so Americans can't read it.

"Yeah, exactly. Americans go there, an' they're from Virginia or Texas, an' they go to Quebec City, and they'll be totally lost. 'Cause in some places in Quebec, they can speak English, but they won't speak English to you, 'cause they don't like it. But they'll just ignore you. That's how it is in some places. But Montreal's pretty good; they'll talk to you in English and French.

"Did you hear about the thing with the Indians?"

When they had a fight over their land with some business developers?

"Yeah, they lost that. They were gonna turn their burial ground into a golf course. It's really stupid. It's pretty heavy, like there was gonna be a total out war there. It was pretty close to it, 'cause the Indians were ready to die for it. It was pretty bad, especially over a golf course! Like, have some respect; they were the first ones here. I'm totally for the Indians."

*Sepultura (Brazil)
with Paulo Jr.*

Is there one main thing you like better about Brazil than the United States?

"I like Brazil. The laws here works a lot more than Brazil. Like, nobody respect each other down there. Here happen too, but here, if you got some problem with drive drunk or whatever, here works. You go to the jail. Down there, not for all the cops, but most of the cops, you just give some money, you just go away. Not any problem."

So you think the government in Brazil is more corrupt?

"Oh, yeah [laughs]. I think here works too, but I dunno. But down there, it's worse, I think. 'Cause here, maybe they can stole some money, but they work and the laws here work. Down there, it's not like that. Nobody respect you. If you need a job, you, kind of like, better than the other guy, but he's got high friends, you know, political friends, whatever, they put the other guy. The other guy can know anything about the shit, but they put, because he's got a friend, you know?"

On the last tour, overall, do you think there's been a lot of violence at your shows?

"Yeah, sometimes we have some problem with the security and the kids."

Is there some place you've toured where it's been more violent than others?

"Yeah. Like the Communist country we been in this year in Europe, like Poland, Czechoslovakia. We play for a lot of people there, but, you know, they don't have too many concerts, and I think when they have one, they get crazy. And the fucking cops over there; it's fucking wild. Worse than Brazil. But anyway, it was real good, an' I want to come back there."

Agnostic Front (USA)
with Roger Miret

What's that sample before "New Jack" and the quote on the [Once Voice album] about?

"That's from the Attica prison riots, what was going on in the courtyard, what the inmates were talking about. Everybody thinks of inmates as animals, of course, whatever. Not everybody in there is in for murder. I mean, there's people that deserve it, like the people in for rape an' shit like that. There's a lot of people there just in for stealing cars. So, people do learn in jail what they've done wrong. That's happened to me.

"So, what was going on back then is that they had no rights at all, and they should have some type of rights. I mean, they're being fed an' treated as animals, an' it just got crazy."

Do you think that is the biggest problem with the prison system today?

"The biggest problem with the prison system is just the way you're treated before [pause], I mean, you know how you say you're innocent until proven guilty? It's not really that way. You're guilty an' your gonna be guilty. Once they got you, you're just guilty. That's the way it works, an' when you're in there, they use a lot of racism. They pit blacks against whites, whites against Hispanic. They like that. They manipulate people."

What should we do to change this "innocent until proven guilty" point?

"Kill them all. Listen to Public Enemy; they're right, you know? Just go out there wit' a gun. Blow 'em all away.

"There's really nothing you can do, because it's such a corruptive part, you know? There's a lot of money involved. Every inmate that goes in costs New York \$36,000, and, believe me, we don't get no \$36,000 worth of service. We eat the shittiest food you can think of. If somebody is not spending \$36,000 on us—I say maybe they spend ten per year—the rest, who knows? Different pockets.

"While I was in there—I do electrical work—I was doin' electric for the sergeants an' lieutenants in their houses. They use us to do all their repairs, you know. It's all full of shit."

Who are you voting for president?

"I never vote. I can't vote to begin with, because I'm not a citizen of this country. I'm from Cuba; I still have a green card. I don't like none of 'em. You ask me to vote, I won't even bother, 'cause to me, they're all full of bullshit. I'm not into any type of authority. I've always been anti-society, anti-religious, stuff like that."

Atheist (USA)
with Steve Flynn

With all these politicians coming out, saying,

"You know how you're innocent until proven guilty? It's not really that way"

"I'm gonna run outside the system, and I'm not gonna play the game," how much of a chance do you think the Democrats have in '92?

"Unfortunately, since the Gulf War, Bush has been so strong with the American people [up until now]. And I don't think there's any Democratic candidate that would have a chance. I'm a registered Democrat myself, although I swing. I believe, with the issues that are out today, you cannot be hard line one way. You can't intelligently address every issue and be a hard line conservative or a hard line liberal.

So, I'm a conservative liberal and I'm a liberal conservative. It depends on the issue. And I would like to see that happen with more politicians, y'know what I mean? More people that are less hard line and willing to sway, depending on the issue. Because

there's a lot of really important issues that need to be tended to, which extremes on both sides won't attend to, because they are who they are, and [they're] against certain issues because of that. I don't think that works anymore."

Carcass (England)
with Bill Steer

Is there a feminist movement in England, and do you support that sort of thing?

"I don't know whether you'd describe it as a movement, but there's definitely feminist literature in England. There are definitely a lot of women who feel that way, but, I mean, they're still a minority.

"As for whether or not I support it, I definitely do, provided that it doesn't involve, you know, hatred of men, simply for the sake of it. I mean, I can understand any woman who's suspicious of men, because she has every reason to. But I think it's a little imbalanced to, kind of, put all the blame for the oppression of women purely on men, because [pauses] women have to assume some responsibility for them, as well as men. But, yeah, I do definitely support feminism, in the broader sense of the term."

Napalm Death (England)
with Mark "Barney" Greenway

What kind of media attention did the Los Angeles riots this year get over in England?

"A lot. It was all over the papers and on the news. I mean, Jesse and Danny were, sort of, at the pre-tension from that, because they were there the day before it happened. The flew out the day that it happened. They were at home with their parents an' stuff."

So they got out just in time, huh?

"Yeah, yeah. In England, [the media] made it look really hellish, an' Danny told us that a few people told Danny just that it was really, really fuckin' bad.

And it didn't matter who you were. If you were in the wrong place at the wrong time, then you'd get fuckin' beat up, which really evades the issue, y'know what I mean?"

Is there a lot of police brutality in England?

"There is a lot that you don't hear about, because, obviously, the media an' stuff'll shy away from that. A lot of it happens one on one, y'know what I mean, that you never get to hear about."

How about in Birmingham in particular?

"No, not really. I mean, not prob'ly as much as what there is over here by a long chalk, because, obviously [*pause*], in America, there's a lot more different races of people an' stuff, I mean, which naturally creates tension. An' that's that whole thing which is, sort of, to me, linked to police brutality an' ever'."

Have you ever been harassed by the police?

"I have, yeah, on a few occasions, because of different reasons. And what can I say? I mean, everybody prob'ly has in their time."

What do you have to say about John Major and the Tories?

"Oh, well, I mean, the ironic thing is that a lot of people that actually voted are affected directly by the things he endorses, like poll tax. An' people like that are totally being destroyed by that still vote for him, y'know what I mean. That's the really funny thing about it. I mean, the Tories promised to radically change an' things, and, once again, nothing happened, y'know what I mean. It's just the same old shit."

Has anything really weird happened on the last tour at a gig?

"Nothing weird, but we had quite a bit of problems with Nazis an' them, especially in Allentown, Pennsylvania. It was really bad. There was a riot. Me an' a few other people got maced at the show, fighting with skinheads an' them. What can I say? I mean, I don't have to tell you what these people are like. I mean, I know it's a bad thing, but it needs people to actually gang up together an' fuckin' throw those people out, y'know what I mean, just toss 'em away like garbage, because they're upsetting everyone's pleasure, an' positive things come from these gigs."

Obituary (USA) with Trevor Peres

Do you pay attention to politics?

"Politics I fuckin' don't really even give a fuck about. 'Cause, man, it's like, every president in the whole world is fuckin', like [*pause*] fucked. I mean, 'cause he's not gonna do what I want, so I don't see why I should even vote. But, I mean, if kids would vote, that's cool."

Do you think that if they took away the electoral college vote, the popular vote would make a difference?

"Yeah, I think so. I mean, if they didn't have the electoral vote, man, it might be a whole new ball game. 'Cause I think pot would be legal now, then. 'Cause, you know, a lot of people know that [the government] could make a lot of money off it, 'cause they tax it. Plus, there'd be a lot more jobs, I mean, 'cause people gotta grow it, harvest it, pack it, an' ship it, whatever, you know? That'd be a killer thing."

Unleashed (Sweden) with Johnny Hedlund

Do you support the European Community? Do you think it's a good idea?

"No. Well, for some countries, it is a good idea, but for Sweden, it's the worst thing that could happen."

Why is that?

"Well, because of the fact that Sweden is the richest country in Europe, [which] means that you will have to pay to the poorest countries. I mean, it's like, if you earn \$1,000, would you like to give 700 of those to people who don't have so much money? I mean, I do want to pay taxes to poorer people. I'm not a fascist or anything like that. But, see, the EC is gonna be wanting all the countries to be as poor or as rich as the one another. Which means that countries like Sweden, Norway, and Denmark is gonna be as poor in maybe fifty years as Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, and countries like that."

"Well, there is, of course, a lot of people in my country as well that wants to join this EC, but mostly those people are the people that owns the production,

the industries, and stuff like that. Because they know that if they enter the EC, they can do whatever they like with people, 'cause all the laws an' all the things that make workers healthier an' stuff like that is gonna go down. It's

gonna be just like countries where unions, for example, don't have so much power, and in Sweden, the union has the most power in the entire Europe."

Is Sweden voting against the EC?

"Well, we haven't had an election yet, but, see, the government that is ruling Sweden now has, for some reason, just brutally entered the EC. They haven't signed it yet, but they have told the EC that we will be there in two years, something like that, which is pretty strange, because usually, in a democracy, you vote about things like this. So, what's gonna happen is, prob'ly that if they are not gonna make the whole thing a big election, then people are gonna get really mad."

"But I think they will make an election. And, well, as it looks like now, I think it's gonna be pretty much fifty-fifty, an' it might just turn both 'yes' and 'no.' I have no idea. But I will definitely vote 'no,' because I know what the results are gonna be like."

"But there is, of course, positive sides to the EC as well. I mean, it's not just negative sides, but I think the negative sides are bigger than the positive sides."

Agathocles (Belgium)
with Jan Frederickx

Where does Belgium stand on the European Community? Did it, and will it, vote yes or no for the EC?

"Maybe you already know it: Belgium has got the 'leadership' of the European Community, and hell yes, these Belgian politicians are fuckin' proud of it."

Where do you stand on the issue and why?

"I think this whole thing stinks. In Belgium, there are lots of troubles concerning the social security, but those Belgian political dicks only wanna have more power in the EC.

"By the way, I also think that this EC is a big fuckin' joke. The only reason of this EC is an economical one, which means more money in the wallets of the rich."

Assück (USA)

with Steve Heritage, Paul Pavlovich,
and Rob Proctor

Here's an interview with Assück that I did when I caught the band when it came to DC on its tour with Rorshach, and the tour played on a Shelter show.

What was up with that spoken word on the B side of the *State To State 7"*?

Paul: "What would you like to know about it?"

What you were trying to get across with that.

Paul: "It's about the war and the current situation in Yugoslavia. I'm Serbian, so it kinda hits home with me. So I wrote half, Steve wrote half, we had a good friend of ours speak it, and it's pretty self-explanatory."

Are there some bands with some sort of a stance, like, say, Shelter, that you would rather not align yourselves with?

Rob: "Just 'cause we play with somebody doesn't mean we agree with anything they're saying."

Steve: "I'd be willing to wager a lot of money that about eighty percent of the bands that we play with, we don't agree with, so whatever. How many people do you know that are a hundred percent eye an' eye with you?"

Not very many.

Steve: "So, how can you find bands that are?"

Rob: "It doesn't matter. You're allowed to think anything you want, do anything you want—"

Steve: "We're here not to play with Shelter. We're here to play with Rorshach. That's the band that we're on the road with. This is the show that happened to be set up. I mean, this is our duty."

Rob: "We're here to play for the people that wanna see us, which, however many that is, that's what we're here for."

Drowning In Solitude (Canada)
with Paul Pfeiffer

Do the lyrics/new zine [*Etherium: Real Life Brushes With The Unknown*] suggest a religious

belief, or a concept of other dimensions, or what?

"There is no religious basis for the lyrics or zine at all. I'd say that it's more spiritual than anything else. Spiritual in the sense that I don't feel we are here now, and then when our body ceases to function, so do we. I believe in the spirit going on, possibly to a heaven-like plane, but definitely not like Christianity attempts to have us believe.

"I don't think that there is one supreme power that we must worship in order to get into 'heaven.' Religion is all a crock to me. There are thousands of different faiths worldwide, and each one is right according to themselves, and they all hold the true answers. One passage from the Bible will be interpreted completely different by two separate groups. This supposed 'good book' has been responsible for more violence and hatred than anything else. No one can ever prove where it came from or who wrote it, yet they base their lives on it, and use it to justify just about anything they want. Whether it's Judaism, Christianity, Satanism, Buddhism, or Islam—it's all a lie to me."

Where do you stand on the issue of Quebec's secession?

"From a non-nationalist standpoint, I would not want to see Quebec leave Canada, but I don't feel that they need to be seen as a distinct society based solely on the fact that a large portion of the province speaks French as a first language. I can tell you that, living outside Quebec, there is a lot of anti-French sentiment, mostly coming from English-speaking whites. If they can't hate them because they are a different color, they'll hate them because they don't speak the same language.

"I have a problem with the Quebec sign law that says you can only have French on your signs outside stores, et cetera. If you own the property, you should be able to put up whatever language you want. If you want to make up your own thing and put it on your walls, fine!

"I went to Quebec a couple years ago and it did feel like I was in a different country. As soon as you crossed the line leaving Ontario, the look of the houses and roads changed. I didn't get a bad impression being there at all. It would probably be different from Ontario in another province where they speak English."

What do you think of the Canadian government's handling of the referendum?

"Those pushing the 'pro' side tried to scare everyone into thinking that unless you check off 'yes' on your ballot, Quebec would leave Canada and the country would fall apart. It obviously didn't work for them, because an overwhelming majority voted 'no.' It's been over half a year now, and the country is still together. A large portion of Quebec's residents want to break off, but they still want the 'benefits' from Canada, like using the same money, et cetera. I honestly don't know what will happen."

Are the continued Native American land seizures an issue to the general public there?

"I feel that Canada and the US is one big land seizure! I consider North Amerika to be occupied territory. White Europeans didn't immigrate here. We came and took over. The whole Columbus thing is a lie. They say he discovered Amerika because he brought Christianity to a country of 'savages.' How can you discover a place that already has inhabitants? Natives were not seen as full-fledged humans, because only God fearing whites can be such. That is why they were massacred and that is why we live here today.

"You don't have to look far to find the same sentiment in this day and age, because an entire people has been cartooned: the Washington Redskins, Cleveland Indians, Chicago Black Hawks, Jeep Cherokee, Land O' Lakes Butter ... I think I'm going to start up a baseball team and call them the 'Newcastle Niggers.' No, how about the 'Newcastle Jew Boys?'"

Is there a scene for straight edge?

"There is a straight edge scene in Ontario that is just out of control, in my opinion. It's bordering on, if not full-fledged, hardline, where it goes beyond writing songs about choosing not to use drugs or booze to confronting people for doing it and using physical means to press your views. That isn't what straight edge was anyway. These people will complain about Nazis attacking people because of race, and then smack someone because they have a beer in their hand.

"There was a time, years ago, when I considered myself straight, but I sure as hell don't now, even though I still choose to abstain. It's one big ego tripping, 'I'm so hard 'cause I don't do drugs' kind of thing.

"I love early straight edge bands before the bastardization became all the rage with the 'cool' people. It's the same to me if someone laughs at you for not drinking. Why such an emphasis, anyway? Is it really that important?"

In American politics, a current sound bite is "the year of the woman." Is there a similar phrase in Canadian politics?

"I'm not aware that we have that phrase per se, but topics like sexual harassment and wife assault are heavily covered, which is a good thing, but I think that if you think women are only around for male satisfaction, a news clip or ad isn't going to do much to change your views. It's sad that there has to be such a push, but I definitely think that it should be continued. A lot of men complain that things are getting too ridiculous with all the sexual harassment talk going on all the time, but it's not up to them to decide what makes someone else uncomfortable. I don't care if women go to work nude. That still doesn't give anyone the go ahead to rape them."

Genital Deformities (England) with Crowe

What have the Tories done, or not done, in

relation to their campaign promises since they've been in office? Do you think John Major looks like Clark Kent with white hair?

"Tories! Who said that! What a load of twats and liars. They really don't know if they're coming and going. Promising one thing and doing another. What a bunch of cunts!—now we've said it. The thing, also, that is really bad is they are just finding out that their cabinet is full of people who don't know what to do! Now, that is a way to run a country; I reckon we could do better! And on a last note, John Major is a bowl of peas! Not Superman with grey hair."

Is there a good voter turnout in England as a percentage to the general voting public? Should more people, in general, vote, or should only those who pay attention to the issues, and thus make an informed decision, vote?

"If you generally are interested in politics and know what you are on about, maybe you should vote! We don't, and we could if we wanted to, but in the UK, even the poor people cut their own throats by voting for Conservative, because the Conservatives dangle a nice juicy carrot in front of their noses, promising everything, but giving nothing. And in the next election, they do it again, and the people get sucked in to a load of bullshit.

"Let the Queen vote. She's supposed to be the big cheese—not!"

God Forsaken (Finland) with Hannu Kujanen

Do you, in general, agree with the current administration in the Finnish government? Are you satisfied, on the whole, with the job it's doing?

"Well, I think they are trying to 'repair' the mistakes that the last Prime Minister/government did, and now they are cutting/saving everything, and no one won't be saved. The taxes are very high now. For an example, my paycheck is a lot smaller than one year ago.

"Generally, I agree with the government and I know that something must be done to get Finland rich again. Point of departures is still better, are the same if you are thinking to move in this country."

Incarnis (USA) with Ryan Muldoon

And how do you feel about the straight edge scene as a whole, apart from the fact that you disassociate yourselves from it?

"As far as the 'straight edge' scene, I really don't understand it. Though I'm not part of that scene at all, from what I've seen locally, it's really a bunch of self-righteous pissants who think they are superior to others, which is a really lame attitude to hold. Most of these guys are just following blind (i.e. uprise of Krishna religion within this scene), 'cause they are too pathetic to think for themselves. If you're gonna decide to be straight, do it for yourself, not because Judge or Youth Of Today or whoever say you should."

Inverted (Sweden)
with Kristian Hasselhuhn

Do you feel Satanic death metal bands are just as justified in promoting their religious views as Christian death metal bands?

"I think that as long as you just telling the listeners what you believe in, and giving them your view of things, it doesn't matter what ever you sing about. But I don't like those Christian death metal bands singing about god, and that you shall devote your life to him. They are not in the scene for the music. They are only there to find some more stupid people for their church. Still, there are Christian death metal bands that are quite okay, as long as they're not telling you what to do. Sorry; I don't think I answered your question at all!"

Do you agree with the idea of Sweden joining the European Community?

"Personally, I don't care, 'cause I don't think there will be any major differences at all. Well, it would be easier to travel inside Europe, and, I guess, the alcohol would be cheaper—cheers!—but, besides that, I don't give a shit!"

Kreator (Germany)
Mille Petrozza

Speaking of the samples and the riffs that you have, would you say that your sound has some industrial influences?

"A lot of people say that. I don't agree with that, either. You know, the atmosphere of the record is supposed to be very depressive, how the system influences the minds of the people, the whatever people who go to work, working class people, you know? And I think it fits to what we wanna say in the music, because we're talking about the manipulation of the minds of people who work in factories all their lives. How they got very frustrated about this situation, an' drink a lot of alcohol. Like in *1984*, the book where it's very dark an' cold atmosphere, with no future, really. And we just wanted to create a sound that fits to that.

"Also, we're from Essen, right, and we're surrounded by these sounds all the time, because, where we live, there's a lot of industry, and it's a very industrial area here."

Do you have a political philosophy that you're trying to come across with?

"Yeah, basically, some of the songs, especially 'Europe After The Rain,' they talk against racism, and against this new neo-Nazi movement that's going on in Germany at the moment.

"And I think that [*pause*], we're not a political band. See, we don't want to get too much involved in political things, because I think music is something that you should enjoy, and if you put too much political stuff into the music, you can't enjoy the music anymore, because it's too political, you know. You should voice your opinion in the music, and, I mean, it's a good way for a musician to express his

negative outlook on the world. So, for me to write lyrics about things that are really bad, things that are pissing me off, it's some kind of a release that helps me to deal with all the negative energy that surrounds me, you know?"

The reason I ask is because the stuff you're saying sort of reminds me of some anarchist zines I've been reading lately.

"Yeah! [*laughs*] Yeah, like I said, we're pretty politically aware. I mean, we know what's going on in politics, an' we know where it's pretty fucked up, and all we can do is say something in our music with our lyrics. And that's what we do sometimes, so we just put it in here and there, you know?"

Are people satisfied with the inflation rate in the German economy?

"It didn't really hit Germany that bad yet. I mean, I think England has a lot of problems with the inflation rate right now, because the pound's not that high anymore. The German mark, I mean, it's not that bad with the inflation over here yet.

"I think, because of the European [Community], there's gonna be a lot of changes, especially with the inflation, because they're planning to make even more money all over Europe, and make that work. You know, in Europe, there's been so many changes over the last two years that it's all happening very fast. And now that the war in Yugoslavia is goin' on, you know, that's another bad thing. I mean, it's fucking slaughterhouse over there, you know. It's just fucked up. People are really killing each other and whatever. It's a massacre."

There was a lot of talk when the unification happened about hyperinflation.

"Yeah. No, it's something that was a problem for the East, because they had to change the money. You know, when the wall came down, the money wasn't worth anything. And I think that's one of the reasons why a lot of the people in the East are not very happy, because their money isn't worth a thing, and they still have to work for the same money. But they have to pay more money to buy things, but, at the same time, they don't get more money in. Also, the East is pretty fucked up, you know. The houses there are pretty much down, and it's not a nice place in some places. The environment there is pretty fucked up. They didn't care, you know. The chemical pollution there is pretty high. So it's a lot of work. West Germany's gotta put a lot of money into East Germany, so that's one of the problems that's going on over here in Germany right now."

I understand that they're trying to mix the laws of both sides, of abortion, for example, so they come out with something even.

"Yeah, exactly. Yeah, they had different laws in East Germany as well, and some people can't really deal with them. I mean, I can't really say much about it, because I haven't lived in the East, you know, and if I would have, my view would be very different. Because, over here in West Germany, it was all pretty much free, you know. Over there, they had total control over anything. It was like *1984*, you

know? It was pretty bad.”

You mentioned neo-Nazis earlier. Is it right that Germany can't refuse any immigrants that want to come in?

“Yeah, they have a law like that. So the neo-Nazis want the government to change that law. But I think that's wrong, because then, they got their way. And the pressure of the right wing parties got so big that the left wing and the Democrats, they want to change that law, just because the right wing movement got so big. And when the election coming up next year, they don't want the right wing parties to get that much votes. So the Democrats want to change that law to kick out the right wing parties. They still wanna let immigrants in, but not only immigrants from countries where there's war, you know, with very bad situations.”

Oh, you mean refugees.

“Yeah, exactly. So, it's pretty complicated, all that stuff, because there's so much things, different views, an' different opinions about these things. My opinion is, they shouldn't change that law. They should let any immigrant in that country. I mean, they're very afraid of crime and all that, but I don't think the criminal energy only goes into immigrants' heads, you know what I mean? It also takes German minds, so [pause], they always blame anything on the immigrants, while they're ignoring their own problems, their own imperfections.”

Yeah, there was a scandal about that over here. A bunch of Haitian refugees came on all these boats, and the American government made them turn around and go back.

“Oh, that's pretty fucked up. See, the people who work have to give money to—it's called some kind of social support; it's only for immigrants and people who need help. And a lotta people are pissed off about that, because it's a lot of money they have to give away every month. So that's why the Nazis got so big over here in Germany, because people are pissed off about the government, and they start reacting very extreme.

“And I think it's wrong, though, because they should put all that power that they put into fighting immigrants or attacking immigrants, they should attack the fucking government, you know? That's what they should do: go to the Parliament, and go where they sit, and just tell them. Demonstrate in front of the government's place, you know. But they don't do that. The immigrants are right there, so they can reach them a lot easier. You know, the government doesn't have to deal with it as long as the immigrants are there. All this negative energy is supposed to go to these places, like the government, because people are really not happy with the government.”

They're using this immigrant thing as a scapegoat?

“Yeah, I think so. A lot of low minded, very dumb people do that, because they don't know who to blame for their own problems, you know? And they can't think that far. They can't think that it's the government's fault. They don't know that, because they're too stupid for that.”

*Monstrosity (USA)
with Lee Harrison*

How do you feel about homophobia?

“My philosophy is live and let live. I figure homophobia is sorta like hysteria—the extreme.”

*Resist (USA)
Ward Young*

In another interview we did, you said that Resist was more Marxist in philosophy than anarchist. However, Profane Existence has, sort of, embraced Resist as an anarchist band. Do you feel this is sort of strange, considering the obvious differences between Marxism and anarchism?

“In that interview, I was just describing my personal views, which, for me, are almost equally influenced by anarchism and Marxism/socialism. Overall, Resist is probably more anarchist than anything else. I don't think *Profane Existence's* off much by considering us anarchist.

“As for the differences between anarchism and Marxism, I think both groups have an almost equal number of drawbacks. I think both groups spend too much time listening to only one viewpoint. Sure, the RCP is silly—and homophobic—but I've never heard a Marxist ridicule anarchists, and I've met many 'anarchists' who are totally against anyone Marxist, and it's too bad, because, in Europe, the left is a lot more unified, and the different groups work together, instead of just sitting around, talking shit about each other.”

In an anarchist society, music, nor anything else, would be reduced to a commodity by business/profit. In the sense of being true to anarchist ideals, do you think an anarchist band could justify selling records, t-shirts, et cetera?

“I guess. I mean, bartering/trading is going to be awfully difficult to implement in an anarchist society, and, right now, I don't think there's anything wrong with selling records or t-shirts, as long as the prices are relatively non-profit, although there's nothing wrong with a *little* profit.”

In reference to the last question, since anarchist bands do sell their material, that, in itself, is a compromise to the system. Do you, then, agree that possibly it is valid to destroy the system within the infrastructure?

“Not really. Money spent in the 'underground punk scene' is nine times out of ten not taxed. It

**“They should
attack the fucking
government”**

circumvents 'the system.' Anything—books, zines, records, et cetera—that requires money to do will most likely have to be funded by money. How many printers will trade anything for a print job?"

Then is voting or even signing to a record company justified in this sense?

"Voting isn't totally a compromise. Some things can only be changed by participatory democracy. Bricks through a bank window won't decide who sits on the Supreme Court! We make compromises every day. It's up to the individual to decide how many—or few!—to make."

Do you think that a state of anarchy, i.e. utopia, is truly possible, or an ideal that we strive for with no true expectation of witnessing?

"No chance. How many people could handle something like that? Only some of my friends, and fewer of my relatives, and none of the dumb shits I work with, would be able to adapt. It's human nature: most of us humans are ignorant, stupid, and selfish, even if many are well meaning. That does not mean that a better world is possible, but we shouldn't expect something unrealistic."

Anarchist philosophy claims that man is inherently good, corrupted by governments. What are your thoughts about this?

"Man is corrupted by anything and everything. Governments just do an unfair share of the corrupting! I think most people would say they 'mean well,' but hell, so did Adolph Hitler and a lot of other assholes."

Do you believe that abortion would exist in an anarchist society?

"I sure hope so! Abortion, drug use, et cetera, are issues of personal liberty and self-ownership of one's body."

Do you foresee an insurgency within the next twenty years as certain social/political analysts have predicted?

"Yes, because, one, a swing to the right, i.e. the last twelve years, is usually followed by a swing to the left. Two, things are going to get much worse before they get better. Twelve years of Republican spending/programs have only just begun to hit us. But, for right now, I'm not too sure how/when it will happen, because the left is pretty disorganized in the US."

*Sick Of It All (USA)
with Lou Koller*

Do you think the presidential debates that went on here in October did any good to inform the public?

"I thought Ross Perot was fuckin' funny. I dunno. They just kept repeating the same things over and over, or they would just attack each other."

Do you think the straight edge philosophy is a waste?

"I guess it's cool. We don't really preach about anything like it, so, y'know. An' we're not against anybody who's not, as long as they can handle it."

One of my roommates is very into heroin right now, an' I can't even talk to her, an' I grew up with this girl. I see her, and she tries to talk to me about her addiction. I'm just like, 'I don't wanna hear it.' That's wrong, but, right now, I just can't handle it."

Do you think racial tension is on the rise?

"Well, when the economy goes down, it always is on the rise. And I noticed, in New York, it's kind of a backlash right now. It's not so much white people attacking blacks or Hispanics or whatever. It's they're all against anybody who's not a minority."

*Slug & Lettuce (USA)
with Christine Boarts*

How do you think the straight edge hardcore scene has evolved/disintegrated over the years?

"Straight edge? Shit. I really don't even give it any thought. I mean, it's something I'm not involved in and I really don't care about. I used to really like a lot of the first bands of that scene: Minor Threat, Uniform Choice. But I don't know. I'm not straight edge myself, and when the whole thing turned into yet another clique, I really lost interest in it, to the point that it was a turn off to me. I guess, because I don't consider myself part of that clique, well, it really got hammered into the ground and got totally boring."

"It's kinda too bad. It's not like it was a bad thing; I think it was, actually, a totally cool movement, rather positive, and I totally respect people [who] choose to be 'straight edge,' but, as far as the label relating to a clique within hardcore, to me, it's something that died a while ago."

"I know people still consider themselves and call themselves straight edge, but how much of that now is jumping onto, or hanging onto, a label or group, and how much of it is about the no drinking, no smoking, maybe no sex ideas? I think it moved way beyond that, so there is all this stigma that goes along with the label."

Who did you want for president and why? Are you apathetic about government?

"The entire election process is a joke. It's just a competition for the better of two evils. No, I'm not apathetic to government. I think the whole thing is totally fucked up, and there wasn't anyone running, that I knew about, that was worth voting for."

"If people in the punk underground all got together and voted for some individual, as a write-in, just think of the potential. No, I'm sure that they wouldn't get elected, but with all these fanzines and shit, if people really followed it, started some little 'campaign,' and everyone voted for that person, it would be enough to be noticed. It's an interesting thought."

*Spine (USA)
Mike Bossier*

Is there any sexism in the scene that you can detect, or do you not pay attention? Is this an issue of concern to you?

"I think there is less sexism in the underground scene than any other scene. You see girls slammin' just as hard and diving just as high as guys. We play our music because we enjoy it, and it gets our aggressions out. If we wanted to just get chicks, we would be playing glam, and our time wouldn't be spent practicing and improving ourselves, but spent on teasing our hair and posing. That's where sexism is."

Unbroken (USA)
with Rob Moran

What are your views on Krishna consciousness' impact on the hardcore scene? Do you think it has a positive effect?

"Not speaking for the band, I don't like it. I don't like any religions. I don't think it's positive, but at least they're not drug users or anything. At the same time they're telling you not to let society's values dictate and control you, they tell you how to live your life without judge or question. All religion is like that.

"Religious people say I'm going to hell and I'm ignorant. I just tell them I don't believe in hell, so I'm not going there, and the only reason you say I'm ignorant is because I question their beliefs. Fuck religion."

Should gays be allowed to serve in the military?

"Yes, for the simple fact is that who and what they fuck is no concern of mine, and their sex life has no say in the performance on the job. If they work good and that's cool. Closets are for clothes."

Wormhole (USA)
with Mary Beilich

You've said that you're "pro-military." Does this imply that you agree with its actions politically as they happen, or what?

"Though I consider myself to be a liberal Democrat, I strongly believe in our military and the need to fund it. I subscribe to the theory that in order to preserve peace, we must be prepared for war."

1994

Mutilated (France)
with Michael

In America, some people think the French are rude and don't like Americans. Have you heard this opinion, and what do you say about it, if so?

"Well, that's true that over there is a American-type-person phobia going on. It mostly comes from the negative image of the 'dumb cowboy gum-chewer and Coke drinker,' which represents the typical capitalist society, conservationist, bigot, you know, that's trying at all cost to give itself a 'clean, young, white, and well behaved' look.

"Well, as far as I'm concerned, I try to take things without prejudice and see for myself. It's a fact that I dislike the hypocrite way American country makes its own propaganda, you know, by carrying symbols, fake ones, like honesty, religion, family and work, freedom, et cetera. This sucks, pretty much, but, I mean, all people in France are not like the image the French government would like you to have of us, so, I guess, it's the same with you all McDonald's freaks. [laughs] I believe that uniformity and conformity are made to be stained and broken."

Do you think men in power in France don't treat women equally? For example, in America, women usually don't earn as much as men.

"That goes on here as well, but the idea of equality between both sexes is pretty new on the planet, except for some millennium tribes here and there who are matriarchal societies, but this is only a small minority, so I think you can't change minds in so few times.

"But there's also something for everyone to think about, it's if both sex are *truly* equal? It seems to me that very often, women are okay to get the same advantages as men, but without the inconvenients.

For example, I'd be curious to see how do women manage working in the streets, building roads, towers, et cetera ... many shit jobs men seem to enjoy doing. Same thing for the army. Here in France, you have to do your military service, but only if you're a male. Women *can* do it if they really die for it, but then they will only work in offices.

"Who fuckin' spoke about sex equality? Not me. Basically, I'm not against it, but then, women got to take it all, not just what's good. Get the point? And if they do, *yes*, I think they should deserve the same treatment as men."

Snapcase (USA)
with Scott

How far off do you think the US of A is from having a female president?

"As much as I hate to say it, I think America is very far off from having a black, or female, or anything other than a white male as president. As much as you or I would want the best president regardless, there is still racism and sexism in the US and it'll probably stick around."

Suppression (USA)
with Jason Hodges

Do you ever feel that the "politically correct" movement goes too far, in that, if people censor themselves so as not to offend, you can't know what they are really thinking?

"Yes. What's correct? It's another form of fascism. But some of the *ideas* are good—just not the dogmatic way of thinking. I strongly believe in equality (racial, sexual, et cetera). Someone who tries to force shit down my throat may receive a kick in the teeth."

*Crawl/Child (Canada)**with Howard Gibbs and Brad Park***Why are some of your members meat eaters?**Howard: [*laughs*] "Brad?"

Brad: "I can't answer for the other members of the band, but I'm not anymore, actually."

Howard: "Oh, you're not? Brad coming out on tape! [*laughs*] So, I guess it's Ryan."

Brad: "Yeah, Ryan's the only one. And it's all due to Gandhi."

Howard: "As a group, we're not [*pause*], the group was formed for musical reasons and not political reasons, which is why we're not overtly political in what we do.

"The most important point is that we firmly believe in people completely thinking for themselves, as opposed to any sort of herd mentality and jumping with the crowd, just because it's the thing to do, you know?"

Brad: "Yeah, I mean, anybody has to justify the reasons why they eat meat or don't eat meat on their own grounds, and from their own philosophical and ethical background. I mean, I can't sit here and talk about anybody else's reasons, because it's not my place to do so. I mean, the whole straight edge scene, and stuff like that: really, it seems to me that it's misguided if people are doing it to be part of a scene and to fit in, and it's not grounded in terms of their own sort of individual needs and desires and aspirations."

Howard: "For us, I think when we first heard about straight edge and stuff, the point was not, I dunno, don't drink and smoke and do drugs and stuff. It was more like, don't just do what everybody else is doing, make your own decisions, think about it, and arrive at your own conclusion. I think that's a more valid and more universally useful point."

*Exit-13 (USA)**with Bill Yurkiewicz***Why are you vegetarian?**

"Because I do not wish to support the inhumane and environmentally destructive practices of meat production, and a non-meat based diet is proven to be healthier."

What do you think of the term "politically correct," and would you define your band as such?

"A media catch phrase with only an ambiguous definition at best. I do not like the term, and would not use it to describe my thoughts and beliefs. I would guess that Exit-13 falls closer to being 'politically correct' than, say, the Meat Shits, but I would not define us with that term."

Do you think that racial integration has failed?

"I wouldn't say it failed so much so much as maybe saying it only worked sixty percent. I am not exposed to much racial tension, so my answer only

applies to my experience."

How do you feel about the influence of religion in society?

"I think most religious beliefs should be disregarded! At least, all the organized religions. I would love to see people return to the religious beliefs of many of the Native American Indians, who based their lives on achieving harmony with nature."

Is humankind hopelessly fucked, is there nothing we can do about it, and so, why bother?

"As a realist, I do think humanity is hopelessly fucked, but I would rather be on the side who is fighting against this, rather than willfully contributing to it!"

Extreme Noise Terror (England)
with Phil Vane"Admittedly, the lyrics [on future records] aren't all gonna be one hundred percent total political stuff anymore, 'cause we've exhausted ourselves, more or less, you know. We've gone 'round in circles on the lyrics so many times [on previous records]. [*pause*] I mean, the lyrics are still gonna be very serious topical issues, if you know what I mean, but they're gonna be more down to earth ones, rather than, 'let's kill the government' an' all this sort of stuff. We're just interjecting a bit more of a personal attitude into it, rather than just sayin', 'Okay, well, I don't like this, so I oughta write a song about it.' [It's more like] 'Okay, I feel strongly about this, whether it's on my doorstep or 10,000 miles away, somewhere else in the world.' So, we're gonna do more shit like that, you know?"

"So, yeah, we have dropped a lot of the real heavy political stuff, 'cause it's so easy to be cornered, as well, by people, 'cause, once you take a stand against somethin' which is political, so many people can say, 'Well, why didn't you say that, an' why have you said that, an' what about this, an', god, you're a hypocrite for doin' that,' an' it's like, 'Shit, man, sorry, you know? I'm only human.'"

Are you guys still totally into vegetarianism or veganism?

"There's only two in the band, actually, now, that are vegetarians. The original drummer, Darren, he's a vegetarian, an' I've been a vegetarian for 14 years, but the other four guys aren't veggies anymore, no."

They just, sort of, got out of it?

"Well, I don't know. It's sort of bizarre. I mean, Ali, the lead guitar player, and Lee, the bass player, they've always eaten meat anyway. We knew that when they joined the band, but, because we wanted them in the band, an' bein' good people anyway, regardless of whether they eat meat or not, we thought, 'Yeah, that would be good to have them in our lineup as people.' An' then, since they joined, I think the other two fell prey to the carnivorous way. I don't know why. It's a bit of a disappointment to myself."

Vermin (Sweden)
with Mathias

What is your opinion of the European Union's programs to make all the countries even and to give them all the same money, et cetera?

"I think the idea has some good points, but it is

just lots of bureaucracy and waste of money."

What's Sweden's position on this?

"A small country like Sweden won't have much to say against big countries like Germany or France, I'm afraid. It seems like all rich people here are pro-EU, so I'll say 'no' for sure. Just say no to the rise of the Fourth Reich [*laughs*]."

1996

Gore Beyond Necropsy (Japan)
with Akinob Ohtaki

Is Japan ready for another earthquake?

"I don't know. As for me, I live in very dangerous area where is warned that a horrendously disastrous one might occur, so sometimes I'm very anxious about it. I don't wanna die under a pile of rubbish!"

What ever happened to that guy who was

poisoning the subways with gas in Japan?

"Well, that fascist pig wanted to be a ruler of Japan by his insane cult, and he did that horrendous act to realize his fantasy. He's totally out of sense! He used to preach his own dogma based on Buddhism, but his true doctrine is, 'sex, drug, money, and murder!' I hope he will die in extreme pain so soon! An open execution would be great!"

1997

Terrible Headache (Japan)
with Yusuke Adachi

How is the Japanese economy?

"Japan has been in great depression for a couple of

years. Many people were laid off. Some famous, big companies went bankrupt. But Japanese government did nothing for them."

1999

Agathocles (Belgium)
Jan Frederickx

A two part question: a) is it important for politically and socially aware bands to "practice what they preach," in the sense of contributing to, or working against, things they talk about in their lyrics? and b) do you not give a fuck what everyone else is doing and just concentrate on your own lifestyle, in the sense that, sure, it would be great if everyone worked for change, but, realistically, I can't convince everyone, so I should just focus on what I'm doing?

"Both 'a' and 'b' are important, I think. 'Practice what you preach' is quite important. You cannot write lyrics which you don't believe in. At least I can't do that. I know that with AG and our lyrics, we cannot change the world. This scene is too small for

that. But it can be a good start for further change and education!

"Giving information to the people through music is one thing, but you can also get involved in tons of organizations which do not have anything to do with music, but which are working on change. So, for me, it is also important to get involved with such organizations!"

Desperate Corruption (Japan)
with Mitsuhiro Maeda

Will Japan be prepared for the next earthquake?

"Next earthquake? It's really serious problem. I prepared some plan for that. But that earthquake's power is very, very big. Nobody can't stop it."

2000

Cattle Press (USA)
with Eddie Ortiz

Cattle Press' lyrics have long dealt with the, so to speak, spiritual and/or contemplative side. There are many bands that, at least, touch on these types of general subjects, but it's perhaps safe to say that only one percent of them actually believe and practice what they're talking about. At the risk of getting too personal, is Cattle Press a spiritual or religious band?

"Cattle Press has always dedicated itself to the

lost arts of self realization and empowerment. It has become a method of teaching us individuality about discipline, transcendence, and release. Paying homage to what we could never understand and, at the same time, acknowledging the power of science—the true occult. It is through this study of thesis and its antithesis do we come up with something altogether different, but not entirely new.

"Joseph Campbell said artists and musicians are the creators of the new myths, combined with the listeners' experiences to base his interpretations of the music, creating a sort of out of the body

experience. One transcending his or her present state to one created by the listening experience. Question and experience: that is our religion.

“There isn’t a single book that I have read that I can say I agree with entirely. Not one. The same can be said about anybody. So how can one bow before one god and one book? With faith, an act of cowardice and conformity. Governments and religion go hand in hand. They work together and are inseparable. Question the question.

“So we can say we celebrate the spirit and the mind; the essence of our totality or spirit, and the reaction to this totality or mind. The spirit can be an amalgamation of our organs, skin, and bone, thus creating a reaction into a form we call our mind. So I could say we sing to ourselves, a celebration of the flesh and the end result of our bodies evolving for billions of years.

“It is through this evolution that man has drastically separated himself from what was his ecosystem, hence him thinking he is above everything placed in this Earth and in our universe. Here is the paradox which governs our universe. It allows us to survive and it is this dominance on this Earth that will eventually lead to our demise.

“Every dynasty has crumbled. We raise our chalices to both our rise and fall.”

While lyrics are, of course, interpretive in different ways to different people, is it safe to say that Cattle Press’ lyrical direction over the years has, in part, been inspired by a personal backlash against Christianity?

“In order for something to begin, something must end. We, under these present conditions, have been force fed rhetoric which says everything that is instinctual and natural should be controlled and suppressed. This gospel also blames women, bringers of life, for our mortality, and denies them priesthood. Obviously, I am speaking of the dreadful Christian power which is literally peppered into every facet of our lives. We believe that Christian ethics and customs should be destroyed and denied.

“On the same hand, we do not agree with a good amount of the so-called ‘occult’ community. Magic exists on all levels, for every action must be preceded by another, and has nothing to do with hocus-pocus shit. ‘Occult’ is, of, or relating to supernatural agencies, their effects, and knowledge of them. So, since the dawn of this movement of those seeking something other than what was handed to them by tradition, it has always been about finding answers to questions we all have asked in one way or another.

“Magic is the mother of science. The golden dawn spoke of quantum mechanics long before it was ‘discovered’ and documented by modern scientists. A lot of these so-called ‘occultists,’ or devil worshippers, have no clue about what any of the icons or belief systems they wear so proudly on their sleeves, or if they do know a bit of history, they miss the whole point altogether.

“Fuck all of this dark and evil shit. The real evil is people wearing crosses in honor of their messiah’s suffering and not really paying attention to what he said. And no one can even come to any agreement on what he said anyway.”

Dead Body Love (Italy) with Gabriele Giuliani

What kind of political atmosphere does Italy have?

“Politicians here are mostly fake assholes. Italy is actually under a liberal party, and things are okay. It could be better; it could be worse. Anyway, I hate politicians.”

Indecision (USA) with Rachel Rosen

Obviously, being a woman in a hardcore band, you are a member of a minority in the hardcore scene. Whenever you play, do some guys and/or girls take more of an interest in you than they

would otherwise, based solely on their not being used to seeing a girl playing this type of music, regardless of the quality of the band’s actual performance?

“I think the fact that I am in the band definitely sets us apart from other bands, but I don’t think that it makes anyone take more of an interest. I can’t see anyone liking us just

because I play guitar in the band. The music still has to be good.

“On the other hand, I have noticed that all-girl bands seem to be able to get away with not being so great musically, simply because they are girls. For example, if they dress sexy enough, then the audience probably won’t be listening to the music, and therefore they don’t have to have good songs.”

Do you feel, or does anyone make you feel, like you have some sort of real or imagined obligation to your fans as, sort of, representing women in music on some level, if that makes any sense?

“I never feel like I have an obligation to anyone. There have been girls who tell me how happy they are to see a girl in a band, and that they wish they could do it too, but I never consider myself representing women.”

**“Governments
and religion go
hand in hand.
They work
together and are
inseparable”**

Hypocrisy (Sweden)
with Peter Tägtgren

Is the government subsidizing bands still?

"Yeah, you know, some bands can get help to get a practice place and stuff like that sometimes from the government. At the end of the month you can get some kind of social service money. Not too much, but enough if you practice for a half a year, you can go and do a proper demo in a cool studio."

Why do you think that's such a priority there?

"The whole Swedish music scene has really grown a lot internationally. There's bands selling millions and shit, both in America and the whole world. And plus, all those producers, like Max Martin and people like that. So, yeah, they really try to put their effort to get young people to play music, 'cause I guess there's some quality stuff that came out here, you know? So it's really cool that they're trying to do something for the youth."

Does that mean there's high taxes in Sweden too?

"Yeah, for sure. I mean, on gas there's like eighty percent tax, so what you pay for one gallon, we pay for one liter. But, on the other hand, we don't have to pay to go to the dentist, or if we need an operation or whatever. There's good thing with it and there's bad things, you know?"

How do you feel with all the changes that are happening with the EU? You've got the Euro coming out and all the countries are trying to become uniform. Do you support that sort of thing?

"Not really. I like to see my kind of money from my country, for example. I like to see our king on the crown, you know, the same as a quarter in your country. Also the same thing where you have your presidents on the dollar and stuff like that. I still would like to see that with our king and stuff, and not

do some stupid logo that represent the whole Europe on the money, you know? I'm not into that."

It doesn't seem like it has too much culture with it.

"No, exactly, you know? I mean, no matter where you come from, be proud. Why be like everybody else? They try to be one unit; for me that's [pause], I mean, first of all, I'm not really into politics and shit like that. I do my own race, but these kind of culture things, they're unique for every country, and why change that so it's like you lose all that, and put it into one country for everything?"

When I ask different musicians from Europe this question, a lot of times they say the same thing: they're against the trend of the EU because it benefits the rich and not the middle class and the poor. Without staying too political, do you feel that way too?

"I mean, it could be good, but it also could be bad, you know? It's pretty cool situation for me. If I would import a new mixing board from Germany because it's cheaper in Europe, because they have more people and more businesses there, so they have to lower their prices and stuff than in Sweden. I mean, there's 65 million people living in Germany and it's only nine million in Sweden, which means that they can raise the price on the shit here in Sweden, 'cause they don't have all these stores, or whoever imports it from the manufacturers and stuff, you know. I can order it from Germany; I don't have to pay taxes through the border and shit like I used to, which is good.

"But it comes a lot of shit with that also, like terrorists that they don't have to show passports and shit like that in every country, so you have no clue who's coming in, who's coming on. Same thing with trucks and the gangster kind of mobster shit, so there's positives and negatives."

Japanische Kamphörspiele (Germany)
with Bony

"The eastern part of Germany is a very good platform for extreme music. The economy there is going down the drain, unemployment everywhere. So the people there are really, really pissed off, and therefore in a mood for 'pissed off' music."

In addition to his thoughts on music and his band, Bony has something of interest to say on the subject of the German chancellor.

"It doesn't really matter for whom you vote. You have the choice between warm shit and cold. No matter if the recent chancellor is Labour or Conservative. He has to sail the ship through a sea of shit. The only thing you can do is *not* vote anyone

from the right wing or any other radical party. Give your vote to some democratic party, sit down and wait for the shit to disappear by itself."

Someone fairly recently said that citizens of foreign nations, in addition to the Americans themselves, should vote for the American

president. How much does American foreign policy affect Germany? Bony has a response.

"I don't like the way American foreign politics affect other countries in general. I was really pissed

off how the American government tried to make France stoop low. Fortunately it didn't work, so the Americans may now call their french fries 'freedom fries.' Congratulations. How much more stupid can things get? My only hope is that the upcoming president's name is not George W. Bush."

"How much more stupid can things get?"

The Dream Is Dead (USA)
with Clark Giles

The Dream Is Dead has very direct, harsh political lyrics on *Hail The New Pawn*. As the email conversation turns to a focus to how the band's message sits with its fan base, Clark begins by saying, "We aren't preaching to the converted as much as I thought we'd be when we started out. I spent my formative hardcore years, though in a name, where vegan straight edge was pretty much the norm. That's definitely not the case nowadays. It's not cool to give a shit anymore; we are just too lazy as a society. Couch potato culture and the internet finally caught up with us. Then it doesn't help that most of the people that still do give a damn usually aren't people that I find it to be much fun to hang out with.

"I do try to make a conscious effort with our serious songs, though, to take things beyond anarcho-punk 101. If I'm going to write about globalism for example, I'm going to write a song about it in a specific context, for example the indigenous struggle of the O'odham people on the border of Mexico. I don't want to just write a song about the nebulous 'system.'"

Napalm Death (England)
with Mark "Barney" Greenway

Napalm Death went on tour for their latest album, and when they came to Virginia, vocalist and lyricist Barney Greenway agreed to sit down after the band's set and speak about a few aspects of British and American politics, which one could say wasn't a problem for him, as the members of Napalm Death are no strangers to taking stands on political issues.

To begin, the British Parliament took Prime Minister Tony Blair to task for a period in late 2004 for what they felt was Blair's misleading the body on WMD in Iraq, the stated reasoning for the invasion and occupation.

"Yeah yeah yeah, people went fucking nuts over it," said Barney. And that wasn't the only issue over which Prime Minister Blair was in hot water.

"Yeah, he wanted to send more troops. That was recently. And of course, people said, 'What the fuck are you doing? It's already a disaster.' It's a funny old situation, because I'm sure you're probably aware that ninety percent—ninety percent—of the British people were against, opposed, to the war. Yet still Britain sent troops to Iraq. How the fuck does that figure, you know? I mean, my god, could it be any more clear? And you know, the craziest thing is that Bush has been re-elected.

"I didn't see it, so I can't quote per se, but I heard that Bush and Blair were on television ... saying that they were going to clean up the Middle East. Now, what the fuck? What are you talking about?"

Tony Blair was the first foreign dignitary to visit President Bush after the US presidential election in

November 2004.

"Well, Bush came over to England, and I think it's safe to say he got a very hot reception," recalled Barney. "I mean, people were throwing shit at him everywhere he went." And this fed into the British discourse over Tony Blair's handling of US-British relations.

"There's gonna be a general election I think within the next couple of years, but what they're talking about is that they were actually trying to raise the point: should Blair still be the leader of the Labor party? 'Cause I think what main traditional Labor members want, and I used to be one of those, they want someone that's gonna be less subservient to Bush. Figure it this way. Blair comes from a party traditionally that comes from the left. Bush comes from a party—and Bush in particular couldn't really be much more right, you know? We're kinda curious as to where this kind of crossover comes, that Blair so willingly is led by the hand. It really angers a lot of people traditionally in the Labor party. People are fucking pissed, man.

"There are a lot of people against the war. I mean, you gotta figure, it's not like the Democrats over here who were like, once all the smoke had cleared, like, I dunno, eighty-five percent of them came out in favor of the war. In England, you could reverse that figure, and eighty-five percent of them were fuckin' against the war, so go figure."

An important issue in Britain is that of the national press' coverage of politics in its reporting, the British Broadcasting Corporation being discussed here.

"There was a BBC scandal where the BBC reported about the doctor that supposedly committed suicide. Very sinister thing," Barney explained. "But you know what? The guy that investigated it found very little fault with the government and so it got white washed, you know what I mean? It got papered over ... I'm not exactly sure how the BBC's being run at the moment. But yeah, it seems that the very fact that the BBC was left with egg on its face after that would mean that they would be reluctant to be so ultra critical of the government again over such matters. You know how things are, man. Once you're kinda blackballed or whatever it's very difficult to convince people that they should again speak for themselves."

Barney has paid attention to the press in America as well.

"There is some good regional press over here that I've seen. And you know, in this sphere you get the free magazines which are always very good, you have the local culture magazines; they're always very good. Every magazine I saw in the week of the election had anti-Bush covers and stuff like that. 'Ten reasons why you shouldn't vote Bush' in fucking big letters on the inside cover. It all helps, man. Sadly, it wasn't to be, but then a week before the election it kinda was looking that Bush was going to win."

Napalm Death is conscious of the political climate

in the areas in which they tour, and yet Barney had strong words about the new American president in between songs while the band was performing.

"You know what, man? I've got to say, and I'm really happy to say this, that every night—I mean, I couldn't have made it much plainer from the stage, really, and no one heckled, man, no one said anything. Whether people are just keeping quiet—but usually people aren't afraid to speak up. The reaction's been really good everywhere. One guy after Dallas came up to me and tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Don't talk shit about my president.' And I just said to him, 'I really don't need to talk shit about the president. He's doing it for himself. I don't need to enter the fucking debate.' I said, 'We'll agree to disagree.'

"You know, Bush has gone into his second term now, and I truly believe that people are starting to realize—it may have taken a term for them to realize—you get people coming to this gig in here tonight; do you think Bush gives a shit about them? I fucking don't think so. He'll take away their jobs, he'll fuckin' deny them basic healthcare, stuff like that. He don't give a shit about them. He's already proved it. I saw him on TV today. His new anti-terrorism initiatives involve cutting down on social plans and education."

In America the population is thirty to forty percent poor but one wouldn't know that because of the way the government structures the tax system.

"Well, exactly. And you've also got to think where you've still got increasing ghetto-ization in this country, and they kinda talk about social plans and stuff like that. They don't want the ghettos cleaned up. Certainly the Republicans don't, because it helps to create a division in society, where it's almost a distraction to have this gap between haves and have fucking nothings, you know what I mean? So it's good because they're always going to fight against each other and it's a great distraction for the government. They haven't got to deal with as many people bitching at them."

Nekhei Naatza (Israel) with Etay Levy

Nekhei Naatza was an Israeli political hardcore band that existed from 1990 to 1997, the first of that kind to have a vinyl release in that country, namely the *Renounce Judaism* EP in 1994 (Beer City Records). The members took two other band names and combined them to make Nekhei Naatza: Nekhei Tzahal describes crippled Israeli soldiers and Naatza Israel means Israel blasphemy. "Put the two together and you get crippled blasphemy," Etay Levy, the drummer, explains. They also released an LP in 1997 called *Hail The New Regime* and in 2002 the *A Blue & White Carthage* EP (Malinke Records).

"Press was always bad," towards the band, recalls Etay. "They saw us as an anti-Semitic threat. They almost got us sued, they got us in trouble with the fascist religious leaders, and they probably gave our

names to the Israeli secret service [Mussad]."

While Etay did not personally get involved with any civilian protest actions, the rest of the band certainly did, participating in animal rights, environmental, and political protests, and those individual members still do so today. "In fact, a few were deported from other countries for their antics," he reveals.

Included in *Hail The New Regime's* lyric sheet are further explanations of the song lyrics on the album. For the song "Reconciliation with Hamas," the band writes, "The media, intellectuals, politicians, and common public place terrorist attacks on civilians and soldiers as Israel's most serious problem, when clearly the economic policy of ever growing divisions between the classes, unemployment, and poverty is a much more alarming problem. The stranglehold of nationalism and Zionist heritage makes it impossible for us to focus our attention on economic exploitation rather than on Arab terrorism."

Etay notes that the number of suicide bombings that occur every year in Israel is so high that the press no longer bothers to report on it. "The press here in the US probably reports on a very small proportion of the attacks. But that is typical of US press. Even the more moderate coverage can't keep up."

Etay served in the Israeli army beginning in March of 1994 until April of 1997. It should be noted, especially in Etay's case, that military service in Israel is mandatory. His position as he describes it was "A trained puppet for the racist regime!" But in the end he remains unaffected by his service and dismisses it as a waste of time. "My stint in the military just reinforced my belief that Israel is headed straight for the toilet."

Ultimately Etay was honorably discharged from the military which he describes as unfortunate, explaining, "It is incredibly difficult to be dishonorably discharged," which he strived to achieve.

Etay spent time in a military prison in Israel during his time in the army. "After training for almost a year, I was sent to the Gaza strip along with two friends. We were 'asked' to serve in Gaza for two months. I refused"—in fact he told his commanding officer to go fuck himself—"and was charged with insubordination and sentenced to one month," he recalls.

He did see some action during his tenure in the force, however. "First year was full on combat training. You know: shooting all sorts of guns and blowing shit up all with live fire, riding on tanks, urban warfare training, navigating by foot in the dark without a map—we almost jumped out of a plane but those bastards cut our budget—and lots of other various wholesome activities."

After completing a year of basic training, Etay says, "My personal mission was to drive my psychiatric evaluation into the ground. This evaluation determined your eligibility for various activities and as I was adamantly opposed to military operations of any sort, this would be my most

difficult mission to date. I spent weeks preparing, and upon completion of my self-imposed mission, I was no longer 'fit' to serve in combat. I was encouraged to return home each evening to distress from the daily activities. Coincidentally, everyone else in the band received the same encouragement so we were able to play regularly during this time."

Israel is both a police state and a military state

2006

The Haunted (Sweden) with Anders Björler

Growing up in Gothenburg, Sweden, the down to earth Anders and his brother, The Haunted bassist Jonas, and former drummer Adrian Erlandsson had a band not too dissimilar to their current outfit. Back then, they took advantage of government programs to benefit their band.

"Yeah," Anders begins, "that was more like a remnant of the socialist government. I think that those funds are long gone 'cause the economy is going down, you know, so that was late 80s, start of 90s. But you can still apply for, like, a cultural grant that provides that you can seek financial backing for tours or for recording an album, stuff like that."

The money for which the young musicians applied were earmarked for music courses that would help educate people on how to find success in their musical prospects. They signed up for classes such as composition and studio recording. But they, as well as many other bands in Sweden that have grown up to world tours and successful albums, observed that no one administering the courses physically took attendance at the classes. All the boys had to do was sign paperwork saying they attended in order to show that they put the government funding to its proper use. They promptly took the course funds they received to buy musical equipment.

The courses that provided the most money were for Christian music instruction. "A kind of double standard, coming in there [to sign the attendance sheets] with, like, band shirts with inverted crosses."

On *Politically Incorrect*, Bill Maher asked his guests whether it would matter if they kept who won the Presidential election out of the papers, that it doesn't affect people's lives that much.

"I mean, politics in Sweden doesn't really matter that much, and the same goes for US in some cases. Republican, Democrat, you have two parties to choose from. Like, in Sweden, you have 100 or something. The difference is so small between each party, so it's almost that you feel that it's pointless that you go to vote, you know, because what they promise, nothing that they gonna to do anything about, anyway. Because we have both the right and

according to Etay. "Realistically, it is the people who embraced their military experience and/or police employment who are brainwashed. These people do not think for themselves; instead they fall victim to the propaganda excreted by the racist regime. This is a time of turmoil, and hence changes, but unless the youth decide for themselves which cause is worth killing and dying for, Israel is hopeless."

the left government, and the change wasn't that big. Very, very minor.

"Of the whole media situation you talk about, that keeping that information about the media, I dunno." Anders stops and takes a deep breath. "If people wouldn't know about it, you know, I don't think people are very well educated about what's really going on in the politics, like lobbies and, or a secret conference with big business. I don't think many people know about it.

"I only read Al Jazeera, so I'm not one to talk," Anders laughs. "No, but I actually have a glance on that site. Yeah, I take a quick look to, kind of, weigh in the facts from the US conflict, check the different stories somehow, to create an interesting balance."

Immigration is a hot topic in the United States, as everyone knows, but in Sweden, the people aren't upset over how immigrants are entering so much as what happens afterward.

"I think the most upset about how the immigrants are treated, because the—it's like a double standard about, from the government point of view, that, of course, we could, we should receive immigrants, and take care of them, you know. But when they are in the country, we don't do anything to make them feel good or feel welcome. We just put them in segregated living, we don't teach them to talk Swedish; just everything to create problems in suburbs. I think people are more tired of the politics surrounding the immigrants than the actual immigrant."

The way people relate to others on the basis of race in Sweden is a lot more open there than is the case in other countries.

"They're very open in Sweden, that, yeah. But, I mean, we have guest workers that came here already in 1940s from Greece and stuff like that, and they came here to work because we needed people to work. So we kind of used to, like, immigration from an early age. I mean, US should be as well, you know?" Anders laughs, "You all had immigration since the 17th century. But I think the media situation in US kind of makes it harder for people to appreciate other cultures. Like the war against Islam is just blown out of proportion."

Many Swedes have respectable skill at

communicating in English.

“Yeah, it’s taught in the, like, fourth grade, but I think they’re changing it now so it starts at the first grade level, ‘cause it’s such a big international language, so you kind of have to follow at a young age, even. But then you’re really taught all the way up to high schools, grade school.

“And the American culture is so strong in Sweden,” Anders continues. “I mean, Levi’s, Coca-Cola ... It’s almost like a cultural revolution. It came creeping, you know, after the,” he pauses to gather his thought, “it started in the 60s, I think.

It started even earlier, I think, with Elvis Presley and rock music. But, I mean, I noticed it on the 70s, ‘cause I grew up there, so it’s easier for me to relate, and American movies, American TV shows, American music, that all contributes to that you learn English somehow. And they even passed a law in Sweden that they should promote more Swedish films and Swedish TV programs in the media because there are so many American programs and movies. The cinemas here show, like, ninety-nine percent American movies.”

Disposable Underground by Richard Johnson unless otherwise noted. © 2006. Visit the zine web site for the unabridged interviews and live photos of some of the interview subjects.

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