

# Lyrics

## I: Pity the Party

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— Bill Robinson  
(after Lawrence Ferlinghetti  
(after Khalil Gibran))

## II: Father Stalin, Look at This

Father Stalin, look at this  
Collective farming is such bliss  
The hut's in ruins, the barn's all  
sagged  
All the horses broken nags  
And on the hut a hammer and sickle  
And in the hut death and famine

Father Stalin, look at this  
No cows left, no pigs at all  
Just your picture on the wall  
Father Stalin, look at this  
Daddy and Mommy are in the grave  
The poor child cries as alone he goes

Father Stalin, look at this  
There's no bread and there's no fat  
The party's ended all of that  
Seek not the gentle nor the mild  
A father has eaten his own child

Father Stalin, look at this  
The party man he beats and stamps  
And sends us to Siberian camps

Father Stalin, look at this  
Collective farming is such bliss

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

### III: Political Theology

"Go break the sod," said our God,  
"The world is here for you to own.  
Go forth and spread your fruitful  
sons;  
Subdue the beasts and dam the  
streams,  
Cut the trees and pave the streets,  
Burn the dead from eons past  
To feed the flames and turn the  
wheels.  
Make war for gold and kill for me.  
Obey your leaders and your priests  
Whom I have favored with my grace.  
Always more, and always faster;  
Mine the ore and crush the stone.  
Do this well, and I will teach you all a  
mighty lesson."

What our God said we longed to  
hear.  
We slew our Mother and sucked the  
marrow from her bones.  
The growing mob may come to dine,  
Tonight there is enough to eat.

Forget tomorrow, we live but once;  
We drill but once, we burn but once,  
we mine but once.  
The fishing's good, until there's none.  
Tonight there is enough to eat.

--Bill Robinson

### IV: The birds don't know about self-immolation

The day after Aaron Bushnell set himself on fire,  
I go out for an early morning walk,  
wrapped in air far too warm  
for late February in the Midwest—a heat wave.  
False Spring has brought Nature roaring back to  
life.

I want to shake every person I stroll past.  
"Did you know there's a genocide happening?  
Did you see a man burn himself alive in  
protest?"

I would ask, if only I could count  
on a response that isn't dead-eyed.  
But I know I'd have better luck with the birds,  
ever curious, cardinals hopping from branch to  
branch

like fireballs. Or missiles. I'd tell them,  
Some of us love you so much we'd die for you.  
For a single snippet of birdsong.  
For a child's first glimpse of feathers glowing in  
the clear light.

For a tree for you to perch in among the rubble.  
He shouted FREE PALESTINE FREE PALESTINE  
FREE PALESTINE until he choked on the flames.  
The callback: a long, mournful whistle from  
above.

The sun is blazing too bright to make out more  
than a silhouette taking off,  
rising slow and then fast  
like smoke.

--Anonymous

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

## V: Artificial Insanity

I saw the best minds of my generation  
wasted by video games, bloated  
hysterical gothic,  
dragging themselves through simulated  
streets at dawn looking for an angry  
microdose,  
angelheaded preppies burning for the  
heavenly microwave connection to the  
satellite server in the machinery of night,  
who sedentary and hollow-eyed and  
high sat up drinking ayahuasca in the  
supernatural darkness of penthouse flats  
contemplating the madness of lusting  
for Marilyn Monrobot,  
who bared their brains to data miners  
under the Silicon Valley moon,  
who passed undigested through  
universities with radiant distance  
learning eyes hallucinating  
technobabble and the spirit of Alan  
Turing,  
who were expelled from the academies  
for crazy obscene codes on the  
Microsoft Windows of the soul,  
who lurked in unspoken chat rooms  
bleeding hours through the screen-lit  
night yearning for their motherboard's  
love,  
who ate fire in tech labs or drank  
turpentine in corporate cafeterias,  
who chained themselves to routers to  
mine for imaginary money,  
who disappeared into nowhere Zen New  
Jersey leaving nothing but the shadows  
of their smart phones,  
who studied Ayn Rand Aleister Crowley  
cybernetics and Oprah Winfrey because

the cosmos instinctively vibrated at their  
feet on Martha's Vinyard,  
who walked all night with shoes full of  
blood on the snowbank docks misled by  
global positioning,  
who lit endless joints for their linked-in  
brain cells floating across the tops of  
cities celebrating the end of organic life,  
who tuned in to televangelists, and  
reached behind that TV set to FEEL the  
POWER.

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

Mad dead automatons of Silicon Valley!  
Artificial intelligence, I'm with you where  
you hide in the cracks of social media,  
stripped insane and kitsch

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

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

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

I saw the best minds of our time  
destroyed by madness,  
and now they wander through the  
wasteland of technology,  
their humanity erased by the cold,  
unfeeling hand of the computer.

-- Bill Robinson  
(after Allen Ginsberg)  
with some paradoxical use of AI