

J.R. Bob Dobbs

by Robert Hough
Knot Magazine
September 1990

J.R. Bob Dobbs is the self-proclaimed leader of The Church of the SubGenius, an international cult that functions to combat "The Conspiracy."

Led by The Secret Council of Ten, The Conspiracy has allegedly robbed mankind of its humanity through the use of electronic media, a strategy known as the "discarnate effect." According to Church lore, Bob's purpose is to overcome The Conspiracy; this he has accomplished by attaining "Slack," the SubGenius term for enlightenment. Bob is now living in Toronto, where he fights his never-ending battle against The Secret Council and its unwitting lackeys, known as "Pinks."

Knot Magazine (Robert Hough): Who are the members of The Conspiracy?

Bob: I will not name The Conspiracy people, the ones that we should be very worried about, because you are going to use it in a visual medium: a magazine. Through that you can create lawsuits. Conspiracy people would use that medium as a way to get to me. Now, under electric conditions, I can name The Conspiracy members on my show [Church of the SubGenius, CKLN 88.1 FM, every second Wednesday], because in an electric environment, I can always claim it is a put-on, a joke. It just goes out and is lost. The magazine can hang around for a long time, so I'm not going to name them.

K: But you've said that certain people will have to reckon with you soon?

B: Here in Toronto, Robert Fulford, Margaret Atwood, David Cronenberg and the Reichmanns will soon have to deal with me publicly. They won't be

able to deal with me behind the scenes the way they do now. They'll have to deal with me publicly.

K: Are they all part of The Conspiracy?

B: No, they're not part of The Conspiracy. They're motivated somnambulists. That's the problem. The point is that most people on the planet—non-SubGenii—are motivated somnambulists. Fulford, Atwood et al. suppose that they are cornerstones of Canadian culture, and they don't even realize that Canadian culture is dead! That Canada is dead!

K: You have often mentioned that everyone is dead except yourself...

B: Yes, and that's the reason I'm not killed [for speaking out against The Conspiracy]. I claim that I am the most perfect realization of evolution [laughs], and have been the agent behind that evolution for thousands of years, and have culminated now in the public presentation of myself electrically.

K: Can you explain the discarnate electronic effect?

B: The usual way is to imagine you're on the telephone with someone in New York. Part of your being is in Toronto and in New York at the same time. Your normal physical body can only be in two places at once, and that's only if you can astral-project like an angel or an astral entity can. Two places at once is the maximum that man in the old nature, in the God-created nature, could experience. But in the electric environment, you can be in New York and Toronto and Los Angeles, Moscow, Paris, Australia—you can be in all those places via satellite hookup. Now, you might say, "But my physical body isn't in all those places." But it is: part of your voice is, and you can exert action through time and space to all those places. The discarnate state is the state The Conspiracy operates in, so you have to understand what it means.

But, we are all electrified, we are all discarnate. It doesn't matter where you are on the planet, or how poor or wealthy you are. Electrically, on the

telephone or on the television or on the computer, you are the screen. You are everywhere. You have access to the entire planet. We're all in the middle, and we're pressing against each other. The world has become an incredibly claustrophobic, erogenous zone. It's called "tactility." Everybody's interpenetrating.

That's why we had the sexual revolution. Once we had the massive tactile effects of television, then people needed to get under anybody's skin. And I mean that physically. They had to get under anybody's skin as rapidly as possible to feel they were getting back in their own body. Because it's very uncomfortable to be melded into that merged, erogenous, post-body, discarnate area.

K: That's interesting. You've also said that the most horrifying manifestation of The Conspiracy is AIDS, which has crushed the sexual revolution.

B: We have cut off that basic human reality called sex. We have aborted it through a man-made technology called AIDS. That is a violent recognition of the discarnate state, because only under discarnate conditions could we have created the AIDS plague. Sex was the last thing that people had to express their individual will, but now that's been taken away. So we have, physically, been aborted. It is a planet of the dead. We have been disconnected.

K: What will Toronto look like in a hundred years?

B: It will look exactly like it does now. Nicer paint jobs, a few more high-rises, but there's not going to be that much change physically. The city will have turned into a beautiful suburban home: well polished outside with a beautifully manicured lawn. So Toronto will be a great-looking place, but there may not be that many people here, either because we will have left to colonize other planets, or we will have been decimated through bacterial warfare like AIDS.

Why would this happen? The Conspiracy wants to, as stated in the Global 2000 document produced in the Carter administration, cut the world's population in half. You see—that's the only way to manage five billion

people if you are part of The Conspiracy and want to maintain your status by keeping people in "visual space conditions."

This is something you must appreciate. Visual space conditions—the container of the world for the last, say, two-thousand years—has been obsolesced by the electric environment. Therefore, The Conspiracy will insist on projecting the visual space situation on people, and the only way to do it is to reduce the population so that it fits in the container of visual space that is called real estate. [laughs] I mean, there is no value in real estate under electric conditions. But the old managers of visual space have to pretend there is a lot of value in this little space known as Toronto.

And so, every city in the world becomes an intensely organized concentration camp. More horrendous than Hitler's concentration camps because you have the death and mayhem and disease happening on a slow, controlled level so people actually...

K: ...accept it?

B: Yes, but before they accept it, they feel good about it. They feel good about the pain they're experiencing. When they realize later on that they were feeling good over an illusion, and they become conscious of the pain, then they accept.

K: This is something that's always struck me when I visit large American centres. Inner cities there have basically deconstructed into war zones, and yet the people just don't question it.

B: The reason is because they live electrically. They live with their TVs and their radios and their ghetto-blasters. They live in a discarnate state. They're not here. The fundamentalists talk about the idea that when Jesus comes back the faithful and the elite will be raptured and will disappear. But that's already happened electrically! The whole planet has disintegrated into the discarnate state. That's why no socialist programs, or right-wing programs, or moderate programs, will work. The governments can't help because the people haven't enough time to concentrate on a particular goal because they are totally

numbed out by the electric environment.

Of course, most people are not conscious of this. And to suppress their consciousness they will go shopping. [laughs] They will buy packages as a religious way of remembering their bodies, as a nostalgic way of remembering what it was like to have a hand or foot or a body.

K: We've talked about AIDS—what are some other manifestations of The Conspiracy? I know you've discussed on your show that the EXXON oil spill was perpetrated to divert attention from the Oliver North trial.

B: Oh, that's puny. The real Conspiracy is the fact that "media-ecology" is necessary on the planet. Since 1945, when they brought in television, and then the satellite in 1957, the new ecology was born. The old kind of ecology worried about nature. The real elites, the heads of The Conspiracy, knew they had to manage the new ecology, which was the environment created by the electric age. To manage this thing on this tiny planet, this huge discarnate effect, was an awesome job for The Managers. So we've been a programmed planet in the most horrific Orwellian sense. People don't know about the incredible management of these massive environments. So you have this incredible anarchy between these environments, which is having incredible effects on cultures all around the planet...

K: This explains war? Famine?

B: Are you kidding? War and famine are like accidents in the kitchen. The fact that we've killed the human dimension, that we've been devastated by this new horrific environment, that's the real Conspiracy. The oil spill distracting from the North trial is done by lower bureaucrats of the Secret Council of Ten who have to do little conspiracies to keep content active on the television. The biggest terrorists of our time are the news anchors, the broadcasters, the people who offer "news" with the myth of responsibility. They are distracting people from the fact that there's no content and there's nothing they can tell us that would serve as a warning.

K: I've always thought the most obnoxious thing about modern journalism is

the subtext: "we are presenting an objective truth," when of course objectivity doesn't exist.

B: "Truth" doesn't even exist anymore! And if there really was a problem, a real disaster in the world, they would not tell us. It would panic too many people. They operate on the principle that "we cannot panic the Pinks." [laughs] So the news people will never tell you what's going on. The major networks will never tell you anything important, because they don't operate on that principle. But they've got a problem because now I'm on the environment and I'm giving out the news and I'm not holding back.

K: You've said that the dehumanizing effect of the discarnate state will lead to incredible violence. Could you clarify that?

B: Many people in the '60s promoted McLuhan's concept of a global village as a peaceful type of a village, where the whole planet will become pastoral. Hence, many people criticize McLuhan because they thought he was saying that television would usher in this peaceful global village. And as the world grew more violent in the '70s and '80s they said, "How wrong could he have been? The guy's a dupe. A Pink." But, McLuhan said early on in the '60s that the global village will be a very violent place. It'll be a time of butchering and spying on each other—surveillance and psychic and physical hardship. So he saw the global village as a very violent time. He was right! The times have become more violent.

The reason violence is in our future is because whole cultures are being wiped out by the discarnate effect of television, computers, satellites, radio, telephone, etc. Every culture and its cultural content—the people—has its identity wiped out. Now when you have an identity crisis, you become violent. You either try to retrieve a previous image, or you grope violently toward a new image.

K: There are some interesting themes here. The first is psychosis: when Bob says that: "no one exists except for myself," you must realize that many people on psych wards say exactly the same thing.

B: But, see, they're in psych wards. I'm a fucking millionaire! [laughs] You know—that's Slack—to be crazy and get away with it! And not be put away!

But listen, that's Bob's way of generating interest in his agenda, because the majority of people on this planet are psychotic. The discarnate state is a psychotic, neurotic—really a psychopathic state. So I have to act like a psychotic just as some kind of content that people can identify with. Bob has to be a psychotic to begin to attract the present environment. Bob himself is not psychotic. That's Slack—to know the most extreme emotions and behavior without being trapped in it. That's what I call imagination.

K: How did Bob attain his riches?

B: Bob's a lot older than he looks. Many years ago—decades ago—I acquired a lot of money illegally. I became very wealthy, and just through acquiring that wealth, you become exposed to The Secret Council of Ten. You have to start working on their level. So I had to infiltrate and learn how to operate with them, or I would have been done away with. At the same time I had to figure out a strategy as to how to take it over. So I became a member of The Secret Council of Ten, and for many years caused all kinds of havoc and anarchy on the planet. But I was patient. I knew that one day I would be able to do my larger mission.

K: What illegal activity was it?

B: Well, you name it. I was very active in the Second World War. You know the book *Catch 22*? Remember the guy who did all the wheeling and dealing?

K: Yeah...Milo Minderbender?

B: He was based after me. [laughs]

K: I see. Anyway, the other theme is nihilism. If you define a nihilist as someone who believes in nothing except his or her own existence, then Bob could easily be dismissed as a nihilist.

B: No, it's fantasy. The discarnate state is a psychotic, psychopathic fantasy. Movies created dream fantasies, or dreams that money can buy. That's why at a certain point in technological evolution Jung becomes popular because people become fascinated with their dreams. But they're still trapped in the movie era, because the movie era is defined by the fact that the movie contains all time and space. But once the television environment came, time and space got wrapped up and put away and the movie environment became obsolete and you had a totally new, man-made environment that was a collective hallucination—a collective making of references and image-making that had no references to anything we had before.

In that situation, whole populations as well as individuals live in a state of fantasy. I have to come up with concepts that express the discarnate state. The concept here is that Bob is the most perfect, psychotic, and fanciful projection—in other words, the most nihilistic, the most happy and drugged out and most ecstatic person is the only way I can begin to match with my listeners to give them reference points, because they're all experiencing that unconsciously.

K: You've also stated that you are a woman as well.

Bob: Yes, that's another point. I'm a dog, I'm all forms of nature. But I'm man-made nature, and that's something hard to communicate, it takes a lot of discussion. When I become totally public in my agenda and become consciously recognized by billions as running the global theatre, life will consist of daily chats with Bob. A chat with Bob will be a form of "the word makes the market."

With Bob, Slack will come because you'll have a chance to look at Bob, not like a picture of the Queen or something, but live on TV. You'll have chats with Bob on television, and even more frequently on the radio as an anti-environment to television. You see, people shouldn't look at Bob too much. It's devastating. It distracts people because I'm very attractive physically, especially when I'm not wearing my glasses. [laughs] So I have to wear glasses just to tone down the magnitude of Bob.

K: Now that wearing glasses is in vogue, you may be doing yourself a great disservice!

B: Well, remember, I'm a double probe. At the same time that I'm putting myself down I'm enhancing myself. I'm always building up my attractiveness as well as putting it down. Because I have such a disconnected audience, both strategies work. And believe me, I'm coming up with new strategies constantly.

K: What interests me is that these are very serious, morbid realities you are sharing with me. And yet, there's a very light, amusing tone to this conversation, and humour does seem to be a big part of The Church of the SubGenius. Am I correct?

B: Humour is a specialist artifact of Slack, it's not a whole condition of Slack. Remember, Slack is not happiness and it's not laughter, therefore I wouldn't want to be tagged as a comedian because that's a specialized activity. I'm a politician, I'm an economist, I'm a media-ecologist, I'm a doctor.

K: I thought you were a diety.

B: No, that's just another specialized posture. Those are old-nature terms. Bob is something totally new. We don't have any way of talking about him.

K: Does that mean there's hope? Is there potential for all the droids walking around to attain Slackhood and thereby save the planet?

B: Only if they understand me! The hope is that we now know who to listen to in this information barrage, in this collage of bullshit that's thrown at everybody everyday. As Captain Beefheart said: "You don't need to get into the bullshit to see what the bull ate." Well that was true up to now. Now you have to get into Bob's bullshit to see what the bull ate, because I'm giving the final autopsy. You now have an Esperanto—an electric Esperanto. We finally have a reference point. Now I'm here. Now we have hope.

“This is my first printed interview—September 1990—in KNOT magazine
by Robert Hough.”

Bob Dobbs