We’re definitely moving toward “control” societies that are no longer exactly disciplinary. Foucault’s often taken as the theorist of disciplin­

ary societies and of their principal technology, confinement (not just in hospitals and prisons, but in schools, factories, and barracks). But he was actually one of the first to say that we’re moving away from disciplin­

ary societies, we’ve already left them behind. We’re moving toward control societies that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication. Bur­

roughs was the first to address this. People are of course constantly talking about prisons, schools, hospitals: the institutions are breaking down. But they’re breaking down because they’re fighting a losing bat-

tle. New kinds of punishment, education, health care are being stealthy introduced. Open hospitals and teams providing home care have been around for some time. One can envisage education becoming less and less a closed site differentiated from the workspace as another closed site, but both disappearing and giving way to frightful con­tinual training, to continual monitoring of worker-schoolkids or bureaucrat-students. They try to present this as a reform of the school system, but it’s really its dismantling. In a control-based system noth­ing’s left alone for long. You yourself long ago suggested how work in Italy was being transformed by forms of part-time work done at home, which have spread since you wrote (and by new forms of circulation and distribution of products). One can of course see how each kind of society corresponds to a particular kind of machine—with simple mechanical machines corresponding to sovereign societies, thermo­
dynamic machines to disciplinary societies, cybernetic machines and computers to control societies. But the machines don’t explain any­thing, you have to analyze the collective apparatuses of which the machines are just one component. Compared with the approaching forms of ceaseless control in open sites, we may come to see the har­

dest confinement as part of a wonderful happy past. The quest for “uni­

versals of communication” ought to make us shudder. It’s true that, even before control societies are fully in place, forms of delinquency or resistance (two different things) are also appearing. Computer piracy and viruses, for example, will replace strikes and what the nine­
teenth century called “sabotage” (“clogging” the machinery). You ask whether control or communication societies will lead to forms of resis­tance that might reopen the way for a communism understood as the “transversal organization of free individuals.” Maybe, I don’t know. But it would be nothing to do with minorities speaking out. Maybe speech and communication have been corrupted. They’re thoroughly permeated by money—and not by accident but by their very nature. We’ve got to hijack speech. Creating has always been something different from communicating. The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control.