

Vision and Praxis:

A manifesto of Non-State
&
Non-Market
Socialism

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VISION AND PRAXIS

I

For over a century the revolutionary movement has been plagued by a monist model of socialism based upon a vulgar understanding Marx's writings. This monism grounded everything within an economic materialist worldview in which human beings were held prisoner to the determining power of the mode of production. And as a consequence, socialism has suffered defeat after defeat at the hands of these would-be Marxists who have all sacrificed human liberation upon an altar stone of increased production for the sake of increased production. In short, the liberation of humanity had been reduced to the liberation of the means of production from the chaos of the marketplace. Such an industrialist and monist way of thinking and acting is utterly alien to the authentic spirit of socialism. It is also alien to the rising spirit of ecological justice whose vision must, of necessity, be integrated into any revolutionary socialist vision. Thus I feel that the liberation of the productive forces would lead, not to increased freedom, but to the further enslavement of humankind to the Planetary Work Machine. Revolutionary socialism rejects the traditional industrial vision of socialism and insists upon the realization of human-centered non-state, non-market socialism.

Look, even after a century of defeats, I feel that socialism is still possible, because as long as any of us still alive anything is possible. The socialist option is always possible for the simple reason that it was always possible. At any time since the collapse of primitive communism, thru the rise of private property and the state, socialism could have been organized. The slave and peasant uprisings of history could have resulted in some form of socialism, if they had only been victorious. Though, of course, not of the same type we would create today. The main point I wish to make is this: that socialism is possible regardless of the level of the means of production (therefore the ex-USSR has no excuse for its state-capitalist dictatorship because of its supposed backwardness of Russian capitalism in 1917). In fact, higher levels of technology instead of making socialism more likely, may make it less likely. And then there is always the added danger that left to itself and the "free market", unrestrained technology would only lead into an ever increasing ecological nightmare and with it, the possible extinction of human life on this planet.

I feel that socialism is always possible as it is an authentic expression of the innate human desire for freedom. No matter how much a ruling class tries to repress this instinct, it remains ever there. There waiting for the opportunity to explode and that opportunity is never too long in arriving. The social revolution is the result of this instinctive freedom bursting its bonds and challenging the right of the old order to oppress and exploit any longer. Success or failure of this revolution depends upon its self-organization and in its determination to abolish all obsolete social structures and its oppressive ideologies.

As I see it, there two roads before us: one that leads through social revolution into socialism and the other that leads thru an ecological collapse into the possible universal extinction of human life. The road leading to extinction is clear; the world is already racing along this road to nowhere. The alternative road towards socialism is not so clear, because of the ideologies of capitalist class society, which have clouded our vision. Ruling class ideologies have perverted just about everything they have touched, so that socialism in their hands becomes mere state control of the economy (nationalization) and the political dictatorship of bureaucrats ruling the working class in the name of the working class. It is sad that all too many socialists also believe this same falsehood. Lets us get this straight: socialism is not state control of the

economy or dictatorship. Rather socialism is a complete break with the ways of the past and with the present, wherein these oppressive power structures dominate. Above all else, socialism is a new way of life; a new hope for a human future.

II

I feel that socialism must be the next stage of human social development. It is very possible that there will be no next stage unless it is socialist. Industrial Capitalism's development of the technological forces is rapidly reaching the point of no return; unless abolished soon capitalism will poison the world. Socialism can only be the next stage when all possibilities remain open. The final curtain may be coming down, but only if we do not seize the stage first.

While socialism can be the next stage in human social development this must never be looked upon as a pre-determined event. Studying the New Physics I have learned that all determinisms are against the very nature of reality; determinism is a mental construct that does not exist outside of our minds. I feel that determinism must be rejected not only upon naturalistic grounds, but upon moral grounds as well. Deterministic thinking breeds fatalism and fatalism usually results in the stagnation of revolutionary spirit. The social revolution is a subjective revolution made consciously by its participants. While the social revolution has been defeated time after time, in the struggle against capitalism we call lose every battle save the last one.

Socialism as the next stage in human social development is the precondition for the abolition of all further stages. For the most part of its existence humanity has lived under the communal form of social organization without any knowledge of private property. It was only thru the development of agriculture that communal society gave way to various different types of class-based societies. These class societies then passed through various stages until today I find myself living within a global neo-liberal capitalist class society. One must always keep in mind that these stages are merely abstractions given to a society upon the basis of its mode of production and distribution. With the break thru into socialism private property ceases to exist and with it, all of the abstractions that arise from it.

III

The movement toward a socialist society is a movement to restore humanity to a state of communalism (this does not mean I advocate a return to its level of technology). Ever since humanity fell out of this original state it has been racing towards self-destruction. And so far, only the resistance of the oppressed classes, the low level of the technological forces and just plain luck have averted human extinction. But today the ruling classes have the means to finish off their inherent death wish; our luck is fast running out. Our struggle is a struggle to overcome the individualistic and competitive nature of capitalist class society. In order for humanity to survive, we must return to our original communal nature; we need to reintegrate ourselves back into the natural order of things.

The present state of capitalism is not an eternal state. At one time capitalism did not exist and one day soon it may disappear. Capitalism, often confused with the mere buying and selling of goods, appears at first glance to be eternal. After all people have been buying and selling goods since the beginnings of recorded history (and most early recorded history has been records of the buying and selling of goods). The error of this conception is this: it confuses the circulation of goods with the production of goods. The methods of circulation have remained fairly constant throughout history, especially since the introduction of money as a universal equivalent. However, the methods of producing goods has changed repeatedly throughout history from the communal hunting-gathering economy to the ancient slave economy, from ancient slave economy to feudal economy, from feudal economy to early capitalist economy and from early capitalist economy to its two modern versions: crony-capitalism (neo-liberalism) and state-capitalism.

Capitalism developed within the feudal economy gradually and eventually it gained economic supremacy over the old economic order. The main difference between the feudal and the capitalist mode of production lies in the main purpose behind the production of goods. The rationale behind pre-capitalist production was the production of use-values, that is, goods were produced to be used. If one produced more goods than one could use then they would be sold so as to give one the ability to acquire those goods one could not produce for oneself. Capitalism reversed the aim of production while maintaining pre-capitalist institutions of circulation (the market). Production was now for the sole purpose of sale in the marketplace; production was now to make money in and of itself, and not necessarily to satisfy any particular need. While goods still retained a use-value, this was no longer the primary reason behind the production of commodities (goods are those things produced for use while commodities are those things produced for sale). Thus the usefulness of a commodity is always secondary to its ability to be exchanged.

Feudal production depended upon a class of serfs who were forced, by their lord's monopoly on arms and the use of force, to work for their lord free of payment in return for protection against other lords. Capitalist production depends upon the capitalists ability to hire "free persons" to produce commodities for a wage. In return for the wage the worker would give up all rights to whatever is produced. All of the commodities that the workers would have produced become the property of the capitalist. While the workers would receive back as wages only a small fraction of the value they created.

The first working classes were forced to work long hours often as long as seventeen hours a day, six days a week. These working conditions were so dangerous and inhumane, one must

wonder how the first capitalists ever found "free persons" to work in their new "dark satanic mills?" The answer can be found in examining the results of the class struggle being waged in the countryside. While the capitalist class was increasing its power over the landed aristocracy from the towns and the cities, the aristocracy was launching its own assault against the free peasant (the scenario described here is that of Great Britain the first industrial capitalist state and the model for other emerging capitalist nations). During an earlier struggle with their serfs the aristocracy was forced to formally "free" them and give them the right to the use of the land in exchange for a rent. But most importantly, the aristocracy retained title to the land. And when the textile production raised the demand for wool, the aristocracy saw a new way to make money thru the raising of sheep. So the aristocracy drove the peasantry off of the land and enclosed the land for sheep pastures. The population made redundant by these evictions migrated into the new and growing manufacturing towns. There they had to either work under the most horrid conditions for subsistence wages, or else starve to death in the streets. Even then many would refuse to work within this inhumane system and would take to the highways and forests to engage in social banditry. So the state, which is an armed force that enforces the interests of the ruling class, then passed laws making unemployment a crime punishable by whippings, brandings, slavery and death. It was only with the backing of the state and its armed, might that the industrial working class was forged.

Yet this process was not without its opposition. As capitalism expanded and suffered repeatedly from crises of overproduction (more on this later) and imperialism, it created the conditions that would allow itself to be abolished thru a social revolution. The working class being at the center of the capitalist system's productive/distributive processes is in an excellent position to physically seize control of the enterprises and advance its own interests. And throughout the history of capitalist class society the working classes (in conjunction with other oppressed groups) has actively struggled against it. In opposition to the interests of the organized capitalist class, the workers organized themselves into unions and political parties. The resulting conflict of interests between the exploiter and the exploited has often resulted in open revolt. From the English Luddites of the early 1800's, the Lyons weaver revolts of 1831 and 1834, the Silesian weavers revolt of 1844 the Paris workers' revolt of June 1848, the Paris Commune of 1871, the waves of insurrectionary strikes that swept the U.S. during the late 1800's, the Russian mass strike of 1905, the social revolutions that swept across Europe in the wake of the First World War, the Ausrias revolt of 1934, the social revolution in Spain during 1936, the Barcelona uprising of 1937, the 1953 East German workers' strike against state capitalism, the Hungarian workers' revolution of 1956, the mass strike in France of may-June 1968, the waves of wild-cat strikes during the early seventies, the Polish strikes of 1970, 1976 and 1980-1, the struggle against Russian state-capitalism, and so the struggle against capitalism continues until capitalism in all of its forms is abolished (which will not be an easy task as the history of the struggle shows).

Yet just as feudalism gave way to capitalism so capitalism can give way to socialism. Feudalism in its internal development created the conditions that gave rise to capitalism and so in turn, capitalism has created the conditions that have made socialism possible. While capitalism has created these conditions that makes socialism possible, socialism will not just spring into being on its own. The overcoming of the contradictions of capitalist class society can only be achieved thru a subjective social revolution. Left to itself capitalism can only evolve into an ever-

increasing nightmare. So the task now at hand is the abolition of capitalist class society and the rebuilding of community.

IV

The main elements of the socialist vision and movement arise out of its critique of capitalist economy and social structures. Socialism is an antithesis to the existing state of affairs and the socialist movement is the means to its transcendence. The main socialist critiques concern: alienation, the division of labor, economic exploitation, economic crisis, the division of society into classes and the domination of the oppressed classes by the capitalist classes.

Alienation

Capitalist class society is a society of profound alienation. Within this world one often feels that they are isolated beings caught up in a deadly game beyond their control. This feeling of alienation is at the heart of the capitalist way of life and of any class based society in general. Looking at capitalist class society I can recognize five main forms of alienation: the alienation of humanity from nature, the alienation of the individual from real human community, the alienation of the individual from themselves, the alienation of the individual from their activity and the alienation of the individual from the fruits of their activity.

Humanity is alienated from nature as many of us have come to see ourselves as other than of this world (thus millions embrace creationism, and deny evolutionary theory, because it would mean we are really of this world arising naturally out of the natural order). This alienation is expressed by our brutal exploitation of nature taking more from it than we return (and what we return is often not fit for nature to recycle). The result of this exploitation is life threatening air, water and land pollution. This environmental destruction is resulting in an ever-increasing destruction of life. Thus the ultimate result of our alienation from nature is the destruction of nature and us in the process.

The individual is alienated from all real human community as all real community has been destroyed (save for the "primitive" communal hold outs like the family and intentional communities). Capitalism has been the hammer that has destroyed every community it arose in. Thru its ideology of free market and unrestricted competition, capitalism has set parents against their children, children against their parents and children against each other. "Looking out for number one" is the gospel of the modern age. We have become a society of isolated individuals living only for ourselves entering into human relationships solely for selfish purposes. We may all live in close proximity to one another, but we may as well live on different planets.

The individual is alienated from himself or herself. So many individuals are so caught up in the religion of consumerism that they no longer know who they really are anymore. And when they do look at themselves it is thru the eyes of the consumerist system ("I'm too fat," so I better go down to the health club to work out or take the latest fad diet; "I do not look like those women in the fashion magazines," so I better go and buy more clothes and cosmetics; "I'm too pale," so I better go to the tanning salon, etc.). Thru the eyes of the consumerist system the individual sees only a false and manufactured appearances. The true essence of the individual cannot be seen, even if it still exists (our society is rapidly moving towards a situation where all essences have disappeared leaving behind only shallow robot-like shells of once passionate human beings).

The individual is alienated from their activities of leisure and work. Capitalist class society has separated the individual from everything it possibly can so that it can sell these things back. We work not for ourselves, but for the capitalists who hire us. Leisure activities are commodities to be sold and consumed. Sports have become an activity that we do not do ourselves, rather professionals we pay to watch perform it. Even sex is a commodity and an inducement towards the purchase of other commodities (advertising).

The final alienation is the alienation of the product of activity from the individual who produced it. We produce things not for ourselves, but for the capitalists who hired us. They take the product of our activity to sell them back to us or to use them to maintain this system of poverty and injustice.

Socialism is the conscious attempt to overcome alienation and I have no illusions that this will not be a long and difficult process. But it is a process that must be started while humanity still has a chance for renewal. As to end our alienation from nature, we must stop end our brutal exploitation of the earth thru the building of an ecological society. As to end our alienation from community, we must rebuild community intentionally from the ground up. As to end our alienation from ourselves, we must abolish the consumerist system and its manufacturing of artificial needs. As to end our alienation from our activity, we must transcend the capitalist mode of production and take control over our activity thru self-management. As to end our alienation from the product of our activity, we must abolish wage labor and commodity production. All members of society upon the basis of need would share all goods produced. In short, to abolish alienation we must build a society based on the satisfaction of authentic human needs, to take the place of this society (which is committed to the satisfaction of the needs of profit).

The division of labor

Under the pre-capitalist modes of production goods were produced in a holistic manner. The craftsperson created the whole good from start to finish; goods were a work of art. Capitalism destroyed this unity thru dividing the production process into separate stages with different workers working on each different stage. This enabled the capitalists to increase the quantity of commodities produced, but at a cost in quality (and in raising the level of alienation experienced by the workers). A socialist economic system would use our advanced level of technology to abolish this division of labor (the effects of alienation upon the working class in recent years has resulted in a drop in productivity and some capitalist enterprises are making attempts at abolishing the division of labor, decreasing the level of alienation, which has resulted in increased productivity) and to restore craftpersonship and art to the production process.

Capitalism has inherited the patriarchal sexual division of labor and has made it even more oppressive. Over half of all humankind suffers from this system of double oppression: first as domestic slaves and secondly as wage slaves. Domestic labor can be seen as slavery as it is never paid for by the system, while its use is absolutely necessary for the reproduction of the families labor power (so that the capitalist enterprise has workers who can work). Furthermore, women are ghettoized into certain labor sectors, which pay considerably less than male dominated sectors. Socialism would see a reduction in necessary domestic labor thru a consolidation of numerous households into communes and urban communities. All members of the respective social unit would share all domestic labor equally. And all labor sectors would be required to maintain as close as possible a 1-to-1 female-to-male ratio demographics permitting.

The division of labor can be found in the economic relationships between nations. Some nations specialize in commodity export production; others specialize in providing the raw materials for commodity production and others as sources of luxury agricultural commodities. This result in the exploitation of some nations by other nations, more specifically the Northern industrial nations exploit the Southern "developing" nations. Also, a state of dependency develops that is counterproductive to world peace. The Northern industrial nations have become increasingly dependent upon raw materials found outside of their borders. The economic chaos, which followed the oil shortages of 1974 and 1979, are prime examples of this state of dependency. Socialism would seek to end this dependency by organizing each region to be as self sufficient as possible (especially in agriculture). This would be accomplished thru a simplification of the economic system by use of appropriate technologies and thru the abolition of all socially wasteful production.

Economic exploitation

So why does the capitalists get richer when they do no real productive labor, while the average factory worker who does work extremely hard all of her life will never even come close to becoming wealthy? The answer lies in the process of economic exploitation. One never gets rich by working hard; one gets rich by getting others to work hard for you. The capitalist purchases the workers' labor power to produce commodities and services. All commodities and services created by the working classes become the property of the capitalist enterprise they work for. These commodities and services are then sold at a price higher than the cost of production (ideally). The difference between wage cost and sale price is surplus value, otherwise known as profit. This profit the capitalist enterprise pockets as its own, even though the capitalists who own the enterprise did not work to add any value to the commodities and services produced. Capitalists do not create value; they can only redistribute it from the class, which creates it (the workers) to themselves. This getting others to do the work while you reap in rewards is nothing other than economic exploitation.

Socialism ends exploitation thru a generalized workers' insurrection, which seizes the enterprises from their wrongful owners. The workers without "professional" management then run these enterprises themselves. Federations of workers' councils would then transcend commodity production thru democratic planning of the economy. At that time, all goods and services would then be produced to meet human needs instead of manufacturing needs infinitely.

Economic crisis

The economic exploitation of the working class results in a continuous cycle of crisis and recovery within all forms of capitalist economy. Economic crisis is not the result of any state interference with the tax and wage structures as the Conservatives all so loudly proclaim. Rather crisis is inherent to the very nature of capitalism; since the beginning of capitalism crisis has existed.

Crisis is the direct result of the capitalist system's drive for profit and in its need to accumulate ever increasing amounts of capital to do so. Both of these drives of capitalism are satisfied by the system's exploitation of the working class thru the seizure of surplus value that was created by the workers' labor. Each enterprise, thru purchasing the labor power of its workers, creates more value than it pays out in wages. The difference between value and wages is surplus value (capital costs are really labor costs, i.e., they represent "dead labor"). This surplus value is the enterprises' potential profit, because it can only become a real profit only after it has been exchanged. Since its own work force cannot buy back all of the commodities or services it has produced, it must seek its exchange elsewhere. The problem with this is that other enterprises are also trying to turn over their surplus values. And because all enterprises pay out wages that are less than the values created, not all enterprises can turn over their surplus values into profit.

An enterprise can only turn a profit at the expense of another enterprise and at the expense of the workers of that enterprise (who are always the first to suffer from crisis). The enterprise can gain a temporary advantage over competing enterprises by lowering its costs of using labor by relocating to low wage areas, by lowering wage rates, by speeding up the production process, by using new labor saving technologies and by reorganizing the productive process. This causes the price of the commodities to fall since the amount of necessary value creating labor falls. This allows the enterprise to sell off its commodities at a lower price, thus realizing its surplus value as profit, which gives it an advantage over its competitors. But this advantage is always only temporary soon other enterprises will follow its example or they would soon go out of business. And yet in the long run this process creates an even greater problem for the system as a whole, in that, it creates even more values without a corresponding increase in demand (the value of wages always lags behind increases in productivity).

Crisis occurs when the enterprise is unable to turn over its surplus values into profit. This takes the form of a crisis of overproduction. The enterprise is unable to sell the commodities it has produced. The classic capitalist response is to cut back on production and lay-off a portion or its entire workforce. Thus workers are made unemployed, not for being unproductive, but for being too productive. They simply produced more commodities or services than the market could handle at the moment. By slowing down or stopping production the enterprise can create a shortage, which can act to its advantage (this allows demand to reach an equilibrium with supply). The crisis continues until the commodities that have been stockpiled have been exchanged. Then the enterprise calls back its laid-off workforce (unless they have been made redundant by new technology) and then steams full speed into its next crisis.

Exporting its surplus commodities to be exchanged in overseas markets can temporarily ease a crisis that is industry-wide or national. Thus a nation's prosperity can be bought by forcing an economic crisis upon another nation (remember all other nations must also try to export its surplus commodities to realize profits and that all nations cannot be successful in this). This can

clearly be seen in the relationship of the Northern industrial nations with the Southern "developing" nations. These nations are made and kept poor because we have exported crisis to them.

Historically, the major problem with this "solution" lies in the fact that other major capitalist nations are also trying to capture the same finite foreign markets. The struggle to gain markets and then to keep them has in the past resulted in world war. The First and Second World Wars can best be seen as a struggle between the various capitalist blocs over the division of the world market. In the present period war is most often the result of a colonized or neo-colonized nation trying to free itself from its state of exploitation and forced economic crisis. So we can see that the problem of crisis cannot be solved in the long run by exporting it and that the continued use of this "solution" can only lead to war.

Since the origin of crisis lies with the difference between wages and the surplus value created by labor. It has been suggested increasing wages could prevent that crisis. This is a most improbable solution to the problem of crisis, because it would result in a decrease in the amount of surplus value (profit) the enterprise would receive. The state may at times be willing to allow the working classes the right to increase its consumption (thru raising minimum wages, increased social spending or thru the creation of non-value producing jobs) to maintain or return to social stability, as long as, some surplus value remains for the capitalists to accumulate and turn into a profit. Though the state may be willing to try this route in order to save the system as a whole, the individual capitalist enterprise can be expected to fight this tooth and nail (short run profits are more important than long range survival). But even this "solution" cannot succeed in the long run as long as any surplus value remains, which has been exploited from the working class. As long as, the law of value prevails, crisis prevails. And if wages were increased to the full value produced, then surplus value would cease to exist. The disappearance of surplus value means that capitalism would cease to exist as an economic system (however, the mere absence of capitalism does not mean the existence of socialist economy; socialism is much more than the absence of capitalist exploitation). Also, it is extremely unlikely that capitalism would abolish itself just to resolve its crisis periods; after all it has been willing to put up with the cycles of boom and crash for centuries. In order to really solve the problem of crisis, capitalism must be abolished and it can be abolished only thru a subjective social revolution that ends economic chaos by democratic planning thru the workers councils.

The division of society into classes

Capitalist society, like all previous societies since the fall of communalism, is a class society. A class is a group of individuals united by their common interests within the economic order. Classes are formed out of the relationships of groups of people with their ownership and control of property. Some classes possess property or control it, while others do not. Those who possess property or manage it have all of the power within a society, while those who do not suffer powerlessness, economic exploitation and poverty. The formation classes, exploitation and poverty are the direct result of the ownership and control of property.

Socialism abolishes the class system by abolishing private property thru the socialization of private property. The haves and the have-nots cease to exist as separate classes. The oppressed classes in their struggle against capitalism abolish the capitalists as a class and in the process abolish themselves as a separate class. Socialism is a united community, a community without division.

The domination of the oppressed class by the capitalist class

Ever since the birth of class society there has been unceasing class struggle: slaves against the slave owners, serfs against the aristocracy, capitalists against the aristocracy, workers against the capitalists and today all of the oppressed against all of the oppressors. To prevent their rule of exploitation from being overthrown, the various ruling classes of history have always used its armed might, as well as, its ideological weapons against the lower classes. The ruling classes have never shown a lack of will to commit mass murder to protect its interests. It is only thru the threat of force, state terrorism and ideology that has so far preserved class rule.

Thru the intensification of the class struggle the oppressed organize themselves politically (and sometimes militarily) to overthrow capitalist class rule. They then dismantle the capitalist state (by reorganizing it into workers and community councils) and seize control over the economy (thru democratic planning by the councils). Socialism is a break with capitalist dictatorship; it is the unleashing of the powers of democracy.

Most of the base evils of capitalist class society arise out of the private appropriation, ownership and control over property. By property I mean land, natural resources and capital (and not one's personal possessions). When individuals possess private property it is only natural that they would use it to advance their own private interests, even if their interests conflict with the general interests of society. A good example of this would be that of a town in which there is just one major employing enterprise. Quite naturally the whole town would be economically dependent upon this enterprise. Then suddenly the enterprise announces that they are going to relocate to Indonesia to take advantage of the lower wage rates there. The enterprise then shuts down and in the process a town is destroyed. Clearly the interests of the people of that town and the stockholders of that enterprise are in conflict. A conflict that the right to the private ownership and control over property decides in favor of the stockholders. Socialism is a reversal of values, it seeks to put the interests of the community first (which is the first step towards the rebuilding of true community) and this can only be done by the abolition of the private appropriation of property.

However, when I speak of the abolition of the private ownership and control over property I do not mean that I seek its nationalization. State ownership and control would be and most clearly is, just as evil as private ownership and control. This can be seen by studying the effects of nationalization in the state capitalist nations and in the mixed economies of late capitalism. Fortunately the choice is not just between private and state ownership and control. Instead of either of these unpleasant options, I advocate the socialization of all property. By socialization I mean that all property is no longer owned, rather it is held and used in trust. The use of property is to be administered by those most affected by its use.

VI

The ruling class is only able to continue its exploitation of the oppressed classes thru the use of its institutional powers. All of the institutions of capitalist class society have two main objectives: to preserve the present class system and the present ruling class's position in this class system. Thus the struggle of humanity against the system of class and exploitation is, of necessity, also a struggle against all the institutions from which the system derives its power. This means a struggle against the state, the law, the system of education, sexual repression and oppressive ideologies.

The state

Ever since the rise of class society out of its communal origins there has been the state. The state is the main instrument of ruling class rule and it is used to maintain the continuance of their various systems of poverty and exploitation. The state is used to maintain the ruling classes domination over all other classes and to protect its wealth gained by its exploitation of the other classes. The interests of the ruling classes dictate to them the need for the state as all class-based societies constantly find themselves in situations of class war. Without the state all class societies would come crashing down like a house of cards (however, a new class based society and state would arise unless consciously rejected).

The state is, in essence, nothing more than a body of armed persons. Thru its police, secret police, agents, courts, prisons, executions and its military, the state exercises the ultimate form of violence: state terrorism. To ensure that the interests of the ruling classes are met the state creates a situation of permanent terror. It has never hesitated from using its violence against all those who would dare to oppose its interests. This is the reality of the state and of class war; this is the reality that must be transformed.

Contrary to the mythological beliefs of the Marxist-Leninists, the state can never be used to achieve human liberation. As the state is only used by one class to terrorize another class. But the social revolution abolishes the private ownership and control over social property that is the cause of the division of society into separate classes. With the complete socialization of the economy the class system comes to an end and with the end of class society the need for a state also disappears.

The law

Class societies base their misrule upon the foundation of law. Law is their justification for this system of poverty and exploitation. In their propaganda they claim that their law is based upon some natural justice, upon the "rights of man" or upon the will of God. In other words, laws protecting capitalism are to be considered as pre-existing and eternally unchangeable. This is nonsense. At one time what is now considered law did not exist. Communal society was self-governed thru custom and habit. Law only developed to protect the property rights of the emerging possessing classes and to justify their exploitation of the working classes. To aid in the laws acceptance the lawmakers wove laws concerning their own interests with those of newly codified communal customs. In this way the ruling classes were able to pass of their view on what is just, with what the working classes thought was just. Thus the ruling classes law is a sham, a fraud against tradition.

Laws change as the class nature of society changes, but always in the interests of the possessing classes, that is, up til now. As the consciousness of the oppressed classes awakes (in response to the rising tempo of the class struggle) to its oppression, it acquires a new sense of justice. This new sense of justice then comes into conflict with the ruling classes sense of justice. Out of this conflict comes the rejection of the old law and the rise of a new law of freedom. A new justice arises upon a new morality, a new custom and a new way of life.

The system of education

Thru its control over the educational system the possessing classes is able to effectively domesticate most youths into capitalist society and to accept exploitation as it is. Education and socialization thru the family system was enough to maintain the state of exploitation in an agricultural society, but this has been found to be insufficient for industrial societies. As capitalism's need for more knowledgeable and more domesticated workers increased (to work increasingly more complex machinery and to put up with ever increasing levels of alienation), the old methods of education no longer worked. So the state enacted universal education as the best method of achieving its objectives.

The main purpose of the schools is not to teach students about the world and how to live, but in teaching them to obey orders. In the pursuit of this end schools have come to mean: competition, submission to authority, stress, overcrowded classrooms, neglect of real knowledge, fear of failure and suicide. And to maintain these conditions there is within every school an authoritarian administration who uses the threat of violence, the use of violence and explosion to break the wills of its victims.

Education in a socialist society would cease to be a means of social control and becomes a means (but not the only mean) towards the self-actualization of every person. Schools would be decentralized, under locale control and linked with creative and productive activities.

Sexual oppression

The family is the basic unit of authoritarian conditioning (domestication), which is essential in the reproduction of domesticated human beings. This is vital to the state and to the economic order as both have need of a class of workers who would never dare rebel. And generally the family does the system a good job in the manufacture of obedient servants, but never completely (or else the very idea of rebellion would be entirely unthinkable). In this conditioning parents transmit the values of society, thru the use of force and fear, into their children. Parents reinforce these values by the creation of guilt and anxiety primarily by way of sexual repression.

The repression of children's sexual instincts is the principle means of all authoritarian conditioning. Repressing sexuality has become the main focus of all relations between parents and their children. Ideally, every expression of sexuality before the "morally" acceptable time, age, way or orientation is severely punished. To avoid further punishment the child learns to repress their sexuality. This repression is only partially successful (though total repression does occur) and repeatedly the child attempts to fulfill their repressed sexual desires. And when they do they experience anxiety and guilt (from fear of further punishment) as well as from really enjoying the sexual experience because of the repression of sexual knowledge. The frustrations brought about by this minor revolt against parental authority in turn paralyzes all other attempts all rebellion. The person who submits to this repression of natural desire is a person who would submit to the state and its system of poverty.

To undermine the power of the state and capitalism we must unleash a sexual revolution. What is the sexual revolution? The sexual revolution consists of those measures that would end the sexual repression of youth by their parents. It is the right of all youths to lead a healthy sex life according to the dictates of their own desire. It is the right to accurate sexual information that is given in a non-clinical and pro-pleasure manner. It is the right to free access to contraceptives for both sexes with no age restrictions or parental notification. And the right to private space and

to the time to engage in sexual activity without interference. This is what we mean by the sexual revolution; it is the right of youth to sex without guilt and anxiety. It is not nor was it ever the consumerization of promiscuity that has been heralded by the mass medias; capitalism's "sexual revolution" is a symptom of sexual repression, not its transcendence.

A sexual revolution is needed to abolish sexual repression. For the fight to have control over one's own sexual activity is a pre-condition for the fight to have self-management over all other areas of one's life. Without a sexual revolution the social revolution is made almost impossible.

Oppressive ideologies

Extremely important for the functioning of class rule is its use of ideology. Ideology is important, because it is very effective in hiding from us the very reality set before our eyes. It is used to prevent us from realizing and transcending the evils of capitalist class society. Therefore to break free from oppressive ideologies is an essential social revolutionary activity. And the first step is to expose them to the light of criticism. These are the major oppressive ideologies I will critique: consumerism, scientism, technocratism, sexism, heterosexism, racism, ageism and nationalism.

Consumerism is an ideology that has become the religion of the modern world and its worshipers can be seen everywhere (shopping malls are its sacred places and advertisements are its sacred texts). Whereas, in the realm of production the capitalist motto is to "accumulate, accumulate, accumulate!" within the sphere of consumption it is to "consume, consume, and consume!" The whole of capitalist propaganda, so-called advertisements, are nothing more than an inducement to consume. And the system has succeeded in this task beyond its fondest dreams. We are consuming far more than we really need and of things we have no natural need for. This is the basis of the capitalist mode of distribution to get us to buy according to artificially created needs. The more we consume the less we really live and the more we come under the control of alien lifestyles; our lives are scripts that others write and we in turn pay for. We must struggle against consumerism and in this struggle we must expose its function within the capitalist system. We can also choose to consume only according to our natural needs, engage in "proletarian shopping" and during the social revolution itself, seize control over the distributive enterprises to distribute goods according to need and not according to greed.

Scientism is an ideology that proclaims science as a god-like force upon which human salvation rests. So successful has this ideology been propagated that it is believed by almost everyone, including social revolutionaries who ought to have known better. This ideology holds the belief that all scientific knowledge is, of itself, good and that the accumulation of all scientific knowledge leads, of itself, to the creation of a progressively better world. Given the fact that science has also given the ruling classes the power to destroy the world and has given the enterprises the means to pollute and destroy the environment, this ideology is disproved by its very "success." While scientific knowledge is desirable its ultimate value can only be determined by the values of those using it. Science is not valueless; objectivity is a myth, an illusion of the intellectual caste. Nothing can be alienated from the values and the ruling ideas that dominate a society without a struggle and science has yet to do this (though the radicals in the various sciences are beginning this process).

An ideology closely related to scientism is technocratism, which is advanced by its elitist advocates. It advances the illusion that all of the problems caused by present technology can be solved in the future by new technology and the rule of technocrats unrestrained by democracy. Given that each technological solution merely masks the old problem and ushers in new ones, this ideology is pretty hard to believe. Technology and the technocrats cannot be a solution to the present crisis as they themselves are the basis of the present crisis. Social problems can only be overcome by social and democratic methods, and not by the quick fixes advanced by the technocrats.

Sexism is the ideology of all patriarchal societies. Capitalism did not invent sexism as sexism preceded capitalism, but capitalism profits from its continued existence. It makes use of

women's domestic labor without compensation and pays considerably less for women's wage labor as a whole (though women workers may individually make equal or even more than a man). Most often women must engage in both domestic unpaid labor and unpaid wage labor thus they are doubly exploited by this system. This is why the social revolution must also be a feminist revolution or it is not a social revolution at all.

Heterosexism is an ideology that classifies a person to inferior status and to a lack of human dignity solely because of their sexual orientation is towards persons of their own sex. This ideology is based upon a rather narrow view of human sexual nature and is closely related to the ideology of sexism. It maintains that only male-to-female sexual relations within the context of monogamous marriage (and then officially only for the procreation of children) are "natural." It ignores the existence of asexuality, bisexuality and homosexuality found throughout the natural order.

Racism is an ideology that justifies the privileges of one race over another. It has been used in the U.S. to make the oppressed white workers ignore their real oppression at the hands of the capitalists and shift their anger towards black and immigrant workers. This ideology causes us to fight each other and not the common class enemy. Racism must be exposed for what it is and exposed wherever it arises. A socialist society will never tolerate racism or racists no matter its origin.

The ideology most often associated with consumerism is ageism. This ideology justifies discrimination upon the basis of age and is manifested in this societies obsession with youth. Consumer society makes us all feel inadequate so that it can sell us products to mask the aging process. And once we are too old for their commodities to be of any help (even if they were of any help to begin with), they then seek to ghettoize and institutionalize us away from the rest of "youthful" society. Because the very presence of the elderly is a constant denouncement of consumerism's lie; no matter what we will age. Socialism would seek to restore the dignity of the elderly by celebrating aging as an essential phase of human development. The elderly would be deinstitutionalized and reintegrated back into larger society (no more elderly ghettos!).

Nationalism is an ideology based upon the belief that one's nation is naturally superior in relation to other nations and thus it is very similar to racism. It is used to shift the blame for capitalism's defects from the backs of our capitalist class and onto the backs of foreign peoples. And when its markets are threatened by other nations or revolutionary nationalism (Third World Liberation Movements are essentially attempts by locale capitalist classes to throw off foreign exploitation so they can exploit their working classes more freely), nationalism is used to trick us into supporting their wars. Nationalism is the fuel that leads us into raging fires of slaughter. A slaughter of the oppressed of other nations who are in the same situation as us, forced to fight the wars of the ruling classes. This ideology must be opposed by a rise in internationalist consciousness, the recognition that all of the oppressed people of the world are one and the same. So that the next time our ruling classes send us out to kill one another, they would be met by a massive refusal and social revolution.

Socialism is a return to community, but not to the community of the past. Socialist community is a worldwide community. Capitalism in its quest for a world market has destroyed for all time the barriers of time and space that has in the past made world community impossible. All regions of the world are now linked together by numerous inseparable ties. A world community is now possible and is necessary for the further development of humanity.

Since Marx the socialist movement has been very leery of all attempts to put forward the utopian element latent within any socialism. So critical has the movement been that utopia, the goal of socialism, has been completely ignored. While Marx may have been right to denounce those in his time who were creating exact blueprints of the future world, this does not mean we cannot envision today what socialism would be like and plan for it. If we do not know what we want rest assured we will never get it. So we can think about the future and plan for it, but we must never forget that it is the movement itself, thru its struggles, that create the new world.

Historically socialism has been associated with the drive for the unlimited expansion of the forces of production. The rationale behind this lies in the assumption that society could be progressively improved only by the growth of the industrial system and the way of life necessary for it's functioning. But today all who wishes too can see the error of this industrial-based socialism; the problems of industrialism have become all too known. Today technology seems to have escaped from all rational human control, it is now dictating to us and we are obeying its very whim. Runaway technology is pulling us along the path of increasing ecological disaster and towards the possibility of human extinction. It is also obvious that the oppressed peoples of the world today can no more take over the productive forces of capitalism and use them for social ends, than they can take over the capitalist state and use it for revolutionary ends. Socialism today stands for a complete break with the industrial system and its way of life (and death).

The basis for this transition can be found in the following minimum measures for a socialist society to be enacted during and immediately after the social revolution. This would not be complete socialism, rather it would be the basis for the building of a new way of life. The creation of utopia is an infinite process that each of the future generations can contribute too.

Self-management is the bedrock upon which all authentic socialism is built and without it, socialism would not exist. It is the extension of direct democracy into all areas of social life especially within the area of productive activity. This means we must set up workers' councils within every workplace whose delegates are workers elected to their positions by a general assembly of their co-workers. These councils would then be able to introduce various ecological and work reforms that would lead to an increasingly humanized work environment. The main objective of socialist production would be to produce goods that are needed, that would be safe to use, that would be safe to produce and in the shortest amount of time (so that the necessary workweek could be progressively reduced).

Instead of minority control by the capitalist class, a federation of workers' and community councils would democratically control the economy. Interactions between these councils would be the means of resolving the decisions about what is to be produced, how it is to be produced and how the goods are to be distributed.

Socialist economy is not the capitalist economy made democratic, rather it is a complete break from its logic concerning production and distribution. The aim of production under capitalism is to make a profit, while the aim of socialist production is to satisfy human needs

(necessary needs as well as those of pleasure and adventure). Over all this means a shift away from a militaristic economy to a social economy; a shift away from the manufacture of needs to the satisfaction of needs.

Society is not just a collection of individuals who make it entirely upon their own efforts, rather it is an organism made up of all its members. All individuals within society contribute to the functioning of that society and in its reproduction no matter what they do or not do. Therefore, all members of society should receive a minimum social wage regardless of the relative merits or demerits of their contribution or lack there of. This social wage would consist of:

- a. the right to communal meals
- b. the right to safe and livable housing
- c. universal social security, not based upon contribution
- d. universal unemployment insurance, not based upon contribution or previous employment and without a time restriction
- e. free health service
- f. an expanded and free mass transit system nation-wide
- g. a family allowance to all families with children
- h. universal and free daycare
- i. the right to a free education

Socialism would see the introduction of appropriate technologies for appropriate problems. The capitalist drive for accumulation for the sake of accumulation would not exist within a socialist economy. So the drive for bigger or newer technologies for its own sake and profit's sake is ended. From now on technology would be geared towards doing the job and in doing it in the safest way possible. And of course, all communities would have the right to reject the use of a technology if they so desire.

The progress of capitalism has been thru ever increasing the rate of centralization of production and power into fewer and fewer hands (the state capitalist systems are the logical outcome of this process). Socialism reverses this process to return control over production and power to the level of regions, communities and councils.

Socialist society would always be on guard against the dangers of bureaucracy. All administration must be the administration of things and never of people; nor of people being treated as if they were things. All council positions would be revocable at will by those who delegated them and delegates would be rotated frequently on principle. Strict limits would be set on a person's eligibility for continued public service and would be strictly enforced.

During the course of many years of struggle between the oppressed and their oppressors there arises naturally certain individuals who have more than just an instinctive understanding of the events unfolding and where those events might lead. And in the process, they unite with others like themselves and form revolutionary groups to aid in the generalization of the social revolution and to struggle against the ideological enemies of the revolution.

The revolutionary group is not a political party based upon a fossilized ideology. By this I mean they are not those organizations that have certain ideological interests that are in opposition to the ideological interests of other organizations. A revolutionary organization is not ideological nor can it ever be and still be considered revolutionary. The social revolution is a revolution made by human subjects, a movement of living human beings and is not the materialization of preexisting divine ideas. The future is to be built consciously as the situation deems necessary and must never be restricted by the weight of the present or of the past.

The revolutionary group is not a group of professional leaders. This revolution, if it is to be a social revolution at all, is to be a self-organized revolution organized by the oppressed themselves. It has no need of professional leaderships nor does it ever want them. For the interests of the leaders are often not the interests of the movement. If one leader can lead you into socialist freedom then another could just as easily lead you back into slavery. The oppressed must liberate themselves thru a democratic struggle against all oppression. Thus the revolutionary group is not a leadership group nor does it ever aspire to become one.

The revolutionary group is not a mass organization, though it can exist within other progressive mass organizations. It does not exist to recruit as many members as possible, rather it exists to provide the necessary reflection upon the struggles of the oppressed to aid in its struggle. So then the revolutionary group needs only those individual who are able to participate in its work as equals and as are necessary.

The revolutionary group is not a part of any armed struggle. All armed struggle is elitist by its very nature and is in direct opposition to the interests of the oppressed engaged in democratic struggle. It assumes that a small group can on its own achieve liberation on the behalf of the oppressed masses who are then reduced to play the role of passive spectators. Also, the question has been legitimately raised concerning the real motives of the armed group and whether or not the armed group is in the service of the state (or is a secret branch of the state's secret services. So the revolutionary group is not an armed group nor does it ever support them. This does not mean they are against the use of violence against capitalism, far from it. What they are against is violence not arising out of real class struggle; against violence being used by groups substituting themselves for the democratic organizations of the oppressed.

The revolutionary group does not issue a call for revolt to a certain class, to a certain oppressed group, at a certain time, to a certain land. For no one can ever really call a revolution in-Lo being, except to utter failure. Revolutions generally are spontaneous events arising naturally out of the conflicts spawned by oppression and are thus unpredictable. While revolutionary groups never issue a call for an immediate revolt, they always advance the idea that a democratic revolution (thru the electoral process or thru force if the other way is blocked by fraud or violence) is absolutely necessary to abolish the oppressions generated by capitalist class society.

What the revolutionary group is then is a group of oppression conscious individuals who theorize, analyze and distribute information concerning the struggles of the oppressed. The revolutionary group is to act as a communications center in the exchange of information between the various actions of the oppressed and other revolutionary groups. They are to provide information useful to the oppressed in struggle. Most of all, the revolutionary group is a temporary project as it dissolves itself as a group when and where ever the councils have risen to power. Thus it is to serve the growth of the democratic revolutionary process, but never is it to lead or control the movement. As ever the liberation of the oppressed must be a self-managed liberation.

The major task of the groups of revolutionaries is to win the battle for consciousness. This means we must bring about the conditions that would enable the oppressed groups to become conscious of their oppression as oppression and then to empower them to struggle against it.

Fundamentally, this is a task of education aimed at the individual so that they can begin to see the world as it really is; a dispelling of the illusions of capitalist ideologies from the minds of the oppressed. Revolutionaries are those members of the oppressed that have awoken to the realities of capitalist oppression and therefore see it as their duty to awaken others.

Contrary to socialist tradition, the struggle against capitalism is not just a struggle of the working class. For as capitalism diversified its modes of oppression, the numbers of oppressed groups who feel alienated and know that they are oppressed grows. Leading to a point of direct resistance across the entire spectrum of oppressed groups. Each group having different and conflicting interests, yet still being able to unite in the realization that in order to end their own special oppression: the abolition of the capitalist economy and state is required. Thus each group would undertake the path towards its own liberation, in union with other oppressed groups, to bring about the liberation of all.

On the Organization and Function of the Revolutionary Work Group

As capitalism abruptly moves from crisis to crisis, the struggle for human emancipation comes to the fore. 'The conditions of degenerating capitalism gives rise to the forces that could overthrow its rule (but also, to other forces that could salvage capitalism, and put off the future). These forces arise spontaneously out of the crisis to directly assault the rule of capital. However, up to now no crisis has ever been successfully concluded by a victorious social revolution. The reason being the mistaken organizational, and functional ideas, of those groups that the struggle gave rise to. Of course, it took the defeat of these groups, in past revolutionary situations, to show that these forms are not valid for the social revolution. History has now proven this beyond a doubt, and it is not the purpose of this article to engage in a polemic with the past. It is to offer an alternative organizational, and functional character, to those groups, which truly want to ensure the victory of our class in the present struggle against capitalism.

The first task is to jettison the obsolete terminology of the old workers' movement, and to demystify all of our language. The old terms obscure and mystify that which should be plain and easy to understand. Language should signify reality, and never should we distort reality to fit the mold of obsolete language. Some of the major offending words and phrases to be jettisoned are: bourgeoisie, proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat, workers' control, and intervention.

These French words for the capitalist class (bourgeoisie), and working classes (proletariat), abound in almost all revolutionary literature. Yet to the average person who reads them, without an interpreter of revolutionary rhetoric on hand, as words to skip over without knowing the meaning. Words are meaningless, if the average person with an average education cannot understand them. From now on if we want to say capitalist, or workers, just say so.

The worst phrase to ever infect the workers' movement is a graft from the capitalist revolutionaries of France. "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" was coined by Augusta Blanqui, and taken over by Marx after the defeats of 1848. No matter how one tries to make it sound democratic, by referring to Marx's reference that the Paris Commune was an example of a proletarian dictatorship, the fact remains it was a blanquist idea. And it means what it says, a dictatorship of a revolutionary elite in the name of the working classes. And the evidence indicates that Marx used the term initially in the blanquist sense, and only later democratized it, to salvage his past from criticism. Marx was only trying to maintain some consistency (which is not our concern), and for modern revolutionaries to continue his juggling act is utterly ridiculous. We do not want a dictatorship of any kind, we want only the formation, and rise to power of the workers' councils. This is the victory of real democracy, to call this "the dictatorship of the proletariat" as some do, is to spread confusion, and give ammunition to the capitalist ideologists.

What appears at first to be a good term to describe the goal that we want, workers' control, at closer look is found to be totally wanting. For workers' control can mean something other than the working class running the workplaces themselves democratically. As the experiences of the past teach us, workers' control can mean the rule of technocrats in the name of the workers. So instead of workers' control, we advance the idea of workers' self-management, which means what it says.

Then comes the term intervention, which is contradictory for a movement for class-consciousness. Intervention implies elitism, as the intervener comes from the outside to intervene into the movement. We are not on the outside, we are a part, of the movement, and thus we can only participate in it. And if we are participants, then why call our actions interventions?

These are only a few of the most sinister phrases, and one could cast a critical eye upon dozens more. And above all else, we must stop using theorists' names to define our politics. What defines our politics is our theory and actions, not the persons we borrow ideas from.

We must learn from history, so that we can go into the future consciously. The successes, and the failures of past revolutionary organizations, and situations are there for us to learn from. So we must learn from them, so as to not make the same mistakes eternally (which some are want to do). So that in the next crisis socialism is the result and not the continuation of class rule, as preceding situations have resulted in.

From the uprisings of antiquity, the uprisings of the Middle Ages, the middle class revolutions of the Enlightenment and the early revolts of the working class at the beginning of industrialism, we learn that humans cannot long suffer oppression without rebelling. Any society that uses any form of oppression is doomed to destruction thru revolution. This is the only historical determined fact, what comes out of the revolution is another fact, which is not determined.

From the Paris Commune, we learn that a revolution must break out of its locale, or it will be isolated, and destroyed. Also, that even capitalist nationalist enemies will stop fighting each other, in the face of a real social revolution, to put it down. The rule of capital is international, so the destruction of the rule of capital must also be international, i.e., a world revolution.

From the 1905 Russian revolution, we learn that the revolution breaks out spontaneously, without being ordered 'by any "revolutionary" party. Also, that the forms of workers' self-rule are to be the councils, and they too were formed outside of party sponsorship.

From the start of the First World War, we learn the truth about Social Democracy, which only the radicals in the party suspected all along. That the Social-Democratic Party is a part of the capitalist political machinery, thus nationalistic. The Social Democrats by voting for war credits proved beyond a doubt, that they were a capitalist party (though a party of a rising, new capitalist class),

From the second Russian Revolution of 1917, we learn that the truth of the capitalist nature of Social-Democracy again when the Bolshevik Party (a social-democratic party) seized power. The Bolsheviks rapidly defeated a working class revolution taking place simultaneously and installed itself as a new capitalist class. It maintained its rule thru sheer terrorism, thus setting the stage for the terrorism of Italian, and German Fascism.

From the failure of the Workers' revolution in Russia of 1917-18, we learn that the socialist revolution cannot succeed in a backward unindustrialized nation (though revolutions can occur). This lesson is important, as it has been confirmed over and over again, but still the lesson has yet to be learned by some. For still some honest revolutionaries insist that the Third world revolutions are socialistic. Yet the most the Third World revolutionaries succeed in doing is throwing out one ruling class, and replacing it with their own as a new capitalist class. So every revolution in the Third Worlds duplicates the Russian one, and a rule of bureaucratic terrorism is the result. The point to be made is this: the social revolution can only succeed in the industrial countries first; from there it spreads throughout the world.

From the failure of the German revolution 1918-23, we learn that parties must not be allowed into the councils. There the councils were subverted by the political parties, which handed power back to the capitalist state. The parties were able to do this because of their constant propaganda that the parties were the only way that the workers' could rule. Of course, not a party made of workers, but a party made up of middle-class professional revolutionaries. And thru the parties' previous battle for consciousness, they convinced the working class of this. The result was the defeat of the revolution. and the rise to power of the fascist reign of terror.

From the Spanish Civil War of 1936-39, we learn two distinct lessons. The first being that a social revolution can succeed against a hostile national army, and that it will fail, if you ally with any political party. The defeat of the revolution came years before the defeat of the Republic. It was defeated, not by the Nationalist army, but by the Stalinist, secret police, and the Communist Army units destroying the collectives, while the real revolutionaries were fighting at the front.

From the 1953, 1956, 1970, 1980-1 workers' uprisings in Eastern Europe we learn that socialist revolution is still possible, even in countries suffering under state-capitalist dictatorships. These rebellions show that the state-capitalist system rests upon an even shakier foundation, than private-property capitalism.

And lastly, from the abortive French revolution of 1968, we learn that revolution is still possible in the West. Also, we have relearned the bitter lessons of the opportunism of the left-wing capitalist parties.

This is, and can only be, a brief glance at the history of revolution, and the lessons we can learn from it. Many more important points can be derived from (these situation, but these are the more important ones: that revolutions break out spontaneously, political parties that work within the framework defined by the capitalist state are capitalist parties no matter how "revolutionary" their slogans be, these parties if followed will destroy any revolution that seeks socialism, that the forms of workers' self-management take the form of councils, and that the socialist revolution is still possible in both private property capitalism, and state-capitalism.

Since our goal is socialism, thru workers' self-management and the power of the councils, our organization, and, actions should be as pre-figurative to our goal as possible. The basic revolutionary organization is the autonomous work group, which is a part of the working class, working within it, instead of outside of it. It doesn't direct the revolution; rather it offers a vision of the future, so that spontaneity evolves into planned action by the class to reach it.

These groups are composed up of workers who have achieved a consciousness of the future, ahead of the rest of the class (who will become revolutionary spontaneously). They work to ensure that the revolution doesn't derail itself after the revolution has broken out. But primarily, they wage a battle for consciousness, for capitalist ideology is the dominant mode of thought, before a revolutionary situation could succeed, the battle for the consciousness must be won. It is towards these tasks that the work group must orient itself towards.

Capitalist ideology is the blinder that hides the reality before our very noses. The work group must work towards the exposure of reality, thru a critique of capitalism that could be confirmed, by appealing to locale reality. Exposure of locale oppressions will have a far greater effect upon changing consciousness, than the exposure of the crimes of capitalism in the Horn of Africa.

A vision of the socialist future is needed, to invoke as a comparison against the present conditions. It would serve as a guide in our daily struggles, so that we do not engage in any actions that might be counter to our goal. It has been said that anyone can criticize anything, but few can build. We must do both! Our critique must be linked to a vision of the socialist future that is realizable in the now, if we only act.

The work group is composed of revolutionaries, who are class-conscious members of the working classes. It is not a mass organization; rather it is a small group of practical theorists. There is no room for passive members; all should contribute towards the functioning of the group (either in production or distribution). Internal democracy must prevail, at this level consensus may be an option. Later, if the situation warrants it, the work groups that are autonomous may federate with each other to work on a larger project. When they do, each group would send delegates to a council of revolutionary work groups. Thus our organizational structure would reflect upon the type of society we wish to contribute in the building of.

The work group should work towards the forming of a regular press. Our ideas must go beyond the sphere of our personal contacts, if we are to succeed in the battle against capitalist ideology. And in this battle we must in particular fight the ideology of the Left-wing capitalists, the Communist Party, the Social Democrats, the Trotskyites, the Maoists, the Third Worldists, etc. Some way must be found to distribute literature free of charge; otherwise you are only going to be read by those who are already politicized. Large printings of tracts, placed just about everywhere, dealing with specific critiques, is one option (we could learn alot from studying the successes of religious groups like the Mormons in spreading their ideas).

And finally, we must discuss our ideas with our co-workers. This does not mean we I bombard them daily with the complete corpus of revolutionary theory. Rather, it means that whenever an opportunity comes up to talk politics/economics, at your co-workers initiative, then present your views, and take it from there. Never ignore a co-worker for their reactionary views, but don't pander to them either. Don't talk down to them or up to them, just state your ideas in the most understandable manner, in the shortest form possible. The aim of all of this is not to recruit, but to discredit the ideology of capitalism. To create a situation amongst your co-workers in which they no longer trust the official capitalist line. This in of itself is enough until a revolutionary situation breaks out which can then find fertile ground that you have prepared.

These thoughts on the organization and function of the work group are not meant to be exhaustive, or definitive. They are meant to be a theoretical contribution to the start of an even larger project: the dialectical transcendence of our theory, by object reality.

THESES FOR A NEO-COUNCILISM
(1983)

1

Neo-councilism, which I considered to be a Marxist-based Anarchism, is a direct result of the defeated French Revolution of May-June 1968. The May events showed how the social revolution could occur, but at the same time how it will fail, as long as, revolutionaries are addicted to the traditional ideas of revolution. For the events of May showed clearly to the present generation, the utter bankruptcy of the Leftist parties of opposition. As France stood upon the brink of history, the forces of capital pulled out of its bag of tricks: the spectacle of opposition. Clouding themselves with revolutionary slogans, the agents of capital rushed in, and took control over the movement, which was the death of the revolution. Thus the state capitalist parties of the Left directly aided the survival of capitalism in France, and in delaying the advent of world social revolution. As a result, serious revolutionaries began to question the role of the party, and of the state; they became critical of all hierarchies, both in their own groups, and in society as a whole. And as they searched for a way out of the impasse of Leftism, they turned to the past workers' struggles for both support, and as a base area from which to build a new movement. During this process, they discovered that they were not the first generation to be fooled by the spectacle of opposition, and it was then determined that this would never happen again!

2

Neo-Councilism is based upon the historical sources of libertarian revolutionary theory, combined with the lessons that have been learned from both the successes, and of the failures of past revolutionary situations. From such a base, we can then develop a practical revolutionary theory that can be realized by practice.

3

My philosophy is that of dialectical evolutionism.¹ Material conditions arise in connection with thought; thought arises in connection with the material conditions. The realization of thought demands action; the realization of action demands thought.

4

Neo-Councilists are not vulgar determinists, either in history or in economics. Though we can be assured that other societies will eventually replace late capitalistic societies, capitalism's replacement does not necessarily have to be the society that we desire. For even Marx and Engel, often accused of being economic determinists, recognized this when they posed the question: Socialism or Barbarianism? Now it is up to us to decide our own fates, to choose between socialism and barbarianism.

5

The kind of society that we want to help in the creation of, is by conception a classless one in which there are neither rulers, nor ruled. No government, no police, no prisons, no armies,

¹ See "Dialectical Evolutionism" dated July 1985.

or any forces of oppression. Alienation and wage-labour would no longer exist. Industrial and urban centralization would be reversed, to form a decentralized world. The distinction between city and the countryside would no longer exist. The population and the means of production would be rationally dispersed across the whole planet. The whole of the society would be based upon the principle: to each according to their needs.

6

Neo-Councilists maintain that the future society must be organized upon the basis of workers' and consumers' councils. The workers' councils, being the most advanced expression of workplace democracy to have arisen from the proletarian class struggle so far, is the first level of the new society. They are in essence the way forward away, from the administration of persons to the administration of things (and not the administration of people as if they were things). Within the workers' councils the workers themselves, at the point of production, decide the direction of future consumption through participation in the consumer councils.

7

Without a revolution in the relationship of the producer vis-a-vis the control over the means of production, any political revolution would be for naught. The aim of the social revolution is for the producers to gain control over the means of production, thus gaining control over their lives. Workers is what we want, not party nor state control.

8

The only solution to the present crisis is world revolution. This requires that the revolution is to begin in the advanced industrialized areas, and to then spread into the less advanced areas. For only with the technology of the industrialized areas, can libertarian socialism be built throughout the whole world.

9

The struggle against capitalism and its state is not just the activity of one special group. As capitalism has diversified its mode of oppression, the groups of individuals who feel oppressed increases. Leading to the point of direct resistance amongst the entire oppressed population. Each group being that which contains various, and often conflicting interests, yet still being able to unite in the realization that in order to end their special oppression: the destruction of the state, and capitalism would be necessary. Thus each group would then undertake the path to their own liberation, bringing about the liberation of all.

10

Within the historical revolutionary movement, there has been a tendency to forget about what we are trying to build, and to concentrate mainly upon the building up of the movement. This tendency can be traced back to the influence of a dogmatic Marxism which denounces as utopian any attempts to envision the future society. Yet can their insistence that we must wait until after the revolution, to even theorize on the future society, be anything other than utopian? The future society must be built, and to build one must have a plan. In order to create the future society we must, at the least, outline in theory its basic outlines. Of course, all such theorizing of

the future is not absolute, and will change as time goes on. Also, there cannot be just one conception of what we want or that which is best, for only than practice can we discover that which is right. And then practice we may discover that not one conception, but many are workable and compatible. So all conceptions must be given a chance. For the period of the social revolution will be a time of great social experimentation. Throughout these times two principles must be observed, these being the right of self-determination by individuals, and that no one can exploit the labour of others. The members of the future society must be allowed the right to choose their own paths; they are not to be forced into this or that new scheme. For we see that the freedom to experiment, is the freedom to be used to gain control over the totality of our existence.

11

The development of revolutionary consciousness, which is the awareness of the oppressed for the need of the social revolution, does not just appear out of nowhere. For revolutionary consciousness develops from the seeds of primitive revolutionary feelings, as expressed in the slave-peasant uprisings of the past, which then have evolved into the present level of consciousness. The idea of freedom is an innate part of the human condition.

The development of revolutionary consciousness proceeds from a lower level (random uprisings) to a higher level (planned action derived from a theoretical standpoint). This development is not a gradual even affair, like all other events proceeds in leaps, and bounds. So the revolutionary classes do not all develop it's consciousness at the same pace. For some sections become more advanced than others, and these sections then form revolutionary organizations. These organizations make it their duty, to raise the level of consciousness of the less advanced sections.

It is the function of the revolutionary organizations to raise the level of consciousness of the masses to it's level, and then to propel it far beyond. To develop a theory based upon the objective realities of the present society, and then to transform it's theory into reality thru action. To educate the less advanced sections in self-activity, which would lead to the creation of the workers' councils.

12

Amongst those who saw they advocate socialism today, are those who insist that the nationalization of industry, land, and services, is the essential foundation of socialism. With the globe covered with nations that have nationalized all or apart of their economies, without creating any real socialist, one would have expected then to have learned something from this by now. It can be suggested that they really do not want to acknowledge the fact, that nationalization creates State-capitalism for purely personal motives. As they aspire to be the new leaders of a State-capitalist revolution; they aspire to become the new state bourgeoisie. The act of nationalization means that the state will control all that which is being nationalized. As nationalization means the expansion of the state, instead of the withering away of the state, it conflicts with one of the main principles of Marxism. This being that an expanding state is the very anti-thesis to a state that should be withering away. Since the state, and not the producers would control the means of production, the working classes would still be alienated, and would still be seen as commodities. State appointed managers would use the same methods, that the present capitalists use in the extraction of greater amounts of surplus-value. Nationalization is the basis for State-capitalism, a different form of capitalism. Workers' control thru their councils is the means towards real socialism.

13

There does not exist anywhere upon this planet libertarian socialism. This includes both the USSR and the PRC (both before and after the death of Mao), which are socialist in name only. For they are state-capitalist nations that surround themselves with revolutionary sounding slogans, to form the spectacle of opposition. Within these nations a new class of bourgeoisie rose to power thru a bourgeois-style revolution. Taking over the productive powers of their nations, they as a class use their positions of power for personal profit. Within these countries all aspects of old-style capitalism remain in effect: the wages-system, the money form, surplus-value extraction, consumerism, taxation, etc. The state by having centralized power then creates centralized terror. All of which has nothing at all to do with libertarian socialism.

14

a. The triumph of the social revolution means the elimination of the capitalist modes of production and consumption.

b. Capitalism can only be eliminated when both the wages-system, and the money form has been abolished.

c. The existence of the wages-system and a money-based economy, means that the economy is still a capitalistic one.

d. The state, being an instrument of class rule, is controlled by the class who controls the means of production. Whatever class or section of a class that has obtained state power, while maintaining capitalistic economic relations, becomes co-opted by the economy, and then goes on to become the new state bourgeoisie.

e. If the economy is a capitalistic one, and if the state controls the economy, then the situation is called state-capitalism.

f. If the masses soon after the start of the social revolution do not move swiftly to abolish the wages-system, and the money form, then the situation will degenerate into state-capitalism.

15

Neo-Councilists have no interest in the reform of capitalism, for we want to abolish it. We have no interest in making capitalism more rational, or more ethical. Reformism is in practice, an appeal for state intervention to rectify a defect in the system. By appealing to the state, these reformists show their impotence. We must always remember that anything that the state grants today, can just as easily be taken back tomorrow. As Neo-Councilists, we maintain that only direct action applied by the oppressed at the source of the problem, can create any real permanent change.

16

In regards to technology, as a whole, it can be either liberatory or oppressive. The main determining factor being who's in charge. Under capitalism, in all its variations, it is oppressive, while after the social revolution it only becomes potentially liberatory. There are technologies that would be oppressive, and down right dangerous, no matter who was in control, and as such has no place in the future world. We will not worship technology for the sake of "progress," for it can lead you into the grave as well as out of it. At the same time we are not primitivists, and hereby reject such an option.

17

Neo-Councilists support the movement for total nuclear disarmament, however, we do not agree with the tactics being used, nor with the domination of the Left bourgeois parties over the movement. The state, being the criminal who has armed itself to the teeth in nuclear weapons, is being called upon by these reformists to voluntarily disarm itself. This can only be seen as a dead-end, for nuclear weapons are in the interest of the state to possess, and to maintain as the supreme weapon of mass terror. You do not negotiate with these terrorists, you disarm them with as much force as is necessary. In order to achieve nuclear disarmament the people themselves must arm, and then use their arms to forcibly disarm the state.

18

Neo-Councilists recognize that the unions, under capitalism, have lost all practical value, as far as, the revolution is concerned. Unions are directly apart of the capitalist ideological apparatus within both liberal and state capitalisms. The, are controlled by highly paid bureaucrats who are concerned only with the struggle to maintain their own jobs, and in maintaining the status quo. Unionism has become one of the major sources of reactionary ideology amongst the working classes.

The bourgeois parties of the Left are addicted to the theory, that appears to be in opposition to the rightist bourgeois attitude towards unions, of ousting the old bureaucrats, and taking over the unions. This theory has infected the whole revolutionary movement, and is entirely bourgeois in origin. These so-called oppositionists tell us that by taking over the unions, we can turn them from being supporters of capitalism into schools of socialism. This is utter nonsense as the unions are an essential part of modern capitalism, for the unions themselves are a legitimate avenue of opposition that the system uses to derail the real movement of opposition. Unions by their very structure cannot be anti-capitalist for they are founded upon the principle of "a fair days pay, for a fair days work." The unions sell their membership as commodities for the highest price the market will bear, and in return the buyer receives a work force that will not demand the end to it's alienation.

The struggle against capital is a struggle against all of it's manifestations and mystifications, so therefore unions must also be combated, as well as, the theory of revolutionary unionism. For in order for the social revolution to occur at all, new forms of workers' organizations must be formed. These organizations should not be organized on a craft, nor on an industrial level. They should be organized regionally comprising all workers both employed and unemployed. These organizations would take the form of workers' councils.

19

Self-management under capitalism is nothing more than a new tactic of capitalism, to trick the working class into exploiting themselves. As in the areas of the economy that the stockholders had abandoned as unprofitable, they have attempted to sell the workers their means of self-oppression (at a profit, of course!). Self-management cannot, under capitalism, be anything other than self-exploitation. Instead of self-management over a small section of the economy, we want workers' control over all production, which can only be accomplished thru a social revolution.

20

Under capitalism all elections are nothing more than mystifications. They merely give the illusion of change by the ritual of voting. Voting never changes anything and tricks the oppressed into giving their consent to the system when they loose. Voting is a fraud and, ss long as, some of us waste our time on this path; we shall never get around to the real tasks that we must perform. As Neo-Councilists we will have nothing to do with electionalism.

21

Religion is purely a private affair upon the level of the individual. We oppose all attempts to restrict religious freedom, as well as, the freedom from forced religion. The matter of belief is up to the individual.

22

All so-called "national liberation movements" are nothing more than a mystification of the deadly struggle between the imperialistic superpowers. Supporting any side in such a struggle, is in fact, supporting one imperialist power against the other. It is the supreme manifestation of the spectacle of opposition within the present potential revolutionary movement, and as such must be exposed as such whenever possible. The spectacle of opposition is the ability of the spectacle to choose it's own "anti-thesis". As the national liberation movements are in opposition to the present national ruling classes, they are influenced by the type of ruling classes that they are in opposition too. It is the ruling classes in power through it's policies and offences, that determines the reactions, and the defenses of it's twin. The opposition is always the lesser twin, until the time comes when the old ruling classes become inert. Then their twin arises to assume the power that it had been groomed for all along.

The terror of the government troops on it's people, gives the opposition the right to use terror. In doing so, the rebel forces learn the art of controlling populations for the time, when the now national liberation army would be called upon to maintain "revolutionary order," after it's victory. Terror gives rise to terror, which synthesises into just more terror--the Age of permanent terror,

23

As capitalism degenerates it creates the forces of its destruction, and therefore has to resort to even more tricks to maintain its power. Within the bourgeois democracies the spectacle of opposition has assumed the form of anti-fascism. Small bands of fascist are paraded around in order to draw the oppressed anger, thus diverting away the anger from itself. Thus antifascism is a bourgeois strategy to derail a potential revolutionary situation.

24

As to the road of action we reject the use of terrorism. The modern capitalist state is the source of all terror from it's more visible manifestations (the police, secret services, armies, prisons, etc.,) to it's invisible ones (state supported terrorist groupings). Terrorism is the essential state function used in the defense of degenerated capitalism. The terrorist in the present period is an agent of the state, and the foremost champion of capitalism.

25

- a. The work group is the organizational structure of revolutionaries

during the present period of degenerated capitalism. The work group is not a party organization, nor a public one; rather it is a group of conscious individuals having a common theoretical perspective combined with the ability to work together. It is an underground organization by design, for the trend of degenerated capitalism is towards state capitalism with its complete political dictatorship. The work group must be able to survive the transition intact.

b. The work groups are autonomous from outside organizations and from each other. They will only unite with other work groups in the pursuit of a common project. They will not form paper federations or alliances with any bourgeois grouping, no matter how radical they become in words. At all times they must be aware against the tendency towards the formation of internal domination, and of the formation of cliques.

c. The work group is not an organization of professional leaders. We see ourselves, not as the leaders of the social revolution or as the core of a future vanguard party, but rather as individuals who want to participate actively in the social revolution as participants. At the present time this activity consists of establishing the theoretical justifications for revolution, combating the various bourgeois ideologies that have infected the revolutionary movement, analyzing the past revolutionary situations, and then learning from their mistakes.

26

We, as Neo-Councilists, recognize the importance of the military side of revolution. We call upon all revolutionaries to learn basic military tactics, and the use of weaponry. To many of us have never even shot a rifle, this state of affairs must end! We cannot wait until after the revolution has started, to learn the art of war, or to build the basis for our defense. We must form libertarian militias wherever we are, just as the ultra-right has been doing for years. These groups are not to be seen as the catalysis for the starting of the revolution, but as the nucleus of a system of self-defense.

27

Revolutionaries do not make the revolution; the breakdown of capitalist society will do that. Neither do we speed up the timetable of the revolution for revolutions only occur when the masses find it impossible to continue to exist in the old order. Conditions force the masses into a revolutionary situation, and this is where we enter in. Our tasks are to clarify the situation, and to point out the way forward out of the impasse of degenerated capitalism.

NOTES ON THE CHINESE STUDENT
DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

1

Now that the bureaucrats of the Peoples Republic of China have crushed the student movement for democracy (in a hail of gunfire and extra-judicial mass executions), it is time to critically assess the movement.

2

The first image that comes to mind upon reflection is the Cultural revolution of the late 1960's. And upon an even deeper look I find that the two movements share more than at first meets the eye. Both movements were youth movements against the bureaucracy. Both movements were a manifestation of an internal power struggle in the bureaucracy that they were against. Both movements were used by a fraction of the Communist Party to defeat its opponent. The only difference lies that in the first cultural revolution the Maoist faction won its fight and the present one lost. And yet even the object of the fight was the same for both revolutions: Deng's faction.

3

Deng's faction lost its struggle against Mao in the first cultural revolution, winning only upon the death of Mao. Being the victims of the first, they were determined not to lose again. While at first they seemed powerless against the rising democracy movement, they were organizing their power for the death blow against the movement.

4

While the media attention kept the student movement in the world spotlight, the ensuing spectacle also masked the movement of the bureaucracy against the students. Caught up in their own created image, the students became victims to that very image. Revolution by videotape is no match against counter-revolution by machine gun and tanks.

5

The student movement represented a move by a rising new class of technocrats to assume state power. Its victory would have brought China no closer to democracy than it is now in the throes of counterrevolution. The rule by experts is not democracy.

6

A question must be asked, "Where were the councils in all of this, if this was truly a social revolution?" To answer this question is to cut right to core. No social revolution happened in China, the student movement for democracy was only a public and bloody manifestation of a bureaucratic power struggle.

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