



What is to be Done Now!

I

Through all the periods of human history there have been rulers and the ruled – slavery, serfdom and capitalism – the exploiters and the producers. And among the persons that make up those two classes there are persons in between and beneath them.

A fundamental tenet of Marxism is that all class-divided social systems are dictatorships; one class dominates the others. Communism, or any egalitarian social system, is a society without class (caste or religious) boundaries. Over the course of human historical development kinship and religion, along with economy, occupied a varying basis of the social structure. With the advent of capitalism political economy became the core determinate of the social world that people lived in. Thus, if we choose to change a society in which we serve as agents for the enrichment of others, then it is the political economy which must be removed and replaced.

Yet knowing the basis of a free society does not mean acceptance of a viable solution if one lives under a regime that will to a greater or lesser extent punish those that subvert the foundation principles of their system. The frank expression of what one knows to be true is often reserved by those unwilling to accept the risk of public exposure for private discussion among trusted friends. Outwardly they will go with the flow which is a mixture of possible reforms confined to the safe limits of what the ruling ideas, usually formed around 'human nature', will allow. Recognition of faults should mean active public involvement with the source. After all, what's the sense of knowing anything if we don't live what we know?

Instead many live in times that can be likened to a not so funny version of *Groundhog Day*; one in which people awaken to a world that is increasingly perverse and inhumane yet still must be perceived as the best that is possible in order to effectively live within it. They experience a daily struggle to redesign an appropriate personal reality until it is made to fit with the latest dictates. It is critically important that we know whether this conduct has become an unconscious fixed form of social madness, or is it a more or less willful way to ensure a safe existence.

II

Fetishization, mystification, false consciousness, are all ideological terms found in Marxism that are used to describe how the ruling class both affirmatively, and by the intrinsic nature of capitalism, sufficiently dupe, or at least confuse, the masses to peacefully maintain their quiescence.

The commodification of human labor power as a source for profit and capital is the conversion of a useful abstraction (human labor power) into a thing for sale. Within a market economy commodities, labor power (along with its fetishized source) become legitimate objects for sale and profit. And further, the capitalist as owner of the means of production from which society obtains useful goods and services is presented as the ultimate producer. There would be nothing without the exploiter, thus, exploitation is justified.

This inversion of reality, a mystification because clearly labor power and worker are the source of all wealth, permeates bourgeois society and its constant repetition from seemingly many different sources tends to generate a false consciousness in the minds of many to the extent that its acceptance means that some of the exploited are unable to even grasp the fact that they have been victimized.

Fortunately an inversion of reality is an ideological construct which is constantly undermined by real conditions. Workers directly involved in the production of commodities and related services know that *they* are the source of their employer's wealth, and that the main function of that executive class is to maximize the rate of exploitation and not to provide for the needs of humanity. Being the core

component of a social system's political economy also makes the working class the liberating force in any revolutionary struggle to change it. They are the revolutionary class that has the means to carry with it all those other than the exploiter class.

Capitalists are so fearful of workers power that their mind control experts have attempted to redefine workers out of their class and into the middle class, hoping they will be so politically naive as to think it an honor and a privilege. Another scheme is to claim that most manufacturing, the epitome of what the working class performs, is now done abroad. No factories, no workers. Actually less than 15% of available goods are imported. A prominent sociologist (E.O. Wright) who has done a great deal of research on class from a Marxist perspective determined that 67% of Americans qualify as working class (worker and family dependents, retired). This of course includes non-profit labor, like school teachers, sanitation and postal workers, that provide essential services most deem as too broadly necessary as to be subjected to the profit motive. As for robotics and the like, they increase the rate of worker production and never will be a replacement for a class.

But there are also those who are in government, corporate sponsored think tanks, certain sectors of academia, mainstream media, and many more of the like, who sell, not their labor power, but their minds (along with their being) to promote the ideas of the ruling class. Almost all of the information that is intended to educate the general public on what is happening in the world and their lives comes from people who have sold for a hefty sum their power of independent thought. They are the infectious germ that lays the groundwork for the false consciousness said to be the cognitive condition of most Americans.

But if those as a class with direct experience of the exploitation process can really detect friend from foe, which class is their enemy, why is their displeasure not frequently made manifest? It is because such practical minded people who work in unison in order to get the job done know they cannot reverse their state of oppression without acting as one, and that takes organization which the ruling class uses all its oppressive tools to keep from forming. Individually the only safe way they can express their displeasure is in the negative, by getting the most out of work by giving less of themselves, by shirking their civic duties, or by throwing a spanner into the system by selecting anybody outside of the mainstream as political leaders. In this state it is little more than an expression of annoyance. But with the addition of a unifying cause annoyance will become class consciousness, class struggle, and hopefully, much more.

III

The lone successful socialist revolution has been presented as the model for future socialist revolutions. But the collection of factors accumulated over a short period of time that contributed to the success of the Bolsheviks were so rare that anything like it cannot be expected to reappear. Russians experienced the devastation of WWI, and the collapse of a centuries old Tsarist autocratic state. Out of that disorder a very weak bourgeois provisional government was established. It along with a general that had been part of the government independently attempted to eliminate the communist threat, and both failed. Therefore the Bolshevik leaders knew prior to November 7th that they were at least as strong as their adversaries. If a revolutionary movement finds itself with such favorable conditions, then by all means get on with the insurrection, otherwise the movement will ready itself for the inherent advent of capitalist crises to create an opportunity for change.

Marx and Engels not only wrote about the system they wished to overthrow but were active participants in wars they hoped would make real the objectives they were writing about. The wars in Germany in the late 1840's were aimed at overthrowing a reactionary feudal dominated regime. Existing along with it was a well established bourgeoisie and working class. The workers movement united with their direct exploiters because that class was by comparison progressive. History has given us many such examples of the weaker party joining with a natural enemy and then being shocked when it suddenly turns on them and unites with its now very concerned natural ally and fellow parasite. From this learning experience the founders of modern communism moved on from movements that relied on class collaboration as a helpful assist for revolution.

A revolutionary movement begins with a founding cadre and a basic statement of principles. They will build their organization by involvement with worker and progressive actions. Open internal discussion will filter out those with major opposing views. Today it is a common practice for Marxist/leftist groups to despise each other more than their ostensible enemy, and those members that left to join

another group as something even worse. Dare not emulate the cultish shenanigans depicted in *The Life of Brian* unless one enjoys being an object of hilarious ridicule. People will come and go and perhaps come back again. It is senseless to make much of this because it's impossible to know in advance the effectiveness of a comrade. There is a sort of safety in a 'revolutionary' cult. Instead of fighting the enemy the leadership fights within its organization for the purity of their revolutionary doctrine as a means to reinforce their domination of the political cult. The ruling class has no concern for such isolated non-threatening groups. Open internal criticism of every sort is predicated on people having different viewpoints. All that is required is agreement on basic principles. Participation in a revolutionary situations will sort out and affirm the correct course of action. Garibaldi said he trained his troops by having them face the enemy. It is the same for revolutionaries.

Those organized on the Bolshevik model will have a full time core leadership. There is something not quite right in calling oneself a professional revolutionary. It is so petty bourgeois and careerist and all the more unwelcomed because those professionals are usually radicalized youth from the middle class with free time and means to rise to the top. A radicalized petite bourgeois may understand and take the side of the working class but they are rarely able to feel and act as a worker. Marx wrote of professional revolutionaries in a review of two works by one *Chenu* who was a revolutionary conspirator in the French 1848 insurrection. The leadership consisted of one or a few conspirators who advanced their cause through a team of professional revolutionaries (*Chenu*). Their job was to recruit proletarians to fight the battles while at the same time gathering useful intelligence about their enemy.

Marx's evaluation of their politics: *It need scarcely be added that these conspirators do not confine themselves to the general organizing of the revolutionary proletariat. It is precisely their business to anticipate the process of revolutionary developments, to bring it artificially to a crisis-point, to launch a revolution at the spur of the moment, without conditions for a revolution. For them the only condition for revolution is the adequate preparation of their conspiracy... They leap at inventions which are supposed to work revolutionary miracles... revolts which are expected to be all the more miraculous and astonishing in effect as their basis is less rational. Occupied with such scheming, they have no other purpose than the most immediate one of overthrowing the existing government and have the profoundest contempt for the more theoretical enlightenment of the proletariat about their class interests.*

As Marx notes, *Chenu* was involved in overthrowing a regime, not a system, hence the use of the proletariat as an instrument for the benefit of the leadership, and only secondarily for their class interests. His task was difficult enough but pales when compared to system change. Failures are to be expected and a well organized and led revolutionary organization must be prepared for rapid learning and change.

IV

A Marxist political organization will not only follow a dialectical approach to gather knowledge of historical developments useful for its purpose but also to create from them a plan, a course of action. A profoundly complex historical process brought human material and social life to where it is today. Over a lengthy period of time there occurred a complex dialectical blending of every conceivable objective and subjective interchange, grouped and blending within and between many categories of relationships and with directional movement the result of asymmetrical relations. In our age it is political economy which is the dominant driver of dialectical entities. But this is not the base-superstructure Stalinist perversion of dialectical materialism (*Diamat*). Political economy powers movement and direction, historical development, within which it determines and is determined by all that is encompassed. It may be likened to a couple on a dance floor. One partner leads but where it is and where it will be is as much the function of the other partner.

The purpose of one small paragraph on the dialectic is to establish it as something completely different than the form of reasoning that prevails at the present time. The dialectical movement of history is fundamentally based on class conflict. Class refers to the social function of a large group of individuals. Much like a large army on an attack doesn't break down if a few soldiers desert, a class will maintain its social role in spite of individual movement among classes.

Lukacs in his *Ontology and Social Being* provides a succinct account of the dialectic with emphasis on Hegel's contribution to the Marxist tradition "...for in this present chaos of ingeniously distorted, superficial reductionism and falsely 'profound' theories, the renovation of Marxism that is needed

requires a well-founded and founding ontology that finds a real basis for social being in the objective reality of nature, and that is equipped to depict social being in its simultaneous identity and difference with nature.” For an accessible diagrammed snapshot of what a complex dialectical system would look like, check out Carl Ratner’s, *Macro Cultural Psychology: A Political Philosophy of Mind*.

Clearly an oppressive ruling class wants nothing to do with a method of reasoning that convincingly proves it to be largely responsible for negative social conditions. To evade blame for those conditions the rulers use their ideological dominance (Marx – the ideas of the ruling class are the ruling ideas) to promote the use of a highly reductive analytical mode of reasoning where the wholeness of real life can be shattered into tiny meaningless components and then redefined and reconstituted into a safe form that has isolated reasoning from reality. At that point it goes public and is used by the thinking bourgeoisie as a false basis for discussion.

One-sided objective and reductive analytical reasoning has proven to be very effective in the physical sciences where knowledge is gained through a close examination of entities at the atomic and sub-atomic level. The great physicist John A. Wheeler in his autobiographical, *Geons, Black Holes and Quantum Foam: A Life in Physics*, illustrates in a personal account the hazards of extending his form of reasoning from mixtures of inanimate objects to the living complexity of a human society. Wheeler studied in Germany, knew German, and was close to the many great German scientists. After the accession of Nazism he was an ardent supporter of their rule basing it on his belief that the major problems in German society were derived from its high degree of damaging disorder. The Nazis provided order, therefore Nazi rule was beneficial. He stubbornly defended his belief deep into the Nazi period, embarrassing his friends and family, until the evils of Nazi rule could no longer be ignored. He made no excuses for his belief, not even to claim ignorance. In fact he says he always had a great interest in history and had read much in that field, yet his belief was not only wrong but shockingly stupid. That being said he was still a brilliant scientist who accomplished a great deal in his area of expertise. He even dared to study the most far out reaches of quantum physics (*Quantum Foam* in the title of his work is a term he created for the study of a field so at the fringe of quantum physics that others avoided for fear it would make them seem slightly crazy), yet that willingness to take risks made him appear a fool when he delved into the far more complex artifacts of the human created world. He also didn’t learn much from his mistake. After the use of atomic weapons most atomic scientists refused to work on the development of hydrogen bombs, but Wheeler, after much soul searching, was able to convince himself of its necessity and joined Edward Teller’s group.

The analytic method is necessary and effective in the study of the physical world even with the risk of our Wheelers, or more recently, our Crick and Watson (*discoverers of the DNA structure*) expressing their horrid narrow minded stupidities. The analytical reasoning derived from science begat an analytical philosophy which has become the main defender of the status quo against the revolutionary implications of the dialectical method. It cleaned up the natural scientific approach so as to avoid the rank idiocies that physical scientists are too naive to notice, and then applied it to our human social system. There are even some philosophers and social scientists who claim to be analytical Marxists though the joining of these two apples and oranges can only result in an anti-Marxist discourse.

Analytic Marxists will make a close study of a work by Marx, examine its components as would a physical scientist study atoms, genes, cells, etc., and seek to discover any flaws or errors. And when they think they discovered one they now have the authority to alter everything connected to that error which often means the whole of Marxism. Almost all of the analytic Marxists are academics and their intellectual perversion of Marxism rarely permits them to maintain the revolutionary core of Marxism. And so they sadly remain steadfast supporters of capitalism while hoping to gradually change it for the better in the distant future. The foolishness of this form of reasoning produces results much like that of the innocent physicist as social scientist John Wheeler. If they feel they have discovered, let’s say, a flaw in Marx’s tendency for a decline in the rate of profit, what does that have to do with Marxism taken as a whole? Do they now want to say that the vast wealth of the capitalists is justly their legitimate earnings and does not derive from the exploitation of the productive working class? Or are the invasions by powerful capitalist nations on the weaker for the exploitation of resources during which millions are killed now legitimized? Of course not. The truth revealed by analytic Marxists is that while presenting themselves as brave critics of the system, their spineless excision of Marxism’s revolutionary core ensures steady employment as the bourgeoisie’s pet radicals.

Another version of reformist Marxism is that derived from Gramsci’s writings. Gramsci was a founder of the Italian Communist Party in 1921. When he learned that Trotsky, following Marx and Engels, opposed Lenin’s surrender to a soon to be defeated Germany and ripe for a socialist revolution,

because communism cannot be maintained and developed in one country, Gramsci called Trotsky's political orientation "Napoleonism, mechanical materialism". Gramsci believed that revolutionary insurrections were only possible in backward nations. Advanced capitalist states were too complex for those to succeed. Russia had its successful insurrection. It should build on that until the success of his alternative approach for economically advanced nations, which was based on what he believed to be the relative independence of the state. This meant that a revolutionary organization could advance its interests by taking advantage of the necessary free spaces within democratic bourgeois rule.

Gramsci's teachings have generated a welter of non-revolutionary social democratic reformist organizations. Bourgeois democracy differs from one man rule or an oligarchy in that the various competing streams of capitalist interests have agreed to regulate those interests in unitary (democratic) fashion through a powerful state apparatus that will advance their interests while protecting their rule. The relative independence of the state only relates to the varying interests of the capitalists. Its apparently broad electoral policy, and the sometimes public squabbles among bourgeois factions, makes the system appear to be a genuine democracy to anyone unaccustomed to thinking. But to the rulers, it's all insignificant child's play. There is no risk to their entrenched rule. The oppressed has their subservience disguised in the act of voting for a candidate who will not be in any position to serve their class interests, and who are in any case acknowledged supporters of capitalism. And if the capitalist control of the electoral process should weaken they will create an artificial crisis to justify the purging of dissenters.

The two major impediments to the application of the Marxism of Marx are the Bolshevik Revolution which by cutting revolutionary corners led to its slow death while leaving a trail of toxic baggage that must be cleaned up in order to start again from scratch. The other is evolutionary socialism which requires a multitude of transformations from within the bourgeois order which will degrade its cause to meaningless hot air.

V

Marx's great body of work can be divided into two categories. One a close analysis of the internal workings of the capitalist system (and to a lesser extent earlier systems), and the other a broader real time examination of the system as it is lived in. Following the rule of his famous 11th Thesis on Feuerbach, *Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point, however, is to change it*, the most vital area of Marx's work for our purposes is how he and Engels sought to change the world and what they managed to accomplish.

The most common stupidity said about Marxism is that it predicted a revolution that would overthrow the capitalist system of exploitation and mass murder and replace it with a social system based on, to use Marx's preferred term for communism in his later writings, *a free association of producers*. That as yet hasn't happened. An adjunct to the preceding is that the one initially successful Marxist revolution eventually failed.

With respect to the Bolshevik Revolution, its failure is explained in earlier writings and shown to be what is to be expected if the conditions for its success are not fulfilled. As to the enthusiasm in the many writings of Marx and Engels for the coming revolution, they were not only theorists of revolution but practical fighters for their cause. Class warfare is similar to other type of war, its leaders encourage their warriors to go all out in their efforts to defeat the enemy. Doing so is their best chance to achieve success. Defeat in any type of war cannot be said to be caused by the participants on the losing side having their objective ennobled so that they fight at their best.

Unlike the analytic or Gramsci mode which are fundamentally based on the mind's reasoning with any doing very much subservient to it, the dialectical method gives at least as much authority to the doing. Marx and Engels were prominent leaders in two major very active revolutionary movements.

The League of the Just was formed in the 1840's. It merged with the Communist Correspondence Committee in 1847, whose major leaders were Marx and Engels, just before the European wide worker uprisings. Following the subsidence of the revolutionary upsurge there was a period of retrenchment and reorganization as many revolutionary leaders, including Marx and Engels, were expelled from revolutionary battlegrounds. But other leaders insisted upon a kind of permanent revolution regardless of the fundamental change in material and practical conditions. This caused the League to split and it was dissolved in the early 1850's. It is worth noting that the division caused by revolutionary idealism was similar to that of some Bolsheviks in the early 1920's. Bukharin in

particular called for permanent revolution following the catastrophic series of defeats in Germany culminating in 1923 when the best opportunity came to nothing. Trotsky, also an advocate of permanent revolution but understanding it in the same sense as Marx, said that favorable conditions had passed and that senseless revolutionary actions would lead to discouragement and further damage to their revolutionary objective. Bukharin's political attitude was closer to anarchism in which continuous revolutionary activity is expected to light a fuse and lead to another revolutionary upsurge. In any revolutionary period it is essential to be able to acknowledge defeat and relegate revolutionary enthusiasm to a period when its use is justified.

The First International was established in 1864. Its political orientation was significantly different than that of the Communist League. Any pre-existing organization, or individual, may join the International providing that they agree to the principles stated in its founding charter, and perform the duties required of a member. The purpose for its founding was the replacement of the capitalist exploitation system with a proletarian socialist democracy. A precise program wasn't detailed in the charter other than to agitate among the proletariat to attract them to their cause. There also was no communist requirement and the International consisted of many political strains: anarchist, positivist, syndicalist, idealist, etc.

The International grew steadily in Europe and the US reaching the peak experience of its existence during the Paris Commune of 1871. It is often written that the leaders of the Commune were communists, which would be true by definition because what they were leading was created as a commune, but not true if meant to attach Marxism to the leadership. Marx and Engels praised the communards for their courage while also criticizing them for serious strategic errors. Shortly after the insurrection was victorious in Paris reactionary forces attempted to regain control of the city and were defeated. They then retreated to Versailles where they formed a government to reestablish the old order throughout France. Its first objective was to form a strong armed force to defend themselves and destroy the Commune. Initially they had little success as National Guard forces in unoccupied areas of France would not join them. Only when the Prussians released prisoners of war directly to Versailles did they have the capacity to defend themselves. During that interval communard forces could have easily driven them out of France and at the same time spread the cause of the Commune throughout the nation. Instead they remained behind the barricades of Paris. The Commune was doomed once Prussian forces encircled and laid siege to the city.

The demise of the Commune had a ripple effect on the International. Because it was identified as the real, and/or intellectual, leadership of the Commune it was suppressed by reactionary forces. Membership alone was enough for imprisonment. The International was also undermined from the inside by Bakunist anarchists that found it convenient to take over sections and run them on anarchist principles. Marx and Engels left to return to their theoretical work and the International faded away in the early 1870's.

VI

Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky had basically the same scheme for a revolutionary seizure of power. First the strengthening of an organization created for that purpose, and then its setting in motion when the weakened state of its enemy made the success of an insurrection possible. While such a program is still theoretically possible, in practice it would have little chance of success. The enemy has far more resources to resist a direct assault in force, as well as the means to prevent its development. I believe that Luxemburg outlined the best model for a revolutionary seizure of power that would be feasible for present conditions. But first a couple of often cited terms must be clarified.

It may have been a translation problem but the term 'collapse' is often found in her writings where one would normally read 'crisis' or the like. Capitalism will never collapse on its own like an ancient building. It has a living force keeping it erect and until that force is removed it will always require an opposing intervention to effect its demise. Another term that is frequently tied to Luxemburg is 'spontaneously' which many anti-communists dishonestly find no other meaning than 'something from nothing.' Luxemburg associated the term to the many worker uprisings in Russia that suddenly appeared without any organizational planning. But they still did not come from nothing, they were driven by something real; class conflict and struggle. Like the sudden appearance of democratic working class soviets (councils) in Russia in 1905 and 1917 which brought down the centuries old Tsarist autocracy, she saw that it was possible for an established revolutionary organization to transform such local pre-revolutionary surges into a national and international revolution.

Late capitalism has seen such mass rebellions of the discontented with increasing frequency. It is also notable that they often inspire and encourage similar actions in other nations, sometimes only days or weeks following the initial outbreak. This demonstrates that the fundamental identity of a capitalist nation state is not language, its particular history and culture, etc., but rather its political economy. Capitalism affects all those under its rule in basically the same manner, the flavor or style of its domination differing according to the degree of its state of development and unique national qualities.

In 2011, three years after the slump and two years after it was formally declared over, the US experienced a massive wave of protests which soon spread to a number of nations. It was called the Occupy Movement because it began as an occupation of Wall Street which was seen as the source of the financial crisis. The protesters, mostly youths, denounced the 1% and for the most part this spiritual uprising went no further than expressing disapproval. But what was significant was the understanding that freedom and democracy was a lie and that America was a de-facto dictatorship ruled by a tiny percentage of capitalists.

As I write there is a similar disturbance in France that has gone on for 11 weeks. It began as a specific local protest against a high tax on fuel and spread throughout the nation and abroad when others came forth to express their displeasure with capitalism. Eleven years after the slump the slump continues, and the lies of the media that it is over generates more anger than belief. Here we have the worldwide rise in populism where people are attracted to anyone on the outside in order to show their contempt for those on the inside. These aimless uprisings will go nowhere unless there is an organized revolutionary movement that can channel the force of their displeasure with the system to an understanding that the only solution is to change the system.

Economic grievances can also be combined with condemnation of reprehensible political acts, such as the American criminal war against Vietnam and the many more that preceded and followed. They can also occur when a capitalist economy is supposedly thriving, as in France May 1968. Two weeks before that event began DeGaulle gave a speech lauding conditions in his country, and that there was no chance for a repeat of disturbances like those during the period leading up to the termination of France's rule in Algeria. What began as an incident of police brutality in the clearance of students from the grounds of the Sorbonne led to a massive uprising of the working class which would have brought down the system had it been under revolutionary leadership.

Some may think that the only way a revolutionary organization can be formed in present times is for revolutionaries to hide their political beliefs in order to not scare off possible members. That is not true. If an organization uniting acknowledged communists and others supporting the removal of capitalism could be formed in 1864, it would be absurd to say that the capacity of human intelligence has regressed since then. Marx and Engels were not part of the central structure of the First International (they were corresponding secretaries) yet they were still the dominant figures because they had a defined well reasoned course of action that if implemented would raise the human condition from thralldom to freedom. The vast majority of Americans and peoples of the world have no love of capitalism and do not hesitate in expressing their feelings. The thing is, that's all they do, feelings aren't quite up to thinking let alone doing. There is rarely any political understanding as to how current conditions came to pass, nor any feasible way to change them. The anger required to be motivated for the necessary changes is internalized, and yet at times it will explosively express itself when a social threshold experienced by many is decisively breached. That means that the way to effect change can be accomplished by a deliberately planned creation of a popularly supported boundary that the ruling class will not accept.

VII

Marx gave an example of the English electoral system in 1852 which he said dates to the Teutonic era. Voters gathered in an assigned location to hear speeches by the candidates. All those present would then vote by a show of hands. In this particular election campaign in Halifax the main candidates were Ernest Jones, leader of the Chartists, and several representing bourgeois interests, one of whom was a Mr. Wood. After the vote which Jones won with 20,000 votes the bourgeois candidates moved that only the votes of the qualified electorate be counted; those with sufficient income or met other conditions. When those were tallied Wood won with 500 votes.

If only today's ruling class were so honest and courageous as to insult the masses with proof of their electoral dictatorship. Presently most qualified citizens will have their votes counted, but under the existing bicameral winner take all legislative system an elected opposition member of congress would

never be in a position to enact fundamental changes. No party that opposes capitalism will ever be allowed to grow and take control by electoral means. The system cannot be counted out. A movement that can make public what everyone knows but is afraid to say – that our free society is a lie and dictatorship is the truth -- will open up a path that has revolutionary potential.

Early in the Clinton administration the President nominated Lani Guinier to the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department. Before her candidacy could be considered by the Senate Clinton learned that she had once wrote favorably of a proportional electoral system. It was truly democratic in that it gave minority viewpoints and interests genuine access to the legislative process. Even though she had long discarded her controversial view Clinton immediately retracted his nomination. Guinier never even had a chance to publicly testify as to her current thinking, the fact that the dreaded ‘proportional electoral system’ had once entered her mind was enough to eject her from respectable politics.

Many bourgeois nations have such legislative systems, albeit severely limited, that permits non mainstream discourse in a public arena without any concern for maintaining capitalist rule, yet even the mere chance of an opposition viewpoint made widely available to the American people was enough for the US elite to publicly demonstrate their fear of the power of the underclass. America is renowned for its ‘pure democracy’; no royal or tyrannical left overs here. But Americans loathe the fact that they have only two garbage political parties available to select a candidate least inimical to their interests, which is why about half don’t even bother.

A movement for a unicameral parliamentary system in which candidates are elected strictly by number of votes, without any national minimum party percentage, would be received very favorably by the majority of Americans disgusted with the corrupt duopoly. To further carry the drive toward a real democracy, several candidates for the presidency would be selected by the parliament voting as a whole, and from which the electorate will choose one for a single term. Candidates and election of the Supreme Court will be selected in the same way with a limited term.

Of course, even if such a movement managed to get some of its people elected to Congress it will be impossible to obtain enough votes to enact any of the desired legislation; or to amend the Constitution; or to have it passed by three quarters of the state legislatures; or to have a Constitutional Congress called by the states. But in our example those things would reinforce the cause being pursued by bringing the reality of a dictatorship to the surface where it will have to be publicly accepted or rejected. The movement suggested will not waste it's time attempting the impossible within the impossible existing limitations. It will use that manifest reality to buttress their cause.

Recall that the Occupy people expressed nothing except that they didn't like the vast inequality between classes. That is only an expression of feelings without a definitive program for change. The current French rebellion began as a protest against a tax on fuel. The government quickly gave in but not before many others joined the protests with their grievances. All such movements will fade away because they have nothing specific – nothing that points to the system as the problem – as a basis for a concrete movement to fight their class war. To make real change a possibility that spirit must be channeled into the formation of a pre-revolutionary entity.

The critical next stage in the development of revolutionary prospects is for the disgruntled masses to say, you won’t allow us to have the means to create a genuinely democratic political system, therefore we will create a constituent assembly and perform the task ourselves. As long as a constituent assembly or constitutional convention is elected without any prior limitations it has the power to completely transform the existing social system. It will only be a shadow of a real constituent assembly, but having such an entity in existence will mean it can quickly become a real functioning revolutionary congress should a mass upheaval sufficiently weaken the power of the ruling class.

All mass upheavals are either conscious or unconscious assertions that sovereignty, freedom to discuss and decide, is ultimately based on the individual. No selected or elected intermediaries can claim power over a people unless the people have the democratic right to freely and easily elect and remove their representatives. No bourgeois state has ever freely allowed the masses such free rein. Few of those serving the political interests of the ruling class will directly deny the peoples’ claim to sovereignty. Instead they will justify the existing political framework by pointing to the dangers of mob rule, etc. But that will not carry any weight among those in the movement because their developing class consciousness has already demonstrated the soundness of its will. That will leave no alternative for the ruling class than its last line of defense; the forces of order.

The US has a national armed force of 1.5 million; a collection of police forces totaling 600,000; and many more in national guards and other security forces. How would they respond should they be ordered to suppress a popular movement involving millions of their own people? There will certainly be resistance. No doubt some non career soldiers would join with the masses. But it is tactically critical to make those who will be charged with suppressing the masses to think in advance about which side they will choose. The words of America's most revered president will assist them in making a decision:

"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing Government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."

Very good of Abe in his first inaugural address to include critical terms like 'revolutionary' and 'overthrow' in a brief statement. There is little doubt that under the conditions described in this article a large part of the forces of order will absent themselves from participating, or join with the masses, but it makes little sense to try to anticipate such things other than to suggest what might happen in a stalemate of opposing forces. The shadow constituent assembly will call for an election to decide, following Lincoln, what to do with its institutions and government, and after that, what form their replacement will take.

VIII

Socialism, or communism, is not possible in one country. This dictum has been stated and restated in these articles as a core principle of Marxism. The reasons for its importance have been expressed in varying ways. Engels in his 1847 question and answer pamphlet simply alluded to the existence of a world market. There is no market economy in a socialist society but there certainly must be a worldwide exchange of manufactured, grown, and raw materials for any locality in the world to thrive at his optimal best. The optimal is the bedrock on which is built a stateless free association of producers. If it is isolated from a significant part of the world, then it is diminished by an untold number of possibilities. It is one of the features of our animal nature that we cannot point to a vast advancement of historical development and convince ourselves that it is enough. Once homo sapiens made the leap from our primate forbears there has been a relentless need to absorb everything our earth has to offer. With socialism, we will fix up the mess made of the earth by now gone capitalism, and settle down to wonder about what goes on in the rest of the universe.

Besides the obvious reasons for world revolution, such as that local revolutionary successes will have to maintain a state apparatus because of enemy nations seeking its destruction, there are new developments since Marx's time that make world revolution a necessity. Many nations have nuclear weapons which have the capacity to destroy life on earth many times over. Only following a world socialist revolution will the people of those nuclear nations be of the same mind to rid the world of the nuclear menace. Associated with the nuclear threat is the climate crisis. Only frauds or cowards could think a solution possible under this massively wasteful, destructive and retrograde system. In order for a socialist revolution to successfully achieve its human objectives it must at the same time revive the earth and all the creatures that live upon it.

Further specifics will be discussed in the next article along with the incredible state of affairs today. It is amazing, astounding, flabbergasting, that the state of our stinking world is understood to be repulsive, disgusting, that it is rotten to the core, yet most can do no more than complain about it. Part of that can be explained by a justifiable fear of the repressive forces of order. Just being alive with a bit of limited freedom, relationships with our own kind, and comfortable personal conditions, makes living as contented things better than nothing. But that mode of life is little different than that of our lower forms of animal life where their fixed existence transitions from survival, reproduction, to death. It is a sick joke that capitalism has made a world unfit for human habitation, all other life forms, and the natural wonders of the earth. Yet it still exists.