

**Contributions to The Revolutionary Struggle,  
Intended To Be Discussed, Corrected, And  
Principally, Put Into Practice Without Delay**

**From Wildcat Strike to Total Self Management**

Ratgeb

1974

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*Behold the society we will build,  
Behold the reason that we seek your destruction.*

## Translator's Preface (Ken Knabb, May 2001)

*The text of this preface has been duplicated in its entirety from Ken Knabb's Bureau of Public Secrets website, where it appears as an introduction to his translation of the third chapter of Vaneigem's book. It has been included here in order to clarify the marked stylistic differences between the first two chapters, translated by Paul Sharkey, and Knabb's version of the chapter three, as well as his translation of the introduction, published here for the first time.*

Raoul Vaneigem's *De la grève sauvage à l'autogestion généralisée*, published under the pseudonym "Ratgeb" by Éditions 10/18 in 1974, has been out of print for many years. The first two chapters were translated by Paul Sharkey under the title *Contributions to the Revolutionary Struggle* (Bratach Dubh, 1981; reprinted by Elephant Editions, 1990). That translation has also been out of print for some time, though it can now be found online. The text below is the third and last chapter of the book, which has not previously been translated.

As I noted in *The Joy of Revolution*, Vaneigem's book "usefully recapitulates a number of basic tactics during wildcat strikes and other radical situations as well as various possibilities of postrevolutionary social organization. Unfortunately it is also padded with the inflated verbiage characteristic of Vaneigem's post-SI writings, attributing to worker struggles a Vaneigemist content that is neither justified nor necessary." This criticism applies particularly to the first chapter, in which Vaneigem is constantly declaring that this or that expression of dissatisfaction implies a total revolt (if you have ever felt like cussing out your boss, or showing up late for work, or smashing your TV set, you are implicitly demanding a life in which all your dreams can be fulfilled). But the other two chapters, though somewhat more concrete because they deal with specific practical issues, also contain quite a bit of ideological fluff.

Nevertheless, Vaneigem's book is one of the few texts that seriously consider the problems and possibilities of a postrevolutionary society. I incorporated several of his suggestions into the last chapter of *The Joy of Revolution*. (The only other text I found equally useful in this regard was Castoriadis's *Workers' Councils and the Economics of a Self-Managed Society*.) Even where Vaneigem's proposed solutions are too vague or simplistic, he at least reminds us of important problems that we will have to deal with if we are ever fortunate enough to find ourselves in such a situation.

To clarify the context: The first chapter denounces various aspects of the present society and comments on some common reactions against it. The second chapter discusses radical tactics during wildcat strikes and workplace takeovers. The third chapter (the only one reproduced here) deals with issues that would arise following a successful self-management revolution, i.e. a popular nonhierarchical revolution that has abolished capitalism and the state.

The most literal sense of *autogestion généralisée* is "generalized self-management." Another acceptable rendering, used by Sharkey in his translation of the earlier chapters, is "universal self-management." In the present case I have chosen "total self-management," which makes for a bit more fluent style without, I hope, being too misleading. However translated, it should be clearly understood that the phrase does not mean the self-management of this or that detail, but self-

management extended to every region and every aspect of life; not the self-management of the present world, but the self-management of its total transformation. Although the situationists always stressed this fact, some people still claim that the situationists “failed to realize that self-management is only the self-management of alienation.” I have yet to see any of these people explain why self-management can *only* be that and nothing more, or how they imagine a liberated society could work if it is *not* self-managed by the people living in it.

# Introduction

## **We want to see truth in the form of practical results**

THE FOLLOWING PAGES are addressed exclusively to revolutionary workers. To workers, because no one except those who are *directly* involved in the processes of production is in a position to break the bonds of commodity domination. To *revolutionary* workers, because workers who remain submissive to labor unions or political parties are nothing but stupid slaves, working to reinforce the very system that oppresses them.

Over the last ten years increasingly frequent and radical wildcat strikes have shaken bourgeois-bureaucratic domination, but have not yet succeeded in overthrowing it. This latent insurrectionary movement has made the proletariat aware of capitalism's increasing domination of all aspects of human behavior and of nature itself. It has also made it aware of its own strength and of the inherent weakness of the commodity system and the State.

Within this rebellion we can also see the beginnings of a lifestyle in violent opposition to the *survival* which is now the world's most widely shared poverty. This rebellion consists of fragmentary and often confused reactions, arising out of the spontaneous desire to abolish work, sacrifice, economism, boredom, constraints, separations, and spectacles; but however scattered and isolated these reactions may be, they are laying the foundation for a radically new society: a society of total self-management.

The revolutionary theory of total self-management has endeavored to give a greater coherence to this whole range of rebellious reactions. It has now developed to the point where it must re-enter the movement it came from, the insurrectionary movement of the workers.

From now on the success or failure of total self-management depends on those in fields, factories, warehouses, stores, and transportation networks who hold the fate of the commodity in their hands. They can turn the fruits of earth and industry to the benefit of everyone, or they can continue to work against themselves and everyone else by allowing capitalism to continue to spread its pollution.

A decisive change is taking shape. We need only accelerate it by providing it with greater effectiveness and practical coherence. To wait any longer would be a crime, or worse yet, a historical error, which all the water in the ocean would never suffice to wipe away.

The conditions are favorable. Sophisticated technologies are at our disposal — if we turn them against those who exploit us, everything is possible and nothing is utopian. Never has survival reigned so widely, and never has it provoked so much resistance. Never has the state had more means of falsification at its disposal, and never has it been more vulnerable to the most simple truths. Never has the commodity system so thoroughly conditioned people to money, power and appearance, and never have people risen up to destroy it with such lucidity, outrage, creativity and passion.

If, after all this, the revolutionary workers do not decide to run their lives for themselves and to push to their conclusion the social upheavals heralded by wildcat strikes and factory takeovers, those who don't have those means will turn total self-management into one more lie in the

heaven of ideas, acting once again like messiahs descended to earth to preach the organization of the proletariat, in the best tradition of Lenin, Trotsky, Mao, García Oliver, Castro, Guevara, and other bureaucrats.

Too long has revolution remained at the gates of our citadels of boredom, our polluted cities, our palaces of stucco. We've submitted long enough to work, leaders, dead time, suffering, humiliation, lies, cops, bosses, governments. Impatience that is repressed too long ends up provoking blind violence, terrorism, self-destruction. We have better things to do to save ourselves from a society that is committing suicide than to become kamikazes against a regiment of cops, bishops, bosses, generals, and statesmen. But the passing of lifeless hours is worse than death. Our ultimate struggle has lasted long enough. We need victory now!

The following text is an attempt to respond to the problems that will be posed by the transition from a class society to a society of total self-management. The first chapter begins with the most widespread expressions of dissatisfaction and insists on their significance, because it is essential that the familiar become better known if we want what arises out of everyday life to return to it in order to permanently enrich it. The second chapter enumerates certain measures that need to be taken at different stages of workers' actions (limited to sabotage or *détournement*; during wildcat strikes; and during workplace takeovers). The third chapter presents a model of what total self-management might be like, and of a society based on the satisfaction of individual desires and passions.

Such notes inevitably contain weaknesses, hesitations, and even mistakes, but their radicality is indisputable. They merit being discussed, but not by intellectual jerks who are only capable of raising abstract objections. The only purpose of these notes is to be debated on the spot, in workplaces at the most explosive moments. At such moments, when they are tried out, corrected, and communicated by all the means now monopolized by bosses, managers, and union bureaucrats (telex, photocopying, radio, PA systems, printshops), they will give cohesion to the insurrectionary spirit and cut through the hesitations and delays that have so often proved fatal during the first moments of a revolution. In so doing, they will throw in the face of the statist the *reason in history* that they fear more than anything else when it is expressed by the proletariat in arms: "This is the society we are going to build. This is why we seek your destruction."

# Chapter 1. The Subsistence Society

1. Haven't you ever, just once, felt like turning up late for work or felt like slipping away from work early?

In that case, you have realised that:

- a. Time spent working is time doubly lost because it is time doubly wasted...
  - as time which might more agreeably be spent making love, or daydreaming, on pleasure or on one's hobbies: time which one would otherwise be free to spend however one wished;
  - as time wearing us down physically and nervously.
- b. Time spent working eats up the bulk of one's life, because it shapes one's so-called "free" time as well, time spent sleeping, moving about, eating, or on diversions. Thus it makes itself felt in every part of the daily lives of each one of us and reduces our daily lives to series of moments and places which have the same empty repetition and the same growing absence of real living in common.
- c. Time spent fulfilling an obligation to work is a commodity. Wherever there is commodity there is, unfailingly, obligatory labour and nearly every activity comes, little by little, to resemble obligatory labour: we produce, consume, eat and sleep for an employer, or a leader, or a State, or for the system of the universal commodity.
- d. The less work, the more life.

So you see... you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society which would guarantee each one of us the right to dispose of one's own time and space: and to build for ourselves each day the life we would choose.

2. Haven't you ever, just once, felt the desire never to work again, (without having others work for you, that is)?

In that case, you have come to realise that:

- a. Even if obligatory work has as its goal only the production of useful things such as clothes, food, tools, comforts and so on... it would be every bit as oppressive, because: the worker would still be robbed of the fruits of his labour and subjected to the same laws governing the pursuit of profit and power, would still have to spend ten times as long at work as would require an attractive organization of creativity to place one hundred times the product at everybody's disposal.
- b. In the commodity system that dominates everywhere, the aim of obligatory work is not, as they would have us believe, to produce goods which are useful and palatable to everybody, but rather just to churn out commodities, regardless of whether they



might be useful or useless pollutants. Commodities have no purpose other than to sustain the profits and power of the ruling class. Under such a system, everybody works to no end and becomes aware of this.

- c. By accumulating and replacing commodities, obligatory work merely boosts the power of bosses, bureaucrats, leaders and ideologies. So it becomes the object of the workers' disgust. Every stoppage in work is a way of becoming ourselves again and defying those who prevent us from being ourselves.
- d. Obligatory work produces only commodities. Every commodity is inseparable from the lie which it stands for. So, obligatory work churns out lies, produces a world of lying representations, a topsy-turvy world where the image takes the place of reality. In this spectacular, commodity system, obligatory work produces two important lies concerning itself:
  - the first lie is that work is useful and necessary and that it is in everyone's interest to do so;
  - the second lie is the make believe story that workers are incapable of shrugging off wage slavery and work, and that they cannot build a radically new society, one based on attractive, collective creativity and universal self-mangement.

So you see... you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society where an end to obligatory work will be replaced by a collective creativity regulated by the wishes of each individual, and by the free distribution of the goods necessary for our everyday needs. The end of forced work means the end of the system where profit, hierarchical power and universal lies reign supreme. It signifies the end of the spectacular commodity system and opens the doors to an overall re-examination of priorities. The pursuit of money and of morsels of power will give way to the quest for a harmonisation of enthusiasms which will, at last, be released and given recognition.

3. Has it ever happened that, outside your place of work, you have felt the same distaste and weariness as you do inside the factory?

In that case, you have come to understand that:

- a. The factory is all around us. It is the morning, the train, the car, the ravaged countryside, the machine, the bosses, the chief, the house, the newspapers, the family, the trade union, the street, one's purchases, pictures, one's pay, the television, one's language, one's holidays, school, housework, boredom, prison, the hospital and the night. It is the time and space of our everyday subsistence. It is the becoming accustomed to repetitive moves and suppressed emotions, emotions sampled through the proxy of intermediary images.
- b. Every activity reduced to mere existence is obligatory work: and all obligatory work transforms the product and the producer into objects of mere existence, into commodities themselves.
- c. Rejection of the universal factory is everywhere, since sabotage and reappropriation are everywhere among the proletariat, allowing them still to derive some morsel of pleasure from idleness, or from love-making, or socialising or chatting or eating,

drinking, dreaming or preparing to revolutionise everyday life by neglecting none of the delights of being not quite totally alienated.

So you see, you are fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society where feelings will be all, and boredom and work, nothing. Mere survival has so far prevented us from really living. We must now stand the world on its head and value those glimpses of authentic living which are fated to be covered up and distorted in the system of the commodity and the spectacle... these moments of real contentment, of boundless pleasure and passion.

4. Haven't you ever thought about using your machine to turn out some instrument for use outside the factory?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. The machine produces contrary effects according to whether it is employed for the benefit of the employer and the State or whether it is put to use by the worker for his own immediate benefit.
- b. The principle of misappropriation consists of employing against the enemy those very techniques and weapons which he usually employs against us.
- c. The opposite of obligatory work is the creativity of the individual or group. Proletarians aspire to create their own living conditions so that they may thereby cease to be proletarians. Outside of a handful of rare revolutionary outbursts, this pent-up creativity has thus far remained hidden (using the boss's machinery, doing odd jobs, experimentation, and the quest for new emotions and sensations).
- d. The passion to create seeks to be all. Implying as it does the demolition of the commodity system and the reconstruction of our everyday lives, this passion to create embraces all our passions. The misappropriation of techniques so that creativity may enjoy all their benefits for all is, consequently, the only way to have an end of work and the omnipresence of compartmentalisation (into manual/intellectual, work/recreation, theory/practice, individual/society, being/appearance).

So you see, consciously or otherwise you are already fighting for a society in which the warehouses and distribution outlets, the factories and technology itself will be the property of the striking shop floor and then of all individuals grouped in self-managing units.

5. Haven't you ever deliberately destroyed products still on the production line or already in storage?

In that case, you have understood that:

- a. The struggle of the workers against the commodity is the real point of departure for revolution. It brings out clearly the joy of being oneself and of enjoying everything and shows how this can only be achieved by the utter destruction of that which destroys us.
- b. The commodity is the heart of a heartless world: it is the strength but also the weakness of hierarchical authority, the State and its bureaucracy. The personal liberty and happiness of all requires not only that we strike out against it but that we annihilate it utterly once and for all (for instance, the mere sabotaging of products will not be

enough since the premature release of obsolescent products on to the market is, in the last analysis, a help to private and State capitalism as in USSR, Cuba, China... in stepping up the rate of purchase and the replenishment of ideologies; thus it improves the accumulation of commodities and the reinforcement of their representatives and of the social attitudes they thrust upon us).

- c. To the extent that sabotage is one way of holding up work, it has the merit of saving our energies and of encouraging us to down tools.
- d. Inadequate though it may be, the sabotaging of finished products is a healthy reaction. It speaks of the workers' distaste for commodity and says something about the role of the worker i.e. about the attitude bound up with beliefs in the necessity of work, taking pride in one's work and other claptrap thrust upon the worker by the ruling society.
- e. Refusal of the role of the worker goes hand in hand with the rejection of work and commodity itself. There is every chance that it may explode into a rejection of all roles and all modes of behaviour which would make the individual act, not in accordance with his urges and inclinations, but in accordance with images (be they good or bad) imposed upon him, images which are part of the lie by means of which commodity expresses itself. What chance has that part of you that is still, truly you when all day long you have been playing roles like the role of the *paterfamilias*, husband, worker, motorist, militant, TV viewer, consumer...?

So you see, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for a society where compartmentalisation will disappear as work itself disappears: when the individual may at last be completely true to himself because he will no longer be churning out the commodity and its lie (that topsy turvy world where the reflected image is more important than the authentic).

- 6. Whilst sabotaging production, hasn't it ever occurred to you what fun it might be to sabotage the weapons of repression (such as the bureaucratic machine, the cops, the quality control people, the information services or the town planners)?

In that case, you have come to realise that:

- a. The commodity system is proficient at recuperating partial sabotage for the advantage of the system. Sabotage confined to the sabotage of products does not destroy the commodity system, for the poor quality thereby brought about merely adds to the premature obsolescence perfected by the employers as a means of forcing the rapid and regular replacement of purchases. Furthermore, sabotage, like any act of terrorism, breathes new life into the spectacle's stock of images by offering the indispensable negative images (such as the hateful saboteur, the ghastly arsonist preying on warehouses...).
- b. What allows a product to be turned into a commodity and the insinuation of the commodity process into every aspect of social activity is obligatory work and those forces which protect and maintain it... the State, the unions, the parties, the bureaucracy, the spectacle, i.e. the whole arsenal of representatives which are in the service

of the commodity system and the commodities themselves (ideologies, culture, roles, or even the prevailing vocabulary).

- c. Consequently, the destruction of commodity by means of the ending of obligatory work is inseparable from the liquidation of the State, of hierarchy, constraint, the commendation of sacrifice, and the lies and of those who organise the universal commodity system. As long as sabotage fails to direct its attacks simultaneously against the production of commodities and against those who protect it, it will remain partial and ineffective; it becomes that terrorism which is the despair of revolution and the self-destructive fatalism of subsistence society.
- d. Anything which cannot be turned to the advantage of revolutionaries must be destroyed through sabotage. Anything that impedes such redirection deserves to be destroyed.

So you see, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for a society from which the State and all manner of hierarchical power will have been eliminated, a society that will give way to self-managing assemblies that will control the forces of production as well as all wealth for free distribution which will put an end to any danger of reconstruction of the commodity system.

- 7. Haven't you ever felt like giving up reading the newspapers and putting your foot through the television?

In that case, you have come to appreciate that:

- a. The press, radio and television are the crassest vehicles for the lie. Not only do they push real problems (such as "How can we live better?", a question asked in concrete terms every single day) further into the background, but they also induce each private individual to identify with ready made images and to put himself, abstractly, in the shoes of a head of State or a film star, or a murderer or a victim... in short, they induce him to react to life as if he were someone whom he is not. The images which rule us mark the success of that which is not ourselves, which haunts us out of ourselves; of that which transforms us into objects to be categorised, labelled and hierarchised in keeping with the usages of the general commodity system.
- b. There is a vocabulary at the disposal of hierarchical power. It is to be found not only in the information services and in advertising, in ready-made ideas and habits and conditioned behaviour, but also in any expression which does not pave the way for the revolution of everyday life, every expression which fails to serve our pleasures.
- c. Every moment one works for the commodity system (i.e. most of one's time), imposes on us its representatives and images, its meanings and vocabulary. This battery of ideas, identifications and modes of behaviour dictated by the need to accumulate and to replace the commodity over and over again, makes the SPECTACLE in which everyone plays a part he really fails to live and lives falsely that which he is not. That is why role-playing is living the lie, and mere existence a sickness without end.
- d. The spectacle (ideologies, culture, art, roles, images, representations, commodity-words) embraces all those aspects of social behaviour by means of which men enter

the commodity system and, by becoming subsistence objects, (commodities) conspire against themselves, renouncing the pleasure of really living for themselves and freely constructing their everyday lives for themselves.

- e. We subsist amid a forest of images with which we are driven to identify. We act less and less for ourselves and more and more as puppets of abstractions that direct us according to the laws of the commodity system (i.e. profit and power).
- f. Roles and ideologies may be favourable to, or hostile towards the ruling system... it makes no difference since they are part of the spectacle, part of the ruling system in either case. Only that which destroys commodity *and* its spectacle is revolutionary.

So you see, you have had enough of organised lies and inverted reality... enough of the dumb shows that ape real life only to impoverish it. And already, consciously or otherwise, you are fighting for a society where the right to communicate, really communicate, will belong to everyone and where each individual will have access to information on things which concern him, thanks to the free availability of technology (printshops, telecommunications) and where the elaboration of an engaging lifestyle will eradicate the need to have a role and to place greater store by appearance than by what is genuinely lived.

- 8. Haven't you ever had the disagreeable sensation that, aside from a few odd moments, you do not really belong to yourself and are becoming alienated from your real self?

In that case you have grasped that:

- a. Through every one of our movements (which are mechanical and repetitive and devoid of connection with one another) time is being broken up and, morsel by morsel, is stealing us away from our own selves. It is by working, and through our being obliged to labour for the reproduction and accumulation of commodities, that such stolen moments proliferate and are amassed.
- b. Today, ageing is nothing but the expansion of wasted time, time during which life slips away. That is why there are no longer any young or old people... only individuals with a greater or lesser liveliness about them. Our enemies are those who believe (and make believe) that universal change is impossible. The dead are those who govern us. The dead are those of us who let themselves be governed.
- c. We labour and eat, read and sleep, consume and take our leisure, absorb our culture and receive attention, and so we live out our bleak existence, much like potted plants. We subsist despite all that urges us to really live. We survive for a totalitarian, an inhuman system (a religion of things and images) which sucks us in on almost every side and almost always in order to boost the profits and crumbling power of the bourgeois bureaucratic class.
- d. Unless we suddenly become ourselves again, unless we are seized by the urge to live life to the full, we merely help the commodity system to survive. Instead of being lived by proxy through intermediary images, moments of real living and boundless pleasure allied to the repudiation of whatsoever obstructs or falsifies them, are blows against the commodity-spectacle system. We have only to marshal these blows in a more coherent fashion to extend, multiply and redouble their impact.

- e. Through the passionate creation of conditions favourable to the growth of our passions, we wish to destroy that which is destroying us. Revolution is the passion that licenses every other passion. Passion without revolution is only the ruination of pleasure.

So you see, you have had enough of squandering your life away amid constraints. And already you are, consciously or not, fighting for a society whose basis will no longer be the pursuit of profit, but rather the search for and harmonisation of the lust for life.

- 9. Haven't you ever felt the urge to burn some distribution factory (i.e. supermarket, giant store or warehouse) to the ground?

In that case, you have caught on that:

- a. The real pollution is the pollution by universal commodity intruding into every area of life. Every commodity on the supermarket shelf is a cynical hymn to the wage-slave oppression of the lie which places it on sale, and of the barter system of the boss and the cop whose function it is to protect that lie.
- b. The display of commodities is part and parcel of a bleak existence and a glorification of its impoverishment: a paean to life squandered in hours of obligatory work; the sacrifices we give our assent to so that we can purchase shit (junk food, gadgets, cars-coffins, accommodation cages, and items with built-in planned obsolescence); inhibitions; pleasure/anxieties; the derisory images offered in exchange for an absence of real life and purchased by compensation.
- c. Arson against a large store is only a terrorist act. Indeed, since the commodity is designed to be destroyed and replaced, arson does not destroy the commodity system but conspires with it with just an excess of brutality. Now it is not a question of whether commodity destroys us in destroying itself. The commodity has to be destroyed utterly if we are to build universal self-management.

So you see, you have had it with settings of ennui and voyeurism. And with a world where what one sees prevents one from living and where that which prevents one from living presents itself as an abstract caricature of life. And, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for a society where the true eradication of commodity will be achieved through free usufruct of products created once obligatory work has ceased. Instead of the work that proscribes abundance and produces only a distorted reflection of it, we want abundance that will encourage creativity and passions.

- 10. Haven't you ever felt like pinching something or other from the factory or store for the simple reason that you had a hand in its production, or for the (even better) reason that you need it or want it?

In that case you have come to realise that:

- a. There is no theft in repossessing one's handiwork. The only thieves are those who serve the commodity system and the henchmen of the State: bosses, bureaucrats, police, magistrates, sociologists, town planners, ideologues. It is because of our tardiness in condemning them to vanish from the scene in practical terms, that they still dare

to use the law to condemn a worker who takes something from a factory or a shop for which he has a need.

- b. An industrial or agricultural product serves no purpose unless it is freely available to satisfy each individual. It is a sin against the right to enjoyment to turn it into a commodity, an element of barter, a piece of the spectacle.
- c. What is required if an object is to be removed from the commodity process and kept from returning to that process, is obviously that it should not be resold, nor appropriated for individual use, nor exchanged for a mess of money or power, (stealing so as to play the underworld big-shot and thus to have a role is merely to reproduce the spectacle-commodity process, with or without the permission of the State).
- d. What is required if an object, or even an attitude, is not to be absorbed into the commodity process is that that object or attitude should be deployed against the process, and turned against commodity seized in full flight (the flight which converts a product into a commodity leaps from the specific object to its abstract representation and that abstract representation in turn takes on concrete shape in a variety of conditional social posturings i.e. in roles).
- e. The complete destruction of the commodity can only be encompassed through the collective seizure of industrial and agricultural goods to the advantage of universal self-management, and only universal self-management.

So you see, you have had your fill of submission to money and to roles as a means of earning, in exchange, the good you need for a semblance of life at least. And, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for a society where 'no charge' and gift are the only possible social relationships.

11. Haven't you already taken part in pilfering from a distribution factory (i.e. supermarket, large store, discount warehouse)?

In that case, you have come to understand that:

- a. Individual reappropriation of goods stolen by the State and the employer class merely feeds the commodity process, unless it becomes a collective action and leads to the total liquidation of the system (however attractive the act may be, it is not enough just to repossess goods. One must also repossess the time and space stolen from us all).
- b. Pilfering is a normal response to commodity's provocations (i.e. the signs reading "Free offer" on "Free service", etc.). Like so-called criminal arson, it is only one manifestation of the system. Just as the commodity system allows for a certain percentage of thefts in large stores and factories, so it also allows for a certain proportion of shoplifting and its self-regulation will be calculated in the light of such foreseeable, programmable "mishaps". This fact is so self-evident that one of the representatives of the law, Judge Kinnard, the sole magistrate in the Liege criminal assizes, refused on 12 September 1973, to apply the legal penalty for the theft of display goods and made the following remarkable observations: "Theft of display goods from self service store is inevitable and, indeed, shoplifting is allowed for in the charges made

by traders of this sort, where gaudy advertising and scientifically gauged and phased multiple temptations constitute, for the consumers, a provocation to buy well beyond either their needs, or their purse. Generally speaking, shoplifting does not denote in the perpetrator any mentality or attitude deserving of punishment under the legal code.” That is jurisprudence indeed.

- c. If, in the course of pilfering, the individual should seize goods as if they were his private property, the commodity would reappear and the system would be renewed (in which case, it would be better to destroy everything: we could be sure that at least 90 per cent of junk would go).
- d. In the absence of an appreciation of universal self-management, pilfering is, at best, an incoherent method of distribution. It constitutes an act divorced from revolutionary conditions in which the group that creates the goods distributes them directly to its members. Thus there is the risk that, by fostering shortages and scarcity of useful products, it may sow confusion in people’s minds and bring about a reversion to the mechanics of commodity distribution.

So you see, consciously or not, you are already fighting for a society where unsalaried production and free distribution of goods will be rendered possible by means of the suppression of property and the collection of producers into self-managing assemblies. In those assemblies the will of every individual can be made plain through the words of delegates under mandates that may be revoked at any time. These delegates would keep account of the amount of goods available and would match up offers to produce and create with the requests of individuals, so that, progressively and irreversibly, abundance might be achieved.

12. Is it not your intention, on the first opportunity that arises, to bawl out your boss or anyone else, who talks down to you?

In that case you have grasped the fact that:

- a. By becoming a boss, one ceases to be human. The boss is the packer and the package of commodity. Outside the commodity system, he has no use. Like the commodities, he reproduces himself and is amassed: he is to be measured in terms of his power and his position in the scale of hierarchy. He derives his power from the power which the spectacle wields, as an economic intent and social representation, over the greater bulk of everyday life.
- b. The more power is atomised and extends everywhere, the stronger it becomes and the weaker it becomes. The more bosses there are the more powerless they are. The more powerless they are and the more the bureaucratic machine operates in a vacuum, the more it imposes upon everyone the semblance of its omnipotence and the more people learn to reject servitude in all its guises.
- c. Everywhere that authority exists, there is sacrifice. And vice versa. The boss and the militant are the twin stumbling blocks of revolution, the points at which it is turned on its head and becomes the very opposite of emancipation.
- d. The terrorist act of standing bureaucrat and boss back to back and dispatching them both with the one bullet, fails to alter the structure by a single iota. It merely ac-



celerates the renewal of leadership cadres. If one is to liquidate the State and all hierarchical organisations that (sooner or later) reproduce it, one must obliterate the commodity system.

- e. The State is the regulator, the nerve centre and protective arsenal of commodity. It strives to balance out economic contradictions, and to politically ordain society's work into rights and duties of the citizen, and to organise the ideological barrage and the repressive mechanisms which convert each individual into a lackey of the commodity system.
- f. The degree of collusion between the State and commodity can be assessed at a glance by the speed with which the police (as well as the militias of the employers and of the unions) intervene the moment a wildcat strike breaks out.

So you see, already you are fighting for a society where there will be neither constraint nor sacrifice, where everyone will be his own master and live in such circumstances that he will never have to treat another man as his slave; in short, a classless society where the power delegated to councils will be wielded under the permanent scrutiny and through the wishes of every private individual.

13. Doesn't it give you a certain sense of pleasure to think how, some day soon, you will be able to treat like human beings those cops whom it will not have been necessary to kill on the spot?

In that case you have come to appreciate that:

- a. The cop is the guard dog of the commodity system. Where the lie of the commodity is not enough to impose order, the ruling bureaucratic class or caste sends in the cop to impose it for them.
- b. Quite apart from the contempt which he stands for, the cop is despised as a hired killer, the lackey of every regime, a professional slave, a dealer in protection, the repressive clause in the economic and social contract which the State foists upon its citizens.
- c. Everywhere that the State is to be found, there are cops. Everywhere that cops are to be found — (starting from the stewards and marshals at opposition demonstrations) — there too, is the State or its ghosts.
- d. All hierarchy depends on the police.
- e. Killing cops is a pastime for would-be suicides. The only way to resolve the police problem is through self-defence within the general context of liquidation of all hierarchical power.
- f. Happiness is possible only when the State ceases to exist: and where the complete absence of hierarchy excludes the possibility of its re-emergence.

So you see, you have had your fill of controls and constraints, and of the cop who is a living reminder that you are nothing and the State everything... and a bellyful of the system that creates the conditions for illegal crime and legalises the crimes of the magistrates who repress it. And already you are fighting for a harmonisation of passions and interests (through the elimination of the interests of the spectacle and its economy) and for the

reorganisation of relations between individuals through abundant intercourse and the free diffusion of desires.

14. Haven't you ever felt like flinging your pay packet into the face of the pay clerk?

In that case, you have realised that:

- a. The wage system reduces the individual to a bookkeeper's digit. From the capitalist point of view, a wage slave is not a man but an index of the overheads of production and a certain degree of purchasing power in terms of consumption.
- b. The wage system is as much the keystone of global exploitation as alienated labour and commodity production are the keys to the spectacle-commodity system. To improve it would be to improve the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeois-bureaucratic class. One can, therefore, only do away with it entirely.
- c. Wage slavery requires that we sacrifice over eight hours of our days for eight hours of work: in return we receive a sum of money which covers only a fraction of the work done. The rest is retained by the employer for his own benefit. In its turn our wage has to be exchanged for polluted, junk products, household goods sold at ten times their real value, alienating gadgets (the car that enables us to get to work and consume, pollute, destroy the countryside, and save some empty time and kill ourselves). Not to mention the dues owing to the State, to experts, and the trade union racketeers...
- d. Anyone who believes that wage demands can endanger private or State capitalism is mistaken: employers award to their workers only that increase which the unions need if they are to give evidence of their continuing usefulness: and the unions demand of the employers (who can, in any case put up prices) only sums that pose no threat to a system of which they are the greatest beneficiaries but one.

So you see, you have had a bellyful of living most of your life as a function of money and of being reduced to obedience to the dictates of economics, of merely existing and not having the leisure to live life to the full. Already, consciously or otherwise, you are fighting for a reallocation of useful goods which will no longer have anything to do with the pursuit of profits and which will, instead, answer people's real needs.

15. Has it ever happened that you spat on a passing priest? Or wanted to burn down a church, chapel, mosque or synagogue?

If so you have come to realise that:

- a. Religion is the opium of the oppressed.
- b. All that is religious calls for sacrifice. Anything or anybody (militants, for example) that calls for sacrifices to be made, is religious.
- c. Religion is the universal model for falsehood, for the overthrow of the real for the benefit of the mythical world which will, once it has been stripped of its sanctity, be the spectacle of everyday life.
- d. The commodity system desanctifies: it destroys the religious spirit and holds its gadgetry (the Popes, Korans, Bibles, and crucifixes) up to ridicule... but at the same time

it is careful to retain religion as a lasting incitement, preferable to the apparent over the real, suffering over pleasure, spectacle over experience, submission over freedom, the ruling system over our passions. The spectacle is the new religion and culture its critical spirit.

- e. Religious symbols testify to the lasting mistrust which hierarchical regimes down through the ages have harboured towards men. Take the example of Christ alone...

Leaders in the field of marketing products of divinity, the Christian churches have bowed to the pressures of the commodity system and put on a display of contortionism which will not cease until their trademark, the chameleon-like Jesus, has been discarded entirely. Son of God, son of a whore, son of the virgin, worker of miracles and maker of loaves, militant and steward, pederast and puritan accuser and accused, convict and astronaut... no role is outside the range of this amazing puppet figure. He has been a hawker of suffering, waiter dispensing favours... he has been a sansculotte and socialist, a fascist and anti-fascist, a stalinist and barbudo, a Reichian and anarchist. He has marched on every side under every flag; he has been in every self-doubt and stood at both ends of the lash, and present at most executions where he has held the hand both of the executioner and of the executioner's victim. He has his place in police-station and prison and school, brothel and barrack, department store and guerilla-held territory. He has been used as a pendant and dipstick, as a scarecrow standing guard over the resting dead and the kneeling living; he has been used as torment and short rations: and once the hawkers of the blessed foreskins have rehabilitated sin as a commercial proposition he will serve as a dildo. Poor old Mahomet and Buddha and Confucious... sad symbols of rival firms lacking in push and imagination... Jesus outbids them on every front. Jesus Christ... superdrug and superstar... all the images of the man who sold out to God, caught up in the hard sell of the Godhead.

The most accomplished symbol of man as the universal commodity is the scrotum of the great father figure staked out on 3 pins and made into an amulet.

So you see, already you are fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society in which the organisation of suffering will have vanished together with its compensations and where each individual being his own master, the notion of God will have no meaning. And above all, a society where the problems of genuine experience and of passions in need of satisfaction will at last take precedence over the problems of proxy living and of passions which have to be repressed.

- 16. Aren't you dismayed by the systematic destruction of the countryside and urban green spaces?

In that case, you have understood that:

- a. Town planning is the seizure of territory by the commodity system and its police.
- b. The poverty of the spectacle's decor is the decor of universal poverty.
- c. Town planner = sociologist = ideologue = cop.
- d. As far as the ruling system is concerned, there is no longer any such thing as countryside or nature or streets where one can stroll... only square metres from which profit

can be extracted; and a surplus value of prestige through the retention of a pattern of green spaces, trees or rocks; expulsions and hierarchical reassembly of populations; police patrols of popular districts; and a habitat programmed to condition people to boredom and passivity.

- e. The authorities do not even bother any longer to disguise the fact that the management of territory is primarily and directly thought out with a view to a future civil war: roads are strengthened lest tanks might need to use them; recently built towers and high-rise buildings carry cameras which enable the police in their H.Q. to keep a 24 hour watch on the streets: in modern apartment blocks, "shooting rooms" are planned for the use of elite police marksmen.
- f. The way in which the ruling system construes everything turns everything into commodity. Ideology is the artificial eyes of the authorities, enabling it to see life in what is already dead, what has already been turned into a commodity.

So you see, you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society in which your wish to escape the clutches of the town planners and of ideology will be realised through freedom to organise according to your preference, the space and time of your everyday life and to build your own homes and the nomads, should you wish, and to make your towns places of passion and play.

17. Have you ever felt the urge to make love (not as a matter of routine but with great passion) to your partner or to the first man or woman to come along, or to your daughter, or your parents, or your men and women friends, or your brothers and sisters?

In that case, you have realised that:

- a. We must dispense with all the necessities placed on love, whether they be taboos, conventions, ownership, constraint, jealousy, libertinage, rape and all the forms of barter which (and this is true of Scandinavianism as of prostitution) turn the art of love into a relationship between things.
- b. You have had a bellyful of pleasure mingled with pain: enough of love experienced in an incomplete, deformed or less than genuine way; enough of intercourse by proxy or through intermediary images: enough of melancholy fornication; of meagre orgasms; of antiseptic relationships; of passions choked and suppressed and beginning to waste the energy which they would release in a society which favoured their harmonisation.
- c. Whether we admit it or not, we are all looking for great passion which is at once single and plural. Socially we want to create the historical conditions for a lasting passionate relationship, for a pleasure the only boundary on which is the exhaustion of possibilities, for a game where pleasure and displeasure rediscover their positive side (for instance in the inception and in the ending of a free amorous liaison).
- d. Love is inseparable from individual realisation, and from communication between individuals (opportunities for meetings) and from genuine and enthusiastic participation in a shared plan. It is inseparable from the struggle for universal self-management.
- e. There is no pleasure that does not reveal its meaning in the revolutionary struggle: and by the same token, the revolution's only object is to experience all pleasures to

their fullest and freest extent.

So you see, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for a society where optimum chances will be made socially available in order to encourage free changeable associations, between people attracted by the same activities or the same delights: where attractions rooted in a taste for variety and enthusiasm and play will take just as much account of agreement as disagreement and divergence.

18. Haven't you ever felt sick to your stomach each time prevailing circumstances force you to assume a role?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. The only complete delight lies in being what one is, in realising oneself as a person with desires and passions. Against this, social relationships, organised like the spectacle of everyday life, force each of us to conform to a series of appearances and unauthentic modes of behaviour: they urge us to identify with images, with roles.
- b. Roles are the counterfeit experience of misery which compensates for the real experience of misery. Roles (the roles of leader, or subordinate, of paterfamilias or materfamilias, or good or rebellious child, of oppositionist or conformist, or ideologue, or seducer, or VIP, or theorist, or activist, or cultured pedant, etc.) all obey the law of accumulation and reproduction of images within the spectacular organisation of commodity. And at the same time, they disguise and underpin the real impotence of individuals in terms of their ability to effect any real changes in their everyday lives, to make them passionate or to live them as a fabric of interwoven passions.
- c. Rejection of roles comes through rejection of prevailing conditions (it is as well to remember that a role can also be a shield, such as the role of the good workers, disguising sabotage and pilfering activities).
- d. It is not a question of changing roles but rather of doing away with the system which obliges one to play at something one has no wish to play at. The revolutionary struggle is the struggle for a life to be authentically lived.

So you see, consciously or otherwise, you are already fighting for the right to authenticity and for an end to the dissembling and the lies thrust upon us... a fight for the right to affirm the individuality of each and every person without being judged or condemned, but instead allowing the individual to give his desires and passions free rein, no matter how singular these may be. You are fighting for a society where truth will be the practice of every moment.

19. Don't you feel an instinctive mistrust of everything intellectual and of everything that inclines towards intellectualisation?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. Along with the manual, the intellectual function is the result of the social division of labour. The intellectual function is the faculty of a master; the manual that of a slave. Both are equally to be viewed with misgivings and we shall abolish both by abolishing the division of labour and class society.

- b. In the struggle of the revolutionary bourgeoisie against the feudal class and the religious spirit, culture has been a weapon of partial liberation, a weapon of demystification. When the bourgeoisie became, in turn, the ruling class, culture for a while retained its revolutionary form. Intellectuals like Fourier, Marx and Bakunin drew from the demands of the proletarians as expressed in strikes and riots, a radical theory which, if only the workers had absorbed and put it into practice, would rapidly have done away with the bourgeoisie.
- c. Instead, the specialised thinkers of the proletariat (workerist intellectuals and intellectual workers) by playing at tribunes, politicians or guides of the working class, have transformed that radical theory into ideology, i.e. falsehood, into ideas in the masters' service. Socialism and the variants of Jacobinism (such as Blanquism or Bolshevism) have been the movement that proclaims the dictatorship of the bureaucrats over the proletariat, as happens with every so-called "workers" party or the trade unions or leftist organisations.
- d. Intellectuals are the reserve army of the bureaucracy, whether they be workerist intellectuals or intellectual workers.
- e. Culture today is the form of intellectual integration into the spectacle, the label of quality that helps all commodities to sell... the initiation into the upside down world of commodity. Under cover of the pretext that it is necessary to acquire learning, culture recuperates the need for practical know-how and turns it into separated scholarship. It imposes an abstract surplus value of learning, a compensation for the emptiness of bleak daily existence, and the promotion within the bureaucracy, of experts. Because this scholarship is deliberately useless, it always ends up serving the system of the commodity-spectacle.
- f. In particular, so called economic scholarship is a bureaucratic/bourgeois mystification and nothing more. It only has meaning within a capitalist organisation of the economy, and how! Once capitalism is abolished, the average worker is better equipped to organise the new production than even the most learned of economists. (Without even venturing beyond reformism, the LIP workers have proven that they were capable of running their factory and dispensing with managers).
- g. The rejection of intellectualisation is meaningless unless it is part of a struggle to terminate the division of labour, hierarchy and the State.
- h. Workerist intellectuals are bastards and skunks. As intellectuals they agree (shamefacedly or otherwise) to hold on to a leadership role. Acting out this role and glorifying the role of the worker, they perpetuate the deception of roles and the lot of the slave, a lot of which every single worker has had his fill. In choosing so they are absurd and counter-revolutionary (for the summons to sacrifice is always counter-revolutionary).
- i. Workers who are proud of that fact are servile bastards. Intellectualist workers are as skunk-like as any would-be leader, relying upon the servile natures of "good workers".
- j. Henceforth the clearest and simplest form of the radical theory thrown up by the proletariat's struggle for emancipation is the property of those who are most capable

of implementing it, i.e. to revolutionary workers, or to all the proletarians who strive for the end of the proletariat and an end to classless society. It is the property of all who do battle for the sake of universal self-management, for a society which has neither masters nor slaves.

So you see, already you are fighting for a society organised in such a way that all compartmentations disappear, and so that diversity may grow through union in the revolutionary endeavour, and so that all the expertise penned up in the prison of culture can be restored to the practice whereby our everyday existence is enriched. So that knowledge may be everywhere that pleasure is: that passion and reason may be indissociable: that taken to its logical extremes, the elimination of the division of labour may truly weave the conditions for a harmonious society.

20. And don't you feel the same mistrust of those who engage in politics and those who, whilst not engaging in politics themselves, have others do so on their behalf?

In that case, you have grasped the fact that:

- a. Traditionally, politicians are regarded as the clowns of the ideological spectacle. This allows one to mistrust them whilst persisting in voting for them. Nobody ever quite escapes them for no one ever quite escapes the spectacular organisations of the old world.
- b. Politics is always *raison d'état*. To do away with it, one must do away with the spectacular-commodity system and its protective organ... the State.
- c. There is no such thing as revolutionary parliamentarism, just as there is not, and never has been any such thing as a revolutionary State. The only difference between parliamentary regimes and dictatorial ones lies in the magnitude of the Lie and the truthfulness of the terror.
- d. Like every ideology, and every compartmentalised activity, politics recuperates radical demands only to whittle them down and turn them into their opposites. For instance, the determination to wreak some change in life becomes, once placed in the hands of the parties and unions, a simple wage demand, a demand for more leisure and other cosmetic changes to bleak subsistence which merely aggravate the disease by making it momentarily a little more comfortable.
- e. The great political ideologies (nationalism, socialism, communism) have seen their charms fade in proportion as the social behaviour imposed by the imperialism of commodity has multiplied "pocket ideologies". In turn, the morsels of ideology (notions about pollution, art, comfort, education, abortion) are politicised in crude amalgamations leaning towards the right or left. All of this is only a ploy by which the individual can be diverted from the only concern he really has at heart i.e. changing his daily existence in the sense of enriching it and infecting it with passionate adventures.
- f. Most of the time, everybody who sets out to fight on his own behalf winds up fighting against himself. Political action is one of the chief causes of this inversion of intentions. Only the struggle for the self-management of all in every area of our lives provides any real answer to the real wishes of each individual. That is why that struggle is neither a political nor an apolitical one, but an all-embracing social one.

So you see, you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society where decision making powers are universal, where divergences between individuals and groups are thrashed out in such a way that they do not result in mutual destruction but instead complement one another to the advantage of all. There is a need for the element of play that is walled up and swallowed up by politics, to be released into an interplay of relationships between individuals and affinity groups, through the balance and harmonisation of points of agreement and of difference.

21. Haven't you long since torn up your union membership card?

If the answer is 'yes', you have caught on that:

- a. It is wrong, this belief that you have been let down by the unions. The unions constitute an organisation separate from the workers... and of necessity that organisation turns into a bureaucratic authority that works against the workers whilst feigning the "spectacle" of defending them.
- b. Created for the defence of the immediate interests of an overexploited proletariat, the unions have (with the development of capitalism) become the appointed courtiers of the labour force. Their aim is not to abolish the wages system, but rather to improve it. Thus, they are the finest servants of the capitalism which, in its private or in its State form, holds sway over the entire globe.
- c. The anarchist notion of a "revolutionary syndicate" is already a bureaucratic recuperation of the direct power which the workers can wield directly by coming together in council assemblies. Spawned by a repudiation of the political in the name of the social, it falls into the traps of compartmentalisation and leaders (even should certain of the leaders be unwilling to behave as such).
- d. The unions are a parastatist bureaucracy which complements and rounds off the power which the bourgeoisie as a class wields over the proletariat.

So you see, already you are fighting, in every wildcat strike, for a direct affirmation of the power of all against any representative arrangement that would betoken compartmentalisation. We no longer want any union delegates: what we want are assemblies, where the decisions are made by everyone and applied for the benefit of all. Instead of bandying words about whether or not to resume work, we wish to pronounce upon the uses to which we are going to put our factories and ourselves. We want to translate our wishes into facts by choosing a council, every one of whose members will be subject to recall at any moment, and who would be charged with implementing the decisions made by the assembly.

22. Haven't you had enough of your wife or husband or your parents, children, household chores and family obligations?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. The family is the tiniest theatre of social oppression, a school for lies, an apprenticeship to role playing, a conditioning of submission, and the ways of suppression, the systematic destruction of childhood creativity... the family is the natural setting for crassness, and resentment and the rebellion of the marionette.



- b. Family authority has continuously been swindling and been facing challenge in proportion as the commodity system undermines the power of men to the benefit of oppressive mechanisms in which men of power are mere cops. Thus the commodity system retains the family but drains it of its ancient and almost humane connotations: as a result the family only becomes the more unbearable.
- c. It is within the family that all the humiliation of having been treated as objects in our subsistence society entitles one to humiliate and reduce to the standing of mere objects those who are members of one's family.
- d. The emancipation of women cannot be dissociated from that of children or that of men. And the abolition of the family goes hand in hand with the abolition of the spectacle-commodity system. Every demand which seeks to compartmentalise (women's lib., children's lib., the revolutionary gay action front) is nothing but reformism and merely prolongs oppression.
- e. Commodity imperialism, which destroys the traditional family, turns the family into a theatre of passivity and submission to the system (and of the contestation of it that provides the meat for mere squabbling over details).

So you see, you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society wherein everyone will have free control of himself and be independent of everyone without being subject to an oppressive system and where problems will be with harmonising everyone's desires. A society whose number one concern will be for the elimination of household drudgery and which will leave the education of children to volunteers, beginning with the children themselves.

- 23. Haven't you often had the feeling that this is a topsy turvy world where people do the opposite of what they wish, pass the time away in self-destruction and venerate that which destroys them, obedient to abstractions and sacrificing their real lives to those abstractions.

In that case you have realised that:

- a. Alienated labour underlies every other form of alienation. It lies at the historic origins of the division of society into masters and slaves, and of all the compartmentalisation that has flowed from it (religion, culture, economy, politics) and of everything that stands for destruction with a human face
- b. It is the product, social relationships, images and representations created by the producers, (in circumstances that are such that these are dispossessed and such that one finds them turning against themselves) that mask their hostility and inhumanity behind images contrary to the reality. (The master proclaiming himself the retainer of his slaves; the exploiters of the proletariat boasting that they serve the people; the images of experience palmed off as the only genuine reality, and so on).
- c. The increasingly remarkable and unbearable gulf between the daily miseries of mere existence (and the lying representations we are offered), and the ambition we all share to live a real life, to live really, demonstrates more clearly each day that the battle has begun between the side of survival and decomposition and the side of life and excess. The final struggle for the classless society, today historically inevitable, is drilling

the proletariat who have had enough of their slavery and who are demanding self-management for each and every one, against the commodity system and its servants, bourgeoisie and bureaucracy, both under the same protective helmet of the State..

- d. The quest for happiness is the quest for authentic and undistorted experience — life without inversion and without sacrifice. Acceptance of one's real self, of oneself as a specific individual, is an advance which supposes that the commodity system has been abolished and the passions of individuals harmoniously reconciled.

So you see, we have had a bellyful of an existence dominated by the very opposite of this striving after happiness: an existence dominated by separate compartments (economy, politics, culture and every aspect of the spectacle) which absorb all our energies and prevent us from really living. We struggle for the overthrow of a topsy-turvy world, for the fruition of our wishes and heartfelt desires through social relationship in which the lust for profit and the imperatives of hierarchical power have no place.

- 24. Don't you find it odious and absurd to make any distinction between immigrant and home-born workers?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. The old adage about "proletarians having no home land" remains perfectly true and should be borne in mind constantly to ward off all the shit of nationalism and racism.
- b. Similarly, it should at all times be remembered that the emancipation of the proletariat is a historic and international endeavour. Only the action of revolutionary workers of the whole world will in fact create an international of self-managing councils.
- c. The ruling class and its retainers do their utmost to impose a distinction between immigrant workers and native-born workers. They delude the latter (whom they disdain as mere objects from which productivity can be squeezed) that there are those even more disdained than themselves.
- d. The involvement of immigrant workers in the hardest struggles is also a blow against their own bourgeoisie which sells them in the finest tradition of the slave-traders. In this respect also, immigrant workers along with other revolutionary workers constitute the basis of a genuine international of wholesale self-management.

So you see, you are already fighting, consciously or otherwise, for a society where differences (be they of race, sex, age, character, interests or desires) no longer constitute a barrier but rather help to harmonise for the sake of the greater pleasure and happiness of all. You are struggling for the realisation of self-management of the individual or group, on an international basis... dispensing with the idiotic prejudices of nationalism, regionalism or geographic attachments.

- 25. Don't you feel the need to talk to someone who understands you and works to the same end as yourself (rejecting work, and controls, and commodity and rejecting the truthfulness of the lies that go to make up the spectacle)?

In that case you have realised that:

- a. The custom of talking for the sake of talking, and of getting absorbed by false problems, and of listening to people who say one thing but do another, and of letting oneself be caught up in the usage of repetitive, everyday nonsense, is of itself, a way of preventing the individual from recognising as his true interests, his enthusiasms and his lust for real life against the lusts for private possession as invented by commerce.
- b. Every intervention which fails to usher in practical measures is just empty talk, just a way of dulling the senses. Every practical measure that does not lead to the improvement of everyone's life merely reinforces the oppression thereof. Nothing can really improve one's life unless it destroys the commodity system.
- c. Each assemblage must rapidly arrive at a decision or be sabotaged.
- d. Before or during strikes, the discussions must take place aimed at practical truths... the propagation of an awareness of the battle to be fought... and the arrival at definite decisions concerning the action to be taken.
- e. Whatever remains only words quickly becomes ideology i.e. falsehood, like everything that is said by members of bureaucratic apparatus (parties, unions, groups specialising in the improvement of the worker livestock).
- f. The finest precaution the strike assemblies could take against the false language of the ruling system, would be to proceed without delay to the election of a council of delegates whose sole commissions would be to follow the directions of the strikers, upon pain of instant dismissal and to translate those directions into practical measures without delay.
- g. We no longer want fine speakers, nor orators showing off their rhetoric. Instead we want the language of deeds, specific proposals and properly elaborated plans of action of our own making. It is about time that our search for perfection should be directed not only into our words, but also into our deeds.

So you see, already you are struggling, consciously or not, for a society where words will no longer be used to dissemble but rather to give real extension to our desires, and will be the faithful spokesmen of our needs and desires.

## Chapter 2. The ABC of Revolution

- A. The object of sabotage and misappropriation, whether practised by the individual or the group, is the unleashing of a wildcat strike.
- B. Every wildcat strike must develop into a factory occupation.
- C. Every factory occupied must be appropriated and turned promptly to the service of revolutionaries.
- D. By choosing delegates (who are subject to instant recall and mandated to collate decisions and to oversee their implementation) the assembled strikers lay the groundwork for a radical reorganisation of society... into a society of universal self-management.

### *The instant the factory is occupied*

1. Every assemblage of strikers should become an assemblage for universal self-management. All this requires is...
  - a. the election of delegates subject to recall at any moment and mandated to oversee the prompt implementation of the assembly's decisions.
  - b. that the assembly have provision for its self-defence
  - c. that it should spread until it embraces all revolutionaries and that it should spread geographically in a search for optimum efficiency of misappropriation (i.e. to those regions possessed of both agricultural resources and primary industries).
2. All power is vested in the assembly in that it stands for the power which every individual seeks to wield over his own everyday existence.
3. The best guarantee against any other (and, of necessity) oppressive power (i.e. parties, unions, hierarchical organisations, groups of intellectuals or of activists... all of them embryonic states) is the prompt construction of radically new living conditions.
4. The only way of dissolving the State is for federations of delegates meeting as councils to render it inoperative. Only coordination of the struggles aimed at universal self-management can eradicate the commodity system.
5. Every discussion, every intervention must culminate in a practical proposition. A measure, once approved by the assembly, instantly becomes writ.

*The prompt organisation of self-defence...*

6. The right of self-defence is the first right of an assembly for universal self-management. It consists of arming the masses, securing and increasing the conquered territory, by means of creating the conditions for all to have a better life.

7. The revolution does not work out a plan, nor does it improvise: but it does anticipate and make preparations.

This being so, it is vital that the assemblies have to hand the following information, above all else...

- a. In supply areas: the whereabouts of warehouses, depots, supermarkets and distribution outlets. The location of factories regarded as being of primary necessity and which can be automated as soon as practicable; the location of plants which are considered convertible and transformable; the location of sectors believed parasitical and to be eliminated. Redistribution of farming areas.
- b. In enemy territory: the location of barracks, police stations, arsenals etc. The home addresses and itineraries of those leaders whose neutralisation would result in the disorganisation of the statist forces.
- c. In communication and liaison zones: the whereabouts of truck, bus, train or aircraft depots, plus garages and petroleum depots... The location of telecommunications centres: local radio stations, printworks, telex outlets, offset facilities, etc.
- d. In the areas of basic necessities: water, electricity, hospital and clinic facilities, gasworks...

8. The instant any area is occupied by revolutionaries it must be appropriated forthwith according to two incontestable principles: self-defence and free distribution of goods produced.

9. The best way to avoid isolation is to attack. Thus one must:

- a. With an eye to the internationalist direction, create other nuclei for occupations and appropriations.
- b. Strengthen and protect liaison between revolutionary zones.
- c. Isolate the enemy and destroy his communications and use commando tactics to harass his rearguard and avoid encirclement by splitting up his forces.
- d. Disorganise the counter-revolution by rendering its principle leaders and best strategists harmless.
- e. Make use of printing works, local radio stations and telecommunications to propagate the truth concerning the movement for universal self-management and to explain what we want and what our capabilities are. Act in such a way that the masses in each district, town or village are kept up to date with what is going on elsewhere in the country. Coordinate street fighting and the struggles in the towns and in the countryside.

10. We should steer clear of outmoded, passive and static tactics, such as the use of barricades, mass demonstrations and student style struggles. It is of the utmost importance that we invent and experiment with new and unexpected tactics.

11. The success of urban guerrilla tactics employed as a tactical backup for occupied factories depends upon the speed and effectiveness of such raids. Hence the importance of small commando teams linking up what statisticians of every colour already refer to as the “neighbourhood hooligans”, with “factory hooligans”.

12. Our aim is to thwart all violence against the movement for universal self-management and not to spread that movement by force of arms. It is more important that we should disarm the enemy rather than liquidate him physically. The more resolute and swift our action, the less blood will be spilled.

13. The defection of some of those who would be initially hostile, into the camp of universal self-management is the touchstone which will enable us to reckon the success of the first measures we adopt and of their advantages to all.

14. Nevertheless, one must take into account those conditioned by hierarchy whom the habits of slavery and self-disgust, deep-rooted suppression and the taste for sacrifice push to their own destruction and to that of all the advances in the realm of actual freedom. It is for that reason that it is a good idea if, from the outset of the insurrection, internal enemies (trade union chiefs, party men, workerists, scabs) and external enemies (bosses, managers, cops, soldiers) can be neutralised.

15. In the event of the insurrection becoming isolated or losing its impetus, self-defence requires that we analyse different forms of possible withdrawal. These will vary according to the intensity of the struggle in which we are engaged, the nature of the mistakes made (e.g. the internal disorganisation of the movement), the violence employed by the enemy, and the anticipated degree of repression, etc.

16. We need not fear failure: instead we should feel out what is and is not possible, so that we can anticipate avert and fend off repression. “There is nothing of the revolutionary in an individual who has yet to shrug off the bondage of intellectualism and, in objective terms, veers towards the counter-revolution... someone who will accept the proletarian revolution only if it can be achieved with ease and without conflict and can be assured instantly of the backing of the proletariat worldwide and can eliminate in advance any eventuality of defeat.”

17. The men who carried out the massacres against the Paris Commune and the Commune of Budapest have taught us that the repression is always ruthless and that the peace of graveyard is the only promise that is ever honoured by the forces of the Statist order of things. When the confrontation reaches the stage where the repression will spare no one, let us not spare any of these cowards who merely await our defeat as their opportunity to play the executioner. We must put their residential areas to the torch, eliminate hostages and ruin the economy so that not a trace remains of that which has prevented us from becoming all is left remaining.

18. Cherishing no illusions about that which awaits us in the event of defeat and determined, once our victory has been assured, to wreak no vengeance on former enemies, we stand ready

to deploy all forms of dissuasion whilst the struggle persists... especially to destroy machinery, reserves and hostages with the aim of compelling the statist forces to retreat and disarm. Should the struggle be at a less drastic pitch, it will be to sever water, gas, electricity and fuel supply lines to bourgeois districts where the leaders reside and to dump rubbish there instead and sabotage the lifts at their residential tower blocks, etc.

19. The voice of the masses is not easily heard above the din of battle. The ingenuity of each individual will wreak new and effective weapons for the use of the self-defence commandos. As rapidly as possible, pilfering will give way to the reconversion of whatever machinery may be available within our factories, in keeping with a rapid armament program laid down by the universal self-managing assemblies.

20. Among weapons suitable for immediate deployment one might predict rocket-launchers made out of tubing (as tried out in Venezuela in the 1960's), ground-to-air missiles (tried out by young scientists' clubs), grenade launchers and catapults for molotov cocktails, flame-throwers, mortars, ultrasonic equipment, lasers... A study will also be made of various methods of armour plating, converted trucks and bulldozers, as well as bulletproof vests, gas masks (products that will counteract the effects of incapacitating weapons). Also of the possibility of dosing the enemy's water supply with LSD... etc.

21. Research into anti-helicopter weapons: improvements to flak guns; surface to air rockets and cannons with remote control; also lasers, marksmen and stakes preventing landings.

22. We must prepare for defence against armour by means of anti-tank silos, remote-controlled rockets, bazookas, napalm jets and mines...

23. We must hold the roofs and cellars and dig tunnels to connect one building with another so as to facilitate the rapid and safe deployment of our self-defence commandos.

24. We must have recourse to deception and remote-controlled weapons with a view to minimising our exposure to danger.

### ***Hastening the passage from subsistence conditions to living conditions***

25. We shall carry the day for sure if we can make significant for everyone the changeover from subsistence to life meaningful for everyone. This does not mean that we are going to beat the commodity system in our first engagement. It means only that the earliest measures adopted and implemented by the self-managing assemblies must render every reversion to former circumstances doubly impossible... by doing away with the old conditions and creating such advantages that no one will consent to being dispossessed of them.

26. The primary benefits of the system of generalised self-management will of necessity have the following results:

- a. The system of trade and wage slavery will be replaced by the free distribution of goods which are necessary to the lives of every one of us.

- b. Obligatory labour will give way to the passing of productive forces under the direct control of the self-managing assemblies and by the unfettered blossoming of individual and collective creativity.
- c. An end to boredom and suppression and constraints... replaced by organisation of sympathetic social conditions and an autonomy which would empower each individual to explore himself with the assistance of all, through recognition, emancipation, multiplication and harmonisation of interests which have hitherto been stunted or sacrificed or bottled up or distorted and, all too often, diverted into destructiveness. All so that under the column of the good, history may note, once and for all, the final annihilation of the commodity system and with it, on a more positive note, the construction of a society that is radically new... albeit carried by each of us in his heart, already.

27. From the very outset our endeavour must be to prevent any backsliding, and to burn behind us the bridges of the old world, by helping to eliminate banks, prisons, asylums, courts, police stations, administrative buildings, barracks, churches and oppressive symbols. Not forgetting dossiers, files, identity papers, hire purchase agreements and payments records, tax forms, financiers' paper-mills and the like. Gold reserves can be disposed of through the use of *acqua regia* (a mixture of nitric acid and hydrochloric acid).

28. As soon as possible, we must destroy the structures of the commodity system rather than persons, and we must liquidate only those who hope to drag us back to a system of exploitation, servitude, spectacle and boredom.

29. The end of commodity will usher in the era of GIFT in every form. Thus the assemblies for generalised self-management will see to the organisation of production and to the distribution of priority goods. They will keep tally of offers to create and produce on the one hand and of the requirements of individuals on the other. Records kept scrupulously up to date will enable every person to have an insight into available stocks, the number and allocation of orders and the whereabouts and movements of the productive forces.

30. Factories will be reconverted and automated, or, in the case of parasitic sectors, destroyed. Almost, everywhere, small workshops for free creative labour will be at the disposal of everyone who wants to use them.

31. Parasitic buildings (offices, schools, barracks, churches...) will, on the decision of the self-managing assemblies, generally be destroyed or, should they prefer, turned into collective granaries or warehouses or temporary dwellings or playgrounds...

32. Supermarkets and department stores will be turned into outlets for free distribution and a study will be made in each area into the convenience of stepping up the number of small distribution outlets (for which purpose small shops and stores may well be adapted).

33. Needs change the moment the dictatorship of the commodity is ended, for that dictatorship has never ceased misrepresenting our needs. Thus, motor vehicles become largely useless once



space and time are available to all and once it is possible to move about freely to no timetable. So we must not only plan for the appearance of radically new demands and personal fantasies and unlooked for enthusiasms, but also gear everything towards the satisfaction of the same so that the only thing preventing their realisation is the momentary shortage of material means and not the social organisation.

34. The plan to abolish the distinction between town and country requires decentralisation of the habitat (the right to be nomadic, the right to build one's house on available sites), the destruction of nuisance, pollutant industries and the creation within towns of areas of tilth and stockraising. (e.g. in the Champs Elysees).

35. The launching of the revolt will be the signal to all to withhold their talents from obligatory labour. That tiny spark of passion which enabled us to bear the harsh alienation of the trade we plied for the sake of mere subsistence, will forge newer and free vocations for us. So that anyone with a love of teaching will give his lessons in the streets: anyone enamoured with cooking will have access to "communal" kitchens everywhere, each one competing with the other in the quality of his cooking. Thus will every creative disposition give rise to free artisanship and a proliferation of artefacts.

36. Each individual will have the right to make known his criticisms and demands, his opinions and creations, desires, analyses, fantasies and problems... so that the widest possible variety can spark off the best chances of encounters, agreements and harmonisation. Printing presses, telex facilities, offset facilities, radios and televisions taken over by the assemblies will be placed at the disposal of every individual to this very end.

37. No one will fight without reservation unless he first has learned how to live without time hanging heavily on his hands.

***Every strike must become a wildcat strike***

38. The true meaning of any strike lies in its rejection of alienated labour and of the commodity which it produces and which produces it.

39. A strike only realises this real meaning by becoming a wildcat, i.e. by jettisoning everything that impedes the autonomy of the revolutionary workers... such as parties, unions, bosses, leaders, bureaucrats, would-be bureaucrats, scabs, workers with the minds of cops and workers with the mentality of slaves.

40. Any pretext is valid grounds on which to unleash a wildcat strike for there is nothing that can justify the brutalisation of obligatory labour and the inhumanity of the commodity system.

41. Revolutionary workers have no need of agitators. Such workers alone provide the impetus for the movement of general agitation.

42. In a wildcat strike, the strikers must exercise absolute power, to the exclusion of any other.

43. The only way of keeping outside organisations (all of them seeking to recuperate) at bay is to invest all power in the assembly of the strikers and to proceed to elect delegates charged with the coordination and implementation of the assembly's decisions.

44. No matter how limited it might be, a wildcat strike must pull out all the stops to win as much support as possible, e.g. by affording glimpses of free distribution. A strike by supermarket checkout assistants would permit both display and stored goods to be distributed free of charge. Workers might distribute goods they themselves have manufactured, or goods from their stores.

***Every wildcat strike should blossom into a factory occupation. Every factory occupation should blossom into the prompt readaptation of the factory***

45. Occupation of the factory speaks of the determination on the part of revolutionary workers that they should be masters of the space and time hitherto taken up by the commodity. Unless they readapt the factory to their advantage they might just as well kiss goodbye to the creativity they seek, and to their most inalienable rights.

46. A factory which is occupied but not readapted makes a contribution to the spectacle which alleges that no one has the power to break the commodity system, in that it puts forward the argument, (the decisive argument) which alleges that bureaucracy and ideological manipulators are always necessary. But for anyone to lose sight of the wealth of technical possibilities available to us today is to render laughable that person's charges of utopianism.

47. A factory, once occupied, should instantly be readapted to serve the interests of self-defence (manufacture of arms and armour) and of the distribution, free of charge, of any useful items which might be manufactured there.

48. To break out of their isolation, revolutionaries have only their own creativity to rely upon. It is especially important that...

- a. Provision be made for ways in which tactical support may be lent by other workers outside the factories. For instance, printers might interfere with the papers on which they work in order to ensure that precise and correct information is printed and that the programme of the striking workers reaches the public. High school pupils might seize control of their schools and set up liaisons with the rest of the country and attack the forces of (dis)order: the inhabitants of a given region might neutralise the forces of repression and join with the striking workers in forming widespread and self managing assemblies; soldiers might seize their barracks and take their officers hostage and hand them over to the strikers... In time of revolution, there is no function that cannot be destroyed through subversion.
- b. The conflict be internationalised and that the wildcat strike spread from division to division of the same industrial complex albeit geographically scattered, and between connected or complementary firms in one country and another, and between a factory and its source of raw materials. Not merely does the readaption of an economically viable region make a mockery of frontiers, but it furnishes the basis upon which can be built, not just a political international, but instead an international of revolutionary practice.

- c. The guerrilla warfare of self-defence be made as coherent as is possible. Commando raids should be mounted against barracks, arms dumps and radio stations only to support and to expand the revolutionary workers' movement and not separately as is the case with terrorism, Blanquism or leftist activism: and should it prove useful, the attentat should be used selectively (against counter-revolutionary leaders with a view to rendering them harmless, or against police centres with a view to neutralising them) and never indiscriminately (e.g. bombing of railway stations, banks or public places).

49. Over living hostages such as bosses, ministers, bishops, bankers, generals, highly-placed officials, prefects, police chiefs, etc. preference should be given to material hostages such as stocks, prototypes, gold and silver reserves, expensive machinery, electronic equipment, blast furnaces, etc.

50. We must know how to tailor our means of pressurising and dissuasion to the nature of our demands. For instance, it is absurd to threaten, as the workers of the Snee company in Liege did (in September 1973) to blow up the plant unless they were given an interview with their members of parliament. Recourse to extreme measures should lead to radical measures (e.g. to the liquidation of the Statist enemy, or the disarming of the faces of repression, or to the evacuation of a town or entire region by the cops and the armed forces).

51. Risks are to be avoided except for worthwhile results. If isolation threatens, better to evacuate with an eye to the future endeavours, thereby avoiding the repression and turning each tactical withdrawal to the advantage of the revolutionaries.

52. Provision should be made for the destruction of buildings and hostages in the event of a threat of repression. Whatever cannot be readapted for the advantage of all may be destroyed: in the event of our succeeding, we can always rebuild — in the event of our being defeated we shall hasten the ruination of the commodity system.

53. Once and for all we must renounce mass demonstrations and student-style confrontations (with the use of cobblestones, sticks and barricades). In order to protect the commodity, the cops will not hesitate to open fire. Strike commandos should very quickly achieve the disarmament and neutralisation of the statists.

54. We must never, at any time, place any trust in the statists nor agree to any truce. Instead we must spread our movement as quickly as we are able and never lose sight of the ferocity of the bourgeois and the bureaucrats in their repressions.

***Prior to the wave of wildcat strikes. The practice of sabotage and readaptation by individuals is effective whenever it culminates in the unleashing of a wildcat strike.***

55. Every worker is fully entitled to adapt for his benefit the products and techniques hitherto employed to his disadvantage.

56. Every worker is fully entitled to sabotage everything which serves to destroy him.

57. Sabotage and adaption are the most widespread spontaneous gestures within the workers' ranks. A proper awareness of this should be propagated and the usefulness of the phenomena stressed so that it can be multiplied, perfected and given a fuller coherence.

58. In 1972, a report submitted by officials of the Commissariat for the protection of the State and the respecting of the constitution and by security chiefs in industry, in West Germany listed the following acts of economic sabotage:

- In a tyre factory, the solutions employed in their manufacture were, by various means and on various occasions interfered with.
- In a steelworks, the men shut off gas delivery valves, causing the blast furnace to cool down and hence, loss of production amounting to several million marks.
- A firm manufacturing television tubes received several returned products and realised that the glass had been stained by the addition of chemicals.
- A cellar housing machinery of high value was flooded when a water conduit was cut through.
- Persons unknown stole some perforated cards from a depot run by computers thereby holding up all work for a four day period.

Such examples, made public through a German magazine, give some idea of the inventiveness of the individual when he applies himself to sabotage.

59. Sabotage enthruses one more than hobbies, gardening or bridge. With diligent preparation, there is every likelihood that it will bring us to a point where we can unleash a wildcat strike, factory occupation, reconversion of the factory for the benefit of all, and so it affords each of us a little more control over our own lives each day. A tradition of long standing among workers, it allows us to let off some steam by wreaking some petty vengeance as well as securing us a little rest whilst we wait for repairs to be done. Hitherto, it has only rarely gone beyond the level of dabbling. Everybody is aware that...

- It takes only a hammer or an iron bar to destroy a computer, a prototype, precision instruments, time-clocks, and the robots which control and ordain the pace of production.
- A heat source held close to the sensor plate will trigger the sprinkler systems in the ceilings of department stores and storage areas.
- A sprinkling of iron fillings in the carburettor, or sugar in the petrol tank or ammonium sulphate in the gearbox will put the car of a cop, boss, scab or trade union chief out of commission.
- Distribution of the telephone numbers of statisticians and of their car licence numbers can serve as an aid to dissuasion and demoralisation. But we really must try to move beyond the stage of mere dabbling.

60. The more complicated the commodity system becomes, the simpler the means that suffice to destroy it.

61. Terrorism is the recuperation of sabotage, its ideology and its separated image. Useful though it may be to destroy the cash registers of a supermarket the moment a wildcat strike is begun, or to give the cash they contain to the strikers, or to organise wildcat distribution of products and to explain what generalised self-management would be like, this would all be pointless unless linked with the operation of readapting the machinery.

62. The positive contribution of sabotage is that, being so used to knowing better than their bosses the errors made in the course of production in the pursuit of profit, the workers are equally capable of aggravating these errors or of correcting them once it becomes a matter of turning the machinery to their own advantage. The Lip experiment (recuperated from the beginning because of its failure to make a radical break with the commodity system) has at least underlined the evidence that the workers alone are equipped to wreak a definite change in the world. (The Lip workers have demonstrated the extent to which they have not succeeded in going far enough. Handicapped by the parasitic nature of their industry, they acted partly for the best in running their factory for themselves, seizing stocks and organising a wildcat pay arrangement. But, in retaining union leaders, and reducing their movement to a simple advocacy of the "right to work", and allowing the worst enemies of the revolution to applaud the spectacle of their strike, they surrendered their autonomy and denied the movement any chance of expansion, and ushered in no real historic change). In the current state of the forces of production, we are capable of anything and nothing may lastingly resist our becoming fully aware of that fact.

63. Subject to every sort of alienation, the workers have this advantage over the rest of the proletariat... that they have in their hands the source of every alienation thrust upon them i.e. the commodity process. Because the only power they have is the power to destroy utterly that which destroys them, they also hold the key to the global solution of the problems of harmonisation, and readaptation of the economy to the organisation of new human relations with their roots in gratuitousness.

64. Sabotage is par excellence anti-work, anti-militancy and anti-sacrifice. Each of us can pave the way for it by the simultaneous pursuit of his own enjoyment and the interests of all, a calculated risk, a case of execution, a favourable opening. It accustoms one to autonomy and creativity and lays a real basis for the relations which revolutionaries aspire to establish between themselves. It is the subversion-play on which bureaucratic recuperation founders. Here is a description of what happened in 1968 in a car plant near Detroit.

"... Acts of organised sabotage began to be noticed in certain sections of the plant. At first there were faults in assembly or even parts left out, but on a much larger scale than usual, so much so that numerous motors were rejected upon first inspection. Organisation of this action brought various agreements between inspectors and some assembly workshops with mixed feelings and motives among the workers concerned certain of them were determined, others were merely out for some sort of revenge, still others took part only for the hell of it. Be that as it may, the movement spread rapidly amid an atmosphere of high enthusiasm...

If, in the course of inspection or trials, a motor appeared which had apparently come down the line without any manufacturing defects, a simple twist of a monkey-wrench on the oil filter or valve cover or distributor was all that it took to set that straight. Sometimes motors were rejected simply because they failed to turn over quietly enough...

Schemes devised during countless meetings led eventually to sabotage on the scale of the V-8 engine works as a whole... As six cylinder jobs the V-8s were assembled in a faulty manner or damaged during production so that they would be rejected. In addition, during trials, the inspectors agreed with one another to reject something like 3 out of every 4 or 5 motors under examination...

Without the shop floor ever having admitted to their sabotage the manager was driven to embark upon a circuitous argument to attempt to explain (something which even he found it hard to accept) that the 'lads' should not be rejecting engines which were quite evidently defective. Of course although he might hint at this, he could at no time state it openly. All such efforts were in vain, for the 'lads' simply ignored him. Unfailingly they argued back that their interest and the company's were identical and thus that they had a duty to ensure that only products of the finest quality left their plant...

During that summer a sabotage rota was organised throughout the entire plant as a means of securing increased free time for the workers. At meetings, workers would number themselves off from 1 to 50 or beyond. Similar meetings were held elsewhere in the plant. Each worker was allocated a certain period of time, say 20 minutes or so in duration, over the following two weeks. When his turn came he would do something to sabotage production in his workshop... and that would be, if at all possible, something serious enough to bring his entire line grinding to a halt. The moment management sent in a team of workmen to repair that 'breakdown', the whole process would be repeated at some other key point in the plant. In this way the entire plant was out of action for between 5 and 20 minutes per hour for a fair number of weeks, either because of a hold-up on one line or because of an absence of engines on the line. Even the techniques of sabotage that were utilised were very numerous and varied widely, and I have no idea which ones were used in most of the workshops...

The remarkable thing about all of this is the level of cooperation and organisation among the workers inside a single workshop and also between workers in different workshops. Whilst a response to the need for coordinated action, this organization was also a means of pursuing the sabotage, taking up collections or even of organisation of games and competitions which served to turn the working day into a period of enjoyment. This is what happened in the workshop where the engines came for testing:

The inspectors on the engine tests bench decided upon a competition centring upon the valves: this competition required that lookouts be posted at the entrances to their workshop and also that an understanding be reached with the workers on the engine assembly line to the effect that a certain number of engines chosen at random would

not have their valves soundly attached. Whenever an inspector heard dubious vibrations, he would call out to everyone to clear the workshop whereupon the workers would abandon their work in order to shelter behind the crates and shelving. Next, the inspector would rev. the engine up to 4 or 5,000 revs. per minute. The engine would make all sorts of noises and eventually, after much clanking, would stop; and with one loud, sharp, cracking noise, the adjustable valve holding the gearbox would hurtle at great speed from one end of the workshop to the other. This was the signal for the rest of the workers to emerge from their shelters, cheering all the while. The inspector in question would then have another point chalked up to his score on the wall. This competition continued for several months, and involved the explosion of more than 150 engines. Betting was all the rage.

In another instance, it all began with two workmen who hosed each other down one hot day with the hoses employed by the test workshop. This developed into a running battle with hosed water for weapons and it persisted throughout the entire workshop for several days. Most of the engines were ignored or simply given a brusque seal of approval so that people would be free to engage in the water-fight. In many cases the engines were destroyed or damaged so that the men would quickly be rid of them. All in all some 10 to 15 water jets were engaged in the battle, each one with a pressure force comparable to that of a fireman's jet. Water jetted everywhere as then men laughed and shouted and ran in every direction. Given this atmosphere there were very few in any mood to get down to their work. Their workshop was regularly awash to ceiling level and all of the men were absolutely saturated. In no time at all, they were bringing in water pistols and garden hoses and pails and the escapades assumed the scale of one huge carnival during working hours. One fellow strolled around wearing his wife's shower cap, to the huge amusement of the rest of the plant's workers who were unaware of what was going on in the test workshop..." (from the pamphlet *Lordstown 72* published by 4 millions de Jeunes Travailleurs, Paris, See Also *Solidarity Pamphlet/45*).

65. The problem of organization is an abstract one unless it answers the question... "who organised and why?" At best, those organisations set up without the workers have resulted in practical impotence and, on most occasions, in the renewal of bureaucratic apparatus. Organisations set up in the name of the workers have, at best, created the conditions for bureaucratization and, most times have become instruments of parastatist oppression. The only form of genuinely workers' and revolutionary organisation is the assemblage of wildcat strikers evolving into an assembly for general self-management, as described earlier. This is ushered in, not by other, necessarily hybrid and separate organizations, but by the revolutionary action which requires only intervention groups coming together for a precise operation and dissolving once that specific activity no longer has need of their existence.

66. Ephemeral groups formed as necessary by and for the exploration of the effects of a specific action, will see to it that the autonomy of the individual is respected, obedience repudiated and all sacrifice excluded. The only discipline will be the discipline that will be adopted after discussion and regulated by the requirements of the undertaking and of protection against any chance of repression.

67. Every revolutionary is entitled to act alone, in commandos or in ephemeral groups, but he should take care lest he act separately i.e. lose sight of the tactical line which leads from acts of sabotage and adaption to the wildcat strike, and from the wildcat strike to collective occupation and adaptation of factories. Our revolution is a total, indivisible revolution. This means, for instance, that sabotage is not confined to action against work, but is applicable to every facet of commodity, dispensing with authoritarian attitudes, taboos (such as incest and sexual repression), self-centred conduct (jealousy, avarice) and the lies of representation, etc... in such a way that everywhere freedom is encouraged along with strengthening of passions, harmonization of desires and personal wishes...

68. Only self-defence groups, formed for the purpose of encompassing a specific action and dissolving once it has been encompassed and once the protection of all has been assured, can prepare the way in any coherent fashion for the emergence of conditions favourable to the establishment of assemblies of general self-management.

69. The workers who are against work, parties, unions, commodity, sacrifice and hierarchy will form circumstantial self-defence groups. The “factory hooligans” as they are known to the statist front (from fascists to Maoists) represent the basis of a movement in whose absence the “neighbourhood hooligans” lapse into terrorism, and from which the assemblies of generalised self-management will necessarily emerge.

70. The finest way in which to ensure the safety of a group engaging in sabotage or adaptation activities is to unleash a collective upsurge of revolutionary enthusiasm in the breasts of the workers and the population generally. And the best anonymity is to enjoy the fellowship of as many people as possible.

71. The absence of hierarchically arrived-at decisions cuts down the risks of police manipulation and bureaucratic machination. Nonetheless, every ephemeral group with a brief has an interest in:

- a. setting itself up among people who know its members well;
- b. taking account of the capacities and weaknesses of each individual, and attuning them to the action;
- c. anticipating the failure of their plan through treachery or inadequacy, and preparing a variety of possible riposts, taking care to avert any widespread repression (e.g. by taking hostages and by giving consideration to the extermination of probable exterminators and their accomplices, etc.) and by learning the lessons from their failures and, in practical terms, by turning each and every defeat into a defeat for the statists.

72. As a general rule, subversive activities initiated by a guerrilla group against the ruling system, should fulfil at least these 4 conditions:

- a. They should give free rein to individual creativity and autonomy whilst giving a sharper edge to the empathies and antagonisms between the participants.



- b. They should examine probable forms of repression and the method by which a response can be made for the benefit of the greatest possible number.
- c. The struggle should be carried into every single facet of everyday life, which is the true yardstick of the progress or shortcomings of a long revolution.
- d. It should always have an eye to the real pleasures and quality of life for all the workers of a factory, or an entire district or for the entire proletariat.

73. The degree of success can be measured by the speed with which the progression is made from sabotage and individual adaptations to the wildcat strike and to collective adaptation... this being the only act that furthers the movement towards generalized self-management.

74. The basic unit of generalized self-management is not the individual but the revolutionary individual who acknowledges obedience only to a circumstantial commitment to a specific purpose and to his own pleasure as the universal guide, and who pays homage to no organisational fetishism.

75. One does not improvise an act of sabotage or adaptation, be it by individual or group. Instead, one prepares for it as if it were a harrying action. One has to calculate the opportune moment, the relative strength of factors engaged on both sides, the layout of the land, possible defections and mistakes and everything that might contribute towards their correction, as well as the possibilities of withdrawal and the risks involved therein. One ought also to link one's action to an overall strategy, the central concern of which ought at all times to be the construction of a system of generalized self-management.

76. It is a good idea to circulate plans and details of factories, telecommunications centres, etc... so that access plans, the methods by which these are to be sabotaged and details as to how they operate are made available to a number of people who can then bring their powers of ingenuity to bear upon these questions.

77. It is good if documents such as we have just described can be discussed and criticised and amended, though not in any abstract fashion. Only practice can bring any real criticism to bear upon the revolutionary plan.

78. Similarly, the best way to eliminate ideologies and their armies of bureaucrats, is to struggle with the greatest possible consistency and as much precision as can be mustered for the goal of generalised self-management. The moment that wildcat strikes open up the possibility of forming self-management assemblages with elected, mandated and revocable delegates, and the moment that the free distribution of goods becomes the system... the ideologies shall see criticism in arms line up against their statist and bureaucratic aspirations denounce once for all the lies behind which they are masked.

79. The theoretical axiom according to which "... the right to live life to the full can be achieved only through the utter destruction of the commodity-spectacle system"... must now assume a consistency in practice stretching from the overall strategic conception to the tiniest details of

the tactical struggle. This is why it is not without its uses that every individual should draft and circulate his recommendations in the game of subversion (for instance, it is possible to dislodge any enemy from his premises simply by tossing in... together... a bottle of bleaching water — say, sodium hypochlorite — and a flagon of sink or toilet cleaner (sodium hydrate based)... and, remember that one hour prior to an expected tear gas attack, one should absorb antihistamine tablets (rumicin)... etc. etc.). And one would do well to mistrust the phoney information supplied by the cops themselves.

80. The struggle for the utter destruction of commodity is indivisible from the day by day elaboration of a full life freed of taboo and constraints. Of necessity, every revolutionary aspiration depends upon the quest for personal amelioration and upon a calculated gamble pitting risk against pleasure (minimum risk, maximum pleasure).

## Chapter 3. Total Self-Management

1. Total self-management is the form of social organization in which everybody has the right to make the decisions that affect their everyday life, whether individually or collectively in self-managing assemblies.

2. It has appeared in the history of the workers movement each time that the people themselves have tried to make and implement their own decisions without giving up their power to leaders and without allowing themselves to be tied to any ideology.

3. It has been crushed by the combined effect of its own internal weaknesses, hesitations and confusions, by its isolation, and by the leaders it has made the mistake of creating for itself or of tolerating, leaders who have led it to defeat while pretending to organize and strengthen it. The most instructive examples are the workers councils that appeared in Russia in 1905 (crushed by the Czarist regime), in 1917 (coopted and destroyed by the Bolsheviks), and in 1921 (crushed at Kronstadt by Lenin and Trotsky); in Germany in 1918 (crushed by the socialists); in Italy in 1920 (destroyed by the socialists and the labor unions); in Spain in 1934 (the Asturian revolution, crushed by the republican government) and in 1936-1937 (coopted by the anarchist labor union and crushed by the Stalinists); and in Hungary in 1956 (crushed by the "Soviet" state).

4. No revolution is possible without the revival of the movement for total self-management, which this time must be decisively strengthened and extended internationally.

5. The movement for total self-management develops through the operation of popular assemblies and their coordinating councils.

6. Total self-management assemblies arise out of class struggles. These struggles are the most direct expression of the proletariat's will to abolish the bourgeoisie and to abolish itself as a class; of its decision to no longer remain a mere spectator watching its own dispossession and the delusory representations that mask that dispossession; and of its determination to no longer submit to history but to make its own history for itself and for the benefit of everyone.

7. A total self-management assembly is nothing other than a strike assembly formed by the workers the moment they begin occupying their factories, and which extends as quickly as possible from the workplace to the neighborhood and surrounding region. Far from being abstract or political, its primary aim is to liberate and enrich the daily life of each individual.

8. Councils of delegates are elected by the assembly for specifically defined purposes. These delegates are constantly monitored by the assembly and may be revoked at any moment.

9. A council has essentially a coordinating function. It is indissociable from the assembly. It has no members other than delegates who have been elected for very specific purposes; and those

delegates have no power of their own, though they are granted whatever creative freedom is necessary to carry out the task they have been assigned. If any separation ever appears between their interests and the interests of the people who elected them, the council will have become a committee which, by acting as an autonomous power, would open the way toward a new State.

10. Even at their greatest degree of expansion, the total self-management assemblies constantly monitor their delegates by means of appropriate telecommunications technologies, in order to verify how those delegates are carrying out the goals they have been assigned.

### **Positive Revolutionary Rights**

11. Positive revolutionary rights are the ever-increasing range of individual rights to enjoyment guaranteed by the very functioning of the new social organization.

- a. Arising out of the struggle against the commodity system and concretized with the first measures taken by the total self-management assemblies, they constitute entitlements which should never be given up.
- b. Derived from requests presented in the total self-management assemblies, whether those requests have been immediately implemented, harmonized, or temporarily postponed due to lack of means to fulfill them, they comprise a perpetual code of possible rights.

12. Rights to enjoyment appear in a *negative* form in our reactions against the system of survival. We become aware of them as we articulate critiques of the state, of bureaucracy, work, exchange, sacrifice, private property; of ideology, hierarchy, and quantification. We can therefore only have a relatively poor idea of the inexhaustible happiness that the destruction of this system of constraints and lies could bring within our grasp virtually overnight. By *positively* realizing the desires that have thus far been blocked, repressed and falsified, the self-management assemblies will free the passions from the conditions that have debased them and will harmonize them in such a way that all the psychological effects of survival (jealousy, avarice, prestige, authoritarianism, taste for submission or for rape, etc.) will disappear once and for all.

13. A genuine movement for total self-management cannot peacefully coexist with any other form of social power. We want the self-management of freedoms, not the self-management of oppression and lies (which amounts to nothing other than oppression and lies in the name of self-management).

14. The point is not to condemn a desire or a passion that has been warped into a masochistic or destructive form, but to undermine its appeal by presenting a far richer range of possible enjoyments. All desires thus merit being presented to the total self-management assemblies in order to be satisfied, harmonized by the process of “supply and demand,” developed from simple to composite, multiplied and refined. If revolutionaries create the first total self-management assemblies, it is equally true that those assemblies will engender new revolutionaries.

15. Positive revolutionary rights are the practice of concrete individuals, not abstract principles of “citizens” or of “humanity.”

16. It is not enough that individuals know their rights or even invent rights for themselves by trial and error; society must be organized in such a way that it will automatically reinforce, enrich and multiply those individual rights. We don't want a new "Declaration of the Rights of Man," but real rights that flow from the very nature and functioning of the social organization.

17. Positive revolutionary rights will be manifested in all domains of social life thanks to the functioning of the total self-management assemblies. The simpler this functioning is, the more the complexity of individual demands will increase and the more desires can be satisfied without even bothering with the assemblies.

18. The more decisive the blows struck against the commodity system and the state, the more the harmonization of individual interests, desires and passions will make everybody masters of their own daily life. During the initial trial-and-error phase, it is crucial to prevent any form of repression within the self-managed society. Except during the self-defensive war that will be necessary to eliminate the statist forces:

- a. No one should be condemned for what he was before the revolution. The only determining factor should be a person's attitude during the current struggle. For example, in the Aragon village of Alcorisa during the uprisings of 1933 the anarchists fired on the village notary, leaving him with a permanent limp. In 1936 the village was collectivized and the notary became part of the collective along with all the other residents. A year later, with the Communist Party's reinforcement of the bourgeoisie and the Stalinists' efforts to destroy the collectives, a minority of small farmers wanted to leave the collective and tried to convince others to do the same. The notary opposed their arguments and said: "Before, I owned such-and-such number of acres of land. Now, in the collective, everything belongs to me and I'm much richer." This notary who had become a revolutionary was shot by the Francoists in 1939 in Barcelona.
- b. While we have to be extremely strict during battle, once victory has been assured we should diversify playful relations in order to get beyond the habit of sniffing out people's past offenses or possible future betrayals.
- c. Practical results are the only thing that counts. As we develop ever more harmonized relations, the need to judge people will fade away. A breach of someone's right will call for no other "punishment" than making good the injury.

### **The Right to Self-Defense**

19. Self-defense is the first right of revolutionaries. As long as arms have not become unnecessary, each person will have the right to be armed.

20. An assembly should immediately organize its own self-defense groups charged among other things with:

- Carrying on guerrilla warfare in unliberated zones, including the destruction of economic centers vital to the statists and individual attacks aimed at disorganizing the enemy.

- Producing new arms.
- Devising new and unexpected tactics.
- Protecting key factories, supply sources, storehouses, health care facilities, and telecommunications in the liberated zones.

21. During the period of experimentation and inevitable errors, the best self-defense is to concretely demonstrate to everyone:

- a. That total self-management brings everybody an immediate improvement in the quality of their daily life (by giving highest priority to de-alienating passions, abolishing forced labor, and constructing real human relations).
- b. That any regression toward money, hierarchy, or commodity relations is subjectively repugnant and objectively impossible.
- c. That the abolition of the commodity system radically changes the orientation of human interests and activities. Freed from the problems of survival, we will finally have no other care than to learn how to live.

22. Creating an increasing number of increasingly rich rights is our best weapon. We will not need to give lessons or exhortations. We are not heroes, but discoverers of new passions, *enragés* of unlimited pleasure.

23. The expansion of the movement for total self-management — an expansion which must rapidly become international — depends primarily on the progress of individual liberation engendered by the collective transformation of historical conditions.

24. The struggle against the isolation that threatens the efforts toward total self-management entails a simultaneous transformation of space and time:

- a. We have to modify geographical space by inaugurating the reign of free goods, by conquering complementary economic sectors (industrial zones, agricultural zones, and zones where we can obtain needed raw materials), and by creating automated “polyindustries” capable of providing the greatest diversity of products. And inseparably:
- b. We have to create the conditions for passing from the present time of boredom and passivity to a new time of creativity and multiple passions, so that people live in a different rhythm within a network of space-time ensembles that they themselves control and transform.

25. The *qualitative* transformation of everyday life is an absolutely necessary requirement in the society of total self-management. It eliminates any compromise with the forces of the old world. The Spanish revolutionaries of 1937 were doomed to extermination precisely because

they had failed to push forward boldly enough and came to terms with the forces of Stalinism and reformism.

26. Total self-management is neither a minimum program nor a maximum program. Its fate is linked to that of the assemblies, depending on whether they develop coherently or fade away. Certain inseparable and immediately implementable requirements will enable us to judge its success or failure: all state or para-state power must be eliminated; the producers must appropriate all the means of production; work must be replaced by collective *creativity*; exchange relations must be replaced with universal giving; and survival and the spectacle must be abolished through the individual construction of everyday life.

### **The Right To Participate**

27. Each individual has the right:

- a. To participate in the self-management assembly of her choice.
- b. To elect delegates.
- c. To be elected as a delegate.
- d. To have her demands heard by the assembly, to take the floor to defend them and deal with them, and to make them known anywhere else by using any of the assembly's means of communication.
- e. To personally enjoy the enrichments guaranteed by the self-management assembly.

28. Each delegate commits to defending the mandates for which she has been elected, and sees that they are carried out by every means possible. Being elected as a delegate does not give her any special privileges. If she is revoked, this does not necessarily imply any blame. The sole criterion that determines whether she is revoked or not is how successfully she carries out her mandates.

29. The members of an assembly do not delegate their power. A delegate never has any power separate from the assembly, she is simply a means for implementing the power of each and everyone. It is to prevent any such separation that assembly members should remain in continual contact with their delegate, using telecommunications not so much to control her every move as to enable her to consult with them at each stage of her mandate. This ongoing communication pertains only to the mission the delegate has agreed to carry out. Its purpose is to ensure the successful implementation of the mandate, not to hinder the delegates' creativity.

30. Each delegate has the right to resign. It would seem, however, that this right should sometimes be temporarily suspended during the period of self-defense. A guerrilla volunteer should not feel free to abandon her comrades in the middle of an armed engagement.

31. Without presuming to predict the exact organizational forms that historical conditions will make most appropriate, it may be helpful to consider some of the main necessities and possibilities. It seems likely that the assemblies' councils of delegates will set up four closely interrelated sections, something along the following lines:

- a. An *equipment* section, charged with coordinating supplies and demands (what has been or needs to be produced, and what should be distributed where) and with regulating relations between industrial zones and agricultural zones in such a way as to promote their interconnection and eventual merging.
- b. A *self-defense* section, charged with organizing guerrilla actions, liberating territory controlled by statists, and protecting key factories, storehouses, and sources of raw materials.
- c. A *harmonization* section, charged with coordinating passionate offers and requests, harmonizing the plurality of desires, and facilitating the fulfillment of particular caprices.
- d. A *liaison* section, charged with relations between assemblies and delegate councils of different regions.

32. The division of councils into these different sections represents an initial effort to coordinate the most diverse supplies and demands. But there should be no separation between these sections; on the contrary, they should work together to establish concrete foundations that will foster a spirit of unity. The delegates should take part in the meetings and work of *all* the council sections.

33. Except in certain matters of self-defense where strategical considerations may require unified action, no majority decision precludes other desires or viewpoints. If a desire cannot be satisfied (because the necessary material means are lacking, or because it reflects a regression toward old, alienated behavior), it should be referred to the delegates of the harmonization section, whose task will be to look into ways of satisfying it as fully as possible.

34. Each person has the right to present and defend her desires until they are satisfied. (See paragraphs 82-88, below.)

35. Whatever harmonizes spontaneously has no need to pass through the total self-management assembly. The diversity of attractive occupations, the multiplication of adventures, the taste for variety, and the interplay of intrigues, encounters and enthusiasms will blossom to such a point that the only things that will need to be harmonized by the assemblies will be those things that have not spontaneously harmonized themselves in the happenstances of everyday life.

36. The members of the assemblies determine the frequency of meetings according to the needs of the moment. People will participate in the assemblies to the extent that they find it interesting and enjoyable to do so, not out of any sense of duty, much less as a result of any form of coercion.

37. The reinforcement of possibilities and the enrichment of regions and their assemblies is the best guarantee of international relations based on gift and play. Conversely, the international interrelation of assemblies and their councils will provide the best foundation for harmonizing desires and inaugurating the reign of abundance.

38. The freedom to change occupations and dwelling places includes the freedom to change assemblies. Such mobility offers at least three advantages:



- a. It prevents the reappearance of a narrow regionalism in which people patriotically identify with some particular territory.
- b. It prevents the development of rigidly fixed groups and conformist habits.
- c. By taking care to satisfy minority as well as majority desires and by continually altering the number of members of the assemblies and of the various affinity groups that are constantly forming and disbanding, it helps dissolve quantitative criteria, reduces proportional oppositions (such as majority-minority antagonisms), and encourages qualitative diversity.

39. In the processes of participation, as in the problems of realization, we must demolish whatever subsists of the old dictatorship of the quantitative. Where qualitative diversity exists, the law of numbers no longer holds sway; where people give freely without expecting anything in return, exchange of equal quantities disappears; where each person has the right to affirm her particularity, groups cease to be considered as mere sums of individuals.

### **The Right To Communicate**

40. Each individual has the right to express and disseminate her opinions, desires, demands, and critiques by spoken or printed word, by film, by artistic means, etc. In so doing she has free access to all the communications technologies created, maintained, and improved by the self-management assemblies.

41. Each assembly should have on hand the widest possible range of telecommunications facilities. These latter serve notably:

- To disseminate projects and requests of individuals and groups.
- To make known the decisions of different assemblies and the current status of problems being dealt with.
- To bring to everyone's attention various possibilities for harmonizing material and pas-sional "supplies and demands."
- To communicate information on anything and everything, to form centers for gathering knowledge on all sorts of topics, to let people know about creative methods in every do-main, to put together basic surveys or compendiums for use in education based on curiosity and practical attraction.
- To collect and communicate particular experiences, dreams, memories, creations, studies and individual and collective researches.

42. Each proposal in the assembly is publicly debated and settled. When all attractions are allowed, all can be avowed, and the fulfillment of one desire incites people to fulfill them all.

43. The assembly limits itself to enabling the individual to communicate what she would not have had the means to communicate on her own. It never intervenes in individuals' affairs except

upon their request (to do so would amount to acting not only against those individuals, but contrary to its own *raison-d'être*). The purpose of an assembly is not to limit attractive occupations, encounters, experiences, and adventures, but to radicalize, multiply, and enrich them.

44. By maintaining ongoing “balance sheets” of radical achievements, the development of new rights, and the progress of *social harmonization*, people will be able to clearly assess the uneven march of the long revolution, so as to correct its mistakes and be aware of the areas in which it is still lagging. (They can ignore the advances, since the latter present no problem.)

45. Mistakes will be made in the assemblies. But the transparency of relations between individuals (made possible by the absence of prejudices, constraints and taboos) encourages ongoing self-correction rather than mere self-criticism. The only irremediable error would be to prefer a committee that is always right over an assembly that sometimes makes mistakes.

46. The council of delegates will fulfill its assembly mandate by presenting comprehensive reports on the current status of individual demands and comprehensive accounts of its own actions, successes and failures.

### **The Right to Fulfillment**

47. The self-management assembly puts the collectivity at the service of individuals, not vice versa. Whatever the creativity of each person contributes in the interplay of attractive occupations is immediately made freely available to everyone else.

48. The council of delegates is a mere coordinating body. It is the focus of the assembly just as the assembly is the pivot of social life. It is also the instrument for carrying out the goals expressed in the assembly. Needs create delegates, not the other way around. Delegates should not be elected except when they are needed to carry out some particular project; and at any moment the assembly can ask those delegates to justify their implementation of their mandate.

49. The construction by each person of her own individual life — the realization of what she really wants — implies the end of the economy as a separate sector and its integration into a collective creation that ensures free access to all the means of survival (food, clothing, housing, utilities, health care) *and* to all the means necessary for the realization of passions, encounters, adventures and games.

50. Even if self-defense is urgent (arms, equipment, supplies, guerrilla organization), the satisfaction of individual passions should retain high priority. “We will fight without restraint only if we stand to win a life without restraints.”

51. The abolition of the commodity economy will inaugurate the reign of freeness. This abolition will pass the point of no return when the self-management assemblies have seized the centers of distribution and production and organized the sharing of goods and free access to technological facilities.

52. People’s right to goods will not depend on whether they have produced or created them. We will replace “To each according to his work” with “To each according to his desires.” The

system of exchange must be wiped out by the universal practice of giving.

53. Council delegates will be continually mandated to monitor the level of supplies in the warehouses and collective stores. Computers will enable them to do this and to coordinate offers of production and creation, and all this information will be made available to everyone. The gradual increase of supplies and the multiplication of centers for surplus products will lead to a society of abundance and luxury.

54. A society in which everything is free means the end of the forms of exchange that have dominated all social behavior under the commodity system. When passions prevail over profits and power, the use of objects and the very notion of usefulness will be transformed, everyday gestures will be liberated from their old rigidities, and the habits of avarice, private property, jealousy, lying, prestige and spectatorship will disappear.

55. Such a society is simply a further development of what the revolutionary moments of the past have begun. In Kronstadt in 1921, for example, “the agriculture union — the organization of workers with connections in the countryside — asked anyone with any scrap iron to donate it for the production of farm equipment. Everything that was produced was listed in the Kronstadt soviet’s paper *Izvestia*. Each item was stamped ‘Agriculture Union of Kronstadt.’ Agitators from the soviet setting out for the country took the tools and products manufactured by this union and offered them to peasants through their local soviets” (Efin Yartchouk, *Kronstadt dans la révolution russe*). The practice of exchange will be replaced by the practice of giving without demanding anything in return.

56. The end of the commodity system means the end of the reign of the quantitative. As production gives way to collective creation, quality will become the dominant factor in the games of passionate emulation and the generalization of luxury. Just as the art of fine cuisine should replace the mere need for nourishment, the quest for quality in products, techniques and lifestyles will become the essential occupation of everyone.

57. The progress of the long revolution will be reflected in the transition from the stage of “Minimum work and equal distribution for everyone” to the more advanced stage of “Universal creativity and maximum gifts for everyone.”

58. We want the enjoyment of all rights, or what amounts to the same thing, the right to all enjoyments.

### **The Abolition of Forced Labor**

59. Total self-management is the shortest path to a society of abundance, a society in which work tends toward zero and creativity toward infinity.

60. The abolition of forced labor is one of the first measures demonstrating the authenticity of a revolutionary situation. It can be immediately initiated by:

- a. Suppressing parasitic sectors (useless or polluting industries, offices, ministries, banks, insurance companies, and the tertiary sector in general). This suppression will free up an enormous number of workers, many of whom will be happy to switch to 5-8 hours of

voluntary work per month in the essential sectors and to taking part in individual and collective creation. The assemblies will coordinate the projects of the continually fluctuating work-teams, whose voluntary participants will themselves determine their own procedures and schedules.

- b. Reversing perspective: instead of 40 hours of forced labor per week and a time dominated by the necessities of survival (the rat race for profits and promotions), each individual will discover the interesting problems posed by the construction of a society designed to ensure happiness for everyone — the creation and free distribution of goods, the multiplicity of encounters, regroupings by affinities, and the satisfaction of desires by the variety of passional dispositions that have finally become recognized and freed from the taboos that previously repressed them and turned them toward violence and destruction.
- c. Automating the essential sectors, particularly the most unpleasant tasks (e.g. cleaning, sewage), and reducing pollution through the development of solar energy and other renewable sources.

61. Since it will probably not be possible to immediately eliminate all unpleasant tasks, those that remain:

- a. Should be divided into brief shifts.
- b. Should be reserved for those who enjoy them or at least don't mind them too much.
- c. Should be automated in priority.

62. In general, forced labor should be replaced by collective creation and the interplay of attractive occupations. In this way, indispensable tasks will tend to take on (though at a higher technological level) the festive character of collective harvest work in certain agricultural societies of the past.

63. When the conditions in which time is money have been abolished, occupations will cease being dominated by profit and social representation and will be organized according to the criteria of pleasure. Do-it-yourself activities, though they are now usually rather trivial, contain a kernel of a creativity that only awaits the moment when it can develop without constraint. Once it is able to make full use of the most sophisticated technologies, this creativity will enrich humanity within a few months with more ingenious and enjoyable discoveries and inventions than were produced in centuries of forced labor.

64. Any remaining repetitive and boring tasks will be organized in such a way that the greatest possible number of people will devote an hour or two to them out of simple taste for variety; so that people who previously had to devote their lives to those tasks will not have to spend any additional time at them beyond whatever is necessary to train others to take over for them.

65. As the taste for variety becomes more refined, it is likely that increasing numbers of people will become adept at an increasingly wide range of skills and will be capable of enjoyably taking part in all sorts of creative occupations.

66. New desires will create new notions of what is or is not necessary. When time is no longer money, the need for rapid transportation will fade away, along with automobiles; the organization of lies will vanish along with the spectacle; bureaucracy will disappear along with hierarchical power and the state. The wealth of individual creativity will ultimately lead to agricultural and industrial decentralization.

67. There is no risk of poverty unless we make the mistake of concentrating exclusively on *survival*, instead of striving for a qualitative rise in the standard of *life*.

68. We need to reduce concentrations of population, to decentralize and open up the cities to a new countryside.

69. The end of separations will include the end of the separation between city and country. This will entail developing a mechanized agriculture that is freed from market imperatives (profitability, pesticides) and interspersing cities with agricultural zones (fields, pastures, forests, farms, gardens).

70. The rapid automation of essential sectors will encourage the rebirth of new craft industries, the development of new inventions, and the rediscovery of all sorts of traditional techniques that had disappeared due to their lack of profitability.

71. As soon as possible, factories will be decentralized into automated workshops for collective creation (along the lines of what already exists, but in an archaic manner, in certain manufacturies of textiles, arms, or watchmaking). Raw material industries will furnish basic materials to creative workshops, enabling them to create the greatest variety of finished products.

72. In addition to workshops for creation and assembling, we will also need to set up numerous local centers for experimentation by individuals or small groups; machine shops where people can repair or build things; and public kitchens and bakeries (modern versions of the public ovens, mills and granaries of the Middle Ages).

73. Whatever her age, physical condition, or capacities, each person has the right to freely exercise her creativity. This is a particularly important right because it hastens the withering away of distinctions of age, sex, intelligence, and physical strength, and of reliance on abilities or disabilities as a source of prestige.

74. Social harmonization will incite the greatest variety of tastes and passions, which will henceforth be the mainspring of abundance and the guarantee against any reversion to forced labor or social roles.

### **The Right to Encounters and Affinities**

75. The movement toward total self-management also involves the study, research and experimentation of human relationships based on interpersonal attractions and antipathies.

76. The delegates who form the harmonization section must deal with the conflicts and accords that arise among individuals and groups. The section will facilitate encounters, register and communicate passionate offers and requests, enlarge the field of possibilities, and foster the greatest

possible variety of behaviors and desires.

77. The point is not to suppress oppositions and disagreements, but to encourage them in such a way that everyone discovers increased pleasures among them.

78. Inequalities, contrasts, and divergent desires are the mainspring of harmonization, engendering the multitude of variants and varieties that are essential to it. The analysis and organization of these varieties will be one of the most important concerns of everyday life under self-management — the realization of individual history through the realization of collective history.

79. Anything that cannot be immediately harmonized should be referred to delegates assigned to seek some way of fulfilling it as soon as possible.

80. The more uniquenesses there are, the more harmonization will spontaneously develop. The best way to avoid succumbing to a single passion is to have several.

81. We don't want the rejection of the commodity system to give rise to a new moralism. The appeal to revolutionary virtue is always counterrevolutionary. It only makes those it condemns more ashamed, more devious and more cynical. Lies, separations, prestige, passivity, private property, and all the habits inherited from the commodity system will not disappear as a result of constraints or punishments or noble exhortations, but by the harmonious organization of passions and desires for personal fulfillment.

82. Certain pre-revolution ideological groups (political parties and organizations) will no doubt try to maintain or reconstitute themselves within the assemblies. They must be resolutely combatted during the life-and-death struggle against the statist forces, but not after that struggle has been won. If self-management spreads as it should, political or syndicalist groups will merge into the variety and complexity of all the regroupings based on affinities and antipathies, into an interplay of agreements and disagreements which will bring rivalries and affinities into the service of the progress of self-management.

83. Individuals will have the freedom to join or refuse to join, to associate with those of like mind, to engage in collective projects, to share their passions and their tastes, to remain alone, to shift from one group to another, to propagandize for this or that enthusiasm, to change activities several times a day, to enter into creative rivalries with each other (cooking contests, inventions, refinements of pleasures, etc.).

84. The coherence of the assembly should promote a network of activities organized in such a way that they don't destroy each other, but multiply and enhance each other. It should be understood once and for all that such an organization implies the abolition of spectacle-commodity conditions, and thus has nothing to do with group dynamics and other techniques for integrating people into the present world of survival. The point is not to combine alienated desires, but to harmonize de-alienated desires, desires which the radical transformation of historical conditions has freed from all the constraints, impotencies and lies that previously turned them against themselves.

85. All tastes are compatible with social harmonization. By eliminating guilt, the promotion and liberation of desires will also eliminate what the old world knew as crimes. This is one of the things total self-management is staked on.

86. Rival or divergent tendencies will enliven total self-management assemblies and the entire social organization. "The absence of discords is only a poor substitute for the positive good which arises out of the combination of discords."

87. The new social organization is nothing other than the organization by all individuals of desires, passions and dreams, creating day by day the historical conditions of their liberation, development and practical fulfillment. We have arrived at a point in history where humanity will not survive unless it creates guarantees of individual happiness.

88. Behaviors and habits inherited from the commodity system which its destruction has not succeeded in completely wiping out must be turned toward play, brought into the interplay of passions in such a way that the abundance of enjoyments overwhelms their miserable lacks, compensations, renunciations, and self-underestimations.

89. We must not only accept each individual disposition, each subjective demand, each particular desire, each peculiarity of taste, each ability, we must encourage them all. This is what gives positive value to inequalities and prevents them from developing into the negative foundation of a new hierarchy. The competing satisfactions of individual tendencies express a range of positive inequalities which, within playful and nonconstraining relations, enhance the charm of encounters and regroupings. We want to create equalitarian conditions for all our subjective inequalities.

90. The social harmonization of individuals is inseparable from the struggle against separations. The economy and everyday life, for example, must not subsist as autonomous sectors, but must disappear as they have existed up till now and become intimately intermingled and indistinguishable from each other. It is therefore necessary to make sure that passionate offers and demands are inseparable from offers and demands of the products necessary for survival (food, information, raw materials, health care, etc.). It will be the task of the delegates to coordinate into a coherent whole the various demands that they are called on to fulfill separately, in such a way that a spirit of unity spreads into every domain.

91. The process of grouping by affinities and contrasts is one of the surest guarantees of the end of separations, the end of fragmentation and specializations. By becoming everybody's business in the interplay of general emulation and particular enjoyments, economics, education, language and the various fields of knowledge will cease to be separate sectors of everyday life. They will instead become integral parts of a *unified life* that past generations could only dimly imagine — the greatest revolutionary transformation in history.

92. A harmonization section within the council of delegates is useful insofar as it facilitates, in cooperation with the other sections, the possibilities of encounter and attractional regroupings. Such a section will no longer be necessary once individuals have themselves developed a sufficiently comprehensive grasp of the possibilities of encounter and association. Meanwhile, it

can among other things promote children's self-management of their own lives by coordinating the actions of their parents, teachers and friends in such a way as to create the most favorable conditions for their development within the present age of survival, and then by learning from those children's spontaneous creativity how to rediscover a lost sensitivity, a new perception of reality, the real unity between word and deed, space and time, dream and reality.

### **The Free Use of Space-Time**

93. The space-time created by the revolution of everyday life is the ensemble of *territories* liberated from the control of the state and the commodity system and continually modified by individuals who are learning how to collectively and individually construct each *moment* of their existence.

94. As both model and center of social life, the total self-management assembly is revolutionary practice's unity of place and time. It is in such assemblies that the old project of making oneself by making history discovers its sole possible means of realization.

95. The free use of time and the free use of space are inseparable. Everyone should be able to feel at home anywhere at any time. What this means in practice is that each individual must have the right to build any style of dwelling, to create ambiances, to move wherever she wants (the right to nomadism), to explore, to construct her dreams, to condense lived time, to dissipate it in fugitive moments, or to put an end to it by suicide.

96. One of the most elementary changes in space-time, one that could be implemented within a relatively short time span, consists of eliminating the distinction between town and country. As large cities are partially invaded by fields and forests, they will disappear in a vast dispersion of people living in a variety of dwellings, fixed or mobile, temporary or permanent.

97. The right to change the space-time of one's daily life includes the right to all the changes one might dream of (for example, changing one's name or appearance in different circumstances).

98. There is no question that the free use of space-time will bring about marvelous transformations in human behavior. Our perceptions of reality will be modified, and our senses, now eroded by the brutalizing habits of survival, will become refined to a level of acuteness that we can now scarcely imagine.

*Never-ending revolution is the rational  
pivot of all the passions.*



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Ratgeb

Contributions to The Revolutionary Struggle, Intended To Be Discussed, Corrected, And  
Principally, Put Into Practice Without Delay

From Wildcat Strike to Total Self Management

1974

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