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Raoul Vaneigem

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

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1974

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as we are able and never lose sight of the ferocity of the bourgeois
and the bureaucrats in their repressions.

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 statist.

54. We must never, at any time, place any trust in the statist nor agree to any truce. Instead we must spread our movement as quickly

Chapter 1. The Subsistence Society

1. 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.

2. 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 sacrifices. 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 de-sanctifies: 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, preferral 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

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 readapt ion 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

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 co-ordination 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 check-out 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 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.

3. 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

Every wildcat strike should blossom in to a factory occupation. Every factory occupation should blossom into the prompt re-adaptation 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.

of green spaces, trees or rocks; expulsions and hierarchical re-assembly 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.

- 4. 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;

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.

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 time-able. 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

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.
5. 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.

- 6. Don't you feel an instinctive mistrust of every thing intellectual and of every thing 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

- 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

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.

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).

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:

- 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 tot 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.
7. 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

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 programme 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, ultra-sonic equipment, lasers. . . A study will also be made of various methods of armour plating, converted trucks and bull-dozer, as well as bulletproof vests, gas masks (products that will counteract the effects of incapacitating

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 world-wide and can eliminate in advance any eventuality of defeat."

- 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.

8. 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 over-exploited 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

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-defense 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 printingworks, 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 back-up 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".

4. The only way of dissolving the State is for federations of delegates meeting as councils to render it inoperative. Only co-ordination 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

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.

9. 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.

10. 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

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.

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.

11. 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.

12. 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.