

# The Psychology of the Unsettled

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STRUGGLESESSIONS



**The Psychology**



**of the Unsettled**

Editors' Note: We are republishing this text which we view as an important intervention into various trends among the "left" and their connection to the problem of disorganization.

## **Article by Cathal**

*An examination of two basic viewpoints within the contemporary struggles*

### **Organization and Disorganization**

The objective situation outruns the ability of the US left to meet it with proper response. This creates a contradiction between, on the one hand, a general state of need for an organized leading body and, on the other hand, the general state of disorganized mass activity; this can have a heavy price. When disorganized forces confront well organized forces, the better organized comes out victorious—this is the reason armies face strict military discipline and organization.

Often repeated as common sense, disorganized tactics are lauded as better than nothing, at least it means activity and being on the side of good.

Disorganization, however, implies a lack of strategic insight. There is a very good and sober reason for this which military theorist Carl von Clausewitz sums up quite well:

“...it takes more strength of will to make an important decision in strategy than tactics. In the latter, one is carried away in the pressures of the moment, caught up in a maelstrom where resistance would be fatal, and, suppressing incipient scruples, one presses boldly on. In strategy, the pace is much slower. There is ample room for apprehensions, one's own and those of others; for objections and remonstrations and, in consequence, for premature regrets. In a tactical situation one is able to see at least half the problem with the naked eye, whereas in strategy everything has to be guessed and presumed. Conviction is therefore weaker.”

It should be clear by now that strategy and tactics form a contradiction, a unity of opposites where one in fact requires the other to be considered successful in the final analysis. It is precisely the situation which presents itself to the naked eye that demands an immediate response, combined with the apprehension towards calling shots far off in the distance that encourages a persistent state of disorganization. We are greeted with many such examples of this.

The police, as brutal enforcers of private property against those with next to nothing, are insufferable and the people correctly incensed rise up and can even overcome this better organized force with sheer numbers, using tactics of street violence, property destruction etc. This is always fleeting and ebbs before a wave of reaction from the police. And what do we hear in the way of strategy? Nothing. We hear calls for de-funding or abolishing the police yet the strategic means to do this are not put forward: in place of strategy, idealism and desire are propped up. Suffice it to say that rebellion, even without strategy at the helm, is capable of forcing this or that reform, but this is not capable of holding advantage, let alone power long enough to destroy an enemy force. It should go without saying that we are unwavering in our defense of the slogan, it is right to rebel.

Another example is Egypt in the mass uprisings against Mubarak, uprisings which employed militant and aggressive street tactics out of necessity but which lacked strategy. The result is verifiable, the installation of a pro-US, military-government. Still, there are shameful cretins in the imperialist countries who laud these tactics without strategy as if they were paths out of suffering! They blow hot air into the trumpets of disorganization. In response to this we must insist that the masses, the Party, and Marxism are everything.

Disorganization sits especially heavily on the backs of the people in countries like the US. And again there are clear and sober reasons for it.

Lenin asserted that opportunism can reign for decades, and he considered anarchism to be a product of opportunism, two sides of the same coin. While opportunists and anarchists are not in mortal opposition to the principles of

organization, they tend toward a state of extreme disorganization—organization along bourgeois lines.

So how is it that opportunism reigns for decades? While a full explanation will need to be presented elsewhere, the answer lays somewhere between a demoralized petty bourgeois left and a strong labor aristocracy propped up by imperialist super-profits. Organizational strength is consequently challenged as infringing upon the personal “freedoms” of a strictly “voluntary association,” and “consent” becomes a moment-to-moment exchange in which nothing is assumed and no commencements can be expected long term, and no obligations need be fulfilled.

The capitalists have already created a host of slanders to sanitize disorganization and paint it as a virtuous thing, a state of nirvana. In order to attack ideological consolidation and adherence to shared principles, they have invented the term “brainwash” literally to suggest millions of Chinese workers and peasants were incapable of thinking for themselves and must have been rewired into red robots by Chairman Mao. We can see this as a mere adjustment in terms rooted in the old colonial notions of Asian “hordes.” The term “autonomous”, affixed at the front of every formula, is the inverse of this. It is a hollow reassurance that proclaims its purity on the basis of compartmentalizing each individual and, through such a maneuver, insisting on general disorganization to supposedly bar infringement upon this fictional personal autonomy enjoyed by each in “voluntary association.”

Postmodernism, which rises to replace liberalism as the hegemonic force in bourgeois ideology (while opening a second front for fascism), is adept at making good use of these issues. It has theorized a number of excuses to express that all group-against-group contradictions necessarily break down to interpersonal relationships. This kind of reactionary compartmentalization is near complete—disorganization is God on the organic and intellectual/theoretical levels.

These things, among others, form a kind of baseline response to the prevailing conditions, a kind of accepted norm, a dirty diaper that the child has grown to think of as normal and would rather sit in than be changed. This norm seeps into every attempt at Marxist organizing. It must be overcome through sealing the cracks of organic forms.

Revolution through disorganization is the first apocalyptic fantasy of the petty bourgeoisie.

Opposition to authority generally—and not often the authority of the state—forms the basis of disorganization. Lenin classified anarchism as “negation of the unifying and organizing power of the authority” and this was meant to be applicable beyond the anarchists’ narrow reach to extend to various other tendencies. Today these include most manifestations of opportunism, revisionism, postmodernism, and liberalism in the imperialist centers. By way of opposition to proletarian authority, the authority of the state while sometimes challenged in form is not genuinely challenged but left completely intact. Assertion of authority through the establishment of superior organic forms is the only viable way to confront this monstrosity; not only does organic leadership have to emerge in class struggle but it has to be conquered in mass movements. The tactical response of the masses has to be given strategic scope through this leadership by implementing and developing the organic forms needed to make revolution. A united front between progressive and revolutionary forces has to be developed on this basis—to hell with idealism.

In regard to the united front, a plethora of misconceptions create a fog that many self-proclaimed revolutionaries cannot see through; it is a fog of their own making and it cannot be dissipated without theoretical intervention.

A few common ingredients to this fog are found based in the school of left-unitarianism which imagines that if all those who profess opposition to “capitalism” can just set aside their differences, their still-minute factions can coalesce into a force that can—again through false tactics detached from

strategy—inflict a meaningful assault on the system and either reform it or overthrow it, depending on who you ask.

This is the “common sense” that destroys the united front before it is ever attempted. It is clear with sub-cultural fronts and especially “movements” like antifa which cede initiative to the disorganized in favor of maintaining an anarchist majority, never interrogating the damage this actually does in regard to mobilizing (and educating) the proletarian masses against fascism. Instead of combating fascism at its social and economic root, the only way possible—i.e. with a united front prepared to use violence—it becomes an abstract call to oppose a vague oppression. Fascism is most often ignored in its most common manifestations for a social witch hunt against inter-personal issues. Exploitation does not even factor into their analysis and they get consumed with every variety of bigotry.

The differences between anarchism and Marxism are often glossed over, and it is imagined by the true devotees of disorganization and false united fronts that the difference is inconsequential. Think how often we hear that Marxists and anarchists “want the same things” and that they only “disagree on how to get there”. The issue is not that such reasoning attempts to find common ground against common enemies, but that it erodes the actual basis of unity and, in fact, the purpose of unity. In addition, it also aligns with the classic anti-communist spins created by the ruling class. Far from the conflation between the two antagonistic tendencies, Lenin demarcates with master stokes:

“A wide gulf separates socialism from anarchism, and it is in vain that the agents-provocateurs of the secret police and the newspaper lackeys of the reactionary governments pretend that the gulf does not exist.”

The state and media of the bourgeoisie today still maintain this pretension and we should be clear as to why—to erode the political struggle and reduce political demands to vague disruption. Their conflation has gone on for so long that it has been taken for granted by even would-be Marxists. It is also still in

vain, because the essential differences, the gulf to use Lenin's term, will always assert itself in practical matters of political and organizational importance. Of course, there are those who are poised to point their fingers, and mercilessly at that, and proclaim that those who mention the objective existence of the gulf are but sectarian dividers who would rather fight their "friends" and "allies" than their enemies. The finger-pointers are agents of the disorganization.

A better defense than the idea that there are basically no substantial differences are found from those who recognize the substantial differences, but are nevertheless taken in by anarchist valor in confrontational engagement with the state and its forces, by the tendency toward a fast response, etc. While no one can suggest that these conflicts do not require courage, the existence of such courage cannot cover for the tactical ignorance caused by a lack of strategic perspective. Valor itself cannot wash away the sins of disorganization. Especially in developed capitalist countries, the tendencies toward anarchism and opportunism are palpable, and within the active sections of society they are even commonplace. We must be assured that this is not because of their merits, but because of a subjective weakness in the footing of Marxists that will be overcome, in part by dissipating the fog we mentioned earlier.

We will quote Lenin again, who points to a fact that he considered explicitly common knowledge, yet today is obscure to many of the petty bourgeois daydreamers on all sides of the issue:

"Marxist theory has established—and experience of all European revolutions and revolutionary movements has fully confirmed—that the petty proprietor, the small master (a social type existing on a very extensive and even mass scale in many European countries), who, under capitalism, always suffers oppression and very frequently a most acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions and life, and even ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organization, discipline, and steadfastness. A petty bourgeois driven to a frenzy by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which, like anarchism, is characteristic of all capitalist countries.

The instability of such revolutionism, its barrenness, and its tendency to turn rapidly into submission, apathy, phantasms, and even a frenzied infatuation with one bourgeois fad or another—all this is common knowledge.”

We can examine any contemporary movement and find ample evidence that what Lenin asserted is indeed correct; there is a wealth of these petty bourgeois types in all mass movements. Whether they call themselves anarchists or not, we see the living infatuation with bourgeois fads most especially with the implementation of new rituals and terms associated with postmodernism and how this permeates the many disorganized activist circles across the country, hollow land recognition, “pronoun introductions,” etc. As for the frenzy, this too is glaring.

All of the above are products of the threatened middle class. These are the petty bourgeoisie who, aware of their own oppression (or even a trajectory which would lead them to facing said oppression) panic, and, having neither alignment with—nor the discipline imposed upon—proletarians, come to all sorts of inconvenienced notions. Thus they are driven make the most abysmal tactical decisions guided by capitulation, liquidation, and disorganization. Only naturally, demoralization follows. These cycles and sequences continue and create a little subculture of activist-based economics, a sand trap which invites on the basis of individual expression and the ascensionist dreams of the small proprietor. One that, without outside forces offering a hand, is seldom transgressed.

Correct united front tactics must develop on the basis of smashing such illusions with organization, never bowing to disorganization in the Church of The Individual.

This should not be a battle of asserting Marxist terminology and what could be considered “Marxist ritual”—which could only be a formal change—but a battle which confronts disorganization with organization, asserting the essential truths of Marxism within the existing struggles, which means rooting all the struggles in the most essential struggle—between the proletariat and



the bourgeoisie. Our disagreements in the abstract are with those who seek to have every interpersonal and petty bourgeois grievance given equal weight to that of the exploited masses, as opposed those who insist that exploitation—class struggle—be centered as the key link. Those who opt for the notion that all is a battle against oppression and not exploitation can treat only a symptom and not prescribe adequate means for curing the disease.

Fortunately we have Lenin serving as a foundation, cutting through the dense fog regarding the united front. When addressing the decision of the Soviets of Worker's Deputies to exclude anarchists by denying their applications, he confirmed the correctness of this move:

“For all practical purposes, the Soviet Worker's Deputies is an inchoate, broad fighting alliance of socialists and revolutionary democrats, the term ‘non-party revolutionary’, of course, representing a series of transitional stages between the former and the latter. Such an alliance is obviously necessary for political strikes and other, more active forms of struggle, for the urgent democratic demands which have been accepted and approved by the overwhelming majority of the population. In an alliance of this sort, the anarchists would not be an asset, but a liability; they will merely bring disorganization and thus weaken the force of the joint assault; to them it is still ‘debatable’ whether political reform is urgent and important.”

Since at the root of anarchism is the pervasive and corrosive bourgeois individualism, it would be limiting to impose this understanding only on the “self-identified” anarchist and not to comprehend it as a condemnation of individualism itself. The point is to insist that the proletarian revolutionary movement and the progressive mass movements suffer acutely from a state of disorganization, and to respond to this with the correct insistence to exclude those who would bring more disorganization to what we call an under-developed united front, that which Lenin called the “joint assault.”

**Imperialism is still a Paper Tiger**

Following from the understandings that opportunism has dominated organized labor in countries like the US, and that consequently, the volume of petty bourgeoisie individuals and groups dominate the day to day—outside of the mass uprisings—activism, we can begin to see why there are so many idealistic fantasies masked as analysis of current conditions. The revisionists dress the same things in different costumes; Avakian, having proclaimed the US a fascist state, has rallied his ever diminishing supporters to the side of the Democratic (imperialist!) Party to save the country from this or that boogiemanager, just as all revisionists before him have attempted to do. Anarchists and others, while still maintaining a posture against the state, will summon other specters, they are not ready or willing to give so much legitimacy to political process, and so they must express ideas like the entire world will perish from environmental destruction, from atom bombs, and so on, all common points with the main revisionist tendencies.

What follows is an obsession with survivalism, complete with stock piles of over-the-counter weaponry, as if the revolution will be made exclusively with such inferior devices—and to hell with the masses of real people. More interesting perhaps is that the emergence of armed revisionism comes with the phenomenon of the “doomsday prepper” almost identical on both the ostensible so-called left, as well as the right. This extends to an obsession with gardening, a viewpoint that imperialism will just collapse under its own weight, and stock piles of seeds and soil which will be needed to sustain communities with backyard gardens. Their canteen is as laughable as their arsenal.

This is not to suggest that revolutionaries should not have forward thinking in response to deepening imperialist crises, but instead to impose the role of the masses in this discussion. Political power indeed grows from the barrel of a gun, but what is meant by this truth is that the gun is commanded by the Party, seized from the enemy and wielded by the masses. It is precisely not to imply that political power will exclusively grow out of cheap shotguns bought (complete with background checks and logged IDs) at the local sporting goods superstore. The same logic extends to the fantastical ideals of those who

prescribe what they sometimes call “urban cultivation”. It is through conquering power (even on a limited scale with the conquest of dual power in the form of base areas and with guerrilla zones) that “urban cultivation” could even be a viable option as an auxiliary resource. Pending this kind of armed intervention, it amounts to nothing but lifestyle consumer choices, charity, and mainly feel-good therapy for those who are far removed from actual class struggle with all its sacrifices, consequences, risks and blood quotas.

Lenin was not instructing the Bolsheviks at the moment of crisis to stockpile seeds and soil, but to form combat units and make use of every weapon available, to learn war by making war. Likewise, Chairman Mao explained that the political line determines everything, and that when applied correctly with reliance on the masses then whatever is lacking will be provided. It is farcical to build community gardens, and buy a few guns at the local box store and call your activity revolutionary, all while absolutely failing in terms of organic construction—all things which pass in many circles for forward thinking activism.

The class basis of these two main opposing views has been stated well by Lenin, who says “Anarchism is a product of despair, the psychology of the unsettled intellectual or the vagabond and not the proletarian.” The proletarian viewpoint does not buy in for all the distractions and cultural obsessions of the petty bourgeoisie, because it is not a product of despair, but a product of being fortified through struggle after all, the proletariat does not vacillate and is not prone to the whims of the petty bourgeoisie, nor the treachery of the de-classed lower strata.

The revisionist response, as well as that of the anarchists, fancies the coming end of the world. This End coincides with the idea that without world peoples war, the imperialists will collapse under their own weight and it will be a question of organizing survival, and they use this to avoid speaking of war, it is an extension of their passive defensive, or purely defensive inclination. So they become buried under stockpiles of equipment and useless gadgets; they become collectors, not organizers.

Deep down, whether they understand this or not, these positions are all predicated on the idea that imperialism is a real tiger. This may seem contradictory when we have already mentioned the fact that they envision the enemy ruining itself, but these two misconceptions are in unity with one another. They imagine a nuclear holocaust caused by atomic war, because they imagine the atomic bombs and all bombs as real tigers, they stockpile over-the-counter arms for the same reason, for fear of the idea that the imperialists will go so far as to destroy themselves and no veil of protection will be awarded to them. They believe, in all their moral posturing, that large scale production itself is doom for the environment, and again this considers the imperialist mode of production to be a strategic real tiger. This latter fantasy is intimately tied with their ambitions as small proprietors, their lack of belief in Marxism, and their reactionary desire to move backward in time to mercantile capitalism ostensibly without the presence of feudal landlordism and monarchs.

This is essentially no different than what their counterparts—reactionaries on the right—desire, a return to “mom and pop” shops where everyone who works hard enough can own their own business and the whole of society can progress through entrepreneurship, voluntary sharing, no forced expropriation needed. These are two sides of the same coin, rooted in their idea that imperialism is a real tiger that can only harm itself—if they identify imperialism as such at all—and that the masses of people are quite inconsequential, side items, collateral or spectators.

They have revised Marx, instead of capitalism producing above all its own grave diggers, they insist that capitalism digs its own grave, only it is not capitalism they wish to see buried, but the specific “late stage” form of it (to use their own terminology). They, like all reformists, dream of a reformed, decent, humanitarian capitalism, in which human need can be addressed, and mass anger at exploitation can be mitigated through welfare programs. They avoid serious engagement with the question of conquering power and maintaining it through war.

As a consequence of the unsettled worldview, the current presidential elections are given undue importance by those who use Trump as an excuse to endorse Biden as well as by those who formally abstain from the electoral farce but gin up end of the world type scenarios on the basis of potential electoral outcomes. It is without a doubt correct, and evident in all the proceedings that this election is more farcical than any in recent memory. Consequently, this means unrest and the mobilization of reactionary support bases of either candidate; it is probable that regardless of the result, Trump's devoted fan-base will respond with increased violence, and it is equally probable that in the event of a Biden victory at the poles (which is still a victory for imperialism only) that his most fanatical supporters will pull out all the stops to try to halt the mass movement by stick or by carrot. In other words, there is a continuity of the function of both factions, whose division is only superficial. Understanding this we can see how the petty bourgeois view affects both voting and not voting with fear tactics and hysteria, and further attempts to guilt or scare the masses into action without providing them real leadership in the interests of their existing struggles.

The disconnected petty bourgeois "socialist" in his stance against vague oppression even goes so far as to distort the old saying "socialism or barbarism" to imply that the world itself, and all humanity will perish in the event that socialism is not implemented. They still view socialism as a choice, as a consequence of man's will, and not the only logical thing that inevitably follows capitalist large scale production. Marx was clear when he insisted that large scale production creates the basis for socialist revolution, that the proletariat is the final class in history and hence the revolutionary subject meant to lead, and that violence is the midwife of history, resulting in epochal shifts in the mode of production. Capitalism makes the conditions for socialism and capitalism is now in decay and socialism is what must be fought for, not with fear or guilt as motivators, but with the scientific resolve of professional revolutionaries on the basis that the proletariat cannot live in the old way.

There is no need to conjure up an end of the world fantasy, to stockpile seeds and soil and guns. So much for the ramblings of the petty bourgeois. The dire need, as addressed above, is to confront disorganization with organization, to create all the forms needed to successfully wage revolution, to take part in this grand history. The masses do their part, they rise and rebel, and Communists must do theirs to organize the clamor of the masses to lead in conquering power.

Patient and calculated resolve, commitment to improving organizational shortcomings, educating the people in revolutionary violence, and of course optimism, enthusiasm, and initiative are the salves for the petty bourgeois malaise.

All of the various petty bourgeois disorders must be confronted, so that they do not maintain or accomplish dominance; this is thwarted by the inward focus of the so-called left, which is prone to feeling sorry for itself, citing “mental illness” and “anxiety” as their main inhibitors for making revolution, they simply cannot act on the ripe conditions because they are too demoralized, too disconnected from the people and especially the proletariat, and far too immersed in their own petty bourgeois worldview to actually rise to the occasion. The masses will never accept such reluctant tourists as leaders.

### **On “Mutual-Aid”**

Instead of the transparent welfare demands mentioned earlier, the popular terminology of anarchists has been taken up by all sorts who deny they are anarchists by insisting upon “mutual aid” and everyone from the social-democrats to the revisionists uphold the need for “mutual aid” from the same standpoint of a fixation on utopian socialism, which is not socialism as has been demonstrated over a hundred years ago but this point needs to be reiterated today.

Proudhon, the French philosopher credited as the father of anarchism, in spite of being roughly treated and totally discredited by Marx and Engels, still

infects the thinking of the US “left” in many regards. While it was the anarchist Kropotkin who coined the term “mutual aid”, it is beneficial to examine its roots in Proudhonism. We could call our readers to study *The German Ideology*, *Anti-Duhring*, *Socialism Utopian and Scientific*, *Poverty of Philosophy*, *The Civil War in France*, and many other books and articles by Marx and Engels, and of course these should be studied, but for our purposes we reference them only to insist that this was a major effort on the part of the fathers of Marxism to battle idealism and disorganization; we bring them up to assert that Marxists have a sworn duty to remain grounded in their teachings and not go adrift into bourgeois ideology. Instead of drawing long quotations from the above text we can focus on a look at Engels’ work *On the Housing Question* in opposition to the ideas of Proudhon, who Engels considered already antiquated and mainly irrelevant at the time of his writing.

The two opposing lines on the housing question signify the two opposing lines regarding serving the people: with one being to bring organization to class struggle with auxiliary service to the people programs or the other with the creation of horizontally disorganized “mutual aid” networks— this includes vertical NGO approaches sitting on the same or similar foundations. Proudhon insisted that the solution to the housing question would be found in housing co-operatives, a system in which through legal land acquisition a better alternative would be provided and workers would make the conscientious choice to stop renting and instead integrate into these co-operatives.

Engels opposed this as a philanthropic bourgeois view. This issue of disagreement could seem to some a dated curiosity, a mere historic gripe between factions and only brought up as ammunition for sectarianism, but Engels being far sighted remarked that the tendency of Proudhon was already losing its hold over workers, but that it persisted: “And today? In France, Proudhon has been completely disposed of among the workers and retains supporters only among the radical bourgeois and petty bourgeois, who, as Proudhonists, also call themselves ‘socialists,’ but against whom the most energetic fight is carried on by the socialist workers.” The radical bourgeois and petty bourgeois are indeed the issues this article seeks to address; they

still today maintain the influence of Proudhon even if his name is not among those they recount. They understand that it is tactically beneficial to forget the name Proudhon and instead evoke the names of the Black Panther Party, David Hilliard, Huey Newton etc., those who sought liquidation of all the best aspects of the BPP for the sake of what amounted to bourgeois philanthropy in what they called “service to the people programs” but were essentially mutual-aid networks, networks which formed the basis of many modern NGOs in the use of counter-insurgency and electoralism. When considering this, it becomes clear why revisionists as well as anarchists have so much nostalgia when it comes to the BPP. After all, the BPP spent the majority of its organizational existence focusing on anything and everything but proletarian struggles, in some cases going so far as to determine that the proletariat was no longer the revolutionary class in the United States.

And why do these types insist on transforming class struggle specifically into a struggle against oppression generally? Why do they time and time again place the mainstay of struggle into the pit of mutual aid? This is because they are petty bourgeois either in their relationship to production or in their class viewpoint. This is not to suggest that housing struggles or struggles for amenities are irrelevant entirely, but to situate them correctly, to situate them as auxiliaries to the struggles faced exclusively by the proletariat and the proletariat alone. The need to correctly orient is so often ignored by the ambulance chasers from the established bourgeois activist circles that it really needs time to sink in. Engels explains it well:

“It is with just such sufferings as these, which the working class endures in common with other classes, and particularly the petty bourgeoisie, that petty-bourgeois socialism, to which Proudhon belongs, prefers to occupy itself. ... the housing question, which, as we have seen, is by no means exclusively a working class question; and that, on the contrary, he [a follower of Proudhon] declares it to be a true, exclusively working class question.”

We have even seen postmodernist influence in shifting the goal post in regard to tenants struggles, proclaiming that anyone who does not have control over



their relationship to housing is a tenant. This is a dangerous and nebulous revision, which places workers struggling to pay rent on the same footing as the homeless and bourgeois teenagers who still live with their parents. Thus, anyone and everyone is now a tenant, their “all-inclusive” approach is in essence liquidation of tenant struggles, even organizing tenants specifically is too close to class struggle for their comfort, and hence too close to broaching the question of exploitation. In order to leave this unaddressed, the postmodernist has now convinced himself that the miserable housing situation inflicted upon workers is simply another interpersonal aggression. Many former anarchists have devolved completely into this type of totally bankrupt bourgeois thinking—into postmodernism.

A pitfall of near equal danger is conflating housing struggles entirely with the class struggle, an idea also rooted in the pupils of Proudhon who insisted as much. This error is far more tempting for would-be Marxists who have understandable qualms with the process of imperialist social reorganization that they call gentrification. These comrades, who are shamefully detached from struggles at the point of production, have taken up a nimble but often misguided attempt to defend areas where proletarians live, since it is for whatever reason beyond their scope to take up the actual trenches where the proletariat is exploited. This too is rooted in the petty bourgeois class, in their inability to orient correctly. While neighborhood defense is important, it cannot establish the appropriate and durable connections between the revolutionary organization (the Party or future Party) and the class.

Combating the notion that a tenant in relationship to the house owner shared the position of the worker in relationship to the owner, Engels was totally correct by asserting that a tenant is a man with money entering into a transaction as a customer with the owner who is selling his wares, while a wage worker is not like this, he is the one selling the commodity, his labor power, and at a price that incurs a heavier cost to him, one in which profit is created for the buyer of the labor power. Essentially the wage worker is a man without money. Whatever transaction he enters after receiving his wage (buying/renting housing etc.) is a different relationship.

Engels says, “No matter how much the landlord may overreach the tenant it is still only a transfer of already existing, previously produced value, and the total sum of values possessed by the landlord and the tenant together remains the same after as it was before. The worker is always cheated of a part of the product of his labour, whether that labour is paid for by the capitalist below, above, or at its value.” Labor power, therefore, is distinct and a critical focus because it is what generates profit, while housing transactions etc. only transfer existing profit, shifting it around.

The misconception we hope to address here is fairly simple and goes beyond the issue of housing; we only use housing as an example. The proletariat cannot liberate itself by becoming the bourgeoisie through however many “mutual aid” programs, programs which precisely seek only to address the issues between buyers and sellers and not between exploited and exploiters, the latter of which can only be resolved with the conquest and maintenance of power—the dictatorship of the proletariat expanded to understand cultural revolution and the slogan Peoples War Until Communism. The main social problem is not based on the question of transfer and distribution of goods and resources, but the meat and bones of capitalism, that is, the proletariat forced to sell its profit-generating labor power to the bourgeoisie who do not work.

The above expressed confusions, distractions, and deviations all benefit the state and its ruling class with a disorganized left. Lack of class analysis, and the perspective it produces, further destabilize things in the interest of the ruling class. Consequently, many incorrect ideas are produced and reproduced in nearly every struggle, the struggles for housing, the struggles for Black lives, against fascism, the woman’s struggle, all of which subvert the main trench for a focus on auxiliary trenches, the main danger from this is in effect ceding the trench of production struggles to the aristocrats in service of the bourgeoisie—supporting the disorganization of the proletariat.

We have attempted to expose a few contradictions which situate the general disorganization of the left, highlight why some of its ideas are so utterly hopeless, and how and why it acts on ideas these in non-revolutionary ways

with the proletariat consequently but never specially. For any of the auxiliary struggles mentioned to strike real blows at imperialism, they must be combined with the specific struggles of the *proletariat* which do not affect other classes. The Communist Party, after all, is conceived of being the general staff of this class, of being its most advanced and military detachment, its vanguard, a quality that the US left is by and large content to ignore.

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