

SOCIALISM 'WITH SOBER SENSES': DEVELOPING WORKERS' CAPACITIES

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All that ~~is~~ solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses, his real conditions of life, and his relations with his ~~kind~~'

One hundred and fifty years ago, The Communist Manifesto announced the arrival of modern socialism. The Manifesto's words rang out with a self-confidence that socialists of today can only dream about: 'A spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of Communism!'. If the question then – and for much of the next hundred years – was 'how and when', the question today is a subdued 'if'. At one time the Manifesto was widely read by workers as well as intellectuals. Today, there is a spectre haunting socialists, the spectre of our marginalization.

With the **right** glorying in its ascendancy, capital has virtually stated – privately in strategy meetings, publicly through its actions – that sensitivity to peoples' needs is incompatible with its own more pressing need for **profit**. But rather than such a blunt confession detonating, as we once imagined it would, a crisis of legitimacy for capitalism, it is the weakness of the left that has been exposed. It is the left, and not the right, that is mired in a crisis of legitimacy. At a moment when the socialist idea should be more relevant than at any time since the Great Depression, it seems that for all practical purposes socialism simply doesn't matter. This historic absence, rather than the ascendancy of the right, is the political story of our times. And the generalized scale of our failures – across a wide expanse of time, experience, and borders – suggests there is more involved here than any list of specific strategic shortcomings.

In spite of a rich legacy of theoretical development and practical experience, we are weighed down by the demoralizing baggage of past failures. Proclaiming 'socialism' – in the abstract – as the answer elicits

a collective **shrug**. Developing lists of policy alternatives is uninspiring: those which are saleable won't work, those that might work have no constituency. Calling for a new **political** party begs more questions than it answers, and **debating** how to 'take state power' raises something too distant to take seriously. In the context of a socialist movement all of the above would of course come alive. As things stand, however, we are essentially starting over.

Recent waves of protests, encompassing a broad range of countries and led by the working class, seem to suggest that there is a new basis for socialist renewal. And yet to see in these developments the seeds of a socialist reawakening is to express a hope, not an argument. Socialists have played a role in this revival of militancy, but that role has been based on their credibility as individual militants rather than as socialists (even if, over the years, it was their socialism that inspired and sustained that militancy). As exciting and crucial as the new level of resistance is, there is still nothing in its scope which convincingly suggests that the working class will go beyond resistance to transform capitalism. The best we can argue is that the resistance which capitalism engenders leaves the door ajar to the possibility of socialism.

THE CHASM: SELLING LABOUR, SELLING CAPACITIES

On the face of it, there is something preposterous in the burden Marxists have placed on the modern working class. This '*first class* not to own *tools*'² will somehow create and develop the revolutionary 'tools' to build a new world. No other class in history, ascendant or subordinate, has ever consciously organized itself for something so bold and ambitious as setting out to build an entirely new society. As tattered as the socialist coat looks **150** years after the *Manifesto*, and in full recognition of the **fact** that **only** a small minority of workers were actually ever committed to this project, many of us still can't help but be moved by the stunning *chutzpah* and staying power of that most ambitious of dreams.

The fact, however, is that this dream has failed to materialize. More so than at any time since the *Manifesto*, 'liberation from capital is nowhere on the **agenda** of **politics**'.³ Is socialism an impossible dream? Are there reasons for its failure to arrive that go beyond any specific example or temporary circumstance? Is there something at the heart of the socialist project that is inherently contradictory – in particular, the chasm between the essence of socialism and the essence of the proposed agent of socialism, the worker in a capitalist society?

Maxim **Gorky**, wearily reaching for a grain of hope, once declared:

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'... life will **always** be bad enough for the desire for something better not to be extinguished in **man**'.⁴ The history of the working class confirms **Gorky's** faith. **Taking** advantage of their strategic role in production or simply rebelling against oppression, working people have resisted and rioted, fought the bosses, confronted the police and private armies, expanded their activity beyond the workplace and immediate self interest, struggled to preserve a sense of dignity and community, taken tactical and creative initiatives, built unions, developed political programmes, formed political parties.

Yet all of this, however heroic and impressive, falls short of demonstrating the collective confidence, sense of mission, and range of capacities necessary to replace capitalism with an alternative social system. Socialism is the society that has never existed, the social order to be invented in the process of revolution, and therefore a world characterized by its 'indeterminate **immensity**'.⁵ Becoming a socialist involves a leap of faith beyond analysis and into the world of possibilities. Is it conceivable that working classes whose visions and potentials have been arrested, if not crippled, by the nature of capitalism, can make – or are even **willing** to try – that enormous leap?

For workers, capitalism starts with the need to sell their labour power. In exchange, they receive a different kind of power, the **ability** to consume. What makes the capitalist-worker exchange unequal is not just that workers retain only a fraction of what they produce, but the difference between **access to consumption** and **control over doing**. This distinction doesn't revolve around a snobbish bias against consumption per se, but around an emphasis on what workers have lost in the process. In North America the industrial relations term for what workers receive in this exchange is 'compensation' – money for alienating your labour is treated like insurance payments for losing a limb.

As compensation for a loss, the form consumption consequently takes is, not surprisingly, distorted. Consumption in this context isn't simply about independent needs and enjoyment, but includes an element of the workers **themselves** trying to 'compensate' for the exchange they have been forced to make. Consumption becomes part of a process that includes offsetting the loss of **dignity**, the frustrations, and the drain in personal energy inherent in alienated labour. Moreover, consumption-as-compensation redirects and fragments the potential unity of workers. Even when workers develop organizations and sufficient unity to **challenge** their employers, the collective action that emerges is channelled into increasing the price of their labour, increasing their power to consume.

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Workers do of course struggle over the conditions of labour and resist their own commodification and subservience – bringing unionization into a workplace is more often about arbitrariness and lack of respect in the workplace than it is about pay. But as the capital-labour relationship is institutionalized, the system's relative openness to gains in wages (because capital has the dynamic capacity to make this concession) stands in contrast to its resistance to any erosion of management rights (the employer's freedom to use, once bought, 'his' labour power).

Since access to consumption is the incentive for *individuals* to offer their labour power, there is a bias to *individual* forms of consumption, reinforced by pressures beyond the direct wage-labour relationship, such as the competitive pressure on companies to develop new markets and hence new individual **needs**.⁶ Between the capitalist's control over the surplus and how it is invested, and the particular biases to individual consumption, communities are structured and restructured in ways that undermine the cultural base for a broader unity – consider, for example, the impact of individual consumption on transportation, housing, recreation, **neighbourhoods**, cities, the environment.

Let's return to what workers trade off in exchange for the power to consume. What workers are surrendering is their capacity to do, the capacity for the creative planning and execution of goals. Equally if not more importantly, they are also handing to someone else control over how that capacity to do is *developed* over time. The new owner of their labour power determines, **through** the organization of work and the division of labour, which skills are used and which are ignored or allowed to atrophy. The capitalist monopolizes the planning and execution of production, and limits workers to carrying out **goals** and tasks determined by others.

The owner is the catalyst and stand-in for the 'collective labourer'. He is the actual organizer of what is otherwise an isolated and unproductive mass of workers, and the initiator and hence ostensible embodiment of all **useful** technical knowledge, past and present. The owner therefore appears as, and in the given context *is*, indispensable. The consequent hierarchical-authoritarian management systems exclude any hint of institutional forms for the running of workplaces in ways that combine efficiency *and* democracy. It is, for example, possible to imagine workers taking over existing technology and modifying it, but much harder to imagine, on any large-scale basis, what entirely different forms of collective democratic co-ordination and

'management' might look like. The *democratic* collective labourer is a 'productive force' yet to be invented.

The lived result is that those very individual (self-development) and collective (institutional-democratic) capacities that need to be nurtured and developed in order to control production, are distorted, undermined, or simply absent. *What workers give up in selling their labour are precisely the kind of capacities and potentials which are absolutely fundamental to one day building a different kind of society: the capacities for doing, creating, planning, executing.* The nature and structure of capitalism guarantees that workers lag behind the productive forces – i.e. are dependent on others and don't have the capacity to control, co-ordinate, or develop the productive forces that already exist. This is not only a **future** 'technical' problem but an immediate political problem. Our assessment of how we can potentially organize ourselves for production affects how we view the possible, and this directly affects the mobilization for socialism.

The workers' dependency on capital is magnified when addressed at the level of society as a whole. Workers wrestling with alternatives today do so in the absence of planning mechanisms for dealing with the incredible complexity of allocating goods and capital. They face the intimidating power and authority of faceless 'external' forces such as global finance. They have to contend with the ideological impact of Eastern Europe's ubiquitous **clamour** to join capitalism. They confront the limits of 'politics' (i.e. a politics that takes the basics of economic power as a given). They have to deal with the competition amongst workers induced by their employers' competition. And when militancy does explode, there is the problem of overcoming its localized and fragmented expression, what David Harvey refers to as 'militant particularism'!

Some socialists have always looked to the decline of capitalism's dynamism as the '**answer**' to such dilemmas, seeing that decline as both imminent and the base for popular radicalization. But images of a stagnant capitalism unable to address the needs of a majority are either empirically wrong (today's capitalism isn't stagnant) or beside the point. When Marx was writing his polemic the world outside his windows was full of pain and cruelty, yet he still marvelled at capitalism's unprecedented dynamism, its '[c]onstant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and **agitation**.'⁸

That dynamism hasn't gone away. Our era is more and more defined by the pervasiveness of capital, its dominance of social and private

spaces as well as its international scope, its *everywhere-ness*. As Raymond Williams wrote in the early eighties, 'What is most totalitarian about the now dominant orientation is its extension beyond the basic system of extraction of labour to a practical invasion of the whole human **personality**.'⁹ Through the market and through the state, capitalism continues to revolutionize production, 'sensitize' workers to market disciplines, fragment workers as income is polarized within the **working** class (thereby expanding the effective 'reserve army' to also include the marginally and low-paid employed), and to generally restructure life to fit the needs of capital. It penetrates every corner of our communities, crawls into every pore of our personal lives, manoeuvres to imperialize every value and idea.

Especially **damaging** is the impact of accelerated restructuring on the development of cohesive communities of opposition. The significance of increased capital mobility extends beyond global access to raw materials, markets, and weaker labour. Capitalist restructuring is '... an exercise of capital hegemonic capacity that disrupts the processes by which working class collectivity (its intrinsic capacity) is **formed**'.¹⁰ When plants close and workers 'relocate', it is not only individual workers that are uprooted. The relationships and common workplace-neighbourhood histories out of which class consciousness emerges are fractured and dispersed.

The comparison with capital is telling. Owners can move plants and expand internationally, yet remain physically in their home base and retain the local and national networks and ties on which their class cohesion depends. In the abstract, the dispersion of workers and their culture may of course also imply the dissemination of radical ideas. But given that such ideas are – even in our strongest communities – still in embryo, the effect of restructuring is to frustrate their emergence.

Through all of this, the past dynamism of capitalism exists in the real material gains made by many or most workers. Without a movement and a context, today's concessionary demands that capitalists make on workers produce not just anger over inequities and false promises, but also fear over how much of these past gains might be lost, and therefore a defensive concern to limit concessions rather than risk 'everything'. In this context, the alternative to the 'mean capitalism of today isn't socialism, but the (nicer) capitalism of yesterday.

Even when workers look to collective solutions at the political level, their own lack of developed capacities is compounded by **the** state's failure to democratize life. A capitalist state has no historical reason for developing structures and supports for direct popular intervention in

daily production, or for democratizing the application of surpluses within our communities. Within the state's own sphere, it increasingly emulates the private sector in the way it provides goods or services and 'manages' its own activities. State activity may, because of the absence of direct market discipline in buying and selling, seem to have some space to be **'different'**. But this has so far rarely led to innovative democratic structures, and even where it does, there is still the indirect discipline on those structures of class pressure exercised through capital and financial markets sounding the alarm over government deficits and debts.

As the focus of politics and therefore democracy, the capitalist state plays a special role in limiting the democratic imagination. The historical transfer of economic power from the state to a specialized and relatively autonomous sphere was the basis for the evolution of a new kind of state. With the privatization of economic power, a ruling class facing democratic pressures could, even if reluctantly, indulge the **broadening** of participation in the state. As Ellen Wood puts it: 'Only in capitalism has it become possible to leave the property relations between capital and labour fundamentally intact while permitting the democratization of civic and political rights.'" Perry Anderson focused directly on the resultant form of the state, asserting that 'bourgeois democracy ... is itself the ideological **lynchpin** of Western **capitalism**'.¹² For the first time in history, the state that emerged (with working class struggles playing a prominent role) included a legislative authority – parliament – chosen by universal suffrage, and tolerated the formation of non-state organizations of the subordinate classes such as unions and working-class parties.

Anderson overstated the case, but the legitimating role of this particular kind of state remains crucial. We cannot successfully **demystify** the capitalist state by limiting ourselves to its coercive role. Even as the state limits basic democratic rights (e.g. those of trade unions) in order to increase freedom for capital (e.g. free trade), it seems to retain its authority and, more importantly, cramps how we think about democracy. After all, how bad can this state be if it has been the site of past gains and even the institutional guarantor of those gains? And the always-open ostensible invitation to seek change through electoral participation transfers failure to the participants. If we don't try, who can blame the state? If we tried and failed, we must have been trying the impossible.

There is a particular genius in the way capitalist structures obscure the 'real conditions of **life**' and prevent an understanding of '**man**[s]

relations with his **kind**".¹³ *The fact that capitalism is so present and socialism so absent, combines with capitalism; remarkable economic dynamism and its 'open' state to channel resistance into reform. As Mike Lebowitz puts it in a brilliant and insufficiently known work, '[T]he inability to satisfy their needs..leads workers not beyond capital but to class struggle within capitalism.'*¹⁴ Workers make their choices in the context of 'options under **pressure**',¹⁵ and the target of their militancy is **change** within the system. When workers strike, the point is to get a settlement. The unemployed want jobs, not a revolution – even if their labour is 'exploited'. Unions want to protect what a dynamic capitalism previously provided, rather than **gamble** with radical change. Political parties with a **working** class base are both awed and seduced by the power of capitalist restructuring, and define their role as 'influencing' that restructuring in a positive way rather than challenging it.

The point is that if we wait for capitalism to go into terminal crisis because its social relations have become a fetter on the productive forces, we are likely to wait forever. Threats to the continued expansion of the productive forces (i.e. threats to capital accumulation and capitalist economic growth) are, as we've learned since the mid-seventies, at least as likely to lead to a **consolidation** of capitalist social relations as to any fundamental questioning of their inevitability. Moreover, the truly serious threats to the continued expansion of the productive forces will come not from capitalist social relations, but from the implications of a radical move to transform those relations. Any transition to socialism is bound to dramatically disrupt the expansion of the productive forces – and not just in the short term. The contradiction to address is therefore not that between the social relations of capitalism and the expansion of the productive forces, but between those social relations and the **expansion of human needs and potential capacities**.

For the ruling class, the idea of ruling is 'in their bones', assumed by osmosis from **everything** around them – from the nervous care of a series of nannies, to the games they play as children, the walls that surround their homes and gardens, the trees that shade their houses, their generational expectations, and, of course, their privileged access to resources of every kind. The ruling class literally breathes power.

But for workers, the idea of 'ruling' is an absence. **It** is not even a distant goal facing possibly insurmountable problems; it hasn't, generally, yet manifested itself as an **idea** to be confronted. For reasons rooted in the working class family and the workplace, and well cultivated beyond, the tendency of capitalism is to reduce a working class

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with the potential capacities to do, enjoy, and act politically, to a collection of 'just workers'; 'just consumers); and 'just voters). In contrast to the ruling class, workers know their place even as they resent it and must go through a process of **unlearning** before the idea of collectively running their lives, and not just occasionally influencing them, can be born.

SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY: DEMOCRATIZING THEORY

Socialist renewal is today fundamentally about ideology – developing, **deepening**, and disseminating a particular system of ideas. That set of ideas expresses, through its values and vision, an opposition to capitalism as a social system; theorizes the dynamics of change within capitalism; and locates itself within a movement to replace capitalism. Socialism may be a product of history, but it is also a break with history. However encouraged or limited by objective conditions, the socialist project is in the end a creative act of collective will. Articulating that 'will' is the purpose of socialist ideology.

It is not struggles per se that define us as socialists, but those struggles that lead us to leap beyond resistance to a self-conscious identification, by way of a socialist ideology, with the socialist project. Socialist ideology-as-vision connects and sustains us in a struggle that will necessarily be long, painful, uneven and uncertain. In the form of ideology-as-common-sense, it equips us to challenge the everyday **(il)logic** of capitalism. As a coherent set of goals, assumptions, and insights into society, that ideology must be rich enough to suggest concrete policies and strategic directions for our struggles.

In saying this, I don't mean to make any artificial distinctions between ideology and other dimensions of building for socialism. Ideology doesn't exist apart from on-going struggles and **organizational** issues. What I am arguing is that at this particular historical moment when our socialist presence is so weak, consideration of any struggle, policy, or organizational direction must give special weight to its impact on how our counter-ideology – our declaration of the socialist project – is developed and given practical life.

Every ideology is unique in ways related to its **particular** project. The uniqueness of socialist ideology stems from the radical and remarkable thing it is trying to do: create a new world and do it through a truly popular mobilization in which 'the masses) are more than foot soldiers for someone else's revolution, but are organizing themselves, for themselves. What does this imply?

Socialists must obviously have something substantive to say about the future society. And creative ideas about resolving expected problems under a socialist future can of course contribute constructively to the socialist project. But any attempt at a concrete outline of socialism (as opposed to 'direction') inevitably raises further problematic questions that, from the perspective of the present, are unconvincing to non-believers. And that scepticism is justified – the truth is we don't and can't know what socialism will, in any detail, look like. We don't know because socialism is not a state of affairs, but a process.

Central to that process is a preoccupation with human capacities. This emphasis was at the centre of the links between **Marx's** critique of capitalism (class control of the capacities of others) and his vision as a revolutionary (the potential political capacities of the working class as the agency morally and strategically placed to challenge capital). Underlying this focus on capacities was a particular philosophy of 'man'. Marx **argued** that humans were **that part** of nature characterized by self-consciousness (hence human nature). Unlike animals, the human species acted beyond immediate material needs and instincts. It had the capacity to imagine what did not yet exist and to plan and execute those imaginings. It is this capacity for conscious and purposive activity that '**distinguishes** the worst architect from the best of bees.'

Human activity occurs in place and time. It is social and historical. As we interact with nature and each other to address our needs, we affect the world in which we live. In the process, we develop and extend our individual and collective capacities; we change ourselves. In contrast to his contemporaries, the socialism Marx addressed wasn't something to be invented by a minority, but something to be created by people in struggle." Socialism could not emerge from top-down plans, however well-meaning, nor draftsmen's blueprints, however elaborate. It wasn't something to be given and received. The socialist utopia wouldn't come from ideal communities established on the margins of capitalist society, but **through** engagement with and within capitalist society (i.e. political struggle). By way of that engagement, people could (which doesn't necessarily imply would) change themselves and develop the collective capacities to change society.

This stress on humans as doers, with the capacity to create our material and social environment and thereby make history and ourselves, transforms 'human nature'⁷ from being a limit on the possible, to a contingency dependent on lived history, on what human beings actually do. Gramsci concisely summarized this: 'by putting the

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question "What is man?" we really mean: "What can man **become?**"¹⁸ The development of capacities is, accordingly, both a goal and the crucial connection to achieving that **goal**.

What **Marx** pinpointed as so historically **significant** in capitalism was its demonstration of the amazing capacity of humans to act socially to produce their material means of existence. Capitalism showed the remarkable degree to which the capacities of the whole, the social collective, could exceed the sum of the parts. Linking individuals and communities through markets, combining workers into factories, accumulating and transforming profits into expanded means of production, subordinating science and other social institutions to the productivist drive, capitalism revealed a potential previously unknown and un contemplated. '... what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social **labour?**'¹⁹

But this overwhelming focus on *production* narrowed the potential richness of human activity to that single dimension. And the socialization of labour came by way of individual alienation and class control. Capitalism, for all its achievements in opening up new possibilities for humanity, inherently limits 'what man can become'. Socialism is the response. The question 'What is socialism?' is transformed from speculation about the **future** into an encounter with the present: 'Can we transform capitalism?'

The kind of movement that could develop the confidence, understanding, unity, collective capacities, and innovative organizational structures to one day defeat capitalism, would certainly have established its potential for completing the invention of socialism. Although the specific questions of 'how to run' socialism remain important, C.B. Macpherson was right to insist that

... the main problem is not how to run it but how to reach it. It seems likely that if we can reach it, or any substantial instalment of it, our way along the road to reaching it will have made us capable of running it, or at least less incapable than we are now.²⁰

The demand socialism makes on itself – the popular capacity to transform the world – translates into distinct expectations of its members in terms of understanding and participating in change. *Socialist ideology looks to be the bridge, carrying traffic both ways, between the practice of theory and the practice of revolution.* The structural power of capitalism to obscure social relations placed an ideological responsibility on Marxist theorists: reveal what capitalism really is and

help us see through it. But socialist ideology can't just popularize theory, making it accessible in content, style and availability. Socialist ideology must also democratize theory.

As important as it is to 'educate the masses' by 'sharing' theory, the issue is to engage the potential creators of a new society directly in developing their own theoretical capacity to understand and see through capitalism. As an American journalist, Sally Kempton, once said: 'You can't fight an enemy that has outposts in your head'. Without the widespread capacity to think in a way independent of capitalist ideas, building a movement to match the task we have set for ourselves would be inconceivable (all the more so at a time when the capitalist castle, wrapped in its aura of invincibility, sits so smugly on its hill).

This does not mean that our need for some activists who devote the majority of their lives to *full-time* theoretical work would disappear. It is that their monopoly over theory would end. With this comes a change in both their relationship to the rest of the movement and the further development of theory. Activists not engaged in full-time theory would not only demand greater clarity, but pose new theoretical questions based on the interaction of their experience and a maturing theoretical framework. Theory, and its democratization as socialist ideology, would consequently be in perpetual change and development, reflecting the unevenness of how class consciousness develops, how socialist class consciousness emerges, and how the struggle proceeds.

'MAKING' SOCIALISTS

That said, the standard questions of socialist mobilization still confront us. Can we reinvent a socialist language for our time with which to address non-socialist workers? How do we participate in working class and popular struggles in a way that both supports them and introduces the 'political *exposure*'²¹ that takes them beyond the local, and beyond resistance? Can we play a role that structures these struggles so that the issues addressed, the articulation of goals, the tactics, and the assessment of victories and defeats have a socialist content – that is, contribute to the introduction of socialist ideas and the 'making' of socialists? How do we ensure that experiences and lessons are cumulative, and avoid repeated memory loss and the separation and isolation of struggles across sectors and time? How do we *build* something that lasts and grows?

The *Manifesto* still sets the stage for such questions. It attempted to integrate ideology and theory through exposing the class inequality underlying free market exchanges and through locating capitalism as a historical, and therefore potentially transitory, social system. Its analysis of the internal dynamics of capitalism was directed at drawing out the political possibilities that came with competition, crises, the concentration of capital, and above all the formation of the modern working class.

The problem from the perspective of the present, however, lies in the fact that we can no longer, 150 years later, think and strategize as if socialism is in any way imminent. What we now need is a theory appropriate to the long march *within* capitalism – a new political economy, a *political economy of transition*.²² This political economy would live between the reality of capitalism and the socialism to come. It would be **unashamedly** ideological in the sense that its assumptions, categories, and dynamics strengthen and give concrete direction to our project. This isn't a matter of finding an alternative to Marxism, but of adding a new *layer* to it.

Parallel to this gap in Marxist political economy is our failure to solve the problem of how we organize ourselves as socialists. The answers from the beginning of the century, that tried to go beyond **Marx** in terms of solving this **through** the 'party question', are in the end inadequate. The reality of the failures of Leninism and social democracy and especially the need to redefine how to think about what we face, have pushed them aside as models. The judgement of Marx and Engels in 1872, **looking** back at the Manifesto and its time, is valid again now:

the political situation has been entirely changed and the progress of history has swept from the earth the greater proportion of the political parties there enumerated.²³

The two main historical wings of socialism, social democracy and communism, generally considered victory possible in the relative near term and directed their attention to the *taking of state power*. In setting a different agenda, we are not suggesting that it is possible to ignore the issue of the state – all struggles in capitalist society are related to or reflected in state power at some level, and any socialist movement will always include an on-going debate over the theory and strategy of addressing the state. But the nature of socialist organizations is inseparable from the identification of the *stage* of the struggle. Since our immediate goal is the 'less ambitious' one of just getting the *idea* of

socialism seriously on the agenda again, we are addressing a different issue from that of social democratic and communist parties.

Social democracy wandered between underestimating capitalism's power, which led to the naive equation of electoral victory with radical change, and a pragmatism that was overwhelmed by the economic power of capital. It consequently slid into **reformism**.²⁴ Social democratic parties, based on the electoralist road to a technocratic socialism, had little need for, or interest in (if not active fear of), the development of a militantly class-conscious activist movement and therefore ended up as centralized, in crucial respects, as their communist antagonists. Communist parties, based on the cataclysmic revolutionary event and so strongly influenced by the particularities of the first successful revolution, emphasized unity, discipline, and centralization. In the case of the Soviet Union, defeating capitalism meant the confluence of the strong party with the state. Communist parties in the West, hampered by the way their ties to the Soviet Union limited their theoretical development, made defensive by the Cold War, and suffering from **top-down** bureaucratized structures, proved incapable of addressing, let alone challenging, the ideological hegemony of capitalism (France and Italy were partial and brief exceptions for a period).

In contrast, socialists at the end of the twentieth century, facing no pressure to immediately 'win' the state or establish a new state, need be less obsessed with **organizational** strength and less enamoured of centralization. They may focus instead on the widespread development of ideological activity – the democratization of theory. This takes us beyond the question of a *different* kind of party, and opens the question of whether there is any reason today to insist on there being only *one* party (with its single party paper), as opposed to a plurality of socialist **parties/movements**. In addition to any debate over the relationship between unity and democracy *within* a single socialist structure, we would therefore also face the issue of developing **practical** working relationships *between* organizationally separate groups. Moreover, the legitimacy of different levels of activity also comes to the fore. In the focus on the state, life is about 'big politics' and the politics of the small – the **non-directly** economic, the local as opposed to national – is, if not ignored, then certainly underplayed. With the shift to developing capacities, the potential of the politics of the small rises.

More generally, if we acknowledge that capitalism will not simply self-destruct and also reject the Big Bang theory of creating a socialist universe; if we truly recognize the staying power of capitalism and especially the protracted process of developing our capacities to both

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change and run the world; if the reality of on-going risks of reversal forces us to address how to *sustain* our ideas and direction; if we **explicitly** agree with Dennis Potter's depiction that we have 'Lots of clues. That's the way **things** are. Plenty of clues. No **solutions**.';²⁵ then it becomes clear that **fundamental** to all organizational questions is the priority of developing a rich socialist subculture. That is, a subculture blossoming in every backyard, full of confidence in its capacity to interact with and change the broader culture's assumptions, common sense and therefore 'political **climate**'.

None of this can happen without the greatest amount of improvisation. Duke **Ellington** had it right: 'It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing'.

THE CANADIAN AUTO WORKERS: BETWEEN MILITANCY AND SOCIALISM

In **light** of the limitations shown by unionism, it is perhaps not surprising that many socialists turned away from workers and unions. Their Marxism apparently proved incapable of shielding them from the temper of the times. But the fact is that unions remain central to the socialist project, even **though** the relationship between socialists and unions is characterized, at best, by an uncomfortable tension. Socialists are other-worldly, unions too-worldly. Socialists dream, unions bargain. Socialists look ahead to a society in which labour is no longer a commodity, unions live to deal with that commodification.

Today, both socialists and unions confront an impasse that only their interaction can address. For socialists, the predicament might be summarized as follows. Capitalism's crime is that it commodifies labour. As **long** as capitalism exists, labour power will be a commodity. This can only be overcome after a socialist revolution ushers in a socialist society. That revolution depends on **working** class leadership. But commodities **can't** make revolutions. How then do we get to socialism and end labour's commodification? For unions, the predicament is that recent history has revolved around capital's determination to *intensify* the commodification of labour and therefore increasingly limit the possible role and impact of unions. This drive to **commodify** and regulate workers so comprehensively *through the market* necessarily marginalizes unions unless they go *beyond* the market.

These dilemmas set the stage for a mutually beneficial dynamic. To continue the socialist project, agitation is not enough. Socialists must

engage workers in winning the kind of reforms that so change the *context* in which workers sell their labour power that the exchange of a **worker's** time for income no longer completely dominates the rest of their being, whether in the workplace or outside. That is, concrete changes in the here and now are absolutely crucial to create amongst workers – through the struggles for the changes, and through the results achieved – a sense of their remaining and on-going humanity. Unions, meanwhile, may have a moral language to counter capital (fairness, sharing in progress) but no language for challenging the capitalist *logic* behind what is happening to the workers they represent. There are, consequently, the best of reasons for both socialists and unionists to edge closer together.

In the late seventies, the growing aggressiveness of corporations and hostility of governments led to debates within unions over an appropriate response. Unions that rejected the 'new reality' found that keeping their traditions of militant unionism unchanged now required radical changes in their structures and activities. The Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), for example, not only ended up breaking away from their more compliant parent (the **American-based UAW**), but found themselves drawn into a world of uncertain strategic demands and pressures for new ideological responses and alternatives." **Through** the resultant struggles and campaigns, the CAW evolved towards a 'movement **unionism**'.

[Movement unionism] means making the union into a vehicle through which its members can not only address their bargaining demands but actively lead the fight for everything that affects working people in their communities and the country. Movement unionism includes the shape of bargaining demands, the scope of union activities, the approach to issues of change, and above all, that sense of commitment to a larger movement that might suffer defeats, but can't be destroyed.²⁷

Central to **consolidating** and sustaining the union's culture of struggle and resistance was a response to the strait-jacket of 'competitiveness'. Competitiveness presents itself as not only the best, but the *only* model of economic development. As such it obscures class relations, structures economic debate and acts as the ultimate ideology of the status quo. Since **competitiveness** is, however, not just an idea but a reflection of structures already in place, competitiveness represents a constraint we have to deal with. The trick is to prevent that *constraint* from slowly insinuating itself into our *goals*.

Within the CAW a group of staffers working in research and education have been trying to flesh out an alternative direction that

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addressed this challenge. It is based on moving beyond questions of distribution, and working through the implications of shifting from capitalism's focus on the accumulation of *capital* and control over labour power, to socialists' concern with the accumulation of *capacities* and democratic intervention. Democracy is here thought of in the broadest terms: '... we are not only emphasizing popular control over the economy, but also equal access to participation (democracy must be universal) and the development of individual capacities (democracy must aspire to meeting and developing each individual's *potential*)'.²⁸ Without the development of our capacities, we could neither progress towards socialism nor – as Marx understood – know what to do with the economy even if it were magically handed to us: '... private property can be abolished **only** on condition of an all-round development of individuals, because ... only individuals that are developing in an all-round fashion can appropriate **them**'.²⁹

This entry point – the 'democratic development of capacities' – is primarily an ideological counter-weight but it also affects how we approach a number of inter-related issues, **particularly** the relevant unit of production, the appropriate unit to address needs, the centrality of protecting spaces for experimentation, the relationship between the economic and political, the tactical and strategic urgency of taking on finance capital.

The CAW, in its leadership training programme, carries out the following exercise. Participants identify a series of issues relevant to their lives – unemployment, training, economic restructuring, working conditions, social programs, equality, etc. For a set of issues, some participants are asked to identify the implications of assuming the **goal** is competitiveness; others are asked to follow through on the logic of pursuing the democratic development of capacities. Reports are given, answers hotly debated and discussed, and the process is repeated with other sets of issues and participants switching their starting perspectives.

For example, the logic of competitiveness incorporates the need for significant unemployment to discipline workers and boost corporate performance. The democratic development of capacities asserts that the underutilization of human potentials contradicts development; if economic structures don't make full employment a priority, it is those structures rather than workers that must be 'adjusted'. Competitiveness sees workplace closures as essential to economic restructuring. Our alternative doesn't deny the need for change but asks whether the closure involves the removal of tools and equipment that might be

useful for the community and for the on-going development of skills that would otherwise go unused. If this is the case, then the issue shouldn't be closures, but supportive mechanisms to revitalize those workplaces.

Similarly, competitiveness does express concern with skill development through training. But training driven by competitiveness is generally concentrated on a small part of the workforce, and the training the rest of the **workforce** gets is generally about fitting people into the requirements of externally-determined technology and work reorganization (Fordism, contrary to popular conceptions, exists comfortably alongside all the new allegedly post-Fordist production paradigms). The 'democratic development of capacities' demands training for everyone – as a need, a democratic right, and a personal-social investment in the future. And the scope of the training extends to developing the skills and confidence to control, rather than be adapted to, technology and the organization of work. Competitiveness would lament this as an 'over-investment' in **skills**,³¹ wasteful and even potentially counter-productive. Our alternative agrees that 'excess knowledge' (re existing work structures and division of labour) might create problems. But that's positive if it implies the kind of conflict over basic issues that could stimulate structural change.

The discussion groups articulating competitiveness note that it is export-oriented and that we are consequently pushed towards strengthening 'our' companies and improving the 'investment climate' so 'our company', and not others, will attract private investment and be **successful**. In contrast, for those starting with the democratic development of capacities, the unit of production isn't the company (a property relation) but the workplace (the basic unit of social production) and groups of workplaces with common economic ties (clusters or **sectors**).³¹ This opens up an economic-political-ideological perspective in which 'strengthening the economy' doesn't automatically translate into bolstering the private power of companies, but shifts attention to developing the productive capacities of workplaces and sectors. Moreover, without a national space free of the undermining pressures of **global** markets, there can be no **experimentation**³² and without experimentation no **new democratic** structures could emerge or suggest themselves. In the discussions, we emphasize that international economic relations will not thereby cease; rather, they would be put in a regulatory framework that permits the passage to substantially more inward-oriented development strategies.

What emerges from all of this is a growing clarity about competi-

tiveness as an ideology, and – more slowly – the democratic development of capacities as an alternative ideology with implications for different directions. Seriously broaching any of these ideas also adds to what unions do, and affects all aspects of how they do it. The process of workers moving from primarily seeing themselves as – and living the lives of – inputs into the production process and consumers in an economy, to a self-identification as producers and political actors, implies a change in not just goals but the everyday culture of their organization: the reallocation of research resources to address jobs; the challenges that come from an awakened membership to improve democratic structures and to create new vehicles for participation; links to the community based on joint mobilization; an expanded scope of bargaining. A reorientation in the role of unions could not, for example, be imagined without unions simultaneously moving beyond defensive challenges to management rights to negotiate – under their new mandate to represent 'producers', and as part of a redefinition of what a 'job' includes – **regular** time during working hours for ergonomic training, access to engineers to improve work stations, updates on production and restructuring trends, and access for workers' to their own 'experts'.

In contrast to the ideological work **being** done within the union, the implications of all of this in terms of political strategy have as yet not been systematically integrated into our work. What follows outlines some ideas being discussed as a way to move ahead; they have been raised only tentatively in various union educational and strategic settings.

The political economy of transition we are reaching for through the 'democratic development of capacities' approach must explicitly overcome the structural separation between the economic and political by politicizing the economy. This involves rethinking the state's direct role in the economy. Over and above the democratization of its existing economic functions, this means thinking about '*a different kind of state*':³³ inventing state structures to simultaneously develop the productive capacities of the community and develop a popular capacity to participate in, influence, and regulate the direction of production in what will still be a **capitalist** economy. Consider the following two examples, one community-based and one sector-based.

Suppose each community elected 'job development boards', mandated to provide everyone in the community with either paid work or training (or both). These boards would survey community needs beyond market demands to match them with the community's

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potential human, natural, and capital resources. They would have the defensive right to postpone closures and – backed by supporting institutions – to evaluate corporate finances, provide technical and financial support, initiate the possibility of workplace conversion or cooperation across workplaces to achieve economies of scale, and over time develop the direct capacity to organize **production/services through** co-ops and the introduction of municipal ownership. Campaigns for seats on these boards would debate how to create jobs, but would inevitably also raise questions about how we define 'needs'. This public involvement would be institutionally encouraged between elections through forums and on-going classes on the structure of the local economy and the technical aspects of addressing its development. These embryonic councils – an alternative to units of capital as the core administrative unit for organizing economic activity – would be the base for moving towards a community-based democratic planning capacity.

This emphasis on the 'community', like that on 'sectors' in what follows, is part of a more general attempt to rethink and redefine how we think about economic activity. Our focus here is not on the consumer (someone with money to spend) but on a tiered range of social units that include the household (the basic unit that supplies labour in order to make a livelihood), the community (the social network and its sense of place within which households live and work), and the nation (communities bound by a geographical-historical-administrative nexus). The concern is not consumption but *needs* (which do not necessarily correlate with market signals). And within the hierarchy of needs, the development of capacities ranks foremost because it includes an expansion of future options and possibilities – ultimately, social change itself. This reorientation highlights particular questions dealing with the family (e.g. the division of labour within the family and its impact on women's options to develop their potentials). And it shapes how we view the role of physical and social infrastructure in providing the base for developing communities and equalizing access to economic participation (e.g. the role of transportation, health, education, training, child care).

At the **sectoral** level, where economic activity extends across and beyond specific communities, the **thrust** would be to develop an independent working class capacity to intervene in the direction of that sector. Unions would demand that state agencies put their bureaucracies to work preparing detailed **sectoral** information specifically for the workers involved. Unions would also insist, on democratic grounds, that they be given resources to partially offset what companies take for

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granted: to hire researchers, carry out surveys of local productive potential, engage their members in creating internal workplace structures for input, and for developing the broader **sectoral** councils. With a sympathetic policy framework around trade policy, financial levers, and newly-established **sectoral** 'service centres' (won through political mobilization), unions would be in a position to **negotiate/struggle** for **sectoral** directions with companies and the state.

These 'service centres' would overlap with the community structures created under the job development boards, since such centres would be physically located in one community or another. They would address particular sub-sectoral needs and be linked to other public institutions like universities. They could pool resources to address the improvement of working conditions and the **quality of goods**; look ahead to new materials, technologies, and outputs; consider the potential spin-offs for other sectors. There might, for example, be a tool-and-die centre in **Windsor experimenting** with new tooling; a stamping research centre in Kitchener to link new developments in steel and plastics; an ergonomics centre in Oshawa to study the engineering of workstations. Unlike the private capacities which come and go with companies (the threat of withdrawal being used against workers and the community), these institutions would represent **social** capacities, rooted in our communities and integrated into domestic sectors.

The local and **sectoral** initiatives raised above could not occur without a funding base and we try to link this to 'taking on the banks'. Although capitalist restructuring of the economy is carried out by the 'real' sector, the financial sector plays a special role in the accumulation and allocation of society's surplus. As capital in its most mobile form, it is the medium through which capitalist logic and discipline is implemented. In the process it takes on, to a **degree**, a life of its own. Challenging the financial sector is an immediate priority because this sector lies in waiting to undermine any of our initiatives, and because we can't move on to the complexities of socializing the real economy without some social control over society's overall surplus.

Viewing the financial sector as a public utility for regulating and **facilitating** the investment that shapes our workplaces, sectors, and communities raises a number of issues about planning capacities. At a minimum, finance-as-a-public-utility means controlling the international outflow of capital and the establishment of a 'social investment fund'. The financial base of that fund **might** come from a levy on all financial institutions (banks, insurance companies, investment houses, pension funds; to limit ourselves to voluntary 'solidarity' funds that

leave financial capital's resources untouched would guarantee failure). Those funds would be allocated, through national and **regional** democratic structures, to national projects (e.g. housing) and to the **sectoral** and community structures discussed earlier. Together, this control on capital outflows, access to a growing portion of private capital, social allocation of the funds, and **union/community** involvement in their concrete application, constitute a process of moving towards the politization and democratization of finance.

Facing both external attacks and preparing for a generational change within the union, the CAW has made an impressive commitment of institutional resources (in addition to political space) for maintaining its culture and developing an ideology independent from capital. The union dramatically increased its educational programmes through the nineties, largely on the basis of negotiating monies from the corporations that were completely controlled by the **union**.⁴⁴ Those educational-are heavily oriented to **political** economy and ideology as **fundamental** to building the union. New educational were negotiated to provide forty hours of training for every steward at GM, Ford, and **Chrysler** on their workplaces, the industry, union history, and movement unionism. Research resources were expanded and shifted to supporting educational work. A department of work organization was established to **provide** an independent capacity to understand workplace changes and act as a catalyst for our response. An economist was hired to prepare background material for **sectoral** interventions and to provide ammunition for taking on the banks. **Sectoral** co-ordinators were appointed in some sectors (aerospace, auto parts) not only to co-ordinate bargaining but act as a catalyst in developing **sectoral** strategies with elected **sectoral** councils. Resources and organizational skills were put into communities (e.g. around the educational system) to expand the self-definition of what workers are and what unions do.

What has been the response from workers? At one level, there is nothing surprising. Some workers raise legitimate but narrow concerns like whether the restrictions on investment **might** affect their pension. Others are intrigued and raise **practical** questions: Won't the local elite still dominate any boards we set up? How will we control those who run the massive Social Investment Fund? There are those that take the ideas in a populist direction, underestimating the difficulties; and those who remain convinced that neither workers nor state institutions can do what companies now do. Even where workers are engaged in lively discussions about these ideas, we still need to question how deeply

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these discussions have penetrated the participants' consciousness; and – since it is these workers who are to take the message back to the workplace – how widespread the impact of this exercise ultimately is.

Another set of concerns comes directly from the every-day reality of union survival. In chasing after the restructuring, resources are 'diverted' to bringing new members in, often only to keep the union in the same place in terms of membership numbers. Staff are overworked and activists – precisely because their activism is 'in addition' to what they are *expected* to normally do – are always exhausted. Even with the best of intentions, and in spite of the leadership support, is it possible to take on the kind of challenge we're posing when it remains *secondary* to the main function of organizations already hard-pressed? Without political attitudes being a condition of membership, can there be any broadly-based internal political consensus and a priority focus on political issues?

The answer – in spite of the reservations, problems, and limits – is an exciting yes. The discussion and debates in the classrooms and workshops are at remarkably high levels. Even where workers remain unclear and unsure of specifics, they are affected by the general orientation towards an independent working class perspective, the emphasis on thinking about capacities, the broadening of the theme of democracy and a new self-consciousness of their history. Most go back ready to challenge the union and supplement or rejuvenate the existing cadre. Although it wasn't intended as an explicit **goal**, the workers trained to deliver the programmes have emerged as a new layer of ideologically-confident activists.

Beyond the *content* of the educationals, and no less significant, were two other factors. Bringing workers together across workplaces, companies, and sectors was crucial. An auto worker hearing a fish plant worker or airline worker **talking** about lean production brings home lessons about class identity that sociological lectures could otherwise never do. Moreover, this horizontal mixing of diverse workers and activists (as opposed to vertically between specific workplaces and a national office) allows workers opportunities to discuss their problems directly, introducing a level of democracy that unions – through inertia or bureaucratic design – too often block. **And** bringing workers together in their own educational centre, in an environment – the CAW's education centre at Port Elgin in Ontario – full of the history of past struggles (posters, art, **photos**) and where they share not just class time, but meals and evenings, not only intensifies the learning experience, but gives it a cultural base. The centre's sheer physical existence seems to say

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'We're in this for the long haul and aren't going away'.

Above all, it must be stressed that in the absence of on-going struggles and campaigns, none of this would be relevant. Ideology would be rhetoric, education would be excuses, cynicism would block excitement, alternatives taken back would have no audience and ideas introduced no reason to mature.

Given the heightened struggles and mobilization that in fact have occurred within the CAW, the main limitation we faced and still face is an old one – the absence of significant socialist movements. Without this, openings created at the national union level have not been taken up and developed locally; there has been little attempt to take the material and perspectives into other unions and organizations; and we have only had ad-hoc and sporadic support and criticism from socialists intellectuals to take this work further. As individuals in unions and as part of networks, we have to get on with developing and engaging workers in the ideas that can make the socialist project relevant again. This *will* lead to battles within the labour movement – if not now, then when we show signs of success – because it ultimately threatens the 'normal' life of unions and the pragmatic ambitions of social democratic 'modernizers'. But the potential is there, and the creation of networks of socialists linked to sympathetic union activists to work on this is the minimum we can expect of ourselves today.

Capital's success in getting its way in terms of structural change depended on people accepting that the national interest lies with **making** capital stronger so 'we' can be competitive. The failure of that victory to deliver the promised **goods** has left both corporate authority and corporate ideology vulnerable. Capital's own insistence that the times demanded major overhaul rather than tinkering has created a more receptive audience to new ideas. And the failure of collective bargaining and electoral representation to adequately address working class needs has, after a **long** hiatus, led to more militant and creative responses and a corresponding radicalization of rhetoric. There is now an interest, at least amongst a **significant minority** of workers, in alternative ideas. *This* is the **fight** socialists must take on.

CONCLUSION

Proletarian revolutions...deride with unmerciful thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses and paltriness of their first attempts. – Karl Marx⁹

Marx brought us the gift of historical optimism, but one hundred and

fifty years after the *Manifesto*, doubt threatens to overwhelm us. We are, in spite of the **long** stretch of history since **Marx** wrote the above **lines**, still engaged in our 'first attempts'. From the perspective of the heady sixties, the 'paltriness' of a strategy which **begins** by postponing the revolution **to** a distant and indefinite tomorrow would be dismissed with a quick wave of the hand as reformist. Today, the modest goal of simply getting socialism seriously on the agenda is more likely to be labelled utopian.

Towards the end of 'What is *To Be Done?*', Lenin, in the midst of the most hard-headed and unsentimental of polemics, quoted the journalist Pisarev:

... if man were completely deprived of the **ability** to **dream**..if he **could** not from time **to** time run ahead and mentally conceive... the product to which his hands are only just beginning to lend shape, then I cannot at all imagine what stimulus there would be... [for] **art**, science, and political endeavour. .. The rift between reality and dreams causes no harm if only the person dreaming believes seriously in his dream, if he attentively observes life, compares his observations with his castles in the **air**..and works conscientiously for the achievement of his fantasies. If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is **well**.⁵⁶

To which Lenin added:

Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And the people most responsible for this are those who boast of their sober views, their 'closeness' to the 'concrete' ...⁵⁷

That connection between 'dreams and life', it turned out, eluded the Russian Revolution and the dream became a nightmare. Social democracy for its part, completely lost its capacity to dream. Even today, however, some of us choose to carry on. We contemplate our inability to build on the past – a past characterized not so much by the gains of the welfare state, as by the movements that lay behind it. We note, without recrimination but with sadness, the past gains in consciousness and the pockets of socialist confidence that **have** faded with disuse. We challenge the credibility and authority of those with power. We shake angry fists at those who in the name of a frightened realism give up on socialist ideals. **Even when** it is out of fashion we still have faith. This faith is connected to the real world, is a secular faith, but no other word honestly explains our hanging on to socialism. We refuse to accept that what is, or has been, is all that can be, and insist on the human species' capacity to develop its capacities. We dream with sober senses.

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NOTES

1. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, London, Penguin, 1967, p. 83.
2. 'If we disregard slaves . . . there has been, in the history of men who work with their hands, no group, stratum, or class which has not owned at least a substantial portion of its tools. Workers in the modern sense of the word are the first class not to own tools.' Jurgen Kuczynski, *The Rise of The Working Class*, New York, World University Press, 1967, p. 10.
3. Ralph Miliband, *Socialism for a Sceptical Age*, London, Verso, 1994, p. 188.
4. Maxim Gorky, quoted by John Berger in *Permanent Red*, London, Writers and Readers Publishing cooperative, 1960, p. 93-4.
5. Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte*, New York, International Publishers, 1969, p. 19.
6. It is, as we emphasized earlier, not only that consumption is individualized but that the content of consumption-as-compensation is not necessarily individually enriching.
7. David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996, p. 44.
8. Marx-Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 83.
9. Raymond Williams, *Towards 2000*, London, Verso, 1983, p. 262.
10. Jerry Lee Lembcke, 'Labor History's "Synthesis Debate": Sociological Interventions', *Science and Society*, Summer 1995, p. 162.
11. Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 202.
12. Perry Anderson, 'The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci', *New Left Review*, No. 100, November, 1976, p. 28.
13. Marx-Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 83.
14. Mike Lebowitz, *Beyond Capital*, London, MacMillan, 1992, p. 131.
15. Raymond Williams, 'Notes on British Marxism since the War' in *New Left Review*, No. 100, November, 1976, p. 87.
16. Karl Marx, *Capital, Volume 1*, London, Penguin, 1990, p. 284.
17. A third of the *Manifesto* concentrated on a critique of a-historical and elitist notions of socialism.
18. Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince and other writings*, New York, International Publishers, 1970, p. 76.
19. Marx-Engels, *Manifesto*, p. 85.
20. C.B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy*, London, Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 98.
21. Lenin, *What Is To be Done?*, New York, International Publishers, 1972, p. 70.
22. '[Its] principles should be envisioned as transitional [not socialist] in the sense of 'structural reform' that initiates democratic modes of regulation against market imperatives.' Greg Albo, 'A World Market-of Opportunities', in L. Panitch, ed., *The Socialist Register 1997*, London, Merlin, p. 30.
23. Marx-Engels, first preface to the German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, June 24, 1872 included in *Manifesto*, p. 54.
24. In an eerily contemporary passage in the *Manifesto* Marx notes: 'Ultimately, when stubborn historical facts had dispersed all intoxicating effects of self-deception, this form of Socialism ended in a miserable fit of the blues.', p. 109.

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25. Dennis Potter, *The Singing Detective*, New York, Vintage, 1988, p. 140.
26. 'Over the past two decades, our union resisted the pressures to get into line with the so-called new reality. . . . Out of that experience, a 'culture of struggle and resistance' grew within the union. That culture united us, **kept** us in motion, defined us as a union. How do we now expand and deepen this legacy as we search for new strategies and new responses'. CAW Collective Bargaining and Political Action Convention, 'False Solutions, Growing Protests: Recapturing the Agenda', June, 1996.
27. Sam Gindin, *The Canadian Auto Workers: The Birth and Transformation of a Union*, Toronto, Lorimer, 1995, p. 268.
28. Sam Gindin and Dave Robertson, 'Alternatives to Competitiveness' in Daniel Drache, ed., *Getting on Track*, Montreal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992, p. 33-34.
29. Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, New York, International Publishers, 1972, p. 117.
30. Wolfgang Streeck, 'Training and the New Industrial Relations' in Marino Regini, ed, *The Future of Labour Movements*, London, Sage Publishers, p. 262.
31. This reorientation in the unit of analysis from the company (capital) to groups of workplaces (sectors) is returned to a few pages ahead with the example of **sectoral** strategies.
32. Albo, op. cit., p. 30-2.
33. Leo Panitch, 'A Different Kind of State?' in Greg Albo, David Langille and Leo Panitch, eds., *A Different Kind of State? Popular Power and Democratic Administration*, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 5.
34. Through the 1980s and nineties, a total of over 5000 workers went through the four week residential course at the union's education centre. The course content focuses on political economy, union structures and strategies, labour history, class and social **identity**, mobilization and **politics**. Each year, thousands more go through two week, one week, and weekend schools with courses on such topics as work organization and health and safety, and courses for activist women and people of colour.
35. Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire*, p. 19.
36. Pisarev, quoted by Lenin, op. cit., p. 167.
37. Lenin, *ibid.*, p. 167.