

## THESES FOR DISCUSSION

Insurgent Notes Internal Conference, July 31

Loren Goldner

(Editor's Note: The following theses are being circulated within the Insurgent Notes collective for discussion in our pending internal conference on July 31. They attempt to expand on the programmatic points sketched in brief in the editorial of IN No. 1 a year ago. We make them also available to readers for comment, before and after the conference. They are, for now, the opinions of the author and not of the IN collective as a whole.)

1) **CONTRACTING SOCIAL REPRODUCTION** The current crisis, on a world scale, began ca. 1970, as the postwar boom—reconstruction from the destruction of the 1914-1945 period—exhausted itself, first in the US, and then shortly thereafter in Europe and Japan. Since that time, capitalism has struggled to “recompose” itself, through a grinding down of social reproduction, most importantly of the total working class wage bill (“V”) and aspects of constant capital (“C”), both fixed capital and infrastructure. It has done this by debt pyramiding, outsourcing of production around the world, technological innovation (in telecommunications, transportation and technology-intensive production), all having the same goal of transferring “V” and “C” to “S” (surplus value), while enforcing an overall NON-REPRODUCTION of labor power. Capital has attempted to achieve the same result as it did in the 1914-1945 period—re-establishment of an adequate rate of profit for a new expansion—without, as yet, resorting to large-scale war. Capital has tapped cheap labor power in the collapsed former Eastern bloc, in Asia (Korea, China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India) while at the same time dismantling or whittling down the old “worker fortresses” of the West: the American Midwest, the British Midlands, the Paris suburbs and Alsace, and the Ruhr. It long ago abolished the one-paycheck blue-collar family. Capital has expelled or is expelling the working class from “financial centers” such as New York, London and more recently Paris, greatly increasing commuting time, making housing an expense approaching 50% of a typical working-class income, and turning the major cities into theme parks for the unproductive FIRE (finance/insurance/real estate) population.

2) **CONJUNCTURE** The 2008 crash, the biggest since 1929, seemed on one hand to discredit the “neo-liberal” “financialization” model (apparently) propelling capitalism since ca. 1980 (Reagan, Thatcher) but in fact was followed by a second wind in which governments attempted to revive the status quo ante with ever-greater infusions of debt. This has had the effect of intensifying the previous, 1970-2008 trend of “capital expanding, social reproduction contracting”. Stock markets recovered, banks cut their losses and consolidated, the top 1% of the population continued to take an ever-greater percentage of “income growth”, while in the U.S., the “real economy” stagnated or declined, with probably 15-20% of the work force unemployed or underemployed, and hundreds of thousands losing homes to foreclosure and apartments to eviction. Japan has been mired in stagnation for 20 years; in Europe, Iceland, Ireland, Britain, and the

southern periphery (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece) have been the hardest hit.

3) OBSOLESCENCE OF VALUE Underneath all appearances, the reality of the situation is the obsolescence of capitalist value—the necessary social time of the REproduction of commodities, above all the commodity labor power-- as a framework for the continued expanded material reproduction of humanity. Capital in crisis spirals backwards, pulling society with it. It must either devalue existing commodities, whether labor power or capital plant or consumer goods, until a new general rate of profit can coincide with some real expansion, or else the working class must destroy value.

4) COLLAPSE OF STATIST ALTERNATIVES The crisis since 1970 has had the positive effect of more widely discrediting the former, apparent alternatives, namely Social Democracy and above all Stalinism. In their diminution or disappearance, the crisis revealed them for what they always were: the completion of one aspect of the minimum program of the bourgeois revolution, (in the countries where they achieved state power or real influence) the elimination of pre-capitalist forms in agriculture and land to the peasants. Where some semblance of their former selves remains (such as in western Europe) they can only compete with the “right” in administering the crisis.

5) PARTIES, UNIONS AGAINST THE WORKING CLASS Well before the 1970 turning point, however, these old organizations of the left and the unions linked to them were fighting against the working class and the latter’s “shop floor rebellion” beginning in the 1950’s and culminating in the early to mid-1970’s. Since that time, far from challenging any prerogatives of capital, they have only embraced them.

6) LEFT COMMUNISM We identify ourselves broadly as left communists. Left communism first appeared as a self-conscious tendency in the revolutionary surge after World War I, above all (but not only) in German-Dutch council communism and in the Italian Communist Left (“Bordigists”). Despite their differences, which were real enough, these two currents were briefly able, in the years immediately after the Russian Revolution, to demarcate themselves in different ways from Bolshevism, and its “dual revolution” alliance with the peasantry, with their rejection of the Russian Revolution as a universal model, insisting that in the developed capitalist West, the proletariat stood alone. The solution of the agrarian question, the main lasting achievement of the Russian Revolution, and the related development of the productive forces, are tasks of the bourgeois revolution, and the “grand illusion” of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the confusion of numerous substitute bourgeois revolutions (beginning with Russia, once the failure of the world revolution had isolated it and when internal degeneration had eliminated its proletarian content, the soviets and workers’ councils) with socialism/communism. The recovery of genuine communist theory and practice can point to many sources, with the Hegel renaissance after World War II, the wide availability of many previously unknown works of Marx (1844 Manuscripts, the Grundrisse, the Unpublished Sixth Chapter of vol. I of Capital, his writings on non-Western societies, the ongoing publication of the MEGA). In addition to elements of the German-Dutch left and the Italian Communist Left, we can cite Rosa Luxemburg’s mass strike conception, Socialism or Barbarism, CLR James, the Situationists, Italian operaismo, the early Camatte, the post-1968 French

neo-Bordigists (Barrot/Dauvé et al.) as sources (the list not being exhaustive or exclusive). This recovery, it goes without saying, would never have occurred without the historical developments of the 1960's and 1970's, in the culmination and end of the post-World War II expansion.

7) CLASSWIDE ORGANIZING VS. 'REVOLUTIONARY TRADE UNIONISM' We argue that the period ushered in by World War I marks a qualitative change in the history of capitalism, characterized alternately, by different currents, as the epoch of the "obsolescence of capital", "decadence", or the "real domination of capital". We see this post-1914 period as one in which reform (trade unionism and parliamentarism), as practiced by the First and above all Second Internationals and muddled in the Third and Fourth Internationals, is no longer viable as a step forward for the working class as a whole. By this we do not mean that partial struggles, defensive or offensive, outside periods of revolutionary upsurge are meaningless. We disagree with those left communist currents which reject work within and around trade unions as solely the terrain of the "left wing of capital". Where possible, we favor work within trade unions while always maintaining an extra-union perspective, looking to transform isolated "class-in-itself" struggles into class-wide movements involving other workers and the unemployed, on the model of the e.g. 1934 Toledo Auto-Lite strike or the 2004 Buenos Aires subway strike. We at the same time reject the perspective of "capturing the unions" for revolution, as advocated by (some) Trotskyists. We aim to supercede unions by class-wide organizations.

8) GEOPOLITICS The developing geopolitical situation is closely related to the world economic crisis, first of all because it is there that a future major war, as part of capital's "solution" to the crisis, will emerge. The current world situation is characterized by the (relative) decline of the United States as the undisputed capitalist hegemon it was until the 1970's. While there is currently no national power or bloc capable of challenging U.S. hegemony, the global situation is characterized by a "multi-polarity" which did not exist in 1970. The U.S. accounted for 50% of world production in 1945, and accounts for 20% today. Part of this is due to the "normal" reconstruction of Europe and Japan after World War II, part of it due to U.S. overseas investment (similar to Britain's increased overseas investments in the era of its decline), and part of it is due to the emergence of new zones of development. East Asia accounted for 5% of world production in 1960, and accounts for 35% today. While the much-touted "rise of China" is overblown (one need merely think of its inability to resolve the situation of 750 million people still on the land and another 100 million in the floating, casualized migrant population), the total post-1945 industrialization of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and China, taken together, as a power center and moreover a greater potential power center, is not. Germany, East Asia, Brazil, and India are, in different ways, other established or potential poles of independence from U.S. domination in a way unthinkable 40 or 50 years ago.

One aspect of the economic and geopolitical crisis is the problematic global status of the U.S. dollar as the dominant reserve currency, a status giving the U.S. the unique ability to print money to pay its own external debts—a privilege no other indebted nation enjoys—and to periodically devalue foreign holdings of dollars (Germany and Japan in the early

1970's, Japan in 1985) which are external debts of the United States. That status further allows the U.S. to fund its perennial state deficits with the recycling of dollars held abroad, which now amount to ca. \$15 trillion. In contrast to 1945, the international weight of the reserve currency status of the dollar is out of all proportion to the weight of the U.S. in total world production. As with the British pound over the 1914-1945 period, this disproportionality will not be resolved at some international conference table but by crisis, shakeout and (possibly) a major war.

9) NEW INDUSTRIAL WORKING CLASSES The increasing multi-polarity of the world economy reflects the geographical shifts in the concentration of wage-labor proletarians around the world. According to some estimates, 60% of all workers today are in Asia. This translates into sharpening of class struggle there; China alone experienced over 100,000 "incidents" (local uprisings and confrontations, not all of them involving blue-collar workers) in 2010; Vietnam has experienced 336 strikes in the past year, many of them wildcats; worker ferment has also erupted in Bangladesh (mainly textile workers, as reported in IN No. 2) and India (in the industrial zone around Delhi). In North Africa and the Middle East, workers have played central roles in the insurgencies in Tunisia and Egypt, and important strikes have occurred in Turkey.

These working-class struggles in countries previously associated with the mirage of "Third Worldism" (peasant-bureaucratic movements and revolutions) is a shift of inestimable importance in the "geography" of class struggle.

10) PERMANENT REVOLUTION While we recognize and welcome the growing importance of the new industrial working classes created by the spread of capitalist investment in recent decades, we continue to see the wage-labor work force in the "old" centers of accumulation—Europe, the US and Canada, Japan—as central to any successful world revolution. The long arc of the history of communism has seen two international revolutionary waves, those of 1848 and 1917-1921, as well as the international wave associated with "1968". In 1848 and 1917, particularly, the truth of Marx's theory of permanent revolution (as later developed further by Trotsky) was demonstrated, whereby working-class upsurge in the "center" was complemented by the emergence of an independent working-class upsurge in the emerging "weak link" of accumulation. In the first instance, the "center" was the apex of the English Chartist movement in January 1848 and, above all, the communist uprising in Paris six months later in June, and the "weak link" was Germany; in the second, more protracted case, the "center" was western Europe (Germany above all) and the "weak link" was Russia. In both cases, the "crossover" necessary to the triumph of the revolutions failed, but we consider such a "crossover" as essential, so that a successful revolution in the "center" spares the working class and peasantry in the "weak link" the rigors of "socialist accumulation" in bureaucratic autarchy. The overcoming of the capitalist "law of value", as transmitted to the developing world, first of all through the world market, must be the task of workers in both the old "center" and in the emerging "weak links". The history of successive Stalinist and Third Worldist revolutions in the semi-developed and underdeveloped world has demonstrated time and again the impossibility of "socialism", or even of real capitalist development, in one country, under the pressure of the world

market.

11) NATIONALISM Seen in this light, we consider nationalism in the current epoch to be reactionary. Nationalism in the period from the French Revolution until approximately World War I could play an historically progressive or even revolutionary role (i.e. in the era of bourgeois revolutions) when the formation of viable nation states out of the old dynastic order (e.g. Germany, Italy) was still possible. This said, the “right of nations to self-determination” was never, as an abstract principle, part of the revolutionary tradition separate from a geopolitical-strategic orientation to the *unification of the working class*, which is always an international class. Marx supported Irish nationalism against British rule, and Polish nationalism against Russian rule, but opposed Balkan nationalism that might weaken the Ottoman bulwark against Russian expansionism. The nations or Ersatz nations which emerged out of the collapse of the empires (Hohenzollern, Habsburg, Romanov, Ottoman) after World War I, or out of the dismantling of the British, French, Dutch, Belgian or Portuguese empires between 1945 and 1975, or finally out of the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989-1991, have almost without exception, due to the dynamic of (an absent) permanent revolution, failed to solve the “tasks” of the bourgeois revolution, most immediately the completion of the agrarian revolution. The few exceptions (e.g. South Korea, Taiwan) managed to do so as “showcases” in competition with the Stalinist revolutions (China, North Korea, Vietnam) in Asia, with serious land reform, but they still remain viable only—to date—with significant U.S. military assistance.

12) “ANTI-IMPERIALISM” Despite these developments, a certain “anti-imperialism” has revived, after experiencing an eclipse in the late 1970’s. It is no longer a question of barefoot doctors and people’s communes in China, or guerrilla focos in the Andes, or various and sundry “tricontinental” “national liberation fronts”. Led by the Petro-Peronist Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, it consists of a loose collection of countries such as Cuba, Ecuador, Bolivia, (occasionally) Brazil, and then extends to even more questionable forces in the Middle East such as Hezbollah (Lebanon), Hamas (Palestine) and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Even further from the front lines are Russia and China, hardly troubled to watch the U.S. squander blood and money in its losing wars (Iraq, Afghanistan) and its declining influence throughout the region (Turkey, Pakistan). These “anti-imperialist” forces are cheered on by the World Social Forum and its array of NGOs; North American trade unionists fly to Beijing to have tea with the official state trade union leaders while workers attempting to organize independent unions there are incarcerated. Perhaps if the Taliban reconquer Afghanistan, they too will be joining these “progressive anti-imperialist forces” at the World Social Forum.

13) RACE, CLASS, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND ‘IDENTITY POLITICS’ Concentrated as we are, at least for the moment, in the United States, we necessarily recognize that the “color-blind” Marxism of many left communist currents—a proletarian is a proletarian is a proletarian—is simply...blind Marxism. The largely black and Latino population of U.S. prisons (1% of the U.S. population) or the black and Latino youth gunned down with impunity every year by the police, are excellent “first approximations” showing that the legacy of 350 years of white supremacy in American

history is still with us, if somewhat deflated since the 1960's. Similarly, gender and "normative sexual" questions are hardly resolved, either within the class or in the larger society. We hardly consider it an accident that most of the incremental progress on these questions since the 1960's, however piecemeal and fragmentary, has mainly benefited what can be broadly characterized as "middle class" and "professional" elements among blacks, Latinos, women and gays. (Our use of the term here is not to be confused with the repellent and ideologically- charged American use of "middle class" when referring to the *working class*.)

The dynamic between class and race, gender and sexual orientation varies widely from one concrete situation to another. But since the ebb of the vaguely Marxian or pseudo-Marxian climate of the 1960's and 1970's, when many of these oppressed groups (we are thinking first of all of the black and Latino nationalists of that period) still felt obligated to articulate their agendas within a broader (mainly Stalinist and/or Third Worldist) "proletarian internationalism", the emergence of an "identity politics" starting in the late 1970's dispensed with that framework altogether. A whole industry of NGO's backed by foundation money came into existence to cement this fragmentation of different groups and to bury the question of class, thus becoming an important anti-working class force, the first line of defense against communist politics in different communities. It was hardly an accident that this ideology and these NGOs and foundations emerged and thrived during decades of defeat, rollback, concessions and factory closings that decimated the living standards of the working class, white, black or brown.

The reunification of a movement on a true class basis, which means a movement that puts the poorest and most downtrodden groups at the center of its problematic, is not something to be solved by a deft theoretical formulation, but something that must emerge from practical experience in struggle. It is therefore a commitment of Insurgent Notes to chronicle those struggles when and where they emerge, to participate in them where possible, and to expose the ideologues of fragmentary, anti-working class "identity" and their foundation (and government) backers.

14) IMMIGRATION Closely related to the problems posed by race, class and gender, in both the U.S. and in Europe, is the question of immigration. In the worst capitalist crisis since the 1930's, political and ideological mobilizations against immigrants are emerging as the perfect lightning rod for channeling growing populist rage into struggles among the "native born" and "immigrant" members of the class that "has no fatherland". The abject failure of "development", aided by Western policies in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and much of Asia for decades, as well from the administration of local bourgeoisies and statist elites in those regions, has turned tens of millions of proletarians and sub-proletarians into refugees from the resulting social and economic vacuum. Far-right groups organized around anti-immigrant feeling have made important breakthroughs in virtually every European country, and with similar developments in the U.S. (first of all along the border with Mexico) becoming a dominant issue here as well. Mainstream capitalists tend to favor immigration as a source of cheap labor and leave

immigrant bashing to the populist right, but will hardly fail to see its uses as serious class antagonism intensifies. Well-meaning but empty calls for international solidarity, in the abstract, will hardly do. From our point of view, and recalling the central role played by an earlier wave of immigration in class struggles in the U.S. before and after World War I, we see immigrant labor as playing a potentially vanguard role again. At the same time we present a programmatic approach to the question, with our perspective of global reconstruction in the transition out of capitalism aimed at undoing the huge imbalances between regions resulting from colonialism, imperialism and capitalist “development” schemes as the ultimate practical common ground between workers in different parts of the world.

15) PROGRAM We see as essential to our tasks the elaboration of a program for the transition out of capitalism. Too much of the debate in the left communist, ultra-left or libertarian communist milieu revolves around questions of forms of organization, and too much of the conception of a post-capitalist society devolves into highly abstract arguments over “Value”. We see the need to emphasize the “material content” of the transition to be implemented, once political and economic power has been taken away from the capitalists, indispensable to the actual abolition of value, i.e. of the regulation of life by the socially necessary time of reproduction. Given the advanced degree of decay in the West, headed by the U.S. and the U.K., it can no longer be (and never really was) a question of “taking over production” and establishing “workers’ control”. In countries with such a high level of employment in socially useless (the FIRE sector of finance-insurance- real estate) sectors, or socially noxious ones (e.g. armed forces and arms production) or (not too long ago) the automobile (and related) industries, such a vision, inherited from the ferment of the 60’s and 70’s, is almost meaningless. More workplaces will be abolished by the revolution than placed under “workers’ control”. We see it as fundamental to conceive of the future society in use-value terms on a global scale. A linear spread of post-1945 models of consumption in the West--such as individual home ownership and the two-car family-- to the entire world is on the face of it a social and environmental absurdity. Such an alternative program will not spring full-blown from the head of some world reformer, but will be, on the contrary, a “work in progress” elaborated by tens of millions, and ultimately billions of people. Nonetheless we can throw out the broad outlines of basic necessities. Already the dismantling of the automobile-steel-oil-rubber complex and its replacement by greatly improved mass transit and rail transport has implications far beyond transportation, namely in the relationship between cities and countryside and in the social organization of space generally; environmental concerns; the huge social waste involved in commuting time; the reorientation to new sources of energy; and the overcoming of the social atomization and social costs induced after World War II by suburbanization and sprawl. The freeing of the tens of millions of people currently employed in state and corporate bureaucracy, in the military and in military production, the FIRE sectors, or police/intelligence and prisons, for socially useful work will also make possible the realization of a key part of the communist program: the radical shortening of the working day. We do not doubt that the collective practical knowledge of working people, once free to reconfigure necessary work from a use-value viewpoint on a truly social (worldwide) scale, will greatly facilitate the implementation of such a broad outline, but

we consider it essential to start this discussion now to counter the long-assumed notion that “all this will be worked out in the soviets” after the revolution. Without an active current with some widely-shared vision of a radically different social order, (in the sense that the old Social Democratic/Stalinist vision of nationalization plus state planning was widely shared) there will be a no successful revolution.

16) HOW WE RELATE TO PARTIAL STRUGGLES Between now and the revolution, local, partial struggles short of the open struggle for the overthrow of capital are emerging and will continue to emerge. Some parts of the left communist scene (we can take the ICC as a *reductio ad absurdum* but they are hardly alone) tend to relate to such struggles with an attitude that ultimately reads “when you’re ready to form soviets, get in touch”. We reject that kind of posturing abstentionism that hides remoteness from the struggles of ordinary working people behind “big theory”. This posturing results from 40 years in the wilderness in which there were, at least in the West, few mass movements in the streets (as there was in the late 60’s/early 70’s) pressuring such groups to do something more than publish their journals, sell their newspapers and maintain their P.O. boxes or, more recently, their web sites.

That said, serious problems arise in relating to such struggles as they are usually posed, problems represented first of all by the thicket of far-left groups that still work off of Trotskyism and Maoism and which circle around those struggles that do emerge like “vultures circling a dying beast”, as someone once put it. The Trotskyists, in particular, characterize such struggles and rival groups as “reformist”, whereas our starting point is an analysis of the impossibility of consequential reformism (the latter being something different than saying, as we do, that there can be small temporary victories in the midst of generally bigger defeats). Such groups are still wedded, at best, to the dialectic of reform and revolution that was the outlook of revolutionaries before 1914, such as Rosa Luxemburg in her polemic against Bernstein: revolution THROUGH the struggle for reform.

Unfortunately for that outlook, no reformism for the class as a whole is possible today. The crisis started 40 years ago and has only intensified. Already in the 1970’s “left” parties in the West were backing off from any promises of “reform”. “Reform” today is mainly the war cry of the right, meaning burning and slashing what is left of the old welfare state and labor legislation. It is no secret that the official left since the 1970’s has reinvented itself as the kinder, gentler face of “neo-liberal” capitalism. We hardly need bother with the Democratic Party (Clinton, Obama) and its hangers-on in the U.S. In the U.S. as in Europe, the ever-growing gap between the wealthiest 1% and everyone else has grown relentlessly since 1968, whether “reformists” or “conservatives” are in power. Mitterand in France, Felipe Gonzalez in Spain, Schroeder in Germany, Blair in Britain, now Papandreou in Greece barely deserve any more of a mention: “reformists” all, “neo-liberal” slashers of workers’ living standards all.

We might consider some recent, disparate but somehow similar struggles of recent years: the piqueteros in Argentina in 2001-2002 or Oaxaca in 2007. All the post-2008 movements and uprisings-- the French mass protests of fall 2010, or, in 2011: Tunisia,



Egypt, Madison, Madrid, Greece—are linked in some way to the world financial and economic meltdown. Most of these struggles took on a qualitative nature in a huge initial burst of “spontaneity” unleashed by some “spark” in an increasingly explosive situation, ( or in the case of Greece, two direct, savage attacks on working-class living standards over the past year). The Argentine uprising began with the total meltdown of the economy and of the Argentine political class, but was brought to a head by the piqueteros, mainly no-future working-class youth, who had been refining their tactics for several years, in actions large and small. Oaxaca began with a provocation by the state government against the initial phase of the normal collective bargaining of the local teachers’ union. Tunisia began with the desperate suicide of an unemployed university graduate, following everyday police harassment. Egypt began with a combination of “normal” everyday state atrocities mixed with the “contagion of struggle” coming from Tunisia, in a worsening economic situation. Madison began, like Oaxaca, with a provocation by the state against public employees.

All of these movements were characterized by a creative “leap” from local forms of protest (even the suicide of the unemployed Tunisian ex-student was the latest in a series by similar people) to a mass spontaneous outburst that no one foresaw, underscoring the always unforeseeable consequences of local acts of defiance.

And most of these movements (with Tunisia and Egypt and now Syria and Yemen, for all their specific differences, still unfolding) have been defeated, and those, like Tunisia and Egypt, find themselves in danger of containment by the usual cast of characters in a facelift of the status quo ante. The Argentine piqueteros were either co-opted into a recomposed Peronist state or dispersed by repression; in Oaxaca, it was straight-up massive repression and the isolation of the movement from the rest of Mexico. (The situation in Greece remains in abeyance at this writing-July 2011). The French government stonewalled the fall 2010 movements in the streets, and won out. The Madison movement never escaped the embrace of the Democrats and the unions and mainly threw itself into an “anti-Republican” recall campaign. The Spanish Socialist government let the “indignados” (cf. our report on that movement) occupy the central plazas in 50 cities for the better part of a month (police attacks and provocations notwithstanding) until the movement collapsed, with some factional acrimony, of its own weight, like so many others, having taken the first creative step of occupying public space and then being incapable of taking another one.

Communism is a concrete possibility because of what capital “compels the working class to do” (Marx). In the situations described above, what is the relationship between “reform” and revolution?

Before people go massively into the streets, in those struggles that occur, revolutionaries can participate with a “class-wide”, “Toledo Auto-Lite” perspective. The key, in such situations, is always to underscore the “break” with established institutions, such as the unions and the state, and the political pseudo-left that accommodates to those institutions. The perspective should always be “dual power”, however small the forces capable of

making that demarcation. The consequences of such a stance are always fluid. Revolutionaries always speak to the “class-for-itself” impulse in the broader movement. The goal is not the specific “demand” or what in some cases might be temporarily won, but the increased unity of the class through the experience of breaking the barriers between different sectors of workers, or workers and the unemployed, and racial caste and gender separations.

When, masses of people are in the streets, as they have been and are in places such as Argentina or Greece or Egypt, the sole real question is that of state power. This is not to endorse just any putschist adventure: there is a dynamic in play that cannot be forced.

But the successful struggle against the state, and its replacement by class-wide institutions (soviets, workers’ councils, whatever new forms may emerge) requires program (as discussed earlier) and a current formed in advance to take the initial steps to implement that program. This current emerges over time from the networks of the most combative and conscious elements, in the ebbs and flows of struggle, and does not need to belong to any more formalized organization. The latter will come as the intensified rhythm of struggle requires it.