It is time to outline a synthesis of all my work and attempt to sketch a program, at the risk of seeing myself accused of engaging in “metapolitics.”

It would be futile to engage in a sort of replastering of an edifice of cracked and worm-eaten socialist doctrines, to struggle to patch together some of the surviving solid fragments of traditional Marxism and anarchism, to indulge in Marxist or Bakuninist scholarship, to seek to trace, merely on paper, tortuous connections.

If in this book we have often turned to the past it was of course not, as the reader will have understood, to dwell on it self-indulgently. To learn from it, to draw from it, yes, for previous experience is rich in teachings, but with an eye to the future.

The libertarian communism of our time, which blossomed in the French May ’68, goes far beyond communism and anarchism. Calling oneself a libertarian communist today does not mean looking backwards, but rather drafting a sketch of the future. Libertarian communists are not exegetes, they are militants. They understand that it is incumbent upon them to change the future, no more,
no less. History has backed them against the wall. The hour of the socialist revolution has rung everywhere. Like the moon landing, it has entered the realm of the immediate and the possible. The precise definition of the forms of a socialist society no longer belong to the realm of utopia. The only people lacking in realism are those who close their eyes to these truths.

What will be the guiding lines that we are going to follow to accomplish the Revolution which, as Gracchus Babeuf said, will be the final one?

To start with, before going into action, libertarian communists assess the exact nature of objective conditions; they attempt to evaluate accurately the balance of power in every situation. Here the method elaborated by Karl Marx and which has not aged, namely historical and dialectical materialism, remains the surest of compasses, an inexhaustible mine of models and guideposts. On condition, however, that it be treated as Marx did himself, that is, without doctrinal rigidity, and that it avoid mechanistic inflexibility; on condition that, sheltering beneath its wing, one does not eternally invent poor pretexts and pseudo-objective reasons to excuse oneself from pushing things to the limit, to sow confusion, to miss the revolutionary opportunity every time it presents itself.

Libertarian communism is a communism that rejects determinism and fatalism, which gives space to individual will, intuition, imagination, the rapidity of reflexes, the profound instinct of the large masses, who are wiser at moments of crisis than the reasonings of the “elite,” who believe in the element of surprise and provocation, in the value of audacity, who do not allow themselves to be encumbered and paralyzed by a weighty, supposedly “scientific” ideological apparatus, who do not prevaricate or bluff, who avoid both adventurism and fear of the unknown.

Libertarian communists have learned from experience how to set about things: they hold in contempt the impotent shambles of disorganization as much as the bureaucratic ball and chain of over-organization.
Libertarian communists, faithful on this point to both Marx and Bakunin, reject the fetishism of the single, monolithic, and totalitarian party, just as they avoid the traps of a fraudulent and demobilizing electoralism.

Libertarian communists are, in their essence, internationalists. They consider the global struggles of the exploited as a whole. But they nonetheless take into account the specificity and the original forms of socialism in each country. They only conceive internationalism to be proletarian if it is inspired from the bottom up, on a level of complete equality, without any form of subordination to a “big brother” who thinks himself stronger and cleverer.

Libertarian communists never sacrifice the revolutionary struggle to the diplomatic imperatives of the so-called socialist empires and, like Che Guevara, do not hesitate to send them both packing if their aberrant fratricidal quarrels cause mortal harm to the cause of universal socialism.

When the moment of the revolutionary test of strength arrives, libertarian communists will attack at both the center and the periphery, in the political and administrative fields as well as the economic. On the one hand, they will deal mercilessly, with all their might, and if necessary by means of armed struggle, with the bourgeois state and the entire complex machinery of power, be it at the level of the capital, the regions, the departments, or the municipalities; they will never make the mistake, on the pretext of “apoliticism,” of neglecting, underestimating, or abstaining from dismantling the citadels, the political centers, from which the enemy’s resistance is directed. But at the same time, combining the economic and political struggles, they will at their workplaces take control of all posts held by the bosses and wrest the means of production from those who monopolize them, in order to hand them over to their real, rightful owners: the self-managing workers and technicians.

Once that revolution is victoriously and completely accomplished, libertarian communists do not smash the state in order to reestablish it in another even more oppressive form through the
colossal expansion of its capacities. Rather, they want the transmis-
sion of all power to a confederation of federations, that is, to a con-
federation of communes, themselves federated in regions, a con-
federation of revolutionary workers’ unions preexisting the revolu-
tion or, failing that, the confederation of workers’ councils born of
the revolution, which does not exclude the eventuality of a merger
of the latter two. Elected for a short mandate and not eligible for re-
election, the delegates to these various bodies are controllable and
revocable at all times.

Libertarian communists shun any particularist atomization into
small units, communes, and workers’ councils, and aspire to a fed-
eralist coordination, one which is both close-knit and freely con-
sented to. Rejecting bureaucratic and authoritarian planning, they
believe in the need for coherent and democratic planning, inspired
from the bottom up.

Because they are of their time, libertarian communists want to
wrest the media, automation, and computers from the maleficent
monopolists and place them at the service of liberation.

Hardened authoritarians and sceptics maintain that the imper-
atives of contemporary technology are incompatible with a liber-
tarian communist society. On the contrary, the libertarian commu-
nists intend to unleash a new technological revolution, this time
oriented towards both higher productivity and a shorter work day,
towards decentralization, decongestion, de-bureaucratization, dis-
alienation, and a return to nature. They condemn the degrading
mentality of the so-called consumer society while preparing to
raise consumption to its highest level ever.

Libertarian communists carry out this gigantic overturning at
the price of the least possible disorder, neither too slowly nor too
soon. They know that a wave of the magic wand cannot instantly
effect the most profound social transformation of all time. They
do not lose sight of the fact that with the hominid distorted by
millennia of oppression, obscurantism, and egoism, time will be
needed to form a socialist man or socialist woman. They agree to